

**Lamar Town Council Meeting Minutes**  
**January 10, 2022**

The Lamar Town Council Meeting was called to order by Mayor James Howell at 6:15 PM.

Invocation was given by Deacon Tim Dargan.

Mayor Howell took roll call of all council members present. Council members in attendance were Mayor Howell, Councilman Tyler Cook, Councilwoman Angele White-Bradley, and Councilwoman Inez B. Lee. Councilwoman Mary Ann Mack attended via zoom call

Others in attendance were Tim Dargan, Chief Carl Scott, and Elijha Enoch-Smith (livestream operator). Jannie Lathan and Doug Poston participated via zoom call.

A motion was made by Councilwoman Lee that the agenda be accepted. Councilman Cook seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

A motion was made by Councilman Cook to accept the minutes from the December 13, 2021, Lamar Town Council Meeting. Councilwoman Bradley seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Jannie Lathan of Lathan Consulting Corporation gave a grant report and an update on the Railroad Pump Station Project.

Doug Poston of Douglas R. Poston, Jr. CPA gave the Financial Report:

General Fund:

Receipts - \$277,194.28, Disbursements - \$51,322.10, Increase in cash - \$225,872.18, Ending cash balance - \$331,495.43 (\$232,745.05 of these funds are from the American Rescue Funds).

Utility Fund:

Receipts - \$37,076.71, Disbursements - \$37,226.39, Decrease in cash -\$149.68  
Ending cash balance - \$87,016.49 (\$20,773.11 available for operations; remainder is grant funds)

Tim Dargan stated that DHEC has required the Town of Lamar to submit an Engineering Dam Report for the Zion Wastewater Treatment Pond by March 1, 2022. He read three quotes that he obtained from three different engineering firms; he recommended contracting with GEO Systems Designs & Testing. A motion was made by Mayor Howell to contract with GEO Systems. Councilwoman Bradley seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Tim Dargan introduced and presented the first reading of the Town of Lamar Grease Trap Ordinance. Councilwoman Mack asked who would be responsible for seeing that the grease trap was properly installed and did the Town have a qualified person to handle this responsibility. Mr. Dargan said that the Town and the Town's Code Enforcer would have that responsibility. Councilwoman Bradley asked if the lift station off Jackson Street (Cambridge Apartment) would be included in this ordinance. Mr. Dargan said that the lift station would be included. Mayor Howell made a motion to accept the first reading of the Town of Lamar Grease Trap Ordinance. Councilwoman Lee seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously.

Chief Carl Scott gave the Police Department Report. Chief Scott discussed the “Active Shooter Segment” that took place at the Lamar Neighborhood Watch December meeting. He also asked the citizens of Lamar to opt in to “Text My Gov” as a means of receiving and giving vital information about the Town.

Mr. Dargan stated that the Lamar Town Council members submitted a list of names of citizens to serve on the Planning Commission and Board of Zoning Appeals at the December 1, 2021, Town of Lamar Council Meeting. They held a call meeting on December 20, 2021, to finalize the list and the qualifications for serving. The members were chosen with diversity in mind.

Councilman Tyler Cook gave the qualifications for serving on the Planning Commission and Board of Zoning Appeals and the names of those chosen to serve (see attachment):

- Members must live within the Town limits.
- The position is a voluntary assignment.
- Members must undergo six hours of initial training (Plus three years of continuous education).

Mayor Howell discussed the full re-open of Town Hall. Effective immediately, Town Hall would be fully open to the public Monday – Thursday from 9:00 am – 4:30 pm (for the past several months, Town Hall was open to the public on Monday and Tuesday. Access was gain through the Police Department entrance).

Councilwoman Mack asked if there are any mitigation steps in place to provide safety for the Town employees. She also wanted to know if Town Hall has proper ventilation and are there plans to purchase air purifiers to assist with the air flow in the building, possibly out of the ARP funds. Mayor Howell responded that citizens are requested to wear masks, there are shields in the office, and that the building is being sanitized on a regular basis as citizens enter and exit the building. He said that the Town would have to investigate the ventilation issue and the purchase of air purifiers. Mayor Howell said that the employees must be safe, but we also must keep Town Hall opened to the public.

A citizen asked if there were any regulations regarding the changing of filters due to the pandemic. Chief Scott is going to check the CDC recommendations and notify council of his findings.

Mayor Howell discussed water and sewer customers who have severely delinquent bills. He suggested that council look at bills that were incurred when the Town was the service provider and bills that have been incurred since Darlington County Water and Sewer Authority became the provider. Mayor Howell wants to bring all accounts current and find ways to reduce or eliminate very old bills; the citizens will still be responsible for paying their portion of legitimate bills. There was a discussion on Additional research will be done, and this will be discussed further at the next council meeting.

A citizen volunteered to share information that the Town that he was previously acquainted with. He will meet with Mr. Dargan at a late date.

Councilwoman Mack said that she thought there was a time in the past when a customer delinquent bill would double every month if they did not pay it; she asked if this was still the case. Mr. Dargan said that he was unsure if that was the case previously but is not the case now. Councilwoman Bradley asked if the customers in question are current customers or old customers? Mayor Howell commented that it’s a combination of both.

Mayor Howell discussed the dilapidated buildings on Main Street in Lamar. He mentioned that the buildings are hazardous and if they should fall and injure someone, the Town and the property owners will be held liable. Mayor Howell asked Mr. Dargan to read the Town of Lamar Code Violation 5.211.

### 5.211 Building Burned or Destroyed More Than Half Its Value

Buildings which may have been or hereafter be damaged by fire, decay, or otherwise to an amount greater than one-half its value, exclusive of the foundation, shall not be repaired or rebuilt but shall be removed.

Mayor Howell also referenced the following code violations:

- 10.210 (Accumulation of Junk and Trash)
- 10.310 (Building Material)
- 10.401 (Upkeep of Vacant Lot)
- 10.402 (Requirement for Owner to Maintain Lots)
- 10.403 (Town to Clean. Costs to be Paid by Owner)
- 10.204 (Weeds Prohibited on Improved Property)

Mayor Howell said that certified letters will be sent to the property owners, and they will be given ample time to comply with the request. The penalties for failure to comply will be discussed after speaking with the Town lawyer.

Councilwoman Bradley said that there may be grant funds available for code violation 10.403 (Town to Clean. Costs to be paid by Owner).

Councilwoman Lee gave the Beautification Commission Report. She also discussed the Christmas on Main event and the Town's newsletter.

Mr. Dargan Thanked Harvest Hope, Elim UMC, The Town of Lamar, and the volunteers that participated in the December 17, 2021, food giveaway. He also mentioned that no definite decision has been made on a MLK Day Celebration for the Town of Lamar. He said that there will be an Egg Scramble Jamboree Celebration in 2022, and that the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee for the Town of Lamar would be meeting in the very near future.

Mr. Dargan thanked Quincey Walker Jr for his success and his stellar representation of the Town of Lamar on the CBS Reality Show "Tough as Nails". In addition to sending a "Thank You" letter to the Town, Mr. Walker also presented the Town of Lamar Water Department with a check in the amount of \$1,000.

Councilwoman Bradley made a motion for council to go into Executive Session. Council Lee seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Councilman Cook made a motion to end the Executive Session and re-enter the council meeting. Councilwoman Lee seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Councilwoman Bradley made a motion to adjourn the Lamar Town Council Meeting. Councilman Cook seconded the motion. Mayor Howell adjourned the meeting at 7:31 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Timothy L. Dargan, Administrative Manager  
Town of Lamar