

Lamar Town Council Meeting Minutes August 12, 2024

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

Councilwoman Inez B. Lee called for a moment of silence in memory of former Town of Lamar Municipal Clerk Sherrill Dorriety. She then gave the invocation.

Mayor Howell took roll call: Mayor Howell, Councilwoman Angele White- Bradley, Councilman Tyler Cook, and Councilwoman Mary Ann Mack, and Councilwoman Inez B. Lee were all present.

Others in attendance: Tim Dargan, Carl Scott, and Edell George.

Councilman Cook made a motion to accept the agenda for the August 12, 2024, Lamar Town Council Meeting. Councilwoman Bradley seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Councilman Cook made a motion to accept the minutes from the July 8, 2024, Lamar Town Council Meeting. Councilwoman Lee seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Edell George, a Citizen of Lamar, addressed the council concerning a few citizens that have or have had chickens on their property within the town limit. She spoke of the foul smell and the possibility of chickens attracting flies. Ms. George presented a signed petition from several citizens and asked the council to consider their point of view as the council proposes changing the animal ordinance to allow citizens to have chickens.

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

General Fund (June 2024): Receipts - \$138,418.37, Disbursements - \$48,088.05, Increase in cash - \$90,330.32, Ending cash balance - \$617,342.38 (\$197,204.69 of these funds are from the American Rescue Funds).

Utility Fund (June 2024): Receipts - \$39,715.30, Disbursements - \$31,915.61, Increase in cash -\$7,799.69, Ending cash balance - \$88,436.61 (\$31,252.66 available for operations; \$57,183.95 for restricted grant funds).

Mr. Poston explained that most of the \$90,330.22 increase in cash for the general fund was from a broker check from MASC (Municipal Association of South Carolina).

A status report on The Railroad Avenue Lift Station Project was submitted by Teresa Jacobs of the Pee Dee COG (Council of Government). Councilman Cook made a motion to accept the report as information. Councilwoman Bradley seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

An email sent in the form of a status report was submitted by Preston Watson and John Reynolds of the Davis & Floyd Engineering Firm. After stating that she was unhappy with the report, Councilwoman Bradley made a motion to accept the report as information. Councilman Cook seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Councilwoman Bradley gave the Codes and Business Report. As of August 12, 2024:

- 121 business license renewal letters were mailed out.
- 104 business licenses were renewed.
- 65 new business licenses were issued.
- 7 business Licenses are pending renewal Councilwoman Bradley encouraged business to obtain their business license before the deadline to avoid costly penalties.

Councilwoman Mack asked how the cost of a business license was determined. Mr. Dargan, along with Councilwoman Bradley and Mayor Howell, explained that it was determined by the profession and gross income earned in the Town of Lamar for the previous year.

Councilwoman Lee Beautification Commission Report:

Councilwoman Lee reported that the Beautification Commission did not meet on August 9, 2024, due to Tropical Storm Debby. She said that the commission is continuing with their "Great American/Palmetto Pride Clean-up" project and are hoping to partner with the area schools to create a "Day of Caring". This event is not set in stone, but hopefully it will transpire in the future. The SC Forestry Commission Presentation was part of the Beautification Commission Report.

Water Line Repairs / Alarm Issues:

- Warren Avenue leak, and (2) leak at Main St. entrance to Police Department have been repaired.
- A work order has been placed for Pearl Street.
- Sandbags were distributed by the town as needed during Tropical Storm Debby.

*For water breaks, please call Councilwoman Inez B. Lee at (843) 230-7137.

Councilwoman Lee gave the Water & Sewer Report:

Water Loss Report for the Month of July 2024:

Gallons Purchased:4,579,200 Gallons Billed: 2,523,674 Gallons Loss: 2,055,526 [\$14,755.81 paid to DCWSA]

Councilwoman Bradley asked about the discrepancy (increased in gallons used and the cost) between the May, June, and July DCWSA water bill. Councilwoman Lee, along with Councilwoman Mack and Mr. Dargan, explained that DCWSA billed for fewer days in the month of May and more days for the month of July.

Councilwoman Mack gave the Streets and Sanitation Report:

- Continuing to monitor and report street light outages. Reminded citizens to report outages as well.
- Concern about lighting on Pearl Street since Craig's closed. Mayor Howell is going to contact Mr. Jebaily (Blackhorse owner) to address this concern.
- Recent rains have caused or increased several problem areas. Identified sink holes at Jackson (Reynolds) and Main & Pettigrew. Barriers that were placed to warn citizens are being moved by citizens.
- Councilwoman Mack mentioned that Tonya Brown from WPDE TV-15 featured a story on the condition of Lamar's recreation football field. She thanked the Recreation Department, local staff, and concerned community members. Mayor Howell added that he has located bleachers to place on the field.
- Stated that the Town should use the balance of the Duke Energy Grant to prepare for tropical and winter storms (including purchasing sandbags, traffic cones, traffic signs, traffic barriers, traffic barrels w/lights).
- Town needs to prepare an Emergency Preparedness Plan.

Councilman Cook gave the Lamar Police Department Report:

- Councilman Cook thanked everyone who supported and participated in Lamar Family Fun Day. In addition, he named and thanked some of the sponsors individually.
- The South Carolina Department of Commerce Grant was submitted on July 30, 2024. Councilman Cook gave a breakdown of the expenditures.
- The Lamar Police Department coordinated with SCDOT to clean storm drains with the vac truck in advance of Tropical Storm Debby. There were two road closures due to sink holes (East Jackson & Reynolds, and Pettigrew & Main).
- Reminded citizens to watch their speed when driving around town.
- Please contact the Animal Shelter if you need a trap in your area at 843-398-4011.
- Encourage residents to call the Anonymous Tip Line at 843-326-1449 (non-emergency calls).
- There have been several break-ins on the outskirts of the town limit.
- Chief Scott pointed out that ac units have also been stolen.

Councilman Cook read a summary of a letter submitted by former Town of Lamar mayor, Darnell McPherson, lauding the success of Lamar Fun Day. She also thanked Chief Carl Scott, the other officers, and the Public Works Employees for a dedicated, well planned, and well executed event.

Councilman Cook read a portion of the Proposed Chicken Amendment for the Town of Lamar including:

- (1) Drainage of the run, (2) coops being screened by shrubbery or a privacy fence, and (3) changing the language in Lamar Town Ordinance Book Section 3.108 to identify certain animals that will be unlawful for citizens to have.

Councilman Cook stated that he modeled the proposed amendments after Columbia, SC Animal Ordinance.

Councilwoman Bradley suggested that the first reading of the ordinance be postponed until the penalty and fee structure is put into place. Councilwoman Lee stated her concern about the smell and asked if there was chemical that could be used to reduce the smell. The ordinance amendment will be discussed at a future council meeting.

Mayor Howell thanked everyone that assisted the Town of Lamar during Tropical Storm Debby. He also said that the pediatrician office will be opening in late August or early September. Lastly, Mayor Howell mentioned that the Town of Lamar now has a steakhouse – “Log Cabin Steakhouse”. It is located at the Lamar Country Club (Governor’s Run).

Councilwoman Mack made a motion to adjourn the Lamar Town Council Meeting. Councilwoman Lee seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Howell adjourned the meeting at 7:20 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Timothy L Dargan