



DANGEROUS SINKHOLE — Signage has alerted residents to the section of Florida Street closed more than five months ago because of an expansive sinkhole directly under the roadway. On Monday night, Clinton City Council gave approval to hire contractors to begin the repairs on the broken storm drain pipes.

Florida Street closure

Opening in sight after Clinton City Council's approval

By Judith Brown

Staff Writer

With a unanimous vote at Clinton City Council Monday night, City of Clinton staff got approval to contract with a company to finally begin repairs to a sinkhole that has caused the closure of a block of Florida Street for almost six months.

A sinkhole was discovered more than five months ago in a section of Florida Street between Clay Street and North Woodrow, and council occasionally has received updates on the problem. The sinkhole developed in an area where there are several lines intersecting, explained utilities

director Joey Meadows following the meeting. When crews used cameras to determine the extent of the problem, it was found the space underneath the road was much larger than the opening in the middle of Florida Street and included at least one space close to 12 feet in depth.

"The problem was bigger than we could handle because special equipment will be needed that we don't have and it would take most of our staff on that one project," Meadows said.

"We had hoped to find that we could do some of the work within the department to save the city money but we realized we had to contract it out."

Council accepted a bid of \$49,710 by Elmore Land and Site Developing of Enoree and also agreed to a \$7,000 change order in case it's needed.

In spite of the expense, City Manager Bill Ed Cannon said, it was actually good news for the city.

"The cost of this project is still less than the engineer's estimate of \$65,000," Cannon explained.

As with other construction work, the wet winter has added to the length of time the city needed to determine these final plans, and Meadows said he hoped the contractor could get to the Florida Street project very soon.

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Pitts elected county council chairman

By John Clayton

Editor

At its first regular meeting of 2019 the Laurens County Council voted for new leadership, electing David Pitts as its new chairman.

Pitts replaces Joe Wood, who had served as chairman since 2012. Wood was elected vice chairman by a 5-0 vote with two abstentions.

"I worked hard to uphold this honor," Wood said of his two terms as chairman. "I worked hard for all of you on council and the people of the county."

Pitts, who represents District 7 in Clinton, was elected by a 4-0 vote with three abstentions. He is also the assistant superintendent of Laurens County School District 56.

After taking the gavel, Pitts welcomed newly elected council members Kemp Younts of

District 1 and Jeffrey Carroll of District 5.

"I look forward to working with everyone on council," Pitts said before overseeing his first meeting as chairman.

Carroll and Younts were sworn in on Jan. 3 along with District 4 incumbent Stewart Jones, who was unopposed in the GOP primary and general election.

In other action Tuesday night: Director of Public Works Dale Satterfield was appointed as the county's representative on the Main Street Laurens Board of Directors. He is a former chairman of that board.

Laurens County Animal Control Officer Amy Bagwell was sworn in as a codes officer by County Attorney Sandy Cruickshanks.

Council unanimously approved third and final readings on tax agreements for

Project Autumn and Project Gator. Project Gator was revealed this week as a \$17.265 million investment from BDS Technologies, which is opening its first production facility at Hunter Industrial Park and should bring 44 new jobs to the county.

Project Autumn is a \$3 million investment from an existing industry, BRAWO USA Brass Forgings, and should create 10 more jobs.

Council also voted unanimously to approve a change order to upgrade lighting fixtures during renovations at the Hillcrest Judicial Complex.

The request for 960 new, more efficient light fixtures will cost \$98,850. The new light panels are expected to save the county \$27,000 per year, creating a return on investment of about 28 percent, Satterfield said.

— Mission —

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Shirley P. Dial

beginning to pick back up. One woman recently brought a bag of brand new blankets.

"We will have people say they got new sweaters at Christmas and so they'll bring us their older ones," Clark said, who says she and fellow volunteers are collecting and giving out other clothing items as well. Then during the summer they give away summer clothes.

"My favorite Bible verse has always been Luke 3:11," she said. "He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none, and he that hath meat, let him do likewise."

Clark explained with her full-time position she is spending most Saturday mornings after 10 a.m. there at the store at 205-C Fleming Street, and other times she'll need to make appointments at lunch or after work hours.

Anyone wishing to make donations or seeking warm clothings and blankets can call or text Clark at 864-923-1879.

Our NEW Secured Assisted Living Memory Care is now open.

(Continued from page 1)

Here are complete statistics (from the coroner's office for 2018):

2018 Laurens County Coroner's Office Statistics

Natural Causes – 500
Motor Vehicles – 35
Suicide – 21
Homicide – 3
Overdose – 12
Alcohol Poisoning – 1
Accidental – 2
Drowning – 2
Infant – 2
Fire – 2
Pending – 3
Total – 583



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Donations will be accepted through Feb. 14 at our office located at 226 W. Laurens St., Laurens. Mon. Thurs. 8 a.m.-5 p.m. & Friday 8 a.m.-noon. Monetary donations are also appreciated.

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