

City of Sparta  
Mayor & Council Meeting  
March 8, 2022 @ 5pm  
City Council Chambers

Elected Officials present were Mayor Allen Haywood, Mayor ProTem Sandra Sherrod, Council Members, Brandon Nolley, Tom Roberts and Rav Zuridan Yisrael.

City Clerk, Virginia Webb and City Attorney, John Hitchcock were present.

This meeting was called to order at 5:00 pm by Mayor ProTem Sherrod, followed by a moment of silence, The Lord's Prayer and The Pledge of Allegiance.

**Adopt Agenda**

A motion was made by Councilman Roberts to adopt the agenda, Councilman Yisrael seconded the motion. Vote was unanimous.

**Adopt Minutes**

A motion was made by Councilman Roberts to adopt minutes from the February 8, 2022, regular meeting, and seconded by Councilman Yisrael. Vote was unanimous.

A presentation for "Appreciation of Services" was made to James Clark and David Ingram for their years of service on the Sparta City Council.

**Clerk's Report**

Ryan Brinson, from the CPA firm that handles the City of Sparta account, requested the ordinance showing the fiscal year change to reflect the December 31 date. This change was made in April 2020. The ordinance was forwarded to the Department of Community Affairs and has been updated accordingly.

Springbrook, the company that purchased QS1, has been contacted about the codes on the Utility Bills for the City of Sparta. According to their programmers, there is not enough space to include explanations of service on the bill and the codes cannot be changed. The sheet containing the explanation of codes will continue to go out with each bill until we reach a solution.

The Office of Planning & Budgeting has acknowledged receipt of all documentation for First Responders payment request and has begun processing payment for The City of Sparta Police Department.

The Georgia Municipal Association sponsors an annual event each year that gives cities the opportunity to highlight successful projects, connect residents with one another, and build or improve working relationships with employees, leaders and legislators. Cities Week is April 24- 30, 2022. This year we will have an employee appreciation luncheon and possibly a Community Clean Up Day. All planned activities will be announced later.

### **Mayor's Report**

Wood & Associates, engineering firm, has been contacted to assist us with grant applications and contracting with different companies to provide services.

The JROTC program director wants to involve the high school cadets in a community service event for The City of Sparta.

Overweight trucks on the City of Sparta streets can be fined up to \$1,000. We have installed signs to notify drivers to possibly prevent violations. The City did receive a support letter from Senator Mack Jackson, in support against increasing the weight limit for big trucks. Big trucks are damaging the streets in the city due to their weight.

Budget was worked on Thursday, March 3, and departmental draft was completed Monday, March 7, 2022.

The price of chemicals for the Filter (Water Treatment) Plant has increased. Several chemicals are hard to find due to supply and demand issues. Water rates may have to be increased due to the rising costs.

HHIP & REACH programs are still pushing Covid19 vaccine campaigns. Terrell Reid, Hancock Outreach Coordinator, spoke encouraging everyone to get boosters that are eligible. There will be a second round of test kits available soon. For more information, he may be reached at 478-952-0921.

Waste Water Plant supervisor, Amanda Akins has applied for a grant for our facility.

## **Old Business**

Councilman Roberts motioned to approve agreement with Hancock County Commissioners for Local Option Sales Tax Distribution percentages, to provide revenue of 38% for the City and 62% for the County for a period of 10 years, beginning January 2023. Motion was seconded by Councilman Yisrael. Vote was unanimous.

Councilman Yisrael motioned to approve agreement with the North Central Health District (REACH) regarding the development of Pedestrian Park on Broad Street in downtown Sparta. Councilman Roberts seconded the motion. Vote was unanimous.

## **New Business**

Presentation of the City's New Retirement Plan for Employees

The plan will be for full time city employees. The plan will be effective retroactively, as of January 1, 2022. Each employee will be required to contribute in order to participate and the city will match up to 3% of their contribution. It is a 457B plan and will be monitored by a third-party administrator as required by law.

Mayor and Council Work Session at 4:30 pm, Monday, April 4, 2022.

Mayor and Council Regular Meeting at 5:00 pm, Tuesday, April 12, 2022.

Historic Preservation Commission Regular Meeting, Thursday, April 14, 2022.

## **Citizens' Input**

Paula Dixon, resident of the county, questioned the percentage of grants and where will they be applied.

Marion Warren, resident of the county, questioned if EMI engineering firm offered exclusive services.

Mary Jackson, resident of county, questioned where the Pedestrian Park will be located.

Willmatine Tolbert, resident of city, praised efforts and accomplishments of Mayor and Council.

### **Executive Session**

Councilman Roberts made a motion to enter executive session and Councilman Yisrael seconded. Vote was unanimous.

### **Back to Regular Session**

Councilman Yisrael motioned to return to regular session. Mayor ProTem Sherrod seconded. Vote was unanimous.

Councilman Yisrael motioned to hire Randy Clinton for the Street Department. Councilman Roberts seconded. Vote was unanimous.

Councilman Yisrael motioned to hire John Buchanan for the Filter Plant. Councilman Roberts seconded. Vote was unanimous.

Councilman Roberts motioned to hire Montee Washington for the Street Department. Councilman Yisrael seconded. Vote was unanimous.

Councilman Roberts motioned to hire Courtney Devereaux for Filter Plant. Councilman Yisrael seconded. Vote was unanimous.

### **Adjournment**

Councilman Yisrael motioned to adjourn the meeting. Mayor ProTem Sherrod seconded. Vote was unanimous.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 6:50 pm.