

AGENDA

Mayor & Council Meeting

5pm Tuesday, March 14, 2023

1. Call to Order
2. Prayer
3. Pledge of Allegiance
4. Roll Call
5. Adopt Agenda
6. Adoption of Minutes—December 13, 2022 Regular Meeting, December 28, 2022 “Called” Meeting & January 10, 2023 Meeting (all were tabled during February 14th meeting); February 14, 2023 Meeting
7. Departmental Reports---Police & Utilities
8. Clerk’s Report
9. Mayor’s Report
10. New Business
 - A. First Reading of Amendment to Zoning Ordinance (business district)
 - B. Approval of Professional Services Contract (monitoring & training staff) for City Landfill
11. Old Business
 - A. Approval to Sub-out Work to Local Contractors In an Effort to Complete Construction of Pedestrian Park
12. Historic Preservation Commission Regular Meeting 5:30pm Thursday, April 13, 2023 in City Hall Council Chambers
13. Mayor & Council Work Session at 4:30pm on Monday, April 3, 2023
14. Mayor & Council Regular Meeting at 5pm Tuesday, April 11, 2023
15. Citizens’ Input (Please limit Questions/Comments to 3 Minutes)
16. Executive Session: Legal and Personnel Business
17. Adjournment

City of Sparta
Mayor & Council Meeting
5PM Tuesday, March 14, 2023

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

City Clerk, Virginia Webb was present. Attorney John Hitchcock was present.

Mayor ProTem Sherrod called the meeting to at 5:10PM followed by a moment of silence, The Lord's Prayer, and Pledge of Allegiance.

Adopt Agenda

Councilman Roberts motioned to adopt the agenda; Councilman Yisrael seconded. Vote unanimous.

Adoption of Minutes – December 13, 2022 Regular Meeting, December 28, 2022 “Called” Meeting & January 10, 2023 Meeting (all were tabled during February 14th meeting); February 14, 2023 Meeting

Councilman Yisrael motioned to adopt December 13, 2022 Regular Meeting minutes; Councilman Roberts seconded. No discussion. Vote unanimous.

Councilman Roberts motioned to adopt December 28, 2022 “Called” Meeting minutes; Councilman Yisrael seconded. No discussion. Vote unanimous.

Councilman Yisrael motioned to adopt January 10, 2023 Meeting minutes; Councilman Roberts seconded. No discussion. Vote unanimous.

Councilman Roberts motioned to adopt February 14, 2023 meeting minutes; Councilman Yisrael seconded. No discussion. Vote unanimous.

Departmental Reports – Police & Utilities
(See Attached Pages 8-9)

Clerk's Report

1. GMA will hold a Pipeline Safety Seminar in Macon, Georgia at the Macon Marriott City Center on April 3-6, for field personnel. As the Drug & Alcohol Administrator for the City of Sparta, the city clerk, Virginia Webb, will be attending on April 3, for the required session. This class is required by the Public Safety Commission for compliance.

2. GMA Annual convention will be held in Savannah beginning June 23-27, 2023. Resignation opens March 30, 2023.
3. Krystal Hayes, the legal account executive with Civic Plus, has been contracted to find out the next step. The quote given on September 20, 2022, was valid for 60 days.
4. The equipment for the animal shelter has been purchased and received. The pails, leashes, catch poles, traps, & dog box has been delivered and we are waiting to hear from the State Licensing Division to approve the license for shelter.

Mayor's Report

1. The city will send several of its workers for certification. Along with Timmy Griffin and Logan Griffin, who are both certified, Courtney Johnson, an employee in the utilities division, will start working on gas certification. A class on water distribution will be attended by Michael Graham, a worker at the wastewater facility. Amanda Akins, a class 2 operator and wastewater supervisor, is preparing for her training as well. Each certification requires several years to complete.
2. Timmy Griffin, the utilities supervisor, has been examining manhole covers. Due to the need for the manhole covers to be resealed, the two sewer systems at the waste water plant—one of which deals with waste and the other with runoff water—are combining and adding some 250,000 gallons of rainwater each month that needs to be treated.
3. The animal shelter has passed the pre-inspection and now awaiting the full state inspection, which the state should schedule within two weeks, to receive the full certification.
4. Surplus equipment sale needs to be approved by Council.
5. In TSPLOST, the city has received \$23,994. The utilities cushion for street work is \$32,000. Now the city can afford to repair potholes on more streets.
6. Dip Polatty, Chairman of the Historic Preservation Committee, may be resigning due to health issues.
7. The price of natural gas keeps going down. Gas prices had dropped from \$19 per 1,000 cubic feet to about \$12, with the expectation of reaching \$8 by May.

8. The fire hydrant accident, which was filed with the city's insurance, GMA, total cost being \$11,895. GMA will then go after the other party's insurance company if they decide to. The city will not lose any money.
9. The Hi-Lo Bike Trail passes through Sparta and Hancock County on its way from Athens, Georgia, to Union Point, then on to Savannah. Every county on the route was requested to contribute \$15,000 for the planning and consulting. The REACH Program provided \$10,000, while the county and city each contributed \$2500 to complete the Hancock cost. The three to four year project is a bike and walking path from Athens to Savannah.
10. The City of Sparta Police Department will host an Easter egg hunt on April 8, 2023, but they need the Board of Education's approval to use the old football field.
11. There is a problem with people not paying their citations. There is \$116,926 in outstanding citations. Attorney John Hitchcock will meet with the judge to see what can be done about this issue.
12. Mayor Haywood thanked DeeDee Hider, who sponsored an outreach program at the Sparta-Hancock County Library with Michael Curry on housing and grants.

New Business

A. First Reading of Amendment to Zoning Ordinance (business district)

According to Attorney John Hitchcock, the council asked him to examine updating the city's zoning ordinances to include a provision for mixed-use (commercial/residential). He added a brief amendment that only adds the clause regarding mixed-use developments and leaves everything else alone. It must be handled like a rezoning since it is an amendment to the zoning ordinance. The city must first publish an ad in the newspaper with the intention of making the zoning ordinance; after that, a hearing must be held. Following that, Council will decide whether to adopt the ordinance amendment at a subsequent meeting. The City's charter prohibits Council from adopting an ordinance on the same day that it is introduced.

B. Approval of Professional Services Contract (monitoring & training staff) for City Landfill

Mayor Haywood stated that Michael Biers, an innovative engineering stagiest, met with Council and himself during Work Session and explained how he could effectively monitor the landfill more effectively.

In 2022 the city paid, \$23,430 to Advance Environmental Services to have the landfill monitored for well water and methane. The city will pay \$15,900, if Michael Biers is hired, for the ground water monitoring, which comes along with teaching the staff how to monitor methane with specialized machines and walk the city through the process of closing the landfill. If hired, the first year will cost the city \$21,100. It has been over 30 years since the landfill was closed. The monitoring should have been complete years ago.

Councilman Yisrael stated that he'd like the agreement in hand to ensure everything previously mentioned was indeed in the agreement and to allow Council to read the agreement thoroughly before voting.

Mayor Haywood agreed to provide the agreement to Council.

Councilman Yisrael motioned to receive the agreement; Councilman Roberts seconded.

No discussion. Vote unanimous.

Old Business

A. Approval to Sub-out Work to Local Contractors in an Effort to Complete Construction of Pedestrian Park

Mayor Haywood stated the engineering work has been done, but the city would like to bid out to licensed local contractors, who have insurance.

Councilman Yisrael motioned to approve to sub-out work to local contractors in efforts to complete construction of Pedestrian Park; Councilman Nolley seconded.

No vote necessary.

**Historic Preservation Commission Regular Meeting 5:30 PM Thursday, April 13, 2023
in City Hall Council Chambers**

Mayor & Council Work Session at 4:30PM on Monday, April 3, 2023

Mayor & Council Regular Meeting at 5PM on Tuesday, April 11, 2023

Citizen's Input (Please Limit Questions/Comments to 3 Minutes)

Mary Jackson, a city citizen, inquired about the location of Pedestrian Park and asked for assistance with the Powelton Avenue sidewalks. She claimed that she is finding stray dogs in her neighborhood and that dogs are being dropped off at the dog kennel; to stop the dogs from escaping, she advised installing a gate or a latch.

The city sprayed concentrate on the streets last year to kill the weeds, according to Mayor Haywood, who said he would have Tremaine Ingram, the street supervisor, take a look at it to see what can be done. Also, he mentioned that the state inspector for the animal shelter would hold a volunteer training session.

DeeDee Hider, a city resident, said that a noise law should be followed at the carwash on Augusta Highway since loud music can occasionally be heard there. She requested the police to patrol the neighborhood more frequently. Also, she thanked Mayor Haywood for attending the outreach event on behalf of the city.

Maxine Evans, a city resident, claimed that the previous administration had included a clause in the bill of sale stating that the park, Pedestrian Park, would be named after Marvin E. Lewis, the first black superintendent in Georgia. Before naming the park, she asked the city council to double-check their records. There shouldn't be any conflicts of interest, so she enquired as to the number of neighborhood contractors in the city. In addition, Evans questioned who was in charge of the police station in the absence of former Chief Thomas Clayton's resignation and suggested that Officer Larry Chapman be given the job.

Mayor Haywood responded that the city is currently advertising for the position of Chief of Police.

She also suggested holding a single, all-inclusive Easter Egg Hunt for kids throughout the entire county. She offered to give Officer Jada Baugh a list of names.

Officer Baugh said she didn't have a problem with that and thought it was a good idea.

Elizabeth Havier, a city resident, reported that water is standing in Minnie Mae Lamar's driveway at 156 Boland Street and it has washed out the street and left a space between the road and the driveway.

Mayor Haywood said Timmy Griffin, the utility supervisor, will need to look at it.

She asserted that she had read a document in which the city council had approved Officer Tommie Walker as an officer rather than an administrative officer, contradicting the mayor's alleged claim that he could hire in accordance with the charter.

Mayor Haywood acknowledged her misunderstanding and responded that he adheres to the city's charter and handbook and that, within those guidelines, he has the power to appoint, promote, or demote a city employee. The worker then has the option of challenging the mayor's decision in front of council.

According to Attorney John Hitchcock, the mayor has the authority to do so in this situation.

The council's approval is required for the mayor to appoint department heads.

James Culver, a city resident, thanked the mayor for attending the meeting. He claimed that he asked the mayor why the county hadn't used its machinery to clean out the ditches two years prior but that they still hadn't. He enquired as to the mayor's long-term objectives for the police station. When comparing the city to neighboring municipalities, Culver persisted in asking about adding more infrastructure.

Mayor Haywood replied that he has asked Senator Jon Ossoff for a grant of \$180,000 so that the city can purchase a structure and later remodel it into a police station. The city has not yet received the \$25,000 that the Intergovernmental Risk Management Agency (IRMA) grant has approved for renovations to the old police station. Mayor Haywood clarified that because the previous administration misappropriated the lending funds, the city was unable to submit a CDBG grant application with DCA. The city's standing with DCA has improved recently. In order to fix two lagoons at the Waste Water Plant, the utilities' surveys must be finished as the first CDBG grant is currently in progress. The city can only apply for one CDBG grant

per year, and the maximum grant amount is one million dollars. Where the old school is, which is owned by the board of education, would be the ideal location for building/housing.

Shelia Bryant, a resident of the city, stated that the city needs to build new housing for residents. She said that this is an election year and the citizens need help.

Paula Barnes, a resident of the county, invited Mayor and Council to attend an address by Senator Raphael Warnock in Milledgeville, GA on Thursday, March 16, 2023 at 11AM. The topic of the address will be assessing rent increase in the disability and elderly communities. Mayor Haywood said he would plan to attend.

Executive Session: Legal and Personnel Business

Councilman Roberts motioned to go into Executive Session; Councilman Yisrael seconded. No discussion. Vote unanimous.

Back to Regular Session

Councilman Roberts motioned to hire Jason Glover for the street department; Councilman Yisrael seconded. No discussion. Vote unanimous.

Adjournment

Councilman Yisrael motion to adjourn the meeting; Councilman Nolley seconded. Vote unanimous.

The meeting adjourned at 6:53 PM.



FEBRUARY 2023

SPARTA POLICE DEPARTMENT ACTIVITY REPORT

160 – TOTAL 911 CALLS FOR ASSISTANCE

15 – TOTAL WRITTEN CITATIONS

- 15 – TRAFFIC
- 1 – DUI

3 – ARREST

- 1 - CHARGED WITH DUI
- 1 – CHARGED WITH BURGLARY
- 1 – CHARGED WITH AGGRAVATED STALKING

GRANTS AND EVENTS:

- WE RECEIVED A TECHNOLOGY GRANT FROM GOVERNORS OFFICE OF HIGHWAY SAFETY ON FEBRUARY 22, 2023. THIS GRANT ALLOWS US TO PURCHASE SIX LAPTOPS AND SIX IN-CAR PRINTERS FOR OUR PATROL VEHICLES.
- WE RECEIVED TWO BOXES OF BEARS TO GIVE TO YOUTH WHO ARE VICTIM OF DOMESTICS OR CRIMES AGAINST CHILDREN.
- WE ARE PLANNING AN EASTER EGGSTRANSVAGANZA ON SATURDAY, APRIL 8, 2023 FROM 11AM TO 1PM. THERE WILL BE FREE FOOD ALONG WITH AN EASTER EGG HUNT FOR CHILDREN AGES 5 YEARS OLD TO 12 YEARS OLD. WE ARE ACCEPTING DONATIONS, WHICH CAN BE DROPPED OFF AT THE POLICE DEPARTMENT.

Utilities Department Report

February 2023

The surveys required for the CDBG grant are still being completed. Staff members are completing them as they go door to door. Over 30 narratives have been written about backup issues, and 197 surveys have been done so far. To be eligible for the grant, 400 families must have been surveyed.