

AGENDA

Mayor & Council Meeting

5pm Tuesday, May 9, 2023

1. Call to Order
2. Prayer
3. Pledge of Allegiance
4. Roll Call
5. Adopt Agenda
6. Adoption of Minutes—April 11, 2023 Regular Meeting; May 1, 2023 Called Meeting
7. Vote on Amendment to Zoning Ordinance Regarding Special Use of Commercial Property in the Business District of Downtown Sparta
8. Departmental Reports
9. Clerk's Report
10. Mayor's Report
11. New Business
 - A. Presentations of Two 2022 Sparta-Hancock County Historic Preservation Commission Awards for Preservation Excellence in Sparta
12. Old Business
 - A. City Attorney's Report on Progress with Listing Ordinances on the City Website
13. Historic Preservation Commission Regular Meeting 5:30pm Thursday, May 11, 2023 in City Hall Council Chambers
14. Public Input Hearing for CDBG Application Wastewater Improvements 4:30pm Wednesday, May 10, 2023 in City Hall Council Chambers
15. Public Hearing to Amend Sparta-Hancock Joint Comprehensive Plan by Adding a Project to the Community Facilities Section (Wastewater Project) 10am Friday, May 19, 2023 in City Hall Council Chambers
16. City Hall Will Close at 1pm Friday, May 26, 2023 for All City Employees to Participate in Employees' Appreciation Luncheon & Activities
17. City Hall Will Be Closed Monday, May 29, 2023 to Observe Memorial Day
18. Mayor & Council Work Session at 4:30pm on Monday, June 5, 2023
19. Mayor & Council Regular Meeting at 5pm Tuesday, June 13, 2023
20. Citizens' Input (Please limit Questions/Comments to 3 Minutes)
21. Executive Session: Legal and Personnel Business
22. Adjournment

City of Sparta
Mayor & Council Meeting
5pm Tuesday, May 9, 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.

Due to voice illness, Mayor ProTem Sherrod asked Councilman Yisrael to preside.

Councilman Yisrael called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. followed by a moment of silence, the Lord's Prayer, and the Pledge of Allegiance.

Adopt Agenda

Councilman Roberts motioned to adopt the agenda; Councilman Nolley seconded. No discussion. Vote unanimous.

Adoption of Minutes – April 11, 2023 Regular Meeting; May 1, 2023 Called Meeting

Mayor ProTem Sherrod motioned to table the April 11, 2023 Regular Meeting minutes and May 1, 2023 "Called" Meeting minutes; Councilman Roberts seconded. No discussion. Vote unanimous.

Vote on Amendment to Zoning Ordinance Regarding Special Use of Commercial Property in the Business District of Downtown Sparta

Councilman Yisrael stated that the ordinance's goal is to allow residential housing to be built on the second floor of two-story commercial buildings. This will be beneficial for the city because it expands the supply of available housing and would give building owners a way to pay for building maintenance.

City Attorney John Hitchcock explained that the city has advertised, held a hearing, and now Council can vote to add an amendment to the zoning ordinance regarding special uses of commercial property in the downtown Sparta business district. This is the second time the amendment has been read to meet legal requirements.

Councilman Roberts expressed concern about the buildings' safety and compliance with fire and building codes. He stated that with remodeling, there are allowances that can be made, but they must be compliant; living spaces above commercial buildings are difficult to construct due to the fire separation between the floors.

Mayor ProTem Sherrod motioned to vote to accept the amendment to the zoning ordinance regarding special use of commercial property in the business district of downtown Sparta; Councilman Nolley seconded. No further discussion. Vote unanimous.

Departmental Reports – Police, Wastewater, & Utilities

(See Pages 8-12)

Clerk's Report

1. The City of Sparta's Community Health & Wellness Fair, held on Wednesday, April 26, 2023, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Sparta Hancock Library, was a huge success. There were over 250 attendees, including 30 vendors. Health screenings, A1C checks, vision screenings, blood pressure checks, and COVID shots were among the services provided. Other vendors provided information on how services could be obtained at reduced or low cost following the event via their organizations. There were 35 raffle items given away, including theme park tickets, gym memberships, Visa gift cards, a handheld blower, and a variety of others. This was an excellent opportunity for Sparta residents to learn about their health, receive valuable screenings, and connect with local health and wellness organizations.
2. The City of Sparta is planning an Employee Appreciation Day for Friday, May 26, 2023, at 1 p.m. at City Hall. At the event, a raffle will be held, and certificates for years of service will be awarded.
3. Nicee Long, a CSRA Commission staffer, organized and submitted surveys for the CDBG funding. These surveys were required for the grant application. This funding will be used to repair lagoons at the Wastewater Facility on Johnny Britt Road.
4. Delinquent utility account holders who have not reached a payment agreement will be sent letters. If there is a problem with the account balance, please come to City Hall to get it resolved.

Mayor's Report

1. On Tuesday, May 9, 2023, the Hancock Health Improvement Partnership (HHIP) and REACH Program hosted a brunch and awards ceremony at CJE. The city was recognized for its collaboration on projects it has been working on.
2. The Community Health & Wellness Fair drew about 250 people and featured 67 vendors. Mayor Haywood thanked everyone who took part and came out to enjoy the health fair.
3. The Georgia Environment and Finance Authority (GEFA) has chosen the city for principal forgiveness. The city has a \$125,184.87 note with GEFA that was initiated on Friday, April 1, 2016, for which the city has been making monthly payments to GEFA of \$657.28. The total amount owed is \$90,397.80. The city is awaiting approval for the principal forgiveness opportunity in the coming weeks; if not approved, the city will continue to pay until Monday, September 1, 2036.
4. Mayor Haywood attended the annual gas authority meeting and took part in a program about the group trip to Washington, D.C., during which he emphasized the importance of natural gas to residential customers. Sparta was recognized for its financial stability and

timely payments. The monthly residential gas rate has stabilized at \$11 per thousand cubic feet.

5. The wastewater and street departments attended animal control training at city hall on Thursday, April 20, 2023, hosted by the State Department of Agriculture animal services training group. In the coming weeks, a volunteer training session will be held. Summer Bilbrey, the licensed animal control officer, created a Facebook page for the city's animal services so that people could view it and learn more about the animals.
6. The city has applied for grants for wastewater, water, public works, and the law enforcement.
7. The quotes on the street potholes are being studied by Timmy Griffin, the utilities supervisor, and Deborah Butts, the city treasurer, to determine how much the city can afford to spend.
Councilman Nolley stated that he would meet with the concerned citizen about Clay Street repairs.
8. Mayor Haywood displayed invoices for water services paid for in the previous two weeks. The city pays for these services monthly: Lowe Electric costs \$7,245.87, Symphona costs \$5,403.95, Court Ware costs \$750, and tank monitoring costs \$1,745.85. Every two months, soda ash chlorine costs \$11,508.50.
9. Engineering Management Incorporated (EMI) has been selected to coordinate the CDBG project involving lagoons. Mayor Haywood received reports outlining the analysis of what needs to be done at the wastewater facility as well as the improvements required at the filter plant.
10. Charles Jackson won the bid for the old police station refurbishing.

New Business

A. Presentations of Two 2022 Sparta-Hancock County Historic Preservation Commission Awards for Preservation Excellence in Sparta

Dip Polatty, president of the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC), stated that May is National Historic Preservation Month. Every year, the HPC honors preservationists who have done outstanding work. Charles and Mary Jackson, as well as Fred Webster, are this year's honorees.

The recognition was given to Charles and Mary Jackson, owners of 12889 Broad Street, for their restoration and adaptive reuse of the building. The downstairs will be offices, and the upstairs could be apartments.

Fred Webster, whose properties are located at 12695 Broad Street through 12707 Broad Street, was recognized for his property stewardship. He has four properties in the historic district, two of which have decorative elements that improve the streetscape.

Fred Webster stated that he loves the community and mostly the people. He thanked the HPC for the work that they have done.

Old Business

A. City Attorney's Report on Progress with Listing Ordinances on the City's Website

Councilman Yisrael explained that to have more transparency between the citizens and the city, having the ordinances easily accessible for all is important.

Attorney John Hitchcock stated that the majority of the expense is \$11,445 upfront, which differs from what was originally quoted, \$9,000 of which is for the company's attorney review of the ordinances to ensure that each ordinance is up-to-date. The review will take 9 to 12 months to complete. The company would not post anything on the city's website for a year under those conditions. The removal of the company's attorney review will be less expensive in the beginning. The alternative would be to upload what the city currently has without the company's attorney review to the city's website and later have them review it to see if any changes are required.

Councilman Yisrael commented that he thought it would be best to have the ordinances that the city currently has uploaded because they are rules that the city must follow.

Virginia Webb, city clerk, shared that if the city chose just the basic would be \$1,850 a year after the first year.

Council did not vote to reduce the services, but agreed to move forward with the alternative of having the company upload the ordinances on the city's website and later have the company's attorney review.

Attorney John Hitchcock asked to be excused from the meeting due to prior commitments; Council allowed him to be excused. He left at 5:45 p.m.

Historic Preservation Commission Regular Meeting 5:30pm Thursday, May 11, 2023 in City Hall Council Chambers

Public Input Hearing for CDBG Application Wastewater Improvements 4:30pm Wednesday, May 10, 2023 in City Hall Chambers

Public Hearing to Amend the Sparta-Hancock Joint Comprehensive Plan by Adding a Project to the Community Facilities Section (Wastewater Project) 10am Friday, May 19, 2023 in City Hall Chambers

City Hall Will be Closed at 1pm Friday May 26, 2023 for All City Employees to Participate in Employees' Appreciation Luncheon & Activities

City Hall will be Closed Monday, May 29, 2023 to Observe Memorial Day

Mayor & Council Work Session at 4:30pm on Monday, June 5, 2023

Mayor & Council Regular Meeting at 5:00pm Tuesday, June 13, 2023

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

1. Maxine Evans, a city resident, stated that she pays both city and county taxes. She recalled seeing one of the councilmembers outside during the last city council meeting, Tuesday, April 11, 2023, during the executive session. She inquired as to how a council member could be excluded from the executive session.

Mayor ProTem Sherrod responded that she was involved in an accident in May 2021 in which she was struck in the back by a police vehicle. That accident was being discussed in that executive session, and she was asked to excuse herself at that point.

Councilman Yisrael mentioned City Attorney John Hitchcock, who explained that in legal matters, that is typically done to ensure that others are comfortable speaking freely and to avoid conflicts of interest.

2. Julio Mejia, a city resident who owns several buildings, thanked the council for completing the residential on the second floor and Mayor Haywood for assisting with water facilities and pumps. His vision for Sparta is to improve its appearance. He noticed that there was no public restroom. He believed that portaloos, which are easily accessible toilets connected directly to the sewer line, would benefit both the homeless and city tourism. The installation would cost the city \$185,000. He offered to look at the city's budget for free to find the money needed for installation or to get an idea of how much the city can pay. He also requested to see the city's budget.

Councilman Roberts responded that Timmy Griffin, utility supervisor, would be the one he would have to speak to about that matter.

Mayor Haywood stated that the city's charter requires the mayor to give a categorical budget and is required to be submitted 60 days before the fiscal year starts, which is January 1st. He pointed out that the line-item budget will not be approved until late July.

3. DeeDee Hider, a city resident, stated that she pays both city and county taxes. She inquired whether the city still had money available through Overview and, if so, whether it had been announced at any of the council meetings. She desired to be able to accurately

instruct others on how to obtain resources. She was also concerned about the prizes won by city employees at a community outreach health event. If the event was truly for the community, she felt that no city employees should have been included in the raffle.

Mayor Haywood responded that Overview follows a list of overdue accounts compiled by the city. The city does not choose which citizens receive funds, and applicants may lie on their applications to gain access to funds, thereby taking resources that could be used for someone who needs and qualifies for them. Mayor Haywood stated that it was a community event which included all the city employees as well.

4. Paula Dixon, a county resident, asked the mayor if Overview could provide him with applicants' personal information.

Mayor Haywood responded that Overview does not give him any personal information.

5. Elizabeth Havier, a county resident, stated that Spring Street has been caved in for a month and needs to be covered to prevent anyone from injuring themselves. During the previous meeting, she expressed her concerns about 156 Boland Street, which has yet to be repaired. She requested to hear the wastewater department report, as well as when retired employees will begin receiving pensions, what was brought with the grants, and how she could obtain a record of it. Sparta, in her opinion, also needs more handicapped parking.

Mayor Haywood responded that Spring Street is on the list to be fixed; Councilman Roberts explained that Timmy Griffin, the utilities supervisor, is waiting on a piece of pipe to fix Spring Street and the hole is left open so that it can dry out and cannot be covered up and allow traffic to go over it because it sinks.

According to Mayor Haywood and City Clerk Virginia Webb, they were told that 156 Boland Street had been fixed.

6. Lillie Tripp, resident of the city, asked that she would like to know how to obtain funds for the renovations and if the funds that helped Pizza Plus renovations were from the HPC or from the city.

Mayor Haywood stated that there are no funds/grants for renovations. He said renovations qualify for tax credits, depending on how big the project is, a property owner could sell their tax credits. He directed her to talk to Dip Polatty to assist her.

Dip Polatty, President of the Historic Preservation Commission, stated Pizza Plus has not received any funds from the HPC or the city. He would be happy to help her with the questions and guide her to the proper resources.

7. Teresa Hines, a Sandersville resident, said that prior to the COVID pandemic, Overview was open and well organized. The way they advertise has changed because of the restructuring. She will request that Overview advertise when funding becomes available.

Executive Session

Councilman Roberts motioned to go into executive session; Councilman Nolley seconded. No discussion. Vote unanimous.

Back to Regular Session

Councilman Roberts motioned to go back to regular session; Councilman Yisrael seconded. No discussion. Vote unanimous.

Councilman Roberts motioned to approve the hiring of Cornell Wright as a police officer; Councilman Nolley seconded. Councilman Yisrael voted “yes.” Mayor ProTem Sherrod voted “no.”

Adjournment

Councilman Roberts motioned to adjourn the meeting; Councilman Yisrael seconded. No discussion. Vote unanimous.

The meeting adjourned at 6:50 p.m.



CITY OF SPARTA

POLICE

365 SPRING STREET - SPARTA, GEORGIA - 31087
OFFICE: 706-444-5777 / FAX: 706-444-0827

APRIL 2023

SPARTA POLICE DEPARTMENT ACTIVITY REPORT

214 – TOTAL 911 CALLS FOR ASSISTANCE

45 – TOTAL WRITTEN CITATIONS

- 41 – TRAFFIC
- 2 – POSSESSION OF MARIJUANA LESS THAN 1 OUNCE
- 1 – OPEN CONTAINER
- DUI – 1
- 3 – WRITTEN WARNINGS (NOT TO INCLUDE VERBAL WARNINGS)

5 – ARREST

- 2 ARRESTS FOR POSSESSION OF MARIJUANA
- 1 ARREST FOR DRIVING W/SUSPENDED LICENSE (SECOND OFFENSE), DRIVING W/SUSPENDED REGISTRATION, LEAVING SCENE OF ACCIDENT
- 1 ARREST FOR DRIVING WITH SUSPENDED LICENSE, DUI, NO HEADLIGHTS, SUSPENDED REGISTRATION
- 1 ARREST ON STATE WARRANTS FOR THEFT BY TAKING, CARRYING PISTOL W/O CARRY LICENSE, CARRY CONCEALED FIREARMS, POSSESSION OF FIREARM BY CONVICTED FELON.

PREVIOUS MONTH STATS: MARCH 2023

214 – TOTAL 911 CALLS FOR ASSISTANCE

48 – TOTAL WRITTEN CITATIONS

0 – ARREST

Police Report – April 2023

Addendum: National Sheriffs' Association grant has rewarded the Sparta Police Department flashlights and first aid kits. Monday, May 15, 2023, all officers will have Class A uniforms.

Utilities Report – April 2023

The tank has been occasionally drained and inspected. It has passed inspection. The city pays \$1,700 per month to drain. Monday, May 8, 2023, all the city's gas, water, and wastewater lines were inspected, due to the 2.3 earthquake, which was between Sander's Quarters and St. Mark Church. The quake was 3.2 kilometers down from the city's gas, water, and wastewater lines, which could have damaged.

For the first time in 21 years the 10-inch pump from the lake in Dublin will be rebuilt; a 10-inch pump for wastewater will be replaced after 23 years.

The city is preparing to have all the city's street ditches cleaned out in the next couple of weeks.

April 2023 Report for City Council – Wastewater Dept.

Sampling Results:

Parameter	Influent (Before Screen)	Effluent (After Outfall)	Storage Pond (Wet Well)	Monthly Limit	Overall Removal Efficiency
Rainfall	5.03 (UGA)			Report	-
Flow MGD	0.482	0.54	Not Calculated Yet	0.800 MGD	-
BOD	188	24.2	-	50 mg/L	87.1%
TSS	80	9.00	-	90 mg/L	88.8%

Notable Work:

- Staff cleaned out the valves and valve boxes for Spryfield valves 1-5. This maintenance work made the valves easily visible and usable for staff. Additionally, staff exercised the valves to help loosen any that were tight.
- Staff continued to trim trees, prune spring growth, and clear the plant to prevent it from becoming overgrown again. Furthermore, staff distributed three truckloads of gravel throughout the plant. Staff also continued working on removing the adhesive from the floor on rainy days.
- Staff dedicated some of the month to organizing the Community Health & Wellness Fair, scheduled for April 26, 2023. The event received donations worth over \$35,000 and featured 30 vendors providing over \$26,000 services. The final count of attendees is 250 total (vendors, volunteers, and attendees). See attached Health Fair Summary Report for more information.
- Staff maintained regular communication with Georgia EPD regarding the latest permit modifications and the ongoing issues with the NetDMR system. On April 14, one day prior to submittal requirements, EPD informed staff that a new permit limit would be enforced for all downstream wells, which led to the plant exceeding the limit for the March DMR. Staff are presently exploring options to comply with the new regulation while also collecting additional samples to identify and resolve potential future violation concerns. EPD has requested updates regarding this violation.
- The staff attended a Chainsaw Safety Course provided by the Department of Transportation (DOT) to acquire certification. The course encompassed a range of topics related to chainsaw usage, including appropriate safety gear, chainsaw upkeep, methods for felling trees, and procedures for safely cutting up fallen trees.
- Staff participated in Animal Shelter Inspection Training for the City's animal shelter.
- Staff administered the final dose of sludge RX to Aeration Pond #1, and cleaned the aerators while removing debris and grass growth from the ponds. To continue with the treatment, the staff needs to purchase more Sludge RX, but are waiting for the CDBG engineers' timeline for dredging before placing an order.
- Staff repaired Aerator #8 after it began to make a noise in late April. Staff pulled the aerator to discover the fan had broken inside. Staff replaced the fan with parts salvaged off an unrepairable aerator, as well as some other minor parts which were damaged when the fan sheared.

April 2023 Report for City Council – Wastewater Dept.

Other Notable Items:

- Treatment Plant Operator (TPO) magazine dispatched a photographer to the Sparta wastewater plant on April 6, 2023, to capture pictures of the facility and its personnel for an upcoming article. During the visit, the photographer expressed his involvement in another assignment, which focused on BBQ restaurants. Consequently, the staff directed him to Straws BBQ to take photos there as well.
- Amanda Martin Akins and Mitchell Ray Perritt Jr. started the renewal process of their State Licenses. The renewal period for their licenses will continue until June 30, 2023. Furthermore, Michael Heath Grahams has successfully completed his 6-month probationary period on April 17, 2023. He has been scheduled to attend a Wastewater Class III course in June.
- In collaboration with the Hancock County School System, GRWA has identified eight students keen on interning for the Water and Wastewater Departments. The students plan to interact with the department heads during a meet and greet session, and submit their resumes for consideration.
- GCSU Gives has partnered with the City of Sparta to launch Donation Drives on campus for various items year-round. The donated goods will subsequently be handed over to the City for allocation to locals, underprivileged families, and senior citizens.

Pictures:

Repairing Aerator



Bathroom Floor – Removing Adhesive



April 2023 Report for City Council – Wastewater Dept.

Grants: Yellow = Working on, not applied for yet Blue = Applied For, No Decision As Of Yet Green = Approved and/or Received

Department	Donor/Grant	Work Completed	Requested/Reason	Additional Notes	Value	City Match
Police	Stop The Bleed	Applied For	Trauma Response Training Kit	Train Fire/Police	\$1,000	0%
Police	Stop The Bleed	Applied For	Response Station W/Response Belts, Breaching Tool, Ballistic Shields, and Emergency Power Banks	Police Station	\$100,000	0%
Fire	Firehouse Subs	Applied For	Rescue Cutter, Ram, & Spreaders	Quarterly Application -- 18% Chance	\$36,801	0%
Police	US Deputy Association	Applied For & Approved	6 Tactical Flashlights With Belt Clip	Can be done annually	\$600	0%
All Departments	Niagara Water	Picked Up & Began Distribution	6 First Aid Kits for Vehicles Bottled Water For Employees & Community	For Upcoming Summer Heat & Boil Water Adversaries	\$1,175	0%
Police	National Police Association	Applied For	Rain Suits, Safety Vests, & Evidence Intake Boxes		\$1,000	0%
Fire & Police	Woodgrain	Applied For	Back to School Supplies To Distribute to Community	Back 2 School Bash	\$1,500	0%
Wastewater	Department of Community Affairs (DCA)	CDBG Surveys Completed / Engineer Selected (EMI) / Discuss Project with Engineer / Read Initial Engineering Report & Set Timelines	Lagoon Rehabilitation		\$1,000,000	10%
Wastewater	Georgia Environmental Finance Authority (GEFA)	Discuss With EMI – Possible Application – Gather Information	Lagoon Rehabilitation	Add on to CDBG to cover additional costs	TBD	TBD
Fire & Police	Stuffed Animals For Emergencies	Applied For	Blankets and Baby Items	Low Income Residents	TBD	0%
Fire & Police	Operation Warm	Applied For	150 Coats and 150 Shoes	Low Income Residents	TBD	0%
Fire	Operation Roundup	Notified of Approval and Check Sent	Fire Hoods, Gloves, and Gas Meters		\$9,400	0%