

AGENDA

Mayor & Council Meeting

5pm Tuesday, November 14, 2023

1. Call to Order
2. Prayer
3. Pledge of Allegiance
4. Roll Call
5. Adopt Agenda
6. Adoption of Minutes—October 10, 2023 Regular Meeting
7. Departmental Reports
8. Clerk's Report
9. Mayor's Report
10. New Business
 - A. Adoption of a Resolution regarding the City & County Joint Comprehensive Plan 2021-2026 (Formality necessary to allow for Georgia Hi-Lo Trail project to apply for grants & funding opportunities, County Commissioners approved during their November 8 meeting)
 - B. Complete City Election Report from Election Superintendent
11. Old Business
12. City Hall and all non-essential departments will be closed Thursday & Friday, November 23 & 24 in observance of Thanksgiving Holidays; All City offices & departments reopen at 8am Monday, November 27.
12. Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) Regular Meeting Will Be Held at 5:30pm Thursday, December 14, 2023 in Council Chambers City Hall
13. Council Work Session at 4:30pm Monday, December 4, in City Hall
14. Mayor & Council Regular Meeting at 5pm Tuesday, December 12, 2023 in Council Chambers City Hall (Swearing-in of city's elected officials)
15. Citizens' Input (Please limit Questions/Comments to 3 Minutes)
16. Executive Session: Legal and Personnel Business
17. Adjournment

City of Sparta
Mayor & Council
Tuesday, November 14, 2023

Elected Officials present Mayor R. 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.

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

Adopt Agenda

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

Adoption of Minutes – October 10, 2023 Regular Meeting

Councilman Roberts motioned to adopt October 10, 2023 Regular Meeting minutes; Councilman Nolley seconded. No discussion. Vote unanimous.

Departmental Reports – Police

Chief Tommie Walker stated that there were a total of 262 “911” calls for assistance, 71 written traffic citations 22 of which were for speeding and 42 other traffic violations including disorderly conduct, possession of marijuana, shoplifting, possession of a firearm by a minor, underage possession of alcohol and tobacco, and 14 arrests, including suspended license, criminal damage to property, thief by taking, possession of marijuana, no insurance, failure to maintain lane, DUI, and burglary. There were five state warrants processed.

There will be a joint Christmas drive with the City of Sparta Police department and several other organizations on Friday, December 15, 2023 from 5 to 7 p.m. at the Hancock Youth Opportunity Center, located at 12560 Augusta Hwy. Donations are welcome.

Clerk's Report

1. The Washington Electric Foundation has pledged \$5,000 to assist with the purchase of a vehicle for the City of Sparta Animal Shelter. Once the city has secured funding for the remaining portion of the project, the funds will be released. Once purchased the city will send receipts and pictures to Washington EMC. This grant is made possible by customers that choose to participate in the Operation Round Up Program. By choosing to round up their electric bill to next whole dollar amount, these donations add up to help the surrounding communities.

2. Tuesday, November 14, 2023, a flaggers' certification class was held at 8:00 am. This class was scheduled through the LTAP program, a division of the Department of Transportation (DOT). There was no cost to the City of Sparta or the attendees. Sixteen participants completed the training, 11 City of Sparta Street and Water Department employees and 7 Hancock County Road Department employees. After the 4 four-hour classroom and hands-On-training and test, the participants are now certified in flagging. As we strive to improve safety, this training will be one of many offered to provide a safe working environment.
3. The publication of the ordinances online has been assigned to an editor. The next step is proofreading and then be printed and published online.

Mayor's Reports

1. The city has received full confirmation of the Georgia Environmental Finance Authority (GEFA) principal forgiveness c loans for water and sewer. The city will receive \$6.8 million dollars from the state to repair infrastructure.
2. Overview will be accepting applications. Friday, December 1, 2023 is for residents 65 or older and Tuesday, January 2, 2024 is for other households to apply. Overview will be distributing a total of \$792,043.27 towards energy. Everyone who is eligible is encouraged to apply.
3. Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program, provides \$42.45 billion to expand high-speed internet access. Mayor Haywood has been working with Senator Rapheal Warnock's office and will be participating in a webinar with AT&T. AT&T has shown interest in providing broadband internet for the city.
4. Mayor Haywood, Coucilman Roberts, and Chief Walker attended a Meet & Greet at the Hancock State Prison introducing the new warden, George Ivey, to the community. The prison is currently hiring. The city will be added to a list for using inmate work crews to help around Sparta, such as cleaning out ditches and picking up trash.
5. Natural gas rates in December will increase by \$2 per thousand cubic feet. Residential natural gas rates will rise from \$11 per thousand cubic feet to \$13 per thousand cubic feet.
6. The sign on the old police station is a required construction sign from the DNR to refurbish the roof and exterior.

New Business

- A. Adoption of a Resolution regarding the City & County Joint Comprehensive Plan 2021-2026 (Formally necessary to allow Georgia Hi-Lo Trail project to apply for grants & funding opportunities, County Commissioners approved during their November 8th meeting)**

Councilman Roberts motioned to adopt the resolution regarding the City and County Joint Comprehensive Plan 2021-2026; Councilman Nolley seconded. Mayor ProTem Sherrod did not vote. No discussion.

B. Complete City Election Report from Election Superintendent

Renette Worthen, election supervisor, stated the report as follows: election day balloting was 180, advanced voting 249, absentee by mail 59, provisional ballot 3 and total was 491.

Copies will be available to the public.

City Hall and all non-essential departments will be closed Thursday & Friday, November 23rd & 24th in observance of Thanksgiving Holidays; All City offices & departments reopen at 8am Monday, November 27th

Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) Regular Meeting Will Be Held at 5:30pm Thursday, December 14, 2023 in Council Chambers City Hall

Council Work Session at 4:30pm Monday, December 4, 2023 in City Hall

Mayor & Council Regular Meeting at 5 pm Tuesday, December 12, 2023 in Council Chambers City Hall (Swearing-in of city's election officials)

Citizen's Input

1. Bernestine Strother, a resident of the city, stated police officers should be mindful about stalking and harassing citizens.
2. Pat Morgan, a resident of the county and chairperson of the Pine Tree Committee, thanked the City of Sparta for helping the Sparta-Hancock Chamber of Commerce make the Pine Tree Festival a success.
3. Dee Dee Hyder, a resident of the city, stated that there are applications located at the library for USDA. USDA will be returning earmarked funds on Sunday, December 17, 2023 if organizations do not apply.
Hyder requested an update on a water leak on Hamilton Street.

Mayor Haywood stated that Timmy Griffin is aware of the problem and it has been added to his list.

Executive Session: Legal and Personnel Business

There was no executive session.

Adjournment

Councilman Roberts motioned to adjourn; Councilman Nolley seconded. No discussion. Vote unanimous.

The meeting adjourned at 6:00 PM.