

# AGENDA

## Mayor & Council Meeting

5pm Tuesday, December 12, 2023

1. Call to Order
2. Prayer
3. Pledge of Allegiance
4. Oath of Office Administered by City Clerk to Newly Elected Mayor & Council Members
5. Roll Call
6. Council Elects a Member to Serve Two Years as Mayor Pro-Tem
7. Adopt Agenda
8. Adoption of Minutes—November 14, 2023 Regular Meeting
9. Clerk's Report
10. Mayor's Report
11. Old Business
  - A. Approve Acceptance of GEFA Clean Water State Revolving Fund loan in the amount of \$2,800,000 of which \$2,700,000 is designated "Principal Forgiveness" if all requirements for use of the funds are met.
  - B. Approve Acceptance of GEFA Drinking Water State Revolving Fund loan in the amount of \$4,200,000 of which \$4,100,000 is designated "Principal Forgiveness" if all requirements for use of the funds are met.
12. New Business
  - A. Adopt Resolution authorizing the Sparta-Hancock Preservation Commission to submit a Hurricane Michael Grant Application
  - B. City Attorney's Report on Zoning regarding Housing needs
13. Public Hearings for Annual Renewal of Retail Sales Liquor Licenses in the City at 10:00am & 10:15am on Thursday, December 28, 2023
14. Called Meeting at 10:30am on Thursday, December 28, 2023 to Approve or Deny Retail Liquor Licenses

15. Mayor & Council Work Session at 4:30pm Tuesday, January 2, 2024 (to be determined)
16. Mayor & Council Regular Meeting at 5pm Tuesday, January 9, 2024
17. City Hall Will Close at 11am and Remain Closed on Thursday, December 14 for Staff Work Day
18. City Hall Will Be Closed Monday, December 25 & Tuesday, December 26, 2023 in Observance of Christmas Holidays
19. City Hall Will Be Closed on Monday, January 1, 2024 for New Year's Day
20. Historic Preservation Commission Regular Meeting at 5:30pm Thursday, December 14, 2023 in City Hall
21. Citizens' Input
22. Executive Session
23. Adjournment

**City of Sparta  
Mayor & Council Meeting  
December 12, 2023**

Elected Officials present were Mayor R. Allen Haywood, Councilmembers Brandon Nolley, Tom Roberts, and Rav Yisrael. Mayor ProTem Sandra Sherrod arrived at 5:18 p.m.

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

Mayor Haywood called the meeting to order at 5 pm followed by the Lord's Prayer, Pledge of Allegiance and the Oath of Office administered by City Clerk to Newly Elected Mayor & Council Members

City Clerk, Virginia Webb swore in newly elected Mayor R. Allen Haywood and newly elected Council Member Tom Roberts. The meeting was paused and Council Member Sandra Sherrod was sworn in at 5:21 pm.

**Council Elects a Member to Serve Two Years as Mayor Pro-Tem**

Councilman Nolley motioned to elect Councilman Yisrael as Mayor Pro-Tem; Councilman Roberts seconded. No discussion. Vote unanimous. Council Member Sherrod was not present for vote.

**Adopt Agenda**

Councilman Roberts motioned to amend the agenda to add the Language Access Plan to the agenda; Councilman Nolley seconded. No discussion. Vote unanimous. Councilwoman Sherrod was not present for vote.

**Adoption of Minutes – November 14, 2023 Regular Meeting**

Councilman Roberts motioned to adopt November 14, 2023 Regular Meeting minutes; Councilman Nolley seconded. No discussion. Vote unanimous. Councilwoman Sherrod was not present for vote.

**Departmental Reports – Animal Shelter, Police & Waste Water**

(See Pages 6-11)

**Clerk's Report**

1. An email was sent to Civic Plus regarding the Republication Project of City Ordinances that clarified miscommunication about missing codes and no response was received. A meeting has been set for Wednesday, December 13, 2023 at 1:30 p.m. with Marilyn Cain to discuss/clarify republication.
2. Thursday, December 28, 2023 at 10 AM, a public hearing will be held for applicants seeking approval for liquor license for owner Asmizam Ahammad with Hancock Sparta LLC, DBA Round-Up Package, located at 12867 Augusta Highway, Sparta, GA.

Also, a hearing has been set for 10:15 am for Sherrod Kennedy Jr., owner of Sugar's Package Store, located at 272 Spring Street, Sparta, GA. A called meeting of Mayor and Council will be held 10:30 am in council chambers following the hearings for voting on the license application for both stores.

3. Tuesday, December 5, 2023, the Repack the Backpack event was a success. The grant obtained thru Washington EMC allowed the City of Sparta to purchase school supplies for M.E. Lewis Elementary, Hancock Central Middle & High School, and John Hancock Academy. The supplies purchased included bookbags, calculators, folders, dividers, protectors, pens, pencils, paper, composition books, planners, etc.
4. Friday, December 29, 2023 will be the city property taxes deadline.
5. A hearing for the CDBG- Lagoon project was held Friday, December 8, 2023 at 10 am, in the council chambers. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss fund distribution and costs for the city. The city's match will be \$55,000 and \$100,000 in funds will benefit low to moderate income persons. No displacement of persons will take place for this project. No members of the public attended this meeting. Funds will be used at wastewater treatment plant for improvements.

### **Mayor's Report**

1. Chief Tommie Walker gave the December 2023 police department report. Friday, December 15, 2023 from 5pm – 7pm will be the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Christmas Toy Drive, which will be held at the skating rink located in Sparta. He thanked all organizations that donated and the community for the tremendous support.  
He shared that the Sparta Police Department received an email from the Governor's Office of Highway Safety, which stated that the department will be receiving a grant. This grant will be able to help pay overtime for officers under the rank of a sergeant. Councilman Roberts thanked Chief Walker for his positive efforts and for making a difference in the community.
2. Hurricane Irma Grant has been submitted for reimbursement which is, \$137,062.50. The city has paid \$95,943.00 from other accounts. The balance due is \$41,119.00.
3. Hurricane Micheal Grant application due in January 2024 will help with the improvements of the interior of the old police station/City Hall. The grant is for \$280,000, but could increase to \$320,000.
4. The city has three companies quoting camera systems to cover different angles at the water and wastewater departments, due to the work with the GEFA and the CDBG.
5. Coutney Johnson, an employee of the city's street department, is also working Monday - Friday four hours in the morning at the animal shelter. Lynn Andrews is working a few hours in the afternoon to exercise the dogs. On weekends, Julianna Johnson, who is in graduate school for veterinarian science, looks after the health of the animals. The shelter currently is home to 18 dogs.

### **Old Business**

**A. Approve Acceptance of GEFA Clean Water State Revolving Fund loan in the amount of \$2,800,000 of which \$2,700,000 is designated “Principal Forgiveness” if all requirements for use of the funds are met.**

Mayor Haywood shared that GEFA has approved a \$2,800,000 loan through the Clean Water State Revolving Fund.

Attorney John Hitchcock stated that a resolution is required to approve the GEFA Clean Water Revolving Fund loan. The \$100,000 remaining balance is to be repaid through a 20-year gratuity with the interest rate of .29%. There is also a \$35,000 origination fee that the City of Sparta will have to pay.

The Georgia Rural Water Association (GRWA) conducted a study for the city and has since been completed. The city will address water rates in January 2023 and more information will be addressed at the upcoming work session. The cost has increased.

Councilman Nolley motioned to approve acceptance of GEFA clean water revolving fund loan of \$2,800,000 of which \$2,700,000 is designated “Principal Forgiveness” and to appoint Mayor Haywood to execute the documents and City Clerk Webb to attest the documents; Councilman Roberts seconded. No discussion. Councilwoman Sherrod would not vote.

**B. Approve Acceptance of GEFA Drinking Water State Revolving Fund loan in the amount of \$4,200,000 of which \$4,100,000 is designated “Principal Forgiveness” if all requirements for use of the funds are met.**

Attorney Hitchcock explained that a resolution is required to approve the acceptance of the GEFA Drinking Water Revolving Fund amount of \$4,200,000. \$4.1 million dollars will be forgiven. The remaining balance will be \$100,000, which will be repaid with the interest rate of .44% with 20-year gratuity. The origination fee is \$52,500 that the City of Sparta will have to pay.

Councilman Roberts motioned to approve the acceptance of the GEFA Drinking Water State Revolving Fund loan of \$4,200,000 of which \$4,100,000 is designated for “principal forgiveness” and to appoint Mayor Haywood to execute the documents and City Clerk Webb to attest the documents; Councilman Nolley seconded. No discussion. Councilwoman Sherrod would not vote.

**New Business**

**A. Adopt Resolution authorizing the Sparta-Hancock Preservation Commission to submit a Hurricane Micheal Grant Application**

Councilman Roberts motioned to adopt a resolution authorizing the Sparta-Hancock Preservation Commission to submit a Hurricane Michael grant application; Councilman Nolley seconded. No discussion. Councilwoman Sherrod would not vote.

**B. City Attorney's Report on Zoning Regarding Housing Needs**

Councilman Roberts motioned to table the report on zoning regarding housing needs until the next work session; Councilman Nolley seconded. No discussion. Councilwoman Sherrod would not vote.

**C. Language Access Plan**

Attorney Hitchcock stated that the City of Sparta must be in compliance with the Civil Rights Act. The City of Sparta developed the Language Access Plan to be able to communicate proficiently with individuals who speak little to no English and who will be served by federal funds. Mandated posters and translated documents will be used to ensure that all community members fully understand and are equally represented.

A Language Access Plan is required to receive federal funds.

Councilmember Roberts motioned to adopt the Language Access Plan; Councilmember Nolley seconded. No discussion. Councilwoman Sherrod would not vote.

**Public Hearings for Annual Renewal of Retail Sales Liquor Licenses in the City at 10:00 am & 10:15AM on Thursday, December 28, 2023**

**Called Meeting at 10:30am on Thursday, December 28, 2023 to Approve or Deny Retail Liquor Licenses**

**Mayor & Council Work Session at 4:30pm Tuesday, January 9, 2024**

**City Hall Will Close at 11AM and Remain Closed on Thursday, December 14<sup>th</sup> for Staff Work Day**

**Mayor & Council Regular Meeting at 5PM Tuesday, January 9, 2024**

**City Hall Will Be Closed Monday, December 25 & Tuesday, December 26, 2023 in Observance of Christmas Holidays**

**City Hall Will be Closed on Monday, January 1, 2024 for New Year's Day**

**Historic Preservation Commission Regular Meeting at 5:30PM Thursday, December 14, 2023 in City Hall**

### **Citizens' Input**

1. Karen Ebay, a representing the Heath District, stated that SHINE will be working with Hancock, Baldwin, and Washington counties. She introduced Morgan Scott, a Georgia College graduate, who will be working in active living area.

### **Executive Session**

Councilman Nolley motioned to go into Executive Session; Councilman Roberts seconded. No discussion. Councilwoman Sherrod would not vote.

### **Back to Regular Session**

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

Councilman Nolley motioned to hire Kevin Malloy for part-time police department employment; Councilman Roberts seconded. No discussion. Councilwoman Sherrod would not vote.

### **Adjournment**

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

The meeting adjourned at approximately 6:18 pm.

## November 2023 Monthly Report For City Council

### Animal Shelter, Wastewater, Grants, and Community Events

#### Sampling Results (November 8, 2023):

Parameter	Influent (Before Screen)	Effluent (After Outfall)	Monthly Limit	Overall Removal Efficiency
Rainfall	1.98 Inches (Per UGA)		-	-
Flow MGD	0.377	0.52	0.800 MGD	-
BOD	221.0	16.2	50 mg/L	92.7%
TSS	112	4	90 mg/L	96.4%

#### Wastewater:

- Staff continued to work on clearing the fence line along road between the back and front gates.
- Staff discovered a fuel leak on the backhoe and repaired it by rebuilding one of the injectors and fixing the fuel line. Staff also determined that the blower motor was bad and a new one needs to be ordered.
- During November, staff allowed the soil samples taken in late October to dry and prepared them for analysis. Staff received the soil results for Fields 1-10 in late November.
- Staff replaced the tailgate handle on the Ford Ranger under warranty.
- Staff administered the final dosage of Sludge RX for Aeration Pond 1 for the year.
- Staff constructed a pole with a blunt hook to aid in retrieving animal carcasses from the pond. This tool was designed to reach animals situated at a distance that was challenging for the backhoe, while minimizing the risk of damaging the pond liner.
- In anticipation of hunting season, staff replaced missing "No Trespassing" signs along the property edges to reinforce boundaries and ensure compliance with access restrictions.
- Ray and Heath attended a flagging class conducted by the Department of Transportation (DOT). Both are now certified flaggers.
- Staff began repairing sprayheads that had experienced cracking due to cold weather changes.
- Aerator 4 was brought back into operation after being temporarily shut down, previously designated as a backup for Aerator 8 when it experienced issues.
- Staff worked on laboratory training for Ray and operator training for Heath.
- Staff filled in a large hole in Field 4 and addressed smaller holes throughout other fields.



## November 2023 Monthly Report For City Council

### Animal Shelter, Wastewater, Grants, and Community Events

- Two relays at the influent failed, causing the automatic start to stop working. The Utility Director bypassed the relays to enable temporary operation until replacement parts arrived.
- The CDBG kickoff event took place for the \$1,000,000 lagoon grant.
- The digital rain gauge quit working in November 2023. Staff, under the direction of the manufacturer, repaired the gauge and it is back in operation.
- Between all staff members, nearly two weeks of time was taken off for the holidays during November. This resulted in less work being done than normal. December is expected to be the same. Additionally, staff spent at least one day a week at the Animal Shelter assisting in repairs and improvements.

#### Animal Shelter:

- In November, the Animal Shelter underwent significant changes. The previous Animal Control Officer was terminated due to various issues, and new officers were hired to fill the positions. The shelter now operates with three daily staff members, with coverage during weekday mornings, weekday afternoons, and weekends/holidays. Additionally, an administrator has been appointed to oversee the facility and ensure compliance with the Department of Agriculture regulations.
- Staff created two additional play areas at the animal shelter for dogs in the new kennels. This will enhance their level of enrichment and allow staff to safely enter the kennels without worrying about a dog trying to escape.
- Staff replaced two broken kennel drop-down doors at the animal shelter.
- The Animal Shelter Facebook page gained over 400 followers and likes in November. Staff are posting information about the shelter and the dogs every few days in hopes of encouraging adoptions.
- Staff created Christmas trees, decorations, and signs to display at local businesses in December, promoting the animal shelter dogs up for adoption and Wishlist. This appears to be working as several donations have come in.
- Staff implemented measures to protect dogs from the cold weather, including placing tarps around kennels to block wind, acquiring hay from farmers to insulate dog houses, and installing the first five donated dog houses to ensure the dogs have a warm place to sleep.
- Transferred an old mini fridge and NIST certified thermometer from Wastewater Dept. to the Animal Shelter for vaccine storage. Staff will now administer vaccinations that do not require a vet, resulting in cost savings of approximately \$1,000 for every 15 dogs.
- Staff secured donations from local vendors and residents, totaling over \$3,500 worth of food and items for the Animal Shelter during November. This was critical for the Animal Shelter as supply was low and our usual donor for dog food was unable to provide any due to a recent recall and the shelter was underprepared for the winter cold snap.

## **November 2023 Monthly Report For City Council**

### **Animal Shelter, Wastewater, Grants, and Community Events**

- Staff addressed paperwork discrepancies at the Animal Shelter to ensure compliance with Department of Agriculture regulations.
- Staff dedicated efforts to cleaning and organizing the shelter, ensuring it is well-maintained and equipped with necessary items.
- Volunteering has been placed on hold until after the January 2024 to allow the new staff time to acclimate.

#### **Community and Employee Events:**

- Staff assisted City Hall in organizing over 420 backpacks for students to receive during the Repack The Backpack event to be held on December 5, 2023. 40 bags were also given to Head Start for their students and parents.
- Staff assisted City Hall with the Thanksgiving Employee Luncheon by obtaining small raffle items to giveaway during the event. A total value of \$200 was given away.
- Staff began to collect raffle items for the Employee Holiday Party, to be held on Friday, December 22, 2023.
- In November, staff conducted a meeting with the Department of Public Health (DPH) to initiate planning for the 2024 Community Health and Resource Fair. The event has been rebranded as the "Community Expo" with the aim of broadening the vendor selection. The Hancock County School System has granted permission for the City and DPH to utilize the football field at the high school for the event, as the gym will be undergoing renovations. The Community Expo is scheduled for Saturday, April 20, 2024, from 10 AM to 3 PM.
- The City has partnered with DPH and the school system to assist with the following events for the community:
  - January 13, 2024 – Free Flu Shot Event
  - April 20, 2024 – Community Expo
  - July 27, 2024 - Back 2 School Event
  - Fall 2024 – Car Seat Safety and Giveaway

## Grants & Misc. Other Income/Donations/Etc.

Yellow = Working on

Blue = Applied For, No Decision As Of Yet

Green = Approved and/or Received

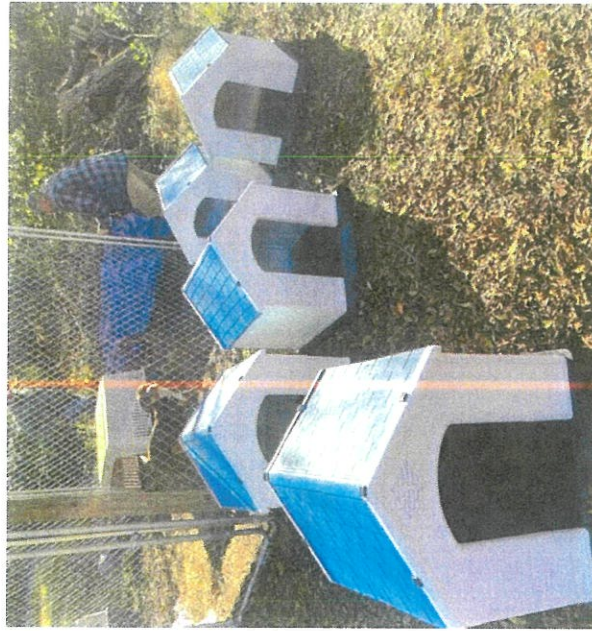
Red = Did not Receive

Department	Donor/Grant	Work Completed	Requested/Reason	Additional Notes	Est. Value	City Match
Animal Shelter	COFAS	Approved	Reduced Cost Spay/Neuter	\$50 Per Dog City Cost for Rabies + Spay/Neuter, COFAS Covering Other Costs Savings of at least \$100 per dog.	\$1,500	Yes
Animal Shelter	Home Depot	Requested and Received	Water Hose and Tarp	Stated We Can Get More Items Once Their Budget Frees Up Some	\$100	No
Animal Shelter	Ace Hardware	Requested and Received	Large Tarps, Bungee Cords, and Rope	For Outdoor Kennels	\$350	No
Animal Shelter	Lady FreeThinker	Requested and Received	Dog Houses	9 Dog Houses	\$1,000	No
Animal Shelter	McGees	Requested and Received	Hay	For Dog Houses	\$100	No
Animal Shelter	Local Community Members (Various)	Requested and Received	Dog Food, Toys, Blankets, Bedding, Heaters, and Bathing Supplies	For Daily Dog Care	Est \$1,817	No
Animal Shelter	Tractor Supply	Requested and Received	Dog Food	-	\$275	No
Animal Shelter	ORHS	Requested and Received	Dog Food and Tarp and Blankets	-	\$128	No
Fire	FEMA AFP	Denied	Turnout Gear	Did Not Make Panel Review	-	No
Fire	FEMA SAFER	Denied	Smoke Alarms	Made Final Round	-	No
Fire	FEMA FPS	Denied	3 Employees	Made Final Round	-	No
Police	Walmart	Denied	Flock Cameras	-	-	Yes
Wastewater	Southeastern Crescent	Denied	Sprayheads and Valves	For Sprayfields 1-10	-	Yes
Wastewater	WEF	Applied	Young Professional Summit	Covers Costs of Attending Conference	\$1,200	No
Public Works	Norfolk Southern	Applied	Boom Mower	Cutting Back Trees	\$15,000	Yes
Animal Shelter	Norfolk Southern	Applied	Advertising and Microchipping	For Community and Shelter	\$11,000	No
General	Norfolk Southern	Applied	Community Expo Costs	For Community Event	\$15,000	No
Police Dept.	Norfolk Southern	Applied	License Plate Readers	For Police Cars	\$15,000	No
Fire Dept.	Norfolk Southern	Applied	Educational Items	Public Safety	\$6,000	No



## Grants & Misc. Other Income/Donations/Etc.

Pictures:





## **DECEMBER 2023**

### **SPARTA POLICE DEPARTMENT ACTIVITY REPORT**

**191- TOTAL 911 CALLS FOR ASSISTANCE**

**44 - TOTAL WRITTEN TRAFFIC CITATIONS**

- **28 - SPEEDING**
- **16 - OTHER TRAFFIC VIOLATIONS**
- **(34 - TRAFFIC VIOLATION WARNINGS GIVEN)**

**4- ARREST**

- **ARREST #1: NO INSURANCE**
- **ARREST #2: CRUELTY TO CHILDREN**
- **ARREST #3: DUI**
- **ARREST #4: DUI**

**1 - STATE WARRANTS ISSUED**

- **1 - CRUELTY TO CHILDREN**

#### **PREVIOUS MONTH STATS: OCTOBER 2023**

**262 - TOTAL 911 CALLS FOR ASSISTANCE**

**71 - TOTAL WRITTEN CITATIONS**

**7 - STATE WARRANTS ISSUED**

**14 - ARREST**