

AGENDA

Mayor & Council Meeting

5pm Tuesday, September 10, 2024

1. Call to Order
2. Prayer
3. Pledge of Allegiance
4. Roll Call
5. Adopt Agenda
6. Adoption of Minutes—July 9, 2024 Regular Meeting (tabled on August 13);
August 13, 2024 Regular Meeting
7. Clerk's Report
8. Department Reports
9. Mayor's Report
10. Council Members Questions/Comments
11. Vote to Approve TIA (TSPLOST) Paving Contract for Adams, Maiden Lane &
Rabun Streets, Low Bidder ALLSTAR Concrete
12. Old Business
13. New Business
 - A. Mayor's Introduction of Presentation by Kyle Edenfield, COO of M. E.
Sack Environmental for On-site Utilities' Services
14. Called Meeting to Approve FY2024 Millage Rate/5-Years' History of Levy in
City Hall at 10am Thursday, September 19, 2024
15. Mayor & Council Work Session at 4:30pm Tuesday, October 1 2024
16. Mayor & Council Regular Meeting at 5pm Tuesday, October 8, 2024
17. City Hall Will Be Closed Monday, October 14, 2024 for In-Service Day
18. Citizens' Input
19. Executive Session Personnel & Legal Matters
20. Adjournment

City of Sparta

Mayor & Council Regular Meeting

5PM Tuesday, September 10, 2024

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

City Clerk, Virigina Webb was not present. Attorney John Hitchcock was present.

The meeting was called to order by Mayor ProTem Yisrael at 5:00 pm, 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. Councilwoman Sherrod refused to vote. No discussion. Motioned passed.

Approval of Minutes

Councilman Roberts motioned to approve July 9, 2024 minutes; Councilman Nolley seconded. Councilwoman Sherrod refused to vote. No discussion. Motion passed.

Councilman Roberts motioned to approve August 13, 2024 minutes as long as corrections (including correcting names on citizen input) was made; Councilman Nolley seconded. Councilwoman Sherrod refused to vote. No discussion. Motion passed.

Clerk's Report

- Trash can audit -continuing to go over billing register to locate trash cans that customers are not being charged for
- Utility Billing Accounts-printed all active accounts that had balances of 90 days past due and sent letters to each account holder. They were
- Obtained quotes for water flow meter - to measure water purchased by contractors
- Handled "No Water" calls near Augusta Highway area-3 different
- Drainage issues at 102 Wilson St- contacted DOT engineer to access issue
- Retirement Compliance Reports
- Revised the Workers Comp Audit report to save the city an additional premium of \$17,288. Previously paid \$13,095
- Issues with main copier
- Spoke with agent/broker to obtain Insurance review for upcoming year
- Reviewing policies to update employee handbook

- Reached out to Dept of Corrections for 2 months delinquent bill
- Handled building inspector/code enforcement questions/planning & zoning questions
- Reached out to Local Mental Health providers for Information for employee
- Attended TIA bid opening for Adams St/Maiden Lane project-Allstar Concrete, Thomson, Ga-only submission-Sept 5 @1pm
- Attended public hearing for proposed general fund & enterprise fund- Aug 29 @10 am
- Important changes to Wood Chipper Services-Notice was posted in the newspaper and on the website-cityofsparta.org

Notable changes*

1. no branches larger than 3 inches can be chipped. If your pile has sizes larger sizes-expect a delay in pickup, homeowner will be responsible for separating pile
2. Contractors are responsible for removing all wood & debris from property
3. Thursdays only
4. vines, furniture, pallets, scrap wood cannot be chipped, will not be removed by city
5. leaves & yard clippings must be bagged-
6. please adhere to guidelines to avoid delays

- Spoke with Clover Moon, customer success Manager, on August 28, to clarify information previously reported

- a. Confirmed ordinances 212-262 were not included in initial quote-SOW
- b. After initial receipt of ordinances-

1. Process includes editorial review- proofread to determine where to place ordinance and for minor typographical errors

2. Indexing- cross referenced legislation

3. Proofreading-line by line for correctness & layout

4. Posting supplement online-notified when online code is updated by

5. Print & ship- ships out to customer as soon as process is complete

- c. Our first (supplement 1) has begun processing and is in the indexing phase. As soon as estimated date is available, we will be notified

Departmental Reports

(See pages 6-14)

Mayor's Report

1. On Thursday, September 5, 2024 a "called" meeting was conducted to approve the FY2024 city budget.
2. William Beall, a water filter plant employee, successfully completed his Class 2 operation certification.
3. GMA will offer an ethics training webinar, and Mayor Haywood plans to share what he learns with the council.
4. The Prince Hall Sickle Cell Awareness Walk will take place at M.E. Lewis Elementary School on Saturday, September 28 at 11AM. Sign-in is at 9:30 a.m.
5. We are renewing Sparta's annual National League Cities (NLC) membership. NLC primarily provides services for cities serving minorities.
6. The city of Sparta has revised its Wood Chipper Policy to include pickup of discarded furniture, appliances, construction debris etc.
7. The Synagro South contract to provide services for the CDBG Wastewater Plant lagoons' refurbishments has been signed and meetings with the Synagro and city engineers (EMI) will begin in the next couple of weeks.

Council Members Questions/Comments

There were no questions or comments.

Vote to Approve TIA (TSPLOST) Paving Contract for Adams, Maiden Lane & Rabun Streets, Low Bidder ALLSTAR Concrete

Councilman Nolley motioned to approve TIA (TSPLOST) paving for Adams, Maiden Lane & Rabun Streets with the lowest bidder ALLSTAR Concrete; Councilman Roberts seconded. No discussion. Councilmembers Nolley, Roberts and Yisreal voted "yes". Councilwoman Sherrod voted "no". Motion passed.

Old Business

There was no old business.

New Business

A. Mayor's Introduction of Presentation by Kyle Edenfield, COO of M.E. Sack Environmental for On-Site Utilities' Services

Mayor Haywood introduced Kyle Edenfield, the COO of M.E. Sack Environmental, to Council and the public.

Kyle Edenfield stated that M.E. Sack Environmental will operate and repair lift stations and water pipes. He offers to provide instruments such as saws and trucks to ensure the city's utilities are efficient and up to date. Following an inspection of the city's water lines and lift stations, he decided that preventative maintenance, as well as hydrant

replacement and/or repair, was required. Replacing fire hydrants costs between \$3,500 and \$8,000, while repairing them might cost up to \$1,500.

M.E. Sack Environmental has served numerous nearby cities, ranging in population from 200 to 300,000 persons depending on the area. His crew would be paid at the following rates: \$65 per hour for 40 hours per week and \$45 per hour for 20 hours per week. They will also provide hands-on training to ensure that the water department can be properly maintained and run efficiently even after the M.E. Sack Environmental team leaves. The city will have the chance to opt out of a contract in 90 days.

Called Meeting to Approve FY2024 Millage Rate/5-Years' History of Levy in City Hall at 10am Thursday, September 19, 2024

Mayor & Council Work Session at 4:30pm Tuesday, October 1, 2024

Mayor & Council Regular Meeting at 5pm Tuesday, October 8, 2024

City Hall Will Be Closed Monday, October 14, 2024 for In-Service Day

Citizens' Input

1. Angela Lawson, a city resident, expressed gratitude to the city for addressing the leak on Willis Street. She mentioned that water had been streaming down the road. The standing water has now turned green. She expressed her support by praising the Sparta-Hancock Public Library for continuously serving the community.
2. DiDi Hyder, a resident of the city, expressed gratitude to the library for bridging the digital divide with the older population.
3. Bernestine Strother, a county resident, the city's staff screening procedure has to be more thorough to safeguard the safety of individuals, particularly in prominent positions like police departments.
4. Kathy Ransom, a resident of the city and librarian, indicated that the library is sponsored by three entities: the school, city, and county. The Sparta-Hancock County Library is part of the Azaela Library System. Service hours have been decreased. The new operation days and hours are Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday 10AM-5PM, Monday and Saturday 10AM-2PM, and Thursday 10AM-8PM. The library provides a number of services.
5. Kez Yisrael, a resident of the city, stated the city's GEFA contracts should include hiring the youth of the community.

Executive Session Personnel & Legal Matters

Councilman Roberts motioned to go into Executive session; Councilman Nolley seconded. Councilwoman Sherrod refused to vote. No discussion. Motion passed.

Back to Regular Session

Councilman Nolley motioned to go back to Regular Session; Councilman Roberts seconded. Councilwoman Sherrod refused to vote. No discussion. Motion passed.

Councilman Roberts motioned to hire Den'Quavion James for employment as a police officer; Councilman Nolley seconded. No discussion. Roberts, Nolley and Yisreal voted "yes"; Sherrod did not vote. Motion passed.

Councilman Nolley motioned to hire Larry Chapman for employment as a police officer; Councilman Roberts seconded. No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

Adjournment

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

The meeting adjourned at 6:20pm



Tommie Walker, Jr.
Chief of Police

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

SEPTEMBER 2024 COUNCIL MEETING
SPARTA POLICE DEPARTMENT ACTIVITY REPORT
(STATS BELOW ARE FROM THE MONTH OF AUGUST 2024)

187 – TOTAL 911 CALLS FOR ASSISTANCE

133 – TOTAL WRITTEN TRAFFIC CITATIONS

- 67 – SPEEDING
- 25 – NO SEATBELT
- 41 – OTHER VIOLATIONS

16 – STATE WARRANTS ISSUED

14 – ARREST FOR THE FOLLOWING CRIMES COMMITTED:

POSS. OF MARIJUANA

POSS. OF COCAINE

POSS. OF CONTROLLED SUBSTANCE

POSS. OF DRUG RELATED OBJECTS

DISORDERLY CONDUCT

TERRORISTIC THREATS

BATTERY

NO INSURANCE

SUSPENDED LICENSE

RECKLESS CONDUCT

GIVING FALSE INFO. TO OFFICER

CRIMINAL DAMAGE TO PROPERTY

POSS. OF FIREARM IN COMMISSION OF CRIME

DISCHARGE OF GUN NEAR PUBLIC ROADWAY/STREET/HIGHWAY

EXPLOITATION AND INTIMIDATION OF ELDER PERSON x2

UPCOMING EVENTS:

NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH, THURSDAY, OCTOBER 3, 2024 @ 5:30PM @ SPARTA/HANCOCK LIBRARY

PREVIOUS MONTH STATS: JULY 2024

204 – TOTAL 911 CALLS FOR ASSISTANCE

90 – TOTAL WRITTEN CITATIONS

18 – STATE WARRANTS ISSUED

9 – ARREST



POLICE

Tommie Walker, Jr.
Chief of Police

80 MONUMENT SQUARE - SPARTA, GEORGIA - 31087
OFFICE: 706-444-5777 / FAX: 706-444-0827

September 10, 2024

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Sparta Police Department is issuing this statement to inform the community of a recent development involving a former officer. On the morning of September 9, 2024, former part-time patrol officer Joshua Wilson was arrested by the Greene County Sheriff's Office. (Wilson voluntarily surrendered without incident.)

Wilson's arrest follows an alleged domestic incident that occurred on September 5, 2024, in Greene County. He faces several charges, including Home Invasion in the 1st Degree, Aggravated Assault, Possession of a Firearm during the Commission of a Felony, Simple Battery (Family Violence), Obstructing or Hindering a Person Making an Emergency Telephone Call, and Criminal Damage to Property in the 2nd Degree. At the time of the incident, Wilson was employed as a deputy with the Taliaferro Sheriff's Office.

Wilson was hired as a part-time officer with the Sparta Police Department on May 17, 2024, and his last day of employment was August 23, 2024.

The Sparta Police Department, along with the City of Sparta, does not condone any acts of violence. We uphold the highest standards of professional and respectful conduct for all officers, both on and off duty. While the Department is not privy to the specifics of the incident and its connection to Wilson's former role, we want to emphasize our commitment to maintaining the integrity and trust of our community.

The investigation into the incident is ongoing. For further details or inquiries, please contact the Georgia Bureau of Investigation (GBI) - Milledgeville office.

Respectfully Submitted,

Tommie Walker, Jr.
Chief of Police
Sparta, Georgia

September 2024 City Council Report

I. Water Distribution and Sewer Collection Systems

1. Work Order System

- Since August 13, 2024, 27 work orders (21 leak repairs and 6 misc. jobs) have been completed and 95 are currently waiting to be resolved. Calls are coming in by the day and staff were unable to keep up due to the trucks being down for 2 weeks.

2. Equipment

- Staff have been borrowing a Rigid Scout and a Pipe Horn 500 to perform in-house locates when possible. Additional training sessions are scheduled for the Rigid Scout and other rigid equipment to enhance staff proficiency.
- During August, staff actively practiced, trained, and utilized the SeeSnake Camera System and the Sewer Jetter to improve operational efficiency.
- The department received a generous donation from Lawrenceville, GA, which included a Flygt submersible pump and control panels valued at over \$15,000. These will serve as backups for the Main Lift Station in the event of a system failure.

3. Lift Stations

- The Georgia Environmental Finance Authority (GEFA) has approved emergency funding for the purchase of Highway 22 Lift Station parts and contract work to facilitate rehabilitation. Staff are collaborating with EMI to fulfill the necessary requirements to move forward with this funding request, including getting multiple quotes.
- A new flygt transmitter, costing \$850, has been purchased for the Main Lift Station. This acquisition was necessary due to a short in the existing transmitter. Staff have been working with Xylem to troubleshoot the issue, as the transmitter is vital in sending accurate water level information from the wells to the control panel. Without it, there is a risk of sewage overflow.
- Public Works continues to clear overgrowth around lift stations to ensure easy access and proper operation.
- EMI visited in late August to work on the sewer line rehab project between the lift stations.

4. Staff Vacancies

- The department is considering contracting with M.E. Sacks to secure certified Water Distribution/Sewer Collection Supervisors and Assistant Supervisors. This contract would also include the provision of a service truck, with gas covered, along with the necessary tools and equipment. A vote by City Council is required to proceed with this.

5. Safety Cones

- The Department of Transportation (DOT) has generously donated traffic cones (\$300 Value) to the City of Sparta.
- The Department of Public Health's traffic safety equipment order has started to arrive (Value \$1,000).

6. Meter Reads

- Staff worked with Harmony Mobile to resolve an equipment failure in the meter reading devices.

September 2024 City Council Report

- A total of 1,304 water accounts were successfully read during the month of September, with additional 445 gas meter reads completed as well.
- Additional staff was trained on the water meter and meter reading in August 2024.
- Delinquency notices went out to 140 accounts in late August 2024.

7. Vehicle Maintenance

- A used motor with low mileage and a 3-year warranty was installed in the Dodge Ram 2500 at a cost of roughly \$8,000, ensuring its continued operation.
- The F250 underwent nearly \$3,000 in repairs, including a rebuild to prevent recurring overheating issues.
- The F150 is currently at the mechanic for repairs to the blend doors to restore functionality to the air conditioning and heating systems.

8. Problem Leak Locations

- The existing main line, composed of older grey PVC, at Chief Street/Highway 22 continues to experience splits. Temporary patches have been applied, but a full replacement is necessary. Staff will seek GEFA funding to install a new line, which will require boring under the highway. The Department of Transportation (DOT) will need to be involved in the process.
- A sewer line on Parkway Drive is sagging and requires replacement. Complicating the situation, a gas line is positioned directly above it, and a nearby house requires a new tap into the line. This project will be complex, involving either the installation of a new manhole and relocation of the sewer line, or the removal of the gas line to repair the existing sewer line. Due to these challenges, staff are unable to install a new tap as planned, as it would need to be further down the line, increasing the risk of sewage blockages for the homeowner.

II. Gas Department

1. Staff Training

- Staff are scheduled to undergo training and become certified in the operation of on/off valves for the gas system. This certification is essential and will enable the department to handle more tasks in-house, increasing efficiency and reducing external costs.

2. Regulator Overgrowth

- Public Works staff continued efforts to remove overgrowth around gas regulators. This ongoing maintenance ensures proper operation and easy access to the regulators for safety and functionality.

3. Annual Leak Survey

- Harp and Associates conducted the City's annual gas leak survey. While no major leaks were detected, several minor leaks were identified, and some gas meters were noted to require painting.

September 2024 City Council Report

III. Water Department

1. Water Usage

- The Water Tanks have been taking twice the normal time to fill. Upon investigation, staff discovered a significant main leak, which has now been repaired.
- The Water Plant recorded an average usage of 1.26 MGD for August 2024, just below the 1.30 MGD limit.
- Staff are monitoring the results of the repair to determine if the repair addressed the issue, as staff suspect the high-water usage at the plant is likely due to multiple leaks in the system and equipment failure at the water plant.

2. Meetings and Training

- Staff met with the Utilities Administrator to compile a list of known issues and begin addressing those that can be resolved immediately.
- Meetings have been scheduled with the Georgia Rural Water Association (GRWA) and the Fire Department to address ongoing concerns related to chemical usage and safety.
- Staff attended the New and Proposed Drinking Water Regulations meeting via GRWA in early September.

3. Monthly Sampling

- Sampling had to be repeated due to delays in the delivery of the initial samples, which arrived outside the required holding time.

4. Equipment

- A refurbished PC from City Hall has been temporarily installed at the Water Plant to support the camera system until a permanent replacement can be funded.
- Dale from DLW Interments assisted with troubleshooting a display issue that had stopped showing readings. In addition, he completed the scheduled quarterly calibrations for our equipment.

5. Asset Management

- Work on the Asset Management program is actively in progress to ensure the long-term sustainability and efficiency of water system operations.

6. Operational Changes

- On the advice of GRWA, changes to the backflush method and pH adjustment process are being implemented. Chemical usage during backflush will be reduced, and testing of Caustic versus Soda Ash will be conducted to assess operational impact. Currently, the plant's pumps are running at 80% for Soda Ash, and pH drops are occurring after backwashing under the current conditions.

September 2024 City Council Report

IV. Wastewater Department

1. General Housekeeping

- No major changes occurred at Wastewater during August 2024.
- Daily operations were successfully managed by staff throughout the month.
- 90% Removal for BOD and 86% removal for TSS
- Staff purchased necessary parts to repair the tractor's bush hog attachment and continue cutting on Spray fields. Staff are working with Hitchcock to post for farmers to cut the fields.
- Sludge RX was applied to the ponds to aid in treatment as the ponds experienced turnover due to recent weather changes.
- The storage pond is at its lowest level in several months.

V. Public Works Department

1. General Housekeeping

- Grass cutting and maintenance were completed at all City department locations, including the Water Plant, Wastewater Facility, Water Towers, Gas Rectifiers, Old Landfill, and Animal Shelter. Also, Cleared the intake at the lake for the Water Plant, which had become overgrown.
- Weed-eating and weed-killing services were provided across the entire city.
- Limbs and trash were removed from residents' curbs on a weekly basis. The schedule for limb removal was moved to Thursdays, and a notice was published in the local newspaper.

2. Road Maintenance

- The bidding process for patching Maiden Lane, Rabun, and Hancock Street has closed, with a winning bid of \$168,000. The City has \$229,506 allocated from GDOT for repairs, leaving a surplus for additional work.
- Boland Street was repaved from the old Reach building to the old hospital, covering over 1,100 feet.
- Cold patching was conducted throughout the city on Adam, Elm, Rabun, Hamilton, Powelton, and Lewis Streets.

3. General Equipment Maintenance

- Installed new batteries on the wood chipper, chipper truck, and mower.
- Repaired the broken spindle shaft and housing on the Zero Turn Mower.
- Replaced the tires on the Bobcat after they burst while repairing Britt Street.
- Changed the blades on lawn mowers.
- Performed daily maintenance checks on all equipment.

4. Assistance to Other Departments

- Assisted the County on an employee Furlough Day by removing overhanging limbs on Oak Street to allow the school bus to pass.

September 2024 City Council Report

- Helped the Water and Sewer Department by handling non-emergency incoming calls while they were occupied with emergency responses.
- Removed trash at the Wastewater Facility and worked on clearing trees from the fence line.

VI. Animal Shelter

1. Animal Care

- The shelter is currently housing 14 dogs. No adoptions or transfers occurred during August 2024.
- Buddy, the newest intake, had a successful tumor removal and a follow-up appointment confirming he is cancer-free.

2. Donations

- The shelter received approximately \$250 worth of dog food and bedding from LOHS and local community members.
- A veterinarian from the Atlanta, GA area donated 92 boxes of PetArmor Plus Flea and Tick medication (valued at \$2,300) and 30 boxes of Panacur C Dewormer (valued at \$270).

3. Community Engagement

- The shelter has been approved to participate in another "Empty the Shelter" event, which will reduce adoption fees to \$50 per dog. Event dates will be announced soon.
- Staff attended a coalition meeting with nearby shelters to discuss resource-sharing opportunities.
- Several community complaints regarding dogs were addressed, and all dogs were successfully returned to their owners.

VII. General Departmental Updates

- Additional funding opportunities are available through GEFA loan forgiveness. However, the City currently has a recovery ratio of 89% (excluding depreciation). A recovery ratio below 100% is viewed as a financial risk, making it unlikely that GEFA will approve funding for future projects.
- The building beside 8 Ball downtown has a beam that is leaning forward. The owner has been notified and is expected to fix it. The City put caution tape around it to prevent anyone from walking directly under it.

September 2024 City Council Report

Putting out road closed signs for Boland



Leaning Beam Beside 8 Ball



Leak found on Main Water Line that has Been repaired at least 4 times previously



CJ with Lil' Bit at LOHS Transferred Dog (Previously had Mange)



Removal of Trash Pile at Wastewater



Water/Sewer Dept Working on Leak beside Gas Line

