

AGENDA

Mayor & Council Meeting 5pm Tuesday, June 10, 2025

1. Call to Order
2. Prayer
3. Pledge of Allegiance
4. Roll Call
5. Adopt Agenda
6. Adoption of Minutes—April 8, 2025 Regular Meeting (tabled during May meeting); May 13, 2025 Regular Meeting
7. Clerk's Report
8. Department Reports
9. Mayor's Report
10. Council Members Questions/Comments
11. Old Business
 - A. Rejection of Bids Exceeding Allotted Funds for Sewer System Rehabilitation of Pump Station Replacements
12. New Business
 - A. Approval of an Inter-Governmental Agreement Between City & County for Use of Voting & Tabulation Machines Regarding the City of Sparta's 2025 Council Election (Advance Voting & Election Day 11-4-25)
13. City Hall Will Be Closed June 20th in Observance of Juneteenth Holiday
14. City Hall Will Be Closed July 4th in Observance of Independence Day
15. Mayor & Council Work Session at 4:30pm Tuesday, July 8, 2025
16. Mayor & Council Regular Meeting at 5pm Tuesday, July 8, 2025
17. Historic Preservation Commission Meeting 5:30pm Thursday, June 12, 2025 in City Hall Council Chambers
18. Citizens' Input
19. Executive Session Personnel & Legal Matters
20. Adjournment

City of Sparta

Mayor & Council Meeting

5pm, Tuesday, June 10, 2025

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

City attorney Virginia Webb was not present. City attorney John Hitchcock was present.

Administrative Assistant Latresa Warren was present.

The meeting was called to order at 5:06 pm by Mayor ProTem Yisrael followed by a moment of silence, the Pledge of Allegiance, and The Lord's Prayer.

Adopt Agenda

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

Adoption of Minutes – April 8, 2025 Regular Meeting (tabled during May meeting); May 13, 2025 Regular Meeting

Councilman Nolley motioned to adopt April 8, 2025 Regular Meeting Minutes; Councilman Roberts seconded. No discussion. Motion passed.

Councilman Roberts motioned to adopt May 13, 2025 Regular Meeting Minutes; Councilman Nolley seconded. No discussion. Motion passed.

Clerk's Report

(See Page 5)

Departmental Reports

(See pages 6- 27)

Mayor's Report

1. Mayor Haywood attended a seminar in Warrenton that announced the cities of Warrenton and Sandersville were selected among only nine Georgia cities to receive the State Department of Community Affairs (DCA) Rural Zone designation for 2025, which offers valuable state tax credits to encourage investment and job creation. Businesses that create two jobs can qualify to receive \$2,000 annually per job created for five years in state tax credits. Property investors can also receive credits of 25% on purchases and 30% on rehabilitation costs. Haywood says he is interested in seeking the DCA's Rural Zone

designation. However, many downtown Sparta buildings are old and costly to renovate due to updated state building codes, making it difficult for owners to afford improvements. The city is working with the county and DCA to prepare for consideration of Rural Zone designation over the next two years. The city aims to leverage these incentives to revitalize the area and boost economic growth.

2. The Progressive Steps summer food program, which began here three years ago, started again last week and continued today. We need to improve outreach by distributing flyers through churches to increase awareness. Turnout has been low because people wait until the last minute to share information. Everyone should help spread the word.
3. The county commission is interested in revitalizing downtown city properties. There are 43 properties in the Broad Street business district with \$5,393 in overdue taxes. We plan a meeting with the tax commissioner and county commission chairman to review county taxes due. The county and city plan to reactivate the Land Bank program here. On the Land Bank board the city council and county commissioners each appoint two seats on the five-member board. The mayor and county commission chairperson appoint the board chair. Deeds to properties with outstanding taxes could be transferred, in lieu of taxes, to the Land Bank to support redevelopment efforts.
4. Mayor Haywood was elected First Vice President of District 7 of the Georgia Municipal Association and will advance to District President in 2026. This role places him on the GMA Board of Directors, that will involve quarterly board meetings in Atlanta.
5. Mayor Haywood participated in a Zoom meeting organized by Maria Cook of Senator Raphael Warnock's staff that included County Commission Chairperson Adrick Ingram and a representative of Home Depot's community involvement staff. The meeting discussed rebuilding/refurbishing needs at the county's recreation park on Fairmount Road. Home Depot plans to assist with work at the park using volunteer employees.

Council Members Questions /Comments

Mayor ProTem Yisrael shared the food pantry will be open on the first and third Sundays each month, located next to Real Deal.

Old Business

- A. Rejection of Bids Exceeding Allotted Funds for Sewer System Rehabilitation of Pump Station Replacements

Councilman Roberts motioned to reject the bids exceeding allotted funds for sewer system rehabilitation of pump station replacements; Councilman Nolley seconded. Mayor ProTem Yisrael voted "Yes." Councilwoman Sherrod did not vote. Vote 3-1. Motion passed.

New Business

A. Approval of an Inter-Governmental Agreement Between City & County for Use of Voting & Tabulation Machines Regarding the City of Sparta's 2025 Council Election (Advanced Voting & Election Day 11-4-25)

City Attorney John Hitchcock explained that every two years, the city enters into an intergovernmental agreement and ordinance with the county to use election machines. State law allows the city to use the county's machines at no charge, though the city must cover any associated costs.

In previous years, the county has prepared and sent the agreement, but they haven't done so this year. Attorney Hitchcock will follow up to determine their intent. Once the agreement is finalized, he will present an accompanying ordinance for council approval, as was done in 2023.

Under the agreement, the county provides voting machines (including optical scanners) and voter registration services. The city conducts its own elections but relies on the county for these specific resources. The updated agreement and ordinance will be presented at the next council meeting.

City Hall Will Be Closed June 20th in Observance of Juneteenth Holiday

City Hall Will Be Closed July 4th in Observance of Independence Day

Mayor & Council Work Session at 4:30pm Tuesday, July 8, 2025

Mayor & Council Regular Meeting at 5pm Tuesday, July 8, 2025

Historic Preservation Commission Meeting 5:30pm Thursday, June 12, 2025 in City Hall Council Chambers

Citizens' Input

1. Nadia ????? a county resident, suggested changing the food pantry hours to 1–4 p.m. to better accommodate churchgoers, as current times limit participation. She and Marcy Blasingame partnered to organize a summer camp at J.T. Walls Gym and the football field from June 16–27, running 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. The camp costs \$20, but no child will be turned away if unable to pay. Volunteers are welcome, with background checks covered by the Sheriff's Department, and breakfast and lunch provided by the school system. High school students (grades 9–12) can serve as counselors and earn community service hours.
Nadia ???? also shared that she and others are working with public, private and homeschool groups to host a countywide back-to-school fair, ensuring supplies reach all students regardless of school type. Lastly, she reported on the success of the summer meal program, noting her site served 100 meals today and encouraged better outreach to boost participation.
2. Tomeka McClendon, a resident of the city, thanked Mayor ProTem Yisrael.

3. Wilmertine Tolber, a resident of the city, asked if the police department and the detention center were originally intended to be housed together.
Mayor Haywood answered “yes”.

Executive Session Personnel & Legal Matters

Councilman Roberts motioned to go into executive session; Councilman Nolley seconded; no discussion. Vote unanimous. Motion passed.

Back to Regular Session

Councilman Roberts motioned to return to regular session; Councilman Nolley seconded; no discussion; Vote unanimous. Motion passed.

No motions were made in reference to executive session discussions.

Adjournment

Councilman Nolley motioned to adjourn; Councilperson Sherrod seconded and a unanimous vote followed.

Clerk's Report

June 10, 2025

- Assisted with conducting interviews
- Obtained price quotes various departments including tires, parts, chemicals, etc.
- Continued training accounts payable clerk
- Submitted documents for On The Job Training program
- Met with attorney to discuss issues regarding city business
- Complied 2024-year end reports for accounting firm
- Completed compliance reports for credit card machine usage
- Coordinated with Jason Oliver to obtain internet for transition at Police Department

Reminder-IMPORTANT CHANGES TO WOOD CHIPPER SERVICES

The City of Sparta wishes to inform residents of important updates to our wood chipper services:

- **Service Day:** Wood chipping will now occur **only on Thursdays** each week (excluding storm and holiday weeks).
- **Acceptable Materials:** Only small branches with a diameter **no larger than 3 inches** will be chipped. Please ensure all branches meet this size requirement.
- **Prohibited Items:** The following items will **not** be chipped:
 - Vines
 - Man-made items (e.g., furniture, pallets, 2x4s, etc.)
 - Any materials not considered small branches
 - Leaves and yard clippings not in bags
 - Items containing dirt, metal, or other foreign objects

Preparation Instructions:

- **Placement:** Place all debris beside the street with the **big end of the limb facing the street** and the **top of the branch toward the ditch**.
- **Bagging Requirements:** All leaves and yard clippings must be contained in bags.

Please Note: Old furniture, man-made wood, and other non-branch items will not be collected. Ensure all materials adhere to these guidelines to avoid delays or non-collection.

Thank you for your cooperation and understanding as we work to provide efficient and effective service to our community.

*Please do not block the sidewalk with bags or debris

For further information, please contact the City of Sparta Public Works Department at 706-444-5753.

*****Utility vehicles without a tag/registration are prohibited within the City of Sparta on city streets or sidewalks, including ATVs, Golf Carts, etc.

*****ALSO, NO HORSES ARE ALLOWED ON CITY STREETS, except by **permit**.

- Attended training for changes in upcoming Election
- Submitted updated census for mandatory coverage for first responders through GIRMA for PTSD program
- Compiled information for FEMA report
- Coordinated with code enforcer to address issues within the city
- Advertised reminder in newspaper to remind citizens that chipper cannot handle limbs more than 3 inches

City of Sparta – June 9, 2025 Council Meeting Report

Natural Gas Report

- The Public Service Commission (PSC) conducted an inspection covering calendar years 2020–2023 and found no documentation for Public Awareness activities. A \$5,000 fine was issued, though staff are arranging a meeting with PSC in hopes of having it waived.
- Meter sets are being painted to improve visibility and compliance in the following areas: Highway 15, Cody Johnson Road, Industrial Park, and the Prison.
- Gas line markers are being installed throughout the city to increase public safety and awareness.
- Two high pressure gas line hits occurred on Highway 15 due to a contractor installing fiber optic lines without properly following locate markings.
- A 2017 Ford F-350 was purchased to support routine operations and emergency response.
- The department continued acquiring necessary tools to enhance staff capabilities.
- Staff attended line locating training hosted by the Georgia Public Gas Authority in Louisville, GA, ensuring certifications and safety protocols remain up to date.

Animal Shelter Report

- The shelter maintained its focus on quality care and community outreach.
- Staff participated in a networking luncheon with regional shelters to share best practices and strengthen partnerships.
- Rescued 1 mom and 3 puppies with mange.
- Donations received included: \$200 in toys from the Kong Company, Supplies from Miss McNair of Paw Prints: 400 lbs of dog food, towels, bowls, leashes, wet food, a dog bed, three bags of blankets, and five bags of treats

Administrative

- The Back-to-School event is scheduled for June 12 and will include the distribution of backpacks filled with school supplies.
- Continued weekly coordination with FEMA to submit project documentation related to Hurricane recovery efforts.
- Collaborated with EMI to prepare for several upcoming grant-funded projects and gather required documentation and material – including but not limited to Wastewater Lift Station updates, Water Plant updates, Sidewalks on East Broad Street, Storm Drains throughout the City, Groundwell compliance, CDBG paperwork, and updating water system maps.
- Two grants were applied for the Fire Department for thermal cameras, hoods, gloves, and fire hoses.
- EPD inspected the old landfill site – three issues were noted: trees around pond, trash in woodline, and bare spots that need reseeding in fields.

City of Sparta – June 9, 2025 Council Meeting Report

Water Treatment Plant Report

- In May, the Water Treatment Plant withdrew 31.12 million gallons from Lake Sinclair—averaging 1.00 million gallons per day—and delivered 24.63 million gallons to the distribution system, averaging 0.79 million gallons per day.
- EPD issued a formal letter in response to January’s water withdrawal exceedance, which stemmed from extreme weather conditions that caused widespread frozen and burst water lines.
- Applied for Backwash Permit (GAG640000). Meeting with EPD on June 17 to discuss any changes.
- Deanta Chatman is out on medical leave for 4 to 6 weeks – Jimmy and Bill are covering his shifts.
- Tin Man level transmitter is unable to be calibrated and the level is continually reading 2 ft off. Plans for replacement are being made.
- All operations for May remained normal, and the plant met all regulatory standards.

Water Distribution & Sewer Collection Report

- 39 work orders were completed (not including rereads, hydrant flushing, or routine lift station checks)
- 5 main breaks and 18 leaks were repaired.
- Parkway Drive required five separate repairs in April; this has been filed under FEMA.
- Major repairs were completed at the 22 Wood lift station, including installation of a new check valve, impeller, suction pump, globe, and a rebuilt motor.
- Hired one employee for Water Distribution team – Johnny Lee Dye.
- Installation of the new electrical panel for the Main Lift Station is scheduled for June 11 and the new pump will take up to 16 weeks to arrive.

Wastewater Reclamation Plant Report

- CJ continued cross-training to serve as a backup operator.
- Groundwell installation in the sprayfields was completed and staff are just waiting on elevation markers.
- Dredging began in Aeration Pond 1. Staff are calculating the results now.
- Storage Pond 2 liner installation was finalized and the pond was placed in service for the first time in a decade.
- A bypass pump failure at a lift station caused an 840-gallon spill and EPD was notified.
- The influent bar screen float failed and was replaced.
- Pump 3 had an electrical failure and an electrician was called for repairs. The electrician recommends planning for electrical upgrades and installing soft starts due to aging infrastructure.



The sample ground well project began on April 24th. The crew arrived with a drill rig and a skid steer loader. The drill rig was driven to a well location and set up to drill another hole. The process to drill and install the casing took approximately two hours per well.



This is a well that has been dug with casing installed before a sign and concrete was placed.

City of Sparta Ground Well Report for City Council

After the well was installed, a smaller hole was drilled for the sign post. One of the workers drilled a hole using a core sampler.



A sign post was then placed in the hole. Concrete would later be poured around the post to lock it in place.



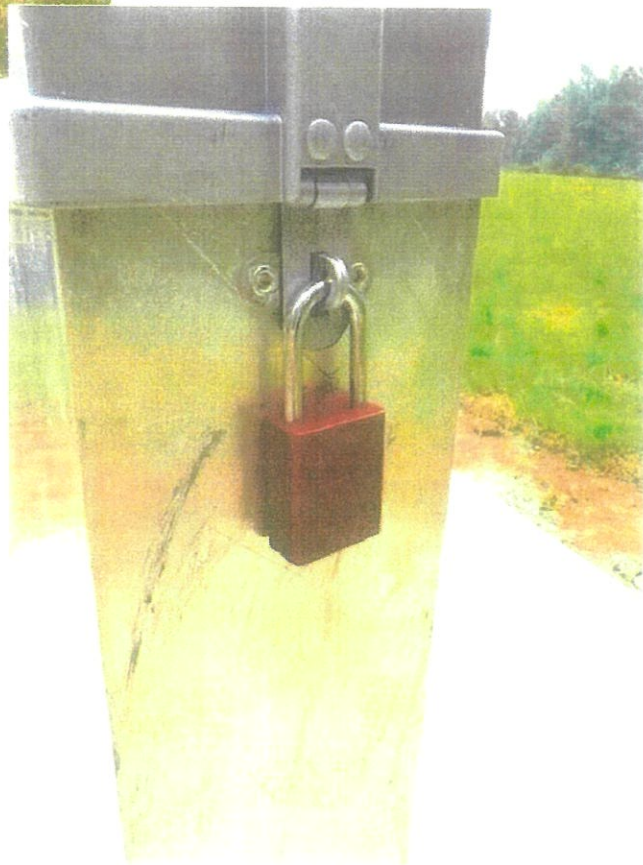
A form was built around the well that was 4" deep and 8' squared. Concrete was then poured into the form and brush finished at the top of the new pad. Workers also rounded the top edges of the pad.





The forms were stripped the same day they were poured. After setting for two hours, the 2x4's that made up the forms, were taken off the pad and the surface was broomed to give the concrete a textured surface for traction.

American locks were later delivered and installed along with the new signs for GWD-1R, GWD-5R, GWU-1R, GWD-7, and GWD-8. EMI then came out to shoot the elevations on May 21st. With the surveying done, the wells were completed and ready for use. The total days spent on this project was twenty-two business days.

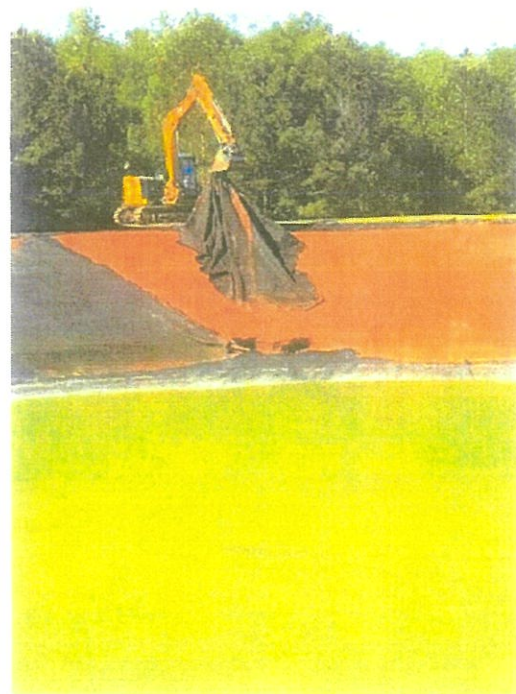


**CDBG - Storage Pond 1 – Liner Replacement
Progress Report for Mayor & City Council**

On April 14, construction began on Storage Pond 2. Augusta Land Management delivered a bulldozer and an excavator.



Water was pumped out of the base of the pond into Aeration Pond 1. The liner was cut near the bottom and was removed using the excavator.

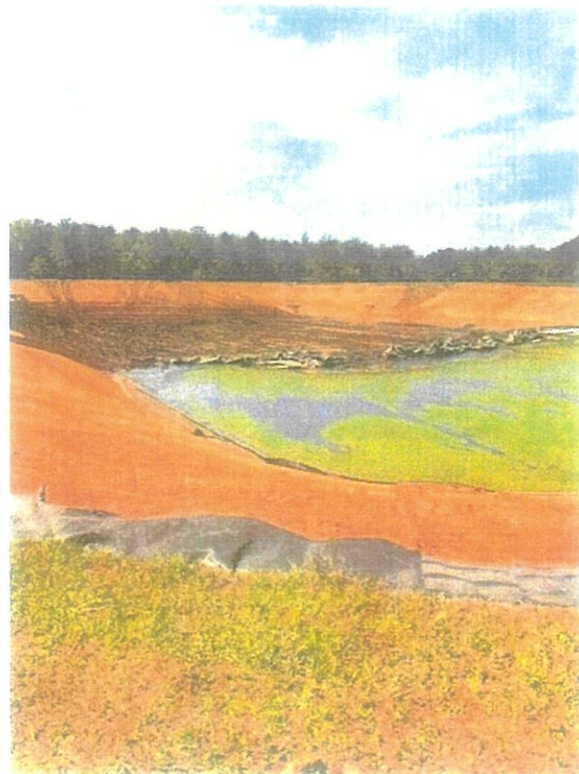


CDBG - Storage Pond 1 – Liner Replacement Progress Report for Mayor & City Council

There was some damage to the embankment of the dirt walls at the base of the pond that needed to be addressed. The worst of the damage was in a single corner of the area that was made worse over the years by local wildlife and erosion. Though there were other spots of concern.

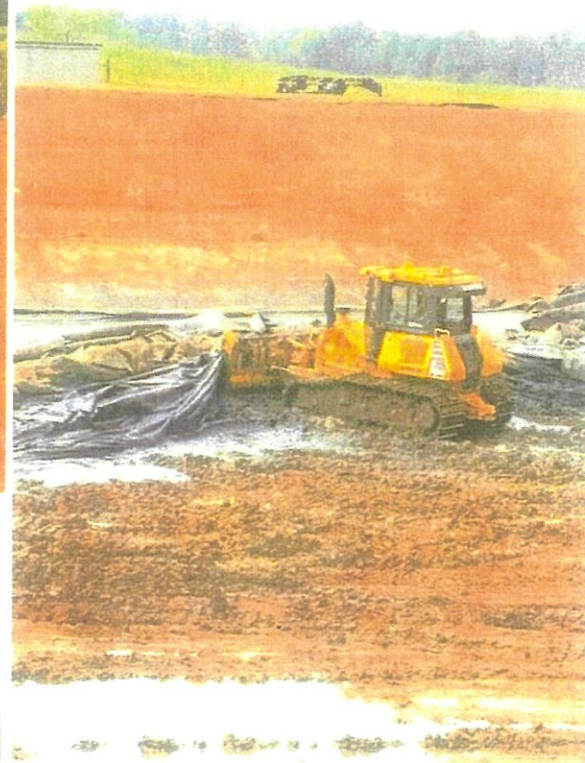
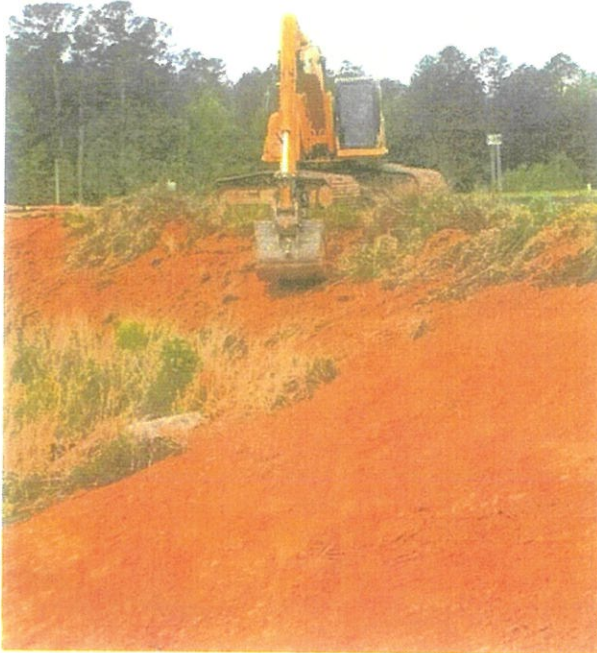


Excess dirt was pushed into the spots once the bottom started drying up. The bottom liner was pushed up using the bulldozer to force the excess water into a low spot. The pump was then able to remove it.



**CDBG - Storage Pond 1 – Liner Replacement
Progress Report for Mayor & City Council**

The excavator began removing plantlife from the exposed portions of the sloped bank while the bulldozer continued to push the liner towards the low point.



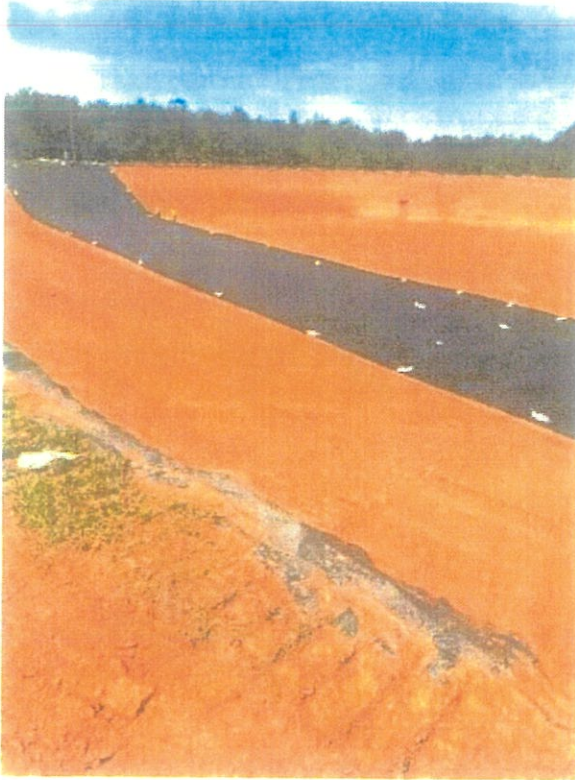
Once the bulldozer pushed the liner as far as it could go, the excavator took over by picking the liner up and rolling it to the low point.

**CDBG - Storage Pond 1 – Liner Replacement
Progress Report for Mayor & City Council**

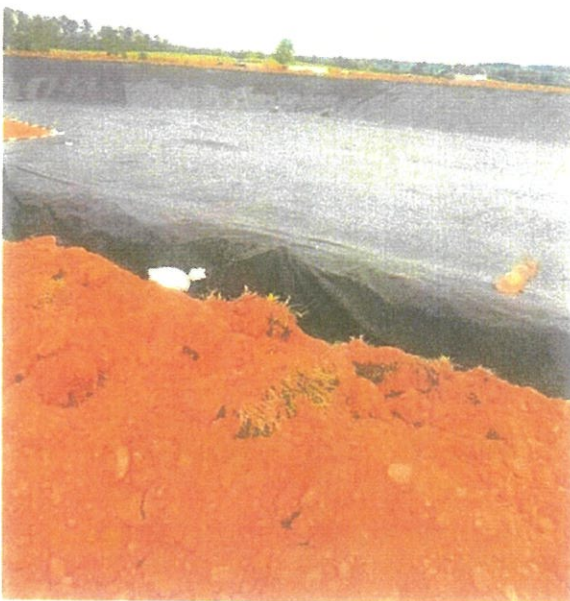
The excavator then pulled the liner out and the bulldozer pushed up the muddy water that remained so the pump could remove as much as possible.



**CDBG - Storage Pond 1 – Liner Replacement
Progress Report for Mayor & City Council**



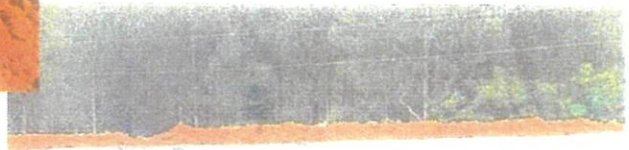
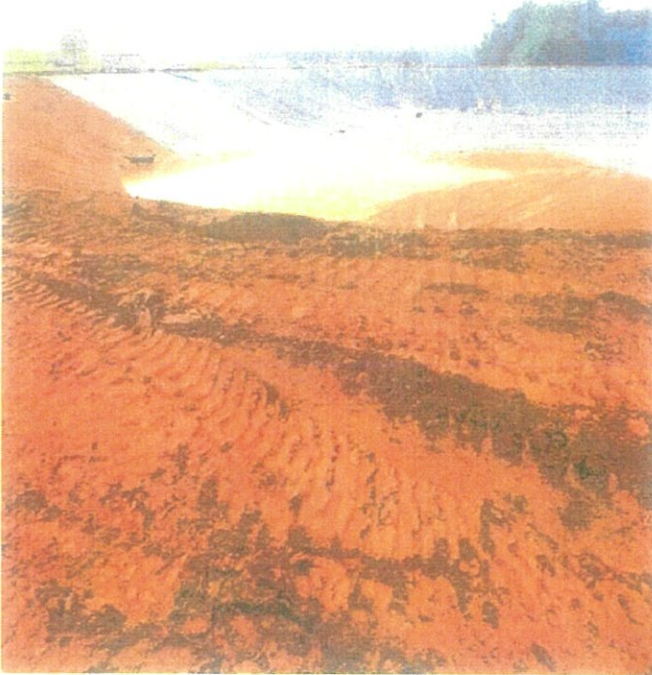
On May 6th, the first sheet of cloth sub liner was laid down. The crew used a side-by-side ATV to pull sub liner and liner into the hole and began welding the strips together for a water tight seal.



It took one day to lay 2/3 of the sub liner and 1/2 of the top liner.

**CDBG - Storage Pond 1 – Liner Replacement
Progress Report for Mayor & City Council**

Rain saturated the hole for several days and stopped progress. Pumps were used to keep the water low over the weekend and work resumed the following week. (A picture of one of the pumps used is on page 4)



Work proceeded smoothly and the liner was finished with no further major complications.



**CDBG - Storage Pond 1 – Liner Replacement
Progress Report for Mayor & City Council**

The pond was put into service on May 16.
The valve was opened and water began to
fill the bottom of the newly lined lagoon.



The connecting valve to Storage Pond 1 was
also opened to even out the water level
between the two.

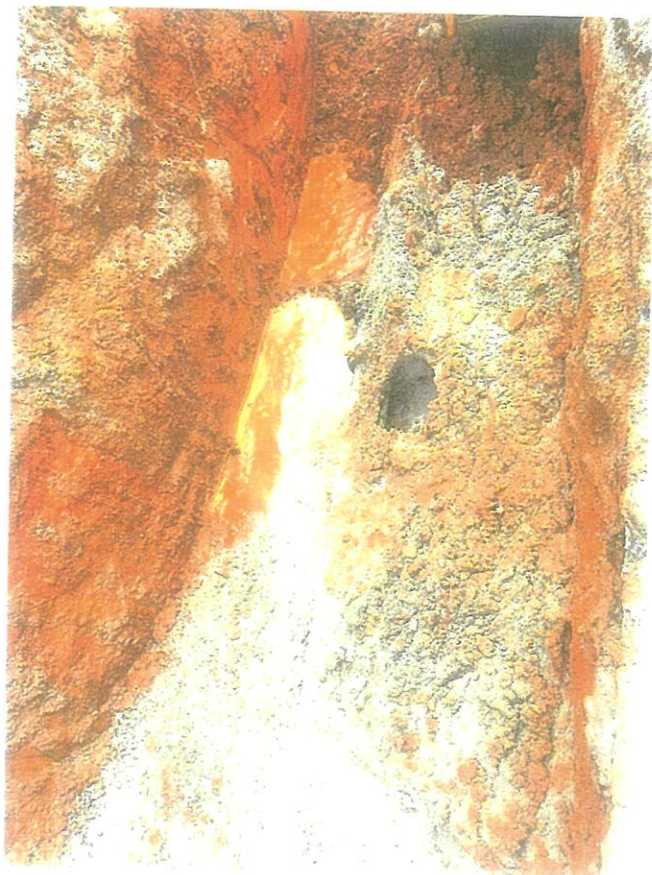
**CDBG - Storage Pond 1 – Liner Replacement
Progress Report for Mayor & City Council**



Mid Georgia Hydroseeding sprayed grass seed around the berm surrounding Storage Pond 2 on May 20th. This will help with erosion control and traction for driving around the pond. It will also help decrease the chances of a mower tearing up the top of the liner.

The project was completed when the hydroseeding was applied. The whole project took twenty-seven business days to complete from April 14th to May 20th.





FEMA Mitigation Funding Justification
Full Replacement of Asbestos Cement Water Line on Parkway Drive

Background:

As a result of the heavy rainfall and flooding from Hurricane Helene, the ground became severely saturated. A major failure occurred at a joint in the Asbestos Cement (AC) water main along Parkway Drive. The cause of the failure was likely due to one or more storm-related factors: ground shifting and/or hydrostatic pressure from excessive flow during the storm. The pipe was forced back into the bell, dislodging approximately 40 feet, which had to be replaced.

The AC line was taken offline to complete this repair. When AC pipe is exposed to air, it dries out and becomes significantly more brittle — a well-documented issue per the AWWA M16 Manual. Since the initial hurricane-related failure, the City has experienced a steady and accelerating pattern of additional breaks in the line, each further compromising the pipe's structural integrity.

Current Status:

Parkway Drive run approximately 3,100 feet and serves 17 residences and 4 fire hydrants. The line is now so compromised that it experiences frequent service interruptions, leak repairs, and increased contamination risk. Each break results in more exposure and further degradation. The City has received a verbal quote of \$196,000 to fully replace the line with a safe, modern material, restoring long-term functionality and compliance.

Justification:

1. The original failure was storm-related. All subsequent failures are directly connected to the compromised condition caused when the pipe was taken offline, then progressively weakened due to brittleness.
2. Parkway Drive's four fire hydrants are dependent on this main. Any failure compromises fire protection, delaying response and potentially endangering lives and property.
3. Every break in the AC pipe increases the chance that asbestos fibers enter the water supply. The EPA's MCL (40 CFR 141.23) is 7 million fibers/L. While AC pipe is not banned, the EPA, AWWA, and NIOSH all discourage disturbing aging AC lines due to public health concerns. In a small system without redundancy, these repairs cannot be avoided.
4. Ongoing repairs risk potential violation of the Safe Drinking Water Act. A compromised AC line, especially one disturbed repeatedly, raises regulatory red flags and creates significant future liability for the City.
5. AWWA recommends retiring deteriorated AC lines entirely. Although not prohibited, new installations of asbestos cement are no longer permitted, and their continued use is strongly discouraged in modern water system design.
6. Repairs involving AC pipe require asbestos-safe handling procedures under OSHA and NIOSH. Emergency repair conditions are rarely ideal for full containment or PPE compliance. Each repair risks regulatory noncompliance and worker exposure.
7. Breaks in the line allow water to infiltrate surrounding soils, potentially depositing asbestos fragments. This poses a longer-term environmental contamination risk, especially in residential areas.
8. The ongoing repair cycle is unsustainable. Labor, equipment, traffic control, and materials have cost the City thousands of dollars in unbudgeted emergency responses — not including the long-term costs of erosion, sinkholes, or further infrastructure degradation. Replacement is more cost-effective than continual repair.



JUNE 2025 COUNCIL MEETING REPORT

MAY 2025 CALLS AND CITATIONS

911 CALLS FOR ASSISTANCE – 138

CITATIONS WRITTEN - 109

EXPIRED REGISTRATION – 52

NO INSURANCE – 8

SUSPENDED REGISTRATION – 8

SUSPENDED/ REVOKED LICENSE – 2

NO LICENSE – 1

SPEEDING – 5

MARIJUANA LESS THAN 1oz - 2

LICENSE REQUIRED TO DISTRIBUTE ALCOHOL – 2

SALE OF ALCOHOL TO PERSONS UNDER 21 – 2

SALE OF ALCOHOL TO PERSONS UNDER 21 – 2

OTHER TRAFFIC VIOLATIONS – 25

ARRESTS – 6

WARRANTS – 2 CRIMINAL DAMAGE TO PROPERTY



MAY 2025 COUNCIL MEETING REPORT

APRIL 2025 CALLS AND CITATIONS

911 CALLS FOR ASSISTANCE – 197

CITATIONS WRITTEN - 90

59- EXPIRED REGISTRATION

3- NO INSURANCE

1- SUSPENDED TAG

1- SUSPENDED /REVOKED LICENSE

14 – SPEEDING

1-POSSESSION OF MARIJUANA LESS THAN 1oz

11 - OTHER TRAFFIC VIOLATIONS

ARRESTS – 4

WARRANTS – 1 THEFT BY RECEIVING STOLEN PROPERTY

Street Department Report

June 10, 2025

- Cleared 12 lifts stations of vegetation and sprayed with weed killer to control grass
- Placed Zero turn mower in the shop for repair of drive shaft
- Assisted Police Department with installation of signs
- Scheduled replacement of windshield in chipper truck, due to leak
- Assisted with water main break Parkway Drive
- Assisted with Gas line repair on John T Irwin Drive
- Assisted with Gas line repair on Hwy 15 & Old Galilee Rd
- Completed Tune up in Dodge Ram 1500, Ford F150 and Dodge 2500
- Assisted homeowner in emergency due to failed storm drain at driveway until City can complete repair
- Repaired washed out road at Dixie Water Tower

Street Department – June 10, 2025



Fallen tree on Spring Street.



Street department working on clearing the tree on Spring Street.



Road repaired at Dixie water tower after heavy rain



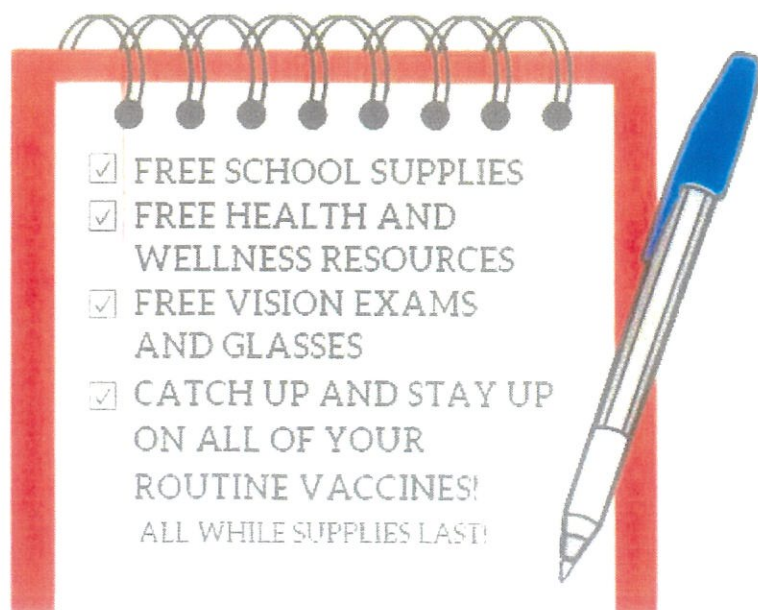
Road at water tower after repair

SAVE THE DATE



June 12, 2025 | 12PM to 6PM

Hancock County Health Department
516 Boland Street, Sparta, GA



INTERESTED IN
BECOMING A VENDOR?



SCAN THE QR CODE OR CONTACT
THE CITY OF SPARTA AT
(706) 444-5753
(OPTION 1)



Unity in the Community

SUMMER CAMPS!

2025



Children
Ages 4-13

Breakfast &
Lunch Provided



Volunteers
Needed

- ✓ Learn & Create
- ✓ Fun Activities
- ✓ Problem Solving & Leadership

JUNE 16 - 27

8:00AM - 2:00PM

**Two Camp Sites:
Sparta & Springfield**

478-457-6244 | 478-363-2245

\$20

Registration
Fee

**REGISTER
NOW!**



<https://tinyurl.com/hancocksummercamp2025>

