

AGENDA

Mayor & Council Meeting

5pm Tuesday, March 10, 2026

1. Call to Order
2. Prayer
3. Pledge of Allegiance
4. Roll Call
5. Adopt Agenda
6. Adoption of Minutes—February 10, 2026 Regular Meeting's Minutes
7. Clerk's Report
8. Department Reports
9. Mayor's Report
10. Council Members Questions/Comments
11. Old Business
 - A. Attorney's Report on Steps to Address Future Zoning Ordinance
12. New Business
 - A. Approval for USDA Rural Development Financial Assistance for Preliminary Engineering Reports (SEARCH Grant)
 - B. Adoption of Safety Coordinator Resolution and Policy Statement
13. City Hall Will Be Closed Friday, April 3, 2026 (Good Friday)
14. Mayor & Council Work Session at 4:30pm Tuesday, April 14, 2026
15. Mayor & Council Regular Meeting at 5pm Tuesday, April 14, 2026
16. Historic Preservation Commission 5:30pm Thursday, March 12, 2026 in City Hall
17. Citizens' Input
18. Executive Session Personnel & Legal Matters
19. Adjournment

City of Sparta
Mayor & Council Meeting
5PM Tuesday March 10, 2026

Elected officials present were Mayor R. Allen Haywood, Mayor ProTem Tom Roberts
Councilmembers Brandon Nolley and Sandra Sherrod.

Councilman Glenn Johnson was absent.

City Clerk Virigina Webb was present. Attorney John Hitchcock was absent.

Adopt Agenda

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

Adopt Minutes – February 10, 2026 Regular Meeting’s Minutes

Mayor ProTem Roberts motioned to table the minutes; Councilman Nolley seconded. No
discussion. Vote unanimous. Motion passed.

Clerk’s Report

1. Ms. Elizabeth Havior organized a Community Prayer Gathering in front of City Hall on Friday, February 27, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. Approximately 27 individuals gathered for prayer and fellowship. Despite the tiny turnout, attendees welcomed the prayers and fellowship. Additional events are planned to foster community togetherness and progress.
2. On Saturday, March 14, at 8:00 a.m., John Hancock Academy will hold its 15th Annual Rebel Dash, bringing competitors from throughout the state and highlighting the city. The event will begin at the corner of East Broad Street and Adams Street, near the Hancock County Tax Commissioner's office. Sparta police, Hancock County Sheriff's Department, and Sparta-Hancock County Fire Department will help with traffic management. For more information, please contact Dawn Brake, Race Director, at 478-456-1207.
3. A property tax collection seminar will be held in Tifton, Georgia, on Wednesday, March 25, 2026, in preparation for an expected delinquent property tax auction in late summer or fall. The workshop will assist with the procedure for overdue property taxes in the City of Sparta. On Monday, February 9, 2026, notices of delinquent taxes were mailed. The sale date will be announced.
4. The State of the City Address took place on February 24, 2026, at 5:00 p.m. in City Hall. Several projects have been completed, and more are in underway with funding from GEFA, CDBG, and other sources. The city's primary focus remains on community building and future growth planning.
5. Open enrollment for City of Sparta employee insurance is scheduled for Monday, March 23, from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at City Hall for all qualified employees.

6. On Tuesday, March 24, 2026, at 7:00 p.m., a meeting will be held with the Sparta-Hancock Volunteer Fire Department to examine Georgia First Responder PTSD and cancer coverage provided by the City of Sparta. This will ensure firefighters are aware of potential benefits.
7. The GDOT program has issued the 2026 LMIG Supplemental Grant, for which the city will apply.. The grant requires a 10% match and can be used for storm drain and culvert rehabilitation, roadside signs and striping, patching, signal upgrades, and preliminary engineering for right-of-way and utility plans.
8. In order to fix storm drain damage caused by Hurricane Helene, the city is looking for temporary labor through a grant. Candidates must have been out of work for a minimum of four weeks. Additionally, people between the ages of 17 and 24 who are not enrolled in school can participate in an internship program offered by WorkSource Georgia. Those who are interested can pick up an application at the Water/Gas Department or scan the QR code on the flyer in City Hall.
9. On Friday, April 3, 2026, City Hall will be closed in observance of Good Friday. The Sparta Police Department resides at 9535 Jones Street and may be reached at 706-444-5777 in an emergency.
10. The Hancock County Courthouse will host Municipal Court on Thursday, March 25, 2026 at 9:00 a.m. The Sparta Police Department will now be in charge of all court citations and operations.

Departmental Reports

(See pages)

Mayor's Report

1. The Traditions Highway 15 Coalition is extending into the North Georgia counties along the route to encourage historic tourism.
2. The city received a \$77,256.15 franchise check from Georgia Power last week. The city's Georgia Power and Washington EMC monthly electricity use is around \$30,000 or \$360,000 per year, including about \$50,000 for street lights and \$21,000 for water removal from Sinclair. The remainder is for power bills from all sites.
3. I attended Hancock Central High School's program to acknowledge Skye Ransom, stepdaughter of Councilman Nolley, as HCHS 2026 Star Student. She acknowledged her mother, Tyrontha Nolley during the program, and expressed an interest in attending Georgia Southern University, presumably following in her stepfather's footsteps.
4. Attended a three-hour seminar in Sandersville the "Hi-Lo Trail", which runs from Athens to Savannah. The segment from Athens to Union Point is complete. Work is beginning on the route through Hancock County and southward into Washington County. Locally, the route will pass by the schools, travel east through the city, and continue toward Hamburg.
5. Encouraged community support for the upcoming "It Takes a Village" Community Resource Expo.

6. The Joint Comprehensive Plan Stakeholders Committee meets tomorrow, followed by public hearings.

7. The city was awarded a \$3,199,500 non-principal forgiveness loan through GEFA for infrastructure. However, the city cannot afford the approximately \$17,000 per month payments required to service the 20-year note. Previous GEFA awards have included principal forgiveness, but this loan does not, therefore the city will have to not accept the loan. The city thanks Mayor Jimmy Andrews of Sandersville, a long-serving GEFA board member, for his support of all of our GEFA projects.

8. The recent ice and snow caused increased natural gas usage, resulting in a higher natural gas utility bill for communities from Texas northward. Higher demand drove up expenses, but rates are projected to fall in the coming months as demand returns to normal.

Council Members Questions/Comments

Councilwoman Sherrod inquired as to who makes choices about hiring and terminating personnel.

Haywood noted that his work as Mayor involves day-to-day operations. When a department head proposes a candidate, he submits it to the council for approval. Similarly, if an employee is terminated by Haywood, the council has the right to overrule the decision, as it has done in the past.

Old Business

A. Attorney's Report on Steps to Address Future Zoning Ordinance

City Attorney John Hitchcock was not present to give an update at this time.

New Business

A. Approval for USDA Rural Development Financial Assistance for Preliminary Engineering Reports

Amanda explained that the funding requires no local match and would cover pre-engineering reports not funded by other grants. This would allow the city to pursue larger funding opportunities at no cost, particularly for water and sewer projects.

Councilman Nolley motioned to approve the financial assistance; Mayor ProTem Roberts seconded. Councilwoman Sherrod refused to vote (which is counted as a "yes" vote). No discussion. Vote unanimous. Motion passed.

B. Adoption of Safety Coordinator Resolution and Policy Statement

Amanda Akins, Utilities Administrator, explained that the city's insurance through the Georgia Municipal Association (GMA) requires this action for compliance. Approval

would help secure discounts and grant funding for employee safety gear, as well as ensure compliance with required inspections conducted every three years. She noted that the measure would benefit the city overall.

Councilwoman Sherrod emphasized the need to discuss issues prior to meetings. She noted that bringing matters to her attention only after discussions makes it difficult to act effectively, and suggested that work session coordination would help her better understand and address items.

Councilman Nolley motioned to adopt the safety coordinator and policy statement; Mayor ProTem Roberts seconded. Councilwoman Sherrod refused to vote (which is counted as a “yes” vote). Vote unanimous. Motion passed.

City Hall Will Be Closed Friday, April 3, 2026 (Good Friday)

Mayor & Council Work Session at 4:30pm Tuesday, April 14, 2026

Mayor & Council Regular Meeting at 5pm Tuesday, April 14, 2026

Historic Preservation Commission 5:30 pm Thursday, March 12, 2026 in City Hall

Citizens’ Input

There were no citizens’ inputs at this meeting.

Executive Session Personnel & Legal Matters

Councilman Nolley motioned to into executive session; Mayor ProTem Roberts seconded. Councilwoman Sherrod refused to vote (which is counted as a “yes” vote). No discussion. Vote unanimous. Motion passed.

Back to Regular Session

Councilman Nolley motioned to go back to regular session; Mayor ProTem Roberts seconded. Councilwoman Sherrod refused to vote(which is counted as a “yes” vote). Vote unanimous. No discussion. Motion passed.

No motions were made regarding business discussed during Executive Session.

Adjournment

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

The meeting adjourned at 6:02 p.m.