



CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION

Tuesday, January 03, 2023 at 6:00 PM
Council Chambers and YouTube Livestream

MISSION STATEMENT

It is the mission of the City of Forest Park to enhance, strengthen, and grow our city by collaborating with our community to provide the highest level of service. Striving to be recognized as a diverse community that values and respects all members. We will strive to provide fair, professional, and courteous service through transparency and open communication. As we work to achieve this mission, we will have integrity beyond reproach while employing fiscal discipline and innovation. In this work there are no praises and raises for mediocrity.

Website: www.forestparkga.gov

YouTube: <https://bit.ly/3c28p0A>

Phone Number: (404) 366.4720

FOREST PARK CITY HALL

745 Forest Parkway
Forest Park, GA 30297

The Honorable Mayor Angelyne Butler, MPA

The Honorable Kimberly James

The Honorable Hector Gutierrez

The Honorable Allan Mears

The Honorable Dabouze Antoine

The Honorable Latresa Akins-Wells

Dr. Marc-Antonie Cooper, City Manager

S. Diane White, City Clerk

Mike Williams, City Attorney

APPROVED MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME: The meeting was called to order by Mayor Butler, and she read the Mission Statement.

ROLL CALL - CITY CLERK: A quorum was established

Attendee's Name	Title	Absent	Present
Angelyne Butler, MPA	Mayor, At-Large		✓
Kimberly James	Council Member, Ward 1		✓
Dabouze Antoine	Council Member, Ward 2		✓
Hector Gutierrez	Council Member, Ward 3		✓
Latresa Akins-Wells	Council Member, Ward 4		✓
Allan Mears	Council Member, Ward 5		✓

Javon Lloyd, Public Information Officer, Chiquita Barkley, Finance Director, Jeremi Patterson, Deputy Finance Director, LaShawn Gardiner, Director Planning & Community Development, Shalonda Brown, Director of Human Resources, Diane Lewis, Deputy HR Director, Fire Chief Latosha Clemons, David Halcome, Deputy Fire Chief, Bobby Jinks, Director Public Works, Deputy Police Chief, Sandra Johnson, and Arthur Geeter, Purchasing Manager

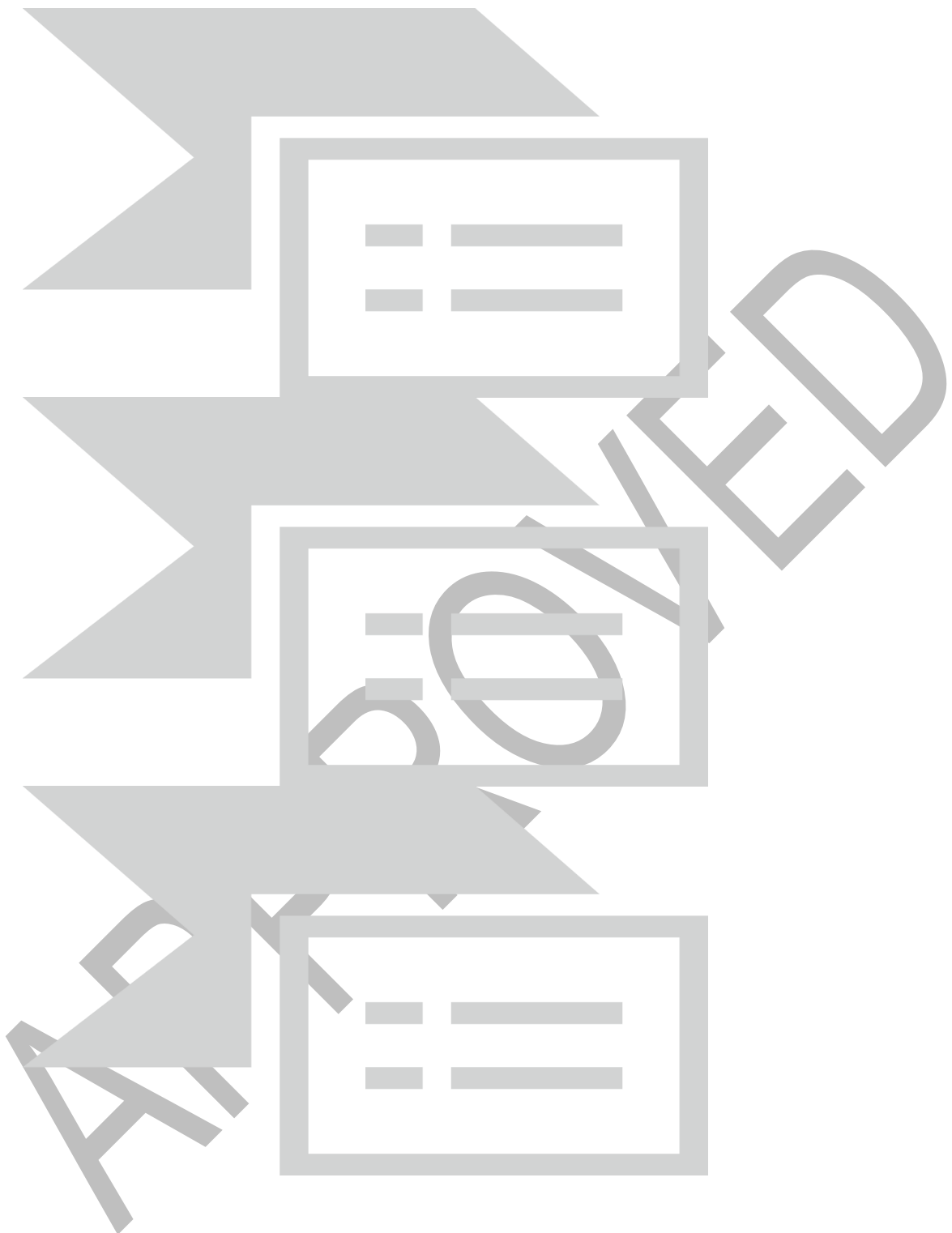
CITY MANAGER'S REPORT: Dr. Marc-Antonie Cooper, City Manager**COMMUNITY INFORMATION/REMINDERS:**


- On Friday, December 9th Congress Woman Nikema Williams presented a “Congress in your Community Event” that was held at the Forest Park Library. She and her team spoke with the community about getting help with Social Security, tax refunds and Veterans Affairs Benefits and more. For more information or to contact Congresswoman Nikema Williams’s office please visit her website at nikemawilliams.house.gov.
- Forest Park Fitness – Every Tuesday 6pm – 7pm held at the Forest Park Recreation Center, 803 Forest Parkway.
- Senior Panthers in Action – BINGO NIGHT – 55 and up you’re invited – every 3rd Friday from 5:00pm – 9:00pm held at the Forest Park Senior Center, 5087 Park Ave, Forest Park, GA
- The City of Forest Park will host a Business Community Discussion tentatively scheduled for January 11th from 10am – 11am held at the Community Center 696 Main St. We would like to hear from our business community on ways we can better serve them and make doing business with our city easier.

CITY OPERATIONS:

- During the Christmas Holiday the City of Forest Park was one of multiple cities in Clayton County affected by an unprecedented water outage. Mayor Butler signed a Local Emergency Declaration on the evening of December 24th, that set the stage for us to respond quickly to any Weather Emergency during this time.
- Under this emergency declaration our team came together and purchased cases of bottled water and worked with the Georgia Emergency Management Agency (GEMA) to purchase in larger quantities. The team organized multiple water distribution events one on December 26th at the Forest Park Police Department on Cash Memorial and on December 27th & 28th in the Recreation Center Parking lot. Overall, the city distributed over 2,270 cases/54,490 bottles of water to our residents. We were the first city in the county to have such events organized and implemented and it took all to make it happen.





- 
- The 2023-2032 Local Option Sales Tax (LOST) certification has been signed by all cities and the county. It has also been submitted to the state and solidifies Forest Park's distribution of sales tax revenue for the next 10 years. We appreciate Chairman Jeff Turner and Clayton County on being such great partners and moving this matter forward swiftly.
 - On December 5, 2022, a ceremony was held to celebrate the commencement of the second phase of improvements which includes the installation of streetscape lighting, continuation of sidewalk connectivity, and landscaping from the water fountain to Phillips Drive. The enhancements will promote economic development growth and business attraction to the downtown district.

EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT/SHOUT OUT:

- Our Water Distribution Events took all hands-on deck to make it possible. Thank you, Mayor Butler, for signing the Local Emergency Declaration.
- Thank you, Fire Chief Clemons, Dep. Chief Halcome and Emergency Management Coordinator Ioana Armstrong for activating the EOC and keeping track of our situation and help to coordinate water purchases and distributions.
- Thank you, Battalion Chief King, the City of Forest Park CERT team, our Fire Recruits; Director LaShawn Gardiner and our Code Enforcement Team; Deputy Chief Sandra Johnson and the Forest Park Police Department for helping distribute cases of water to our seniors and disabled residents that could not make it out to the distribution location.
- Thank you to Ms. Chiquita Barkley, and Finance Manager Nekeeta Davis for processing the emergency purchase order for us to receive our 46 Pallets of water for distribution.
- Thank you, Director Maxwell and the Recreation and Leisure staff, for providing the support and the location for the distribution to take place, as well as some entertainment.

- Thank you, Director Bobby Jinks, and the phenomenal men and women of our Public Works Team, Building Maintenance Team, and Parks and Recreation Team. You were truly the engine that kept our momentum going with this distribution.
- Lastly, I would like to thank the residents of the City of Forest Park for helping us maintain order and adhering to the requirements that aided us in providing as much help as we could in an such an orderly and expeditious fashion.

Mr. Franks, Clayton County Water Authority Executive Director - Obviously everyone is happier now that they have water. However, that particular crisis we called the perfect storm, when it comes to that type of temperature for that period of time. We are all aware of the temperature and the impact it has had on our community. Throughout this event we had over 10,000 calls come through our office and feel a sense of accountability when it comes to water, and that is how everybody sees us; but we were all in this together. As Clayton County Water Authority as well as the community. One of the things we struggled with, and we communicated to our residents and to the community, before the cold snap happened, and we did not think it would last that long. What we had found and have prepared is about 22-line breaks.

When the first started to happen and people were losing water and pressure, we thought it was a 24inch line somewhere broken. We thought we had a 10-inch line somewhere losing water pressure, but when the temperature dropped any people lines started to freeze, empty buildings, and schools over the county. For that reason, we lost a significant amount of pressure.

You all experienced most of the impact, the pump station is a bit further south from you, mostly Forest Park had some significant issues. Mayor and I had some conversations earlier and met you all at Sam's to get some water too you. You all were the first to act on this, but we recognized people were hurting. When you do not have water, you really get to see what its' value is. As of now pressure should be back to where it should be, and we have not yet had a chance to debrief our team to see how this can be prevented next time. More will be communicated to make sure people are aware of things to do, for instance leaving the faucet dripping.

You have 30 PSI coming to you, when you should have 95, but by the time it gets to you everyone else has taken it and I do not know how many of you did not have water. The system is up and running full pledge and we had a meeting today to regroup. We have a great team, and I would like to brag on them. We appreciate how Forest Park acted immediately with getting water to the community. We ourselves gave out over 12,000 cases of water ourselves at different locations. We also delivered water to a lot of the elderly, because some are homebound and cannot get out in the community and take care of themselves.

I have received a lot of angry calls, but I am well equipped now to handle whatever else comes my way. We understand and recognize that the fault will come out way, because we take care of the water system. However, the blame is to be shared, it is a community event that we all witnessed and went through. Again, you all did a great job taking care of your community and we commend you.

Comments/Discussions from Governing Body:

Councilmember Antione – Thank you for your leadership. I want to thank Dr. Cooper for his leadership of this team. On my part it was a struggle from the emails and the calls, and I was just hoping you all could get it together. What does PSI mean?

Mr. Franks – Pressure per square inch. When it comes to pressure from our distribution center or our plant. You are normally 95 and were down to about 32. So, you can imagine us pushing the pressure toward you and everyone consuming it before it gets to you, and you have little to no water.

Councilmember Gutierrez – Thank you for that presentation and I appreciate you being here. The way our city, the city manager and staff responded and you all being in the fore front, but things happen. Moving forward I would like to follow up on this to see how we can avoid this in the future. I know you said you received a lot of phone calls, so did we. This just makes us grateful for what we have and having water every day and being able to turn on the faucet, but without it can be crucial.

I would love to follow up with you after your after-action review, and you all talk about what it is that we can improve upon. If we linkup I am sure there are grants out there to improve infrastructure and the more people, we can get on board the better it will be. We can even initiate a community so that this is not forgotten. I appreciate you taking credit, but this is not something I want our people to go through again.

Councilmember Wells – Thank you for being here and thank you Dr. Cooper, for stepping up and being out there.

Councilmember Mears – Thank you for the effort because I know you have a headache or had a headache or will get a headache. Anything we can do here in Forest Park, to help you help us just let us know.

Mayor Butler – I want to thank you again for everything you did to help aide us during these unprecedented times from early morning calls to being up at Sam's Club first thing in the morning. You were there the entire step of the way and I commend you and on behalf of the community we thank you.

Mr. Franks – You all are the first, the community looks to you. You need answers from us to provide them with answers and we will continue to improve on that.

PRESENTATION:

1. **Introduction and Presentation - Public Safety Educator ANTHONY GALLMAN** – Fire & EMS Department

Background/History:

FPPFD would like to introduce its new Public Safety Educator, Mr. Anthony Gallman. Mr. Gallman comes to us with 35 years of experience in the fire safety industry, which has led him to the area of prevention. He and his wife Renee have two children Braden and Brenna.

His passion is community service. He has been a Lions Club member for 14 years and has served on local and state levels. He has been recognized with several accommodations; one he is most proud, the Melvin Jones Fellowship, which is the highest honor in Lions Club International.

Mr. Gallman will be a great asset to our Fire Prevention Division. His training and background will offer our community his experience in education, enforcement, and investigations.

Mr. Gallman has a brief presentation of his program and short-term goals for the City of Forest Park.

Mr. Anthony Gallman – Good evening, Mayor and council, thank you so much for allowing me to be on board. I look forward to the challenge, I think Chief Clemmons, has been paramount to making me

responsible; I will do that, and I promise to deliver to the community. This brief presentation is of a Life Safety Program, I would like to present and bring to the City of Forest Park. The priority is going to be 1 to 3 months, I would like to establish a positive community relationship. We had a nightmare with the water outage, but I think that was a great idea to be able to deliver to the community to let them know that we care.

The Smoke Detector Bliss Program as you can see the stats say, roughly 3 out of 5 fire deaths happen in homes with no smoke alarms or no working smoke alarms. I will partner with The Red Cross and their affiliates and get out in the community by April, to give out smoke detectors within the community to the homes that do not have any. Part of the prevention program we need to update our current Life and Fire Safety Handouts. They need to be evaluated and replaced with current messaging through the National Fire Protection Association. This has already been started and I have created a spreadsheet of what we have and what I think we can use.

I would like to bring to our employees a Safety Ambassador Program to teach life safety within our departments. How to use a fire extinguisher, how to do CPR, how to use an AED and basic first aid. If we are going to teach the citizens, we should teach our employees the same.

The operations Safe Haven is something I think we need in all communities. Recently the Supreme Court has overturned Roe vs. Wade ruling and we need to be progressive by offering options to women in crisis, to get help. These Safe Haven boxes, will be installed in fire stations and are connected to 911 and offers a way to prevent illegal abandonment of newborns by raising awareness, offering a 24-hour hotline for mothers in crisis and offering the Safe Haven Baby Boxes as a last resort option for women who want to maintain complete anonymity.

Sparky the Fire Dog is the beloved mascot of the National Fire Protection Agency. This loveable canine is recognizable to adults and children and conveys fire and life safety messages to help prevent injury. Our costumes are outdated, and need to be replaced, so that it is more children friendly by allowing mouth speaking and eyes blinking, to make it more animated.

I would also like to give monthly safety tips for the workplace and add them to the monthly newsletter. The message will be uniform across the state and the nation. Me and my counterparts will be working together to teach basic life safety like CPR, and we will be doing that in the community. It is the Goal of the department and the Public Safety Educator to provide focused messaging for the community throughout the year. This is a basic start for what I have seen that we have, and what I would like to build upon. Thank you for your time and the opportunity and I look forward to working with each and every one of you and the citizens.

Comments/Discussions from Governing Body:

Councilmember James – Welcome and thank you for choosing Forest Park and thank you Chief Clemmons, for choosing our educator here. I have a question about the baby box, it is a very unique idea, and this is my first time ever hearing about it and I think it is an awesome thing. How does it work; do they drop the baby off anonymously and the baby is protected?

Mr. Anthony Gallman – Yes, women in crisis do not want people to know that they are doing such a thing. It is anonymity and there is no repercussion. We may have to look at doing a local ordinance, by research there is state governance on how this is done. I would definitely look to the city attorney to go further with that.

Councilmember Antoine – Thank you and welcome to the all-star team. I think it is a great job that you are doing, education is key. So many residents have passed away from fire, trees falling onto their homes, simply because someone did not know how to do CPR, they are not educated, and they do not know what to do. We saw an example of that yesterday with the football player and the CPR. So, I am very interested in this, and I challenge the mayor and council to get that CPR. So, we are looking forward to the dates for those classes.

Councilmember Gutierrez – I will accept that challenge. Welcome and I am really excited about this program. Educating our citizens is essential. Like the councilmember said checking the alarms and making sure they are up to date, and I am excited about bringing the mascot into the schools, just because I think it is a great starting point to get to our families. Thank you, Chief Clemmons, for your leadership.

Councilmember Wells – I would like to say welcome and thank you for what you are going to bring to the City of Forest Park; and thank you to our amazing chief. You can see the difference since she has taken the chief position; thank you for everything that you bring to the city and to the department.

Councilmember Mears – I think you have a lot of good ideas and CPR is one of my pet peeves and we need to teach people from the youngest to the oldest how to do it. You never know when you will need it or when you have to assist somebody. I am excited about your program bring these activities in and welcome to the city.

NEW BUSINESS:

2. **Administrative Appeal (Blood Plasma Center) – Planning & Zoning; Legal**

Background/History:

During the October 3, 2022, meeting, the City Council adopted a moratorium on blood plasma centers due to the concern regarding the potential negative effects such centers might have on local neighborhoods. This arose in part due to an inquiry the City received from a potential developer of such a center and the fact that the City does not currently have any regulations controlling such centers.

The language of the moratorium provides for an appeal and/or exemption from the moratorium if the applicant can show that its proposed use would be in compliance with the anticipated changes the City might adopt.

Harold Buckley, Attorney – Seeking to redevelopment a vacant drug store property at 833 Forest Parkway. You have the written appeal where we lay out the legal basis that we have vested our rights to proceed with this proposed redevelopment. The company entered into a contract to purchase the property, and during the due diligence stage they reached out to the city planning staff to confirm the property could be used for this purpose under the current zoning and they received a confirmation letter on August 3, 2022.

Based on that letter they took the proper steps to move forward with the purchase of the property. So, our argument is we have vested our rights to proceed with this development. I have Nicholas Berk here with me who can answer any questions about the interactions with the planning staff.

What I want to focus on is the standards the city is considering during this moratorium. There will be some sort of text amendment, I am unsure if it is to the zoning ordinance or the comprehensive plan, it can be either of both or those. We understand that there are ten standards and when you adopted the moratorium

it basically said anyone that wanted to seek an exemption could do so by showing compliance with the new standards the city was considering.

We do not know what the standards are because the planning department is in the review process. Looking at the standards that exist, we meet 9 of them. The other one we substantially comply with as we are only off by about 50 ft. I do have with me Aaron Renshaw, who can speak about the facility operations if you would like to go into it with more detail. Later we will be asking for your support and approval for the exemption of a moratorium on conditions of the 9 standards that we do meet.

Comments/Discussions from Governing Body:

Councilmember James – The fact is nearly 80 percent of what I call blood centers are in Americas poorest neighborhoods. Our community is a very diverse community, which includes not only low-income families, but also high-income families. So, I think it brings a certain stigma to our community to have a blood center in our community especially on a parkway.

One of the other things I would say, and this is probably addressed to staff, is to consider with these proposed conditions, to include something with restrictions on how close it can be to a recreation center or a place where children play.

We are spending millions of dollars on the Star Park renovations, and it was not this council that allowed a transfer station to appear in the community, but it would be under my administration to allow a blood center in our community, and I am not for it. I have spoken to other members of the community; some are well to do, and some are not. I do not like the stigma that it brings when it comes to having this type of facility in our community so I will not be in support of it.

Councilmember Antoine – Thank you for coming, what is the stigma behind this? Can you answer her question?

Harold Buckley – I do not dispute the position the councilmember took, that this has been the experience in Forest Park. What I will respond with is that this is an issue of fundamental unfairness. When people talk about, I bought the property and I wanted to use it for something and now I can't, there is the statement caveat inter, let the buyer beware. You are supposed to do your homework before you go through with a major purchase like buying a piece of property, and we did that.

As I said in my appeal there was literally nothing else, we could have done to see this coming down the pipeline. When we got the letter, we still had time in our diligence period to look into things, but we ended it because we did our homework and realized it is suitable based on zoning. So, this triggered a requirement for our earnest money to be non-refundable.

We had already paid 50,000.00 in earnest money that was non-refundable. Then because the total earnest money that was due was 75,000.00, we wrote another check for 25,000.00, in reliance on that letter. Now we are obligated to purchase the property at 1.8 million dollars. In response to the councilmember respectfully, I think it would be very appropriate to look at those policy issues when you are looking at facilities coming down the pipeline. As for this one it would be fundamentally unfair to stop us by changing the rules of the game after it has gotten started.

Councilmember Antoine – This is in my ward, and I want what is best for the community, just like we need water we need blood. So, I am trying to find out what is so bad about having a Blood Plasma Center. People in my community called and they did not mind it, but I just want to know, the stigma behind it.

Harold Buckley – What I understand is this and Aaron can speak more in detail. This industry is dominated by a few really big players, they go where they want, and they target certain communities. We are a smaller business, and we follow best practices that are higher than those. So, we do not have those issues with our facilities. I do not dispute that they exist, but we are a different type of operation and we do not have those problems.

Councilmember Gutierrez – Thank you for your presentation, I feel bad that this made it, you got a letter, and this got approved, and we need to fix those things. I am 150 percent against you coming into our community. The data shows that your type of business targets our communities, low-income communities. I cannot, like Councilmember James said, support something like this. You are going to come into my community, and at time when people are in these idea situations. I do not want them to have to go sell their plasma for 30 dollars to go and buy some milk and eggs. Apologize for what you are going through, we will get it fixed, but I will do whatever it takes for me to prevent you coming into my city.

Councilmember Wells – I agree with my colleagues, it targets certain areas. I would like to see something better there, maybe something for our kids that the community can benefit from, like a community center. I too apologize, because we have to make sure we uphold our end and do what we are supposed to do to prevent these types of things from happening, but I cannot agree with this.

Like Councilmember said, we already have a transfer station in the middle of my ward and the residents have to deal with that, and they should not have to keep dealing with things they do not have to deal with. So, I cannot support this.

Councilmember Mears – I thank you for your presentation, sir, but I also agree with my colleagues.

Mayor Butler – I agree with my colleagues and because this could potentially end up in litigation, I will reserve my comments until then.

3. Council Discussion and approval of appointment for Mayor Pro-Tem - Legislative

Background/History:

Council approval of appointment for Mayor Pro-Tem for 2023 calendar year.

Mayor Butler – Historically, this appointment goes in chronological order, and with that said Councilmember Wells, would be up for appointment for this calendar year. For those unaware, anyone selected for this appointment will serve in my absence.

Comments/Discussions from Governing Body:

Councilmember Gutierrez – As Mayor Pro- Tem, I know Councilmember Wells will do a great job.

4. Council Discussion and approval to Set and Publish the Qualifying Fees - Executive

Background/History:

The City of Forest Park's General Election will be held on Tuesday, November 7, 2023, for the offices of Councilmembers Wards 3, 4, and 5. Pursuant to O.C.G.A. §21-2-131(a)(1)(A), the City Council must set and publish the qualifying fees by February 1, 2023.

The qualifying fees shall be three (3%) percent of the total gross of the office paid in the preceding calendar year. The qualifying fee for the Councilmembers for Wards 3, 4, and 5 will be four hundred thirty-two dollars (\$432.00).

EXECUTIVE SESSION: (When an Executive Session is required, one will be called for the following issues: Personnel, Litigation or Real Estate)

It was moved to enter into Executive Session for Personnel, Litigation and Real Estate at 6:43pm.

Motion made by Councilmember James, Seconded by Councilmember Gutierrez.

Voting Yea: Councilmember James, Councilmember Antoine, Councilmember Gutierrez, Councilmember Akins-Wells, Councilmember Mears

It was moved to reconvene back into the Work Session at 7:09pm

Motion made by Councilmember James, Seconded by Councilmember Antoine.

Voting Yea: Councilmember James, Councilmember Antoine, Councilmember Gutierrez, Councilmember Akins-Wells, Councilmember Mears

ADJOURNMENT:

It was moved to adjourn the Council Work Session at 7:09pm

Motion made by Councilmember James, Seconded by Councilmember Antoine.

Voting Yea: Councilmember James, Councilmember Antoine, Councilmember Gutierrez, Councilmember Akins-Wells, Councilmember Mears