



CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION MEETING

Monday, March 17, 2025 at 6:00 p.m.
Council Chambers and YouTube Livestream

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 Latresa Akins-Wells
The Honorable Allan Mears

Ricky L. Clark Jr, City Manager
Randi Rainey, City Clerk
Danielle Matricardi, City Attorney

APPROVED MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME: Mayor Pro Tem James called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL - CITY CLERK: A quorum was established.

Attendee's Name	Title	Absent	Present
Angelyne Butler, MPA	Mayor, At-Large- Arrived at 6:06 p.m.		X
Kimberly James	Council Member, Ward 1		X
Hector Gutierrez	Council Member, Ward 3		X
Latresa Akins-Wells	Council Member, Ward 4- Via Zoom		X
Allan Mears	Council Member, Ward 5		X

Pauline Warrior, Chief of Staff; Joshua Cox, IT Director; Rodney Virgil, Level 2 Support Engineer; Javon Lloyd, PIO; John Wiggins, Finance Director; Jeremi Patterson, Deputy Finance; Shalonda Brown, HR Director; Diane Lewis, Deputy HR Director; Nicole Dozier, PDC Director; Dorothy Roper-Jackson, Municipal Court Director; Tarik Maxwell, Rec and Leisure Director; Nigel Whatley, Public Works Deputy Director; Latosha Clemons, Fire Chief; David Halcome Deputy Fire Chief; Brandon Criss, Police Chief, Derry Walker, Code Compliance Director, and Danielle Matricardi, City Attorney.

ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA WITH ANY ADDITIONS / DELETIONS:

It was moved to amend the consent agenda to remove Item 1-Council Discussion and Approval to purchase 6 Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) units, and Item 2-Council Discussion and Approval to purchase a Record Management Software System.

The motion was made by Councilmember Mears and seconded by Councilmember Gutierrez.

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

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA WITH ANY ADDITIONS / DELETIONS:

It was moved to amend the agenda to remove Item 5-Council Discussion and Approval for the Sale of Firearms from the Police Department's Evidence Room and Item 7-Council Discussion to approve Clayton County pocket/skate park on 851 Alpine Way and authorize city funding for the continuation of sidewalk improvements from the daycare center on the corner of Jonesboro Road and Alpine Way to the park property.

The motion was made by Councilmember Mears and seconded by Councilmember Gutierrez.

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

CONSENT AGENDA:

1. **Council Discussion and Approval to purchase 6 Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) units - Procurement/Fire & EMS Department **REMOVED FROM AGENDA****

Background/History:

Fire & EMS requests purchasing six (6) new SCBA air packs/units. One unit consists of SCBA, spare cylinder, mask, and protective bag for the mask. The NFPA 1981 (National Fire Protection Association) and NIOSH (National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health) require that all SCBA cylinders be hydrostatically tested every 5 years throughout the service life of 15 years. We currently have a total of 59 SCBA cylinders. These SCBAs were manufactured in 2011 and have reached the end of life. This purchase is to replace the outdated SCBAs and keep inventory fully stocked. Requesting to purchase the SCBAs from the Sourcewell cooperative contract #011824 with Municipal Emergency Services for \$64,552.92 from 100-61-3520-53-1136.

2. **Council Discussion and Approval to purchase a Record Management Software System - Procurement/Fire & EMS Department **REMOVED FROM AGENDA****

Background/History:

Fire & EMS is requesting a records management software system that will allow it to maintain and track equipment inventory accurately. The system will also allow it to fulfill other multifaceted responsibilities, including fire/medical incident reporting and data analysis. Additionally, the software will interface with 911 Dispatch through the existing Central Square software system. There are annual fees associated with the interfacing systems, which will consist of annual renewals for three years.

Fire & EMS is requesting to piggyback on the cooperative agreement with Hillsborough County, Florida, and EPR Systems. The total cost over three (3) years is \$106,746. Startup and Year 1 costs are \$24,030 EPR Systems and \$17,656 Central Square—a total of \$41,686. Each Annual Recurring Cost is \$20,530 for EPR Systems and \$12,000 for Central Square—an annual total of \$32,530.

3. **Council Discussion and Approval of a Fee Proposal to provide ROM (Rough Order of Magnitude) cost estimate for Starr Park-Executive Offices **THERE WAS NO DISCUSSION ON THIS ITEM****

Background/History:

Croft Architects has completed the Starr Park Renovations' contract documents and technical specifications. In a prior bid, the city received only one bid that exceeded the project budget. Staff determined that it would be in the City's best interest to revise the drawings and obtain the assistance of

a cost-estimating firm to prepare a cost estimate for each of the buildings/structures and the three separate sites of the project before rebidding.

NEW BUSINESS:

4. Council Discussion and Approval to Launch 1-800-BOARDUP- Fire & EMS Department

Background/History:

1-800-BOARDUP is a team of trained emergency responders standing by to help fire victims handle all the effects left behind after a fire. The 24/7 response team will immediately begin protecting the victim's property from further damage and containing the damage already in place. This team is ready to board up the victim's property and provide restoration services every step of the way.

The training and experience help quickly inspect and contain the property by securing structural integrity, protecting it, and beginning the restoration process. The team will remove harmful carcinogens and leftover smoke odors using specialized and expert equipment.

Some of the services include Board-up and roof cover, structural stabilization, temporary fencing, complete building enclosure, plumbing winterization, temporary power and generators, emergency cleaning and deodorization, emergency heat and AC, emergency temporary repairs, tree removal, emergency demolition, heavy equipment, and crime scene/biohazard cleanup.

The Fire Chief will give more details and answer any questions.

Fire Chief Clemons- noted that this organization has trained emergency responders who help residents and businesses when their buildings are badly damaged, such as after a fire. She also said they provide services like boarding up structures and restoring properties to keep them safe.

Fire Chief Clemons stated that in the past two weeks, we had two fires—one on Lake Drive South and another on Kendrick—where 1-800-BoardUp stepped in to secure the properties and prevent further damage. She concluded that this service does not cost the city anything; they work directly with insurance companies and property owners to cover the costs.

5. Council Discussion and Approval for the Sale of Firearms from the Police Department's Evidence Room- Police Department **REMOVED FROM AGENDA**

Background/History:

The City of Forest Park Police Department has completed a comprehensive audit of its evidence room. Initially, nearly 33,000 items, including some dating back to 1984, were in storage. By returning items to citizens and destroying those eligible for destruction, the inventory has now been reduced to 10,500 pieces.

The police department currently holds approximately 750 firearms, which are ready for sale/auction on PropertyRoom.com. These guns, now owned by the City of Forest Park as a result of court orders, will generate proceeds that will be deposited into either the Local Forfeiture Account or the General Fund.

6. Council Discussion and Approval on the Re-Appointment (s) of the Urban Design Review Board Members- Planning and Community Development Department

Background/History:

Staff is seeking approval for re-appointments for five (5) Urban Design Review Board Members: Rodney Givens, Ron Dodson, Yahya Hassan, Yoni Cortez, and Karyl Clayton. Terms are three (3) years and will end March 7, 2028.

Director Nicole Dozier- noted that the current members are requesting re-appointments.

7. **Council Discussion to approve Clayton County pocket/skate park on 851 Alpine Way and authorize city funding for the continuation of sidewalk improvements from the daycare center on the corner of Jonesboro Road and Alpine Way to the park property**- Planning and Community Development Department **REMOVED FROM AGENDA**

Background/History:

The City of Forest Park's Planning & Community Development Department, along with the Public Works Department, recently held a predevelopment meeting with representatives from Clayton County to review the specifications and scope of the proposed pocket park/skate park project. Clayton County plans to develop a pocket/skate park at 851 Alpine Way, which will feature an open multipurpose area, restroom and maintenance facilities, a gathering and picnic pavilion, a tot lot (small playground), a parking lot, a 10-inch-wide pedestrian trail, a fenced-in skate park, and a parking pad designed for two community mobile medical units.

As part of the project, City staff have requested that Clayton County install sidewalks along the park's frontage to enhance accessibility and connectivity. Additionally, staff are seeking authorization from the Mayor and Council to allocate City funding for infrastructure improvements, including extending existing sidewalks from the daycare center at the corner of Jonesboro Road and Alpine Way to the park property.

Should the Mayor and Council approve the request for the pocket/skate park and funding for sidewalk improvements, Clayton County will proceed with the park development, while City staff will begin installing sidewalks to improve accessibility. This will help promote active transportation, ensure safe pathways, and contribute to residents' overall quality of life. By providing convenient and accessible routes, the City encourages healthier lifestyles, fosters community engagement, and ensures that all residents, regardless of mobility, can fully enjoy the park and its benefits.

8. **Council Discussion and Approval on a Partnership with Georgia Haitian American Chamber of Commerce and The Consul General of Haiti in Atlanta** – Recreation and Leisure Services Department

Background/History:

Haitian Flag Day, celebrated annually worldwide on May 18th, is a momentous occasion that honors Haiti's history, culture, and contributions to the world. Haiti, in 1804, became the first republic in the world where all its citizens and residents enjoyed true freedom, regardless of ethnicity. The Georgia Haitian American Chamber of Commerce, Inc. (GAHCCI) and the Consul General of Haiti in Atlanta are organizing the 2025 Haitian Flag Day Celebration to bring together the Haitian American community, residents, businesses, and civic leaders for a day of cultural pride, networking, and community engagement.

We propose to partner with the City of Forest Park, GA, to host this event at the Forest Park Amphitheater, creating a welcoming space where attendees can celebrate Haitian heritage while also promoting economic and community development.

Ron Cetoute, President, and Jacques Laurent, VP of GA Haitian American Chamber of Commerce-presented a presentation to the Mayor and Council. Mr. Cetoute noted that they are organizing the 2025

Haitian Flag Day Fest, an annual event typically held in partnership with the Consulate General of Haiti. Mr. Cetoute noted that in recent years, they have collaborated with the City of Atlanta, hosting it in the atrium, but due to its growth, they've moved it outdoors. Mr. Cetoute expressed that given their past success hosting a similar event in Forest Park, they are excited to bring it back in partnership with the city. This year, they focus on driving economic, community, and cultural development.

Mr. Cetoute- also noted that the GA Haitian American Chamber of Commerce's mission is to equip members with the skills, resources, and connections needed to build a strong foundation for starting, running, and growing their businesses successfully. As a result, both member businesses and communities in Haiti thrive. Mr. Cetoute stated that the chamber's vision is for entrepreneurs in Haiti and the diaspora to achieve financial success within a healthy ecosystem, ultimately contributing to Haiti's development as a nation within our lifetime. Mr. Cetoute noted that the chamber offers several programs, including The Foundation, which supports charitable initiatives such as student scholarships; The BELL Initiative Program focuses on entrepreneurship education and fostering trade between the U.S. and Haiti; The Pinnacle Project, aimed at strengthening nonprofits; The Leadership Academy and Monthly Business Coaching, providing essential guidance and skill development; The Georgia Haitian Real Estate Association, dedicated to promoting homeownership and wealth-building within the community, benefiting professionals in real estate, including realtors, loan officers, and service providers in the industry; Commerce Works, a monthly networking event. Additionally, the chamber hosts various events throughout the year.

Mr. Laurent- mentioned that the Haitian Chamber annually hosts a series of signature events that celebrate and support the Haitian business community. One of these events takes place every March in honor of Women's Month, recognizing outstanding Haitian businesswomen and awarding one as Businesswoman of the Year. Mr. Laurent noted that following this, the chamber will organize the annual Haitian Flag Day celebration in May, which will be hosted in collaboration with the City of Forest Park.

Mr. Laurent- noted that this event fosters cultural exchange and inclusivity, welcoming the Haitian community and all communities to engage and celebrate. Mr. Laurent noted that the chamber's most distinguished event is "Lakay," meaning "legacy" in Creole. This prestigious gathering honors entrepreneurs who have overcome significant challenges to build thriving businesses and leave a legacy for their families and communities. A key highlight of this event is awarding scholarships to young students of Haitian descent. Mr. Laurent mentioned that the final signature event of the year is the Year-End Holiday Celebration, where members and partners reflect on the year's accomplishments and enjoy a festive gathering.

Mr. Laurent- stated that the key partnerships The Haitian Chamber collaborates with several influential partners, including: The Consulate General of Haiti in Atlanta – A long-standing partner supporting various cultural and business initiatives; The City of Atlanta – Mayor's Office of International and Immigrant Affairs – Supporting Haitian Flag Day and other community events; American Family Insurance – A key sponsor with board representation; The Atlanta Black Chambers – Recently co-hosted a multi-chamber networking event at Rock Steady ATL; The French American Chamber of Commerce, Haitian Chamber of Commerce of Orlando, Gwinnett Chamber, and Greater East Side Chamber of Commerce – Collaborative partners in fostering business growth; Clark Atlanta University School of Business – Actively involved in entrepreneurship education, with the Associate Director serving as the Chamber's president; The Haitian Times – A media partner with over 40,000 subscribers; The Gwinnett Office of Economic Development – Supporting economic initiatives.

Mr. Laurent- explained that Haitian Flag Day, second only to Haiti's Independence Day (January 1), is a deeply significant celebration within the Haitian community. It commemorates the historic events of May 18, 1803, when Haitian revolutionary leaders sought to establish their identity. During a pivotal meeting in the town of Arcahaie, Jean-Jacques Dessalines famously took a sword, removed the white portion from

the French flag, and entrusted Catherine Flon to sew the remaining blue and red sections together—symbolizing the unity between formerly enslaved Africans and free people of color. This moment marked a turning point in Haiti's fight for freedom, culminating in the country's independence on January 1, 1804.

Mr. Laurent- noted that the chamber has previously hosted similar events in Forest Park, making this return a natural continuation of an ongoing partnership. Mr. Laurent mentioned that the area has long been home to a significant Haitian community, with institutions like Bethesda Haitian Adventist Church playing a central role. Over the years, the chamber has hosted various events in the city, including a Flag Day program and a relief initiative for Haiti held at the amphitheater. Additionally, discussions and community meetings addressing Haitian issues, such as the "Cozy Conversations for Haiti Relief," have taken place in local venues.

Mr. Laurent—noted that for the 222nd anniversary of the Haitian flag, the chamber proposes a partnership with the City of Forest Park to host an event featuring live music, dance performances, spoken word presentations, inspirational guest speakers, networking opportunities, a business expo, and authentic Haitian cuisine—offering attendees a taste of Haiti's rich culture and heritage.

Mr. Cetoute- noted that hosting the Haitian Flag Day Fest presents several key benefits for the City of Forest Park. This event typically attracts 300+ attendees, offering increased visibility and exposure for the city. As a bi-national chamber, the Haitian Chamber fosters international business opportunities, opening doors for trade, entrepreneurship, and investment in the local economy. Mr. Cetoute also mentioned that this event provides economic benefits, as Haitian immigrants are Georgia's second-largest Caribbean immigrant group, contributing significantly to various communities. Mr. Cetoute noted that Haitian American businesses have played a vital role in boosting local economies across counties such as Cobb, DeKalb, Henry, and Clayton, with Forest Park well-positioned to benefit from similar growth. Increased foot traffic from this event could positively impact local businesses, attract new residents, and encourage long-term economic development.

Mr. Cetoute- stated that beyond economic benefits, the event strengthens community and cultural engagement by reinforcing Forest Park's commitment to diversity and inclusivity. He believes this collaboration enhances the city's image as a welcoming and culturally vibrant destination. Additionally, it encourages greater civic engagement among diverse communities, fostering stronger relationships between residents and city leadership.

Mr. Cetoute- included that the Haitian Chamber is committed to sustained collaboration rather than one-time partnerships. Beyond hosting Flag Day, the chamber envisions exploring future initiatives that could benefit the city, local businesses, and the Haitian American community. While no immediate decisions are required, these opportunities are seeds for future collaboration beyond an event.

Mr. Cetoute- noted that the chamber operates with a dedicated team of professionals from diverse backgrounds, including executives from major corporations and successful entrepreneurs. The chamber is expanding its leadership, bringing on five new board members and additional advisory board members, further strengthening its capacity to support business growth and community engagement.

Mr. Clark Jr.- noted he was unaware of a charge for this event. Mr. Cetoute explained that the tickets to be purchased are for vendors and not the community.

Mr. Cetoute- concluded that this event represents an opportunity for Forest Park to engage with its growing Haitian American community and solidify its role as a hub for cultural exchange, economic development, and civic participation. The chamber looks forward to working with Forest Park, the Georgia Haitian-American Chamber of Commerce, and the Consulate General of Haiti to make this partnership a success.

Mr. Clark Jr.- inquired with Director Maxwell whether this arrangement is structured as a partnership or simply a fee waiver for the use of the park. Mr. Clark Jr. stated that if a partnership involves any financial transactions, it is important to ensure transparency and confirm that no gratuity concerns arise. Mr. Clark Jr. noted that a clear understanding of the financial structure will help define expectations and responsibilities on both sides. He also inquired about the intended benefit to the city. Mr. Clark Jr. also stated that While various benefits were mentioned about past collaborations with the City of Atlanta, as well as scholarship opportunities and other programs, it is essential to clarify what direct benefits this partnership will bring to the residents of Forest Park. This includes assessing how the event will significantly contribute to the community beyond its general cultural and economic impact.

Mr. Clark Jr.- mentioned that if the governing body agrees to a fee waiver for the amphitheater, it is important to outline the city's additional obligations in this partnership. Beyond approval of the fee waiver, what level of city involvement or resources (if any) would be required? He also noted that this event was held two years ago as a council-led initiative sponsored by a council member. Understanding how this proposal differs in structure and commitment will clarify the city's role moving forward.

Director Maxell- noted that this event would be structured as a partnership involving discussions on key logistical and financial aspects. As part of this process, a determination would need to be made regarding vendor fees, including how they contribute to covering costs such as police services and venue expenses. Director Maxwell noted that if the decision is made to waive all associated fees, the vendor fees will be directed to the department, following standard procedures.

Comments/Discussion from Governing Body:

Councilmember James- expressed appreciation for the event organizers considering Forest Park as the host location. She emphasized the importance of embracing diversity, particularly in a city with such a diverse community. Acknowledging the presence of Haitian American business owners and the businesses that serve the city, he highlighted the value of fostering strong relationships that contribute to economic and cultural growth. Councilmember James assured that while logistical details will need to be worked out, the city is open to collaboration.

Councilmember Gutierrez- expressed enthusiasm and strong support for the event, recognizing its cultural and historical significance for the Haitian community and the broader Forest Park population. He emphasized that Forest Park's diversity is one of its greatest strengths. Councilmember Gutierrez highlighted the importance of creating spaces for celebrating different cultures, ensuring that all residents feel represented and included in city-sponsored activities. He reaffirmed his commitment to supporting the Haitian community and fostering cultural exchange. Additionally, Councilmember Gutierrez encouraged educational initiatives that could help residents learn more about Haiti's contributions to world history and its cultural impact. He also expressed interest in collaborating with the Haitian Chamber on future opportunities beyond the event, ensuring this partnership could lead to lasting engagement within the city. In closing, he expressed excitement about the event and encouraged the organizers to contact him directly for any assistance he could provide to make it a success.

Councilmember Mears- expressed support for the event and emphasized the importance of expanding Forest Park's international engagement. He recognized the value of fostering global connections and cultural exchanges within the community. He also stressed the need to address logistical and security measures properly. Councilmember Mears suggested working closely with the City Manager to ensure that all loose ends—such as security, park protection, and overall event safety—are properly managed. By doing so, the city can ensure a smooth and successful event while maintaining the integrity of the venue.

Mr. Clark Jr.- emphasized that the current discussion is simply a request for the governing body to approve a partnership between the city and the Haitian organization. He clarified that the specific details of the partnership have not yet been finalized and that this approval does not automatically include a fee waiver or vendor fee exemptions unless explicitly agreed upon as part of the final partnership terms. Mr. Clark Jr. reinforced the importance of properly addressing all logistical and financial aspects before making any commitments. He stressed that security, park protection, and any obligations on the city's part must be clearly outlined to avoid any misunderstandings. To move forward, he recommended that during the regular session, the governing body should state within the motion that this approval only allows city staff to work with the Haitian organization and legal counsel to define the specific terms of the partnership.

Mr. Clark Jr. also assured that he would work to ensure that presentations are provided in advance to the governing body, allowing for more informed discussions and decisions. He expressed support for the event and its potential benefits for the Forest Park community while emphasizing the need for proper coordination and clarity in the partnership agreement.

Councilmember James- inquired about the firearms item being removed from the agenda. Mr. Clark Jr. addressed the urgency of the matter, noting that the contract is set to expire in two days. He emphasized that when this item is brought back for further discussion, the city welcomes the opportunity to meet with governing body members in advance to address any outstanding questions. Mr. Clark Jr. acknowledged that multiple council members have raised concerns and assured that those questions would be fully addressed before making final decisions. Mr. Clark Jr. stated that the first step is for the governing body to agree on how they wish to proceed based on the proposal presented. Once there is agreement, the governing body can decide whether to declare the excess firearms as surplus and determine the appropriate disposal method in accordance with city policies. Mr. Clark Jr. reiterated the importance of ensuring clarity and alignment before the contract expires. He encouraged council members to engage in discussions before the next meeting to facilitate an informed decision-making process.

Attorney Matricardi- clarified that the proposal essentially involves declaring the excess firearms as surplus and then entering into an agreement with an outside entity to conduct a public auction for their sale. She emphasized that the firearms must be auctioned off and cannot be sold directly by the city. Attorney Matricardi reiterated that once the governing body agrees to declare the items as surplus, the next step would be to formalize an agreement with a qualified auction service to handle the process in compliance with legal requirements.

Councilmember James- inquired if the firearms could be destroyed. Attorney Matricardi noted that, generally, because the sale of surplus firearms can generate revenue for the city, municipalities typically opt not to destroy them. Instead, they pursue auctioning as the preferred method of disposal. However, she emphasized that the final decision rests with the governing body, and if the council determines that destruction is the appropriate course of action, that option remains available.

Mr. Clark Jr.- mentioned that agencies have traded in weapons as part of a purchase agreement to acquire new equipment in some cases. However, he acknowledged that the age and condition of the firearms in question could determine whether this option is viable. Given that some of these weapons may date back 20 years or more, he suggested that the governing body consider all possible options, including auctioning, trade-in, or disposal, based on the feasibility and potential benefits to the city.

Mr. Clark Jr.- suggested that if Mayor Butler and the governing body wish to discuss their preferred course of action collectively, they could engage in that conversation to determine a unified approach. He proposed that city staff prepare the necessary documentation based on the governing body's collective decision and bring it back for formal review, along with the contract for disposal of the items. He also indicated that he is open to meeting individually with council members after the session to address any concerns or questions before finalizing the next steps.

Chief Criss- provided an update on the recent audit of the evidence room, revealing that the department had approximately 33,000 items in storage, some dating back to 1984. During the clean-up process, it was discovered that there were nearly 800 firearms that now require guidance from the governing body regarding their disposal. Chief Criss outlined the available options for declaring these firearms as surplus and determining their proper disposal: Destruction of the firearms – This would permanently remove them from circulation; Selling them through a contracted auction service – The department has identified GovDeals and PropertyRoom.com as potential platforms for this. Chief Criss noted that these companies would conduct an auction, allowing eligible buyers from across the United States to place bids, provided they pass all required background checks and legal requirements. Additionally, Chief Criss noted that any firearm with an altered or fictitious serial number must be destroyed per legal requirements. Regarding fund allocation, he explained that if the firearms sold were abandoned (such as weapons turned in and never reclaimed), the revenue from the sale would go into the city's General Fund. However, if the firearms were seized as part of a forfeiture case, the proceeds would be required to go into the city's Forfeiture Fund. Chief Criss concluded that the department is now seeking guidance from the governing body on disposing of these surplus firearms.

Mayor Butler- noted the firearms item was originally taken off the agenda due to the contract expiring in two days. Attorney Matricardi clarified that the proposed contract for the sale and auction of the firearms would piggyback off an existing contract listed on Sourcewell, which was originally established with another agency. However, the impending expiration of that contract in two days cannot be used as a basis to move forward with the disposal process.

Mayor Butler- noted that if the council wants to destroy the firearms, there is no need to wait for the contract to expire. Attorney Matricardi noted that this is correct; no contract is needed.

Councilmember Gutierrez- inquired about who would destroy the firearms. Chief Criss noted looking at a company to melt them down or trade the weapons at a local pawn shop.

Councilmember Mears- shared his perspective as a gun collector and a weapon permit holder for 50 years, expressing concern over destroying good-quality firearms when there could be an opportunity for legal resale. He emphasized that, without placing any pressure on the city, he believes that if firearms are in good condition, a reasonable effort should be made to sell them to qualified individuals through a legal and transparent process. Councilmember Mears noted that destruction would be the best action if most firearms were in poor condition, altered, or unsafe. However, for reputable and still functional firearms, he suggested the city explore ways to ensure they can be sold legally to responsible and qualified buyers rather than automatically opting for disposal. Councilmember Mears expressed personal interest in having the opportunity to legally purchase quality firearms if the city decides to move forward with an auction process. Chief Criss reassured the governing body that if the city proceeds with an auction process, the contracted company will thoroughly vet all buyers to ensure that only those legally eligible to purchase firearms would be allowed to do so. He emphasized that all necessary background checks and legal requirements would be strictly followed, ensuring that firearms are sold only to qualified individuals in compliance with state and federal laws. This process would provide an additional layer of safety and accountability, preventing firearms from falling into the wrong hands while allowing responsible buyers to participate in the auction.

Councilmember Akins-Wells- expressed strong opposition to the idea of auctioning off the surplus firearms, emphasizing concerns about a government agency putting guns back onto the streets. She stated that, regardless of whether the firearms are considered collectible items, she does not support the city financially benefiting from selling them. Referencing Councilmember James's previous question, Akins-Wells agreed with the ethical concerns surrounding the sale of firearms. She firmly stated that she is not in favor of reselling the weapons and believes the city should pursue an alternative method of disposal that does not contribute to the circulation of guns.

Mr. Clark Jr.- inquired whether the city could explore trading the surplus firearms directly with a licensed gun dealer rather than a pawn shop, which might resell them to the general public. He referenced previous exchanges where government agencies have traded surplus firearms to a company that supplies weapons to law enforcement in exchange for credit for purchasing new guns, ammunition, or other equipment. Mr. Clark Jr. asked Chief Criss whether this trade-in option would be a viable alternative to outright sale or destruction, allowing the city to recoup value for necessary police resources while ensuring the firearms do not end up in unregulated circulation.

Mayor Butler- acknowledged the discussion and emphasized the need for the governing body to carefully consider the end result of any decision regarding the surplus firearms. She pointed out that even if the city trades the firearms to a licensed dealer or government-approved supplier, those weapons could still end up back on the market and potentially be resold to the public or other entities.

Mr. Clark Jr.- inquired whether firearms dealers that supply police weapons—specifically those the city might trade with—resell the surplus firearms to the general public or if they only sell to law enforcement agencies. Chief Criss noted they sell to the general public.

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 recess into Executive Session at 6:42 p.m. for Personnel, Litigation, or Real Estate matters.

The motion was made by Councilmember James and seconded by Councilmember Mears.

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

It was moved to reconvene the work session at 7:01 p.m.

The motion was made by Councilmember James and seconded by Councilmember Mears.

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

ADJOURNMENT:

Mayor Bulter adjourned the meeting at 7:01 p.m.

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, those requiring meeting accommodation should notify the City Clerk's Office at 404-366-4720 at least 24 hours before the meeting.