



## CITY COUNCIL REGULAR SESSION

Monday, May 02, 2022, at 7:00 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](http://www.forestparkga.gov)  
**YouTube:** <https://bit.ly/3c28p0A>  
**Phone Number:** (404) 366.1555

**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 at 7:03pm and she read the Mission Statement.

**INVOCATION/PLEDGE:** The invocation and pledge was led by Dr. Beeler, Gateway Restoration Church

**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, Mayor Pro-Tem |        | ✓       |
| Latresa Akins-Wells  | Council Member, Ward 4 -              |        | ✓       |
| Allan Mears          | Council Member, Ward 5                |        | ✓       |

**DIRECTORS PRESENT:** Chiquita Barkley, Finance Director, Darquita Williams, Deputy Finance Director; Kim Trawick, Human Resources Generalist, Bruce Abraham, Director Economic Development, Tarik Maxell, Director of

Recreation & Leisure, Bobby Jinks, Director of Public Works, James Shelby, Planning & Community Development Director, and Nathaniel Clark, Chief of Police

#### PRESENTATIONS:

1. **Swearing in of Planning Commission Board Member Andy Porter**– Planning & Community Development Department

Mayor Butler administered the Oath of Office for Andy Porter to the Planning Commission

2. **Proclamation - Recognizing Municipal Clerks Week** – Executive Office

Mayor and Council presented a proclamation to City Clerk S. Diane White in honor of Professional Municipal Clerks Week.

#### PUBLIC HEARINGS:

3. **Approve Conditional Use Permit at 5370 Ash Street - PUBLIC HEARING** – Planning & Community Development Department

It was moved to open the Public Hearing for Conditional Use Permit at 5370 Ash Street

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 close the Public Hearing for Conditional Use Permit at 5370 Ash Street

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 approve the Conditional Use Permit at 5370 Ash Street with recommended conditions.

Motion made by Councilmember James, Seconded by Councilmember Gutierrez.

Voting Yea: Councilmember James, Councilmember Antoine, Councilmember Gutierrez, Councilmember Mears

Voting Abstaining: Councilmember Akins-Wells

4. **Council Approval of Text Amendments - PUBLIC HEARING** –Planning & Community Development Department

It was moved to open the Public Hearing for Text Amendments

Motion made by Councilmember James, Seconded by Councilmember Mears.

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

It was moved to close the Public Hearing for Text Amendments

Motion made by Councilmember James, Seconded by Councilmember Antoine.

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

It was moved to approve the Text Ordinance Amendment

Motion made by Councilmember James, Seconded by Councilmember Antoine.

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

**5. Council Approval of Technical Map Amendments PUBLIC HEARING**– Planning & Community Development Department

It was moved to open the Public Hearing for Technical Map Amendments

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 close the Public Hearing for Technical Map Amendments

Motion made by Councilmember James, Seconded by Councilmember Antoine.

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

It was moved to approve the Technical Map Ordinance Amendment

Motion made by Councilmember James, Seconded by Councilmember Gutierrez.

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

**PUBLIC COMMENTS: (All Speakers will have 3 Minutes)**

There was two (2) public comment speakers:

**Diane Lunsford** – I have a couple of comments I would like to make: 1) at the last city council meeting that I attended Chief Clark proposed his new super-duper plan for getting Forest Park safe again. Why did not he start this on the first murder that we had in Forest Park under his hand; 2) is that he was going to have all his patrol officers skedaddling around and protecting our city, I live on Skyline Drive, Mr. Clark (Mayor asked that she direct her comments to the chair), you know how I feel about Clark, anyway, I do not see any police officers going down our street. We have complained to PD before about one motorcyclist that you all have to hear on the southside of town, honest to pete, this kid, who lives on Skyline, revs his motorcycle and it is annoying, he starts on Skyline and go down Greenwood or Phillips, then down Pine Ridge as far as he can, I assume he runs on Ash Street. You hear him, you know when he stops. We would like to have a little bit more PD presence in Ward 5 in the evening so they can hear this joker and pull him over. Is there an ordinance against this motorcycle and the racket he makes? Do we have one? Clark needs to just step down, he has been on a gravy train for four years and it is time for him to be if he wants to stay with us to drive a regular unit around. Thank you!

Councilmember James – Point of order Madame Mayor, it is very disrespectful to address a Chief in that manner, so I would ask moving forward that when referring to our staff that we refer to them by their titles and not be disrespectful.

**LaWanda Folami** – I am to come with a different perspective about, madame chair, our public safety department. I have notes, here from our community in Ward 3, this past weekend there was two or three arrested for a tragic accident and constituents called that the chief and the staff with to sit and comfort them, so I beg the pardon of that. We have at, when you are in a job, and you are in capacity of 20 to 22 citizen, and you have what you must work with. He said last week he was doing some changes to his staff, he rectified that, so I am going to give Chief kudos, because if I want to go back home with my family and I am giving my public works my service to my community, everyone is not going to agree, you all do not agree, but let us be fair here, we do have public service here. If I called the police for everything and they showed up every time I called, kudos to me. A lot of times things come in our does not even belong and it just happened to pass through our city. I received a note someone was sending around about madame chair, you, and the city manager and Chief Clark, I do not have anything to do with, the hiring and firing that is your prerogative; you voted to vote whoever in and they did whatever, that is not what I am here, but I am here to say that that my family and some of my constituents feel he is doing an amazing job, he is doing something we have to tolerate right now and that is let him do his job and we as a collective body get behind him and let us get it straight. I have some people listening on zoom, who had questions and could not be here. One of the questions madame chair is – why is it that Mr. Cooper makes \$28k for a board that no other city manager has gotten paid for before and if so is that the only board that get paid is the planning and zoning? You can answer it later. I want to give kudos to my volleyball team and I proud of them. Had some girls with no self esteem or confidence, but they have really grown and the last but not least, I want to be make sure that I put this in the minutes, that for my household, there is not going to be any polls open for people to vote after the primary and I would think it would be so embarrassing for the city of Forest Park to be the largest city, give us a voting poll.

#### **ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA WITH ANY ADDITIONS / DELETIONS:**

It was moved to adopt the Council Agenda as printed.

Motion made by Councilmember Antoine, Seconded by Councilmember James.

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

#### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

**6. Council Approval of Council Work Session and Regular Meeting Minutes from April 18, 2022 - City Clerk**

It was moved to approve the Council Meeting Minutes for April 18, 2022

Motion made by Councilmember Antoine, Seconded by Councilmember Gutierrez.

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

#### **NEW BUSINESS:**

**7. Council Approval to enter into an Agreement with Clayton County Summer Food Service Program Agreement – Recreation & Leisure Services**

It was moved to approved to enter into an agreement with Clayton County Summer Food Service Program.

Motion made by Councilmember James, Seconded by Councilmember Antoine.

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

**8. Council Approval of Citywide Janitorial Services Vendor**– Various Departments throughout the City

It was moved to approve the City-Wide Janitorial Services vendor Acsential Services

Motion made by Councilmember James, Seconded by Councilmember Antoine.

Voting Yea: Councilmember James, Councilmember Antoine, Councilmember Gutierrez, Councilmember Mears

Voting Abstaining: Councilmember Akins-Wells

**CLOSING COMMENTS BY GOVERNING BODY:**

**Councilmember James** – Thanks to all who showed up this evening, we appreciate for being here. Just a few dates I to remind everyone of; May 13<sup>th</sup> is the last day for Seniors at Forest High School and it may be the last day for seniors all over Clayton County Schools; May 24<sup>th</sup> is the official last day of school; May 25<sup>th</sup> is the graduation for our Seniors; mark your calendars for May 21<sup>st</sup>, that will be the day we will have the Senior caravan, traveling through the city of Forest Park, we will leave the school at 11am and finish at Starr Park and we have some great things happening at Starr Park; we are having a community field day, which encompasses all schools, elementary, middle and high starting at 11am in Kiwanis Stadium with Mr. Olympian. May 19<sup>th</sup> at 5pm is my monthly ward meeting, it will be mostly virtual, but if you would like to be in-person, I will be at the high school until school is official closed, then we will move back to the community center. I want to piggyback on what Dr. Beeler said, when he said the word 'hope,' I just wanted to say hope deferred makes the heart sick, so I encourage everyone to exercise that hope and give out that hope so we will not have hearts that are sick. I think that hope requires, faith, patience, humility, meekness, long-suffering. And I reiterate what I said about our chief, I think we need to be very respectful and respect the title, I know oftentimes I have been called other than my title, which I am okay with that, but I will not allow our employees that are doing a great job in our city degraded and one final comment I will say, I am a very proud mama, my daughter, Olivia Joy James, will have her commencement exercise on May 16<sup>th</sup>, which I will not be here, but will try to make it on virtual, I will be in Ohio at the College of Wooster, where she will be exercising her commencement, however she will not graduate until after the fall, because she took a gap year or semester, when the pandemic happened so that she study abroad. So, for the fall semester, my baby will be going to Argentina, this is a Forest Park resident born and raised, Olivia Joy if you are listening, congratulations.

**Councilmember Antoine** – Dr. Beeler, yes, every morning I usually mediate on the word of God and that was exactly what God gave me today so that just confirms that we are aligned spiritually, the city is. I want to give a shout out to all new employees that joined the best all-star team, which is Forest Park Team. To the officers and the best chief in this country, Chief Clark. Also, a big shout out to us representing the city beautifully on last week, the mayor and I CM James and city manager, we all represented and put Forest Park on a good platform, because you had, Heinz Ward, former NFL NVP two times and all the NFL players that were present and they mention Forest Park, every time he spoke, Heinz Ward that is, he mentioned Forest Park and how he wants to give back and support Forest Park. So, out of all the schools Forest Park Heinz Ward is in named for us as a city and that is big when you have an NFL star that come back and give back to his community. Also, I would like to share this from my heart, Haiti as you know that is where I am from, they of course, those that have been studying, you know the President has been assassinated, there is no and we have partnered up, we made a partnership with Mirebalais, that the city withing the country. And what is going on now is guns, weapons are being funneled to these the bandits and gangs, therefore the gangs are running the people out of the country and they are going to the villages, imagine you are in Atlanta and the gangs control the city and now they are running towards Riverdale and Forest Park; and people are all scared



and this is why it is important that send these fire trucks, because when you have a city growing with population of course, you are going to need everything. This is coming from the city, they have asked me to be a spokesperson for them, because obviously we do not hear it on the news, but this is not the only country that is in war, I just want everybody to take this seriously because that is something that we do not like to see. Great job on the recycling program, which is something I see not just in Forest Park, but in other places, we need to know the importance of recycling and Happy Mother's Day to all that are mothers, I would say in my country language, bon fed bon fed mama ju. God bless you all.

**Councilmember Gutierrez** – Thank everyone who came out and who are listening and thank you Dr. Beeler, which was a good message and I think hope and faith it what gets us through and being optimistic and believing. This month I will not have a cleanup, because council will be in a retreat discussing the budget so, there will not be a cleanup. I will find out where the cleanup will be for our first Adopt-A-Sign organization that now has a sign posted, Fort Gillem Lodge No. 601 Prince Hall, thank you and hopefully this will be the first of many to come. They have been committed to cleanup the road once a month, and we are going to provide them with picks and vests and the other things to make them safe. Welcome to all new employees and I appreciate hearing the public comments but be respectful and respect the titles that we have that you know at the end of the day I feel safe here in Forest Park, so thank you Chief for what you do every day, and no one is perfect. I will not be at the family wellness event day this Saturday, this event was postponed due to weather back in April, please come out with your families, it is in partnership with the Hand, Heart, and Soul project, which is based out of the Little Lions Learning Center, the event will be held at Starr Park. This Friday we will be celebrating our teachers and mothers during Food Truck Friday, the new location is Lee Park, which is on Main Street across from the library. Lastly, congratulations to you, Dr. Folami on your volleyball team; we went to the baseball inauguration, it was amazing to see the excitement of the little kids and Director Maxwell had them read something on we are all volunteers, and everyone would volunteer and take one of those teams, what an impact that would make on our youth. The city of Forest Park will be having an Asian Heritage month with a cultural festival on May 28<sup>th</sup> from 4pm – 9pm, there is no vendor fee so if you know of any vendors that want to come out, please have them contact the council aides. Thanks to all employees for what you do because without you getting everything moving forward.

**Councilmember Akins-Wells** – Thanks to everyone for coming out and hanging with us for this long but short meeting. Wanted to remind everyone that on May 19<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm at the Leonard Hartsfield Community Center Ward 4 will have a Town Hall meeting to discuss the issues, things that are going in Ward 4, things that you want to see in your ward and some of the potential projects. June 17<sup>th</sup> from 7pm – 11pm, at Starr Park will be the first Fun Friday and we will have the band Ear Candy, it is a family fun filled day with the residents of the city and we are trying to keep going, unfortunately we do not know, how that is going to good. So, because of that the VIP tables that include a lot of other things will increase, because we want to continue this event going for the community. If you know of anyone, individual or business in Ward 4 that deserves a beautification award, please contact me. I want to explain, because I just do not abstain from voting, just to keep from voting; so, if I do it is because I do not have all the information, or I know of something and am not going to put myself in a position to vote on something because others are voting on it. I want all the information and to be aware of what I am approving, so it will not come back to slap me in the face. Have a good night and again thanks for attending.

**Councilmember Mears** – I too, am glad to see everyone here tonight and I would like to comment on the comments about Chief Clark. I have talked to him several times and we see eye to eye and agree that soft cops cause crimes. I have talked to him several times about the issues in Ward 5 about doing whatever the police have to do to get the issues taken care of in Ward 5. Let us work with Chief Clark, give him permission to what he must, to get his staff to do what needs to be done to make Forest Park a safer place for residents to live.

**Mayor Butler** – Thank you, let me first start out by saying that I am, CM Antoine, hearing you talk about what is going on in Haiti currently, makes my heart palpitate even faster, because my baby, will be in Haiti this week, she's flying

there but not doing a solo flight, but, you know, she is a five time Rugby Champion and she links up with organizations that goes to different countries to teach Rugby to the local residents. She has partnered with another organization and will be in Haiti and was going to let you know so you could give me your people's contact, so that could look out for her, I was worried about Haiti to begin with now I am worried, but God is with her, and she will be okay. Let me also address a comment that was made about some information that was circulating about myself, Dr. Cooper, and Chief Clark. There has been a series of emails that have been going out about elected officials in Clayton County. So, this email made some allegations that were false, and if it is the same correspondence, one of the allegations, was that Chief Clark, me and Dr. Cooper were in cahoots to hire someone and with it being a personnel matter, I am kind of going to be a little bit vague here, but let me start by saying, contrary to what some people believe, I do not hire, I do not fire, I can veto; Dr. Cooper, if asked his opinion, will give his opinion on any personnel matters and as a director, the directors have the ability to hire and fire at their leisure. And so, one of the allegations in that correspondence was that this person was hired as a result of the former fire chief Don Horton's investigation. The allegation was that this person was an applicant at that time, which is false. Another allegation was that this person was making six figures and while that is not true, I will just say this, if the position called for a six-figure salary, then said person who was chosen to fill that role, would make six-figures, but in this case it did not. Was also said was getting a car, well again if the position calls for such, which it does, then that person would be driving a police car. And the whole notion of this corruption allegation is again another farce and I just find it appalling at the lengths that people will go through to try to hurt others and it all be unmerited and false. So, Chief Clark, while there are some things we may not agree on, I do feel safe in Forest Park, if there are any questions I have, I do bring them to you or to Dr. Cooper and I am confident in your ability to run and lead your department and continue in the direction that Forest Park is going in terms of our law enforcement and I just want to thank you for what you are doing. And with any other hiring there is a process that people through and it is different components, it is not just one area and it sticks there, they look at several different factors and if this person turned out to be the most qualified, then I am going to trust your judgment that this person is the most qualified and therefore deserved the appointment that they were put in. So let me say, with the election part, I know this is a county ran election so, we will investigate why or why not there may not be any other precincts after the primary in the city, so we will look into that.

**Councilmember Mears** – On my city phone we get different messages through emails and stuff like that, and I have received a couple of emails toward what the mayor is trying to talk about Mr. Clark. I guess somehow or another, we are all drawn into it, I do not know I got the email to the point where that we were good old boys' theory; after Mr. Clark or whatever, it is about five paragraphs and is the craziest thing I have ever heard. I have never been in a conspiracy like that, there are people out there that causes those kinds of problems or insinuates. If you are going to through me in a dog fight, I want to get ready. So, do not put me as them or us or we are like that and usually if I have something to say about somebody or something, I am man enough to confront everybody, and I will say it myself, I do not need people accusing me and talking about me and others, if you want to something I am plan as outdoors all you got to do is ask me and I will embarrass you, because I will tell you just like it is. I want Mr. Clark to know, that I am not in that good old boy's that are after you, personally from me to you that I am not involved in it, even though I got associated by proxy.

**Councilmember Akins-Wells** – Yes, I was not going to say anything, because I have a lawsuit against me, but I received that same email, do not know where it came from and it is kind of crazy and did not make sense, but it is what it is. But your statement, mayor, as far as hiring, I received a message, a long message and I actually called the city attorney and I thought we would discuss in executive session because to me it is not the appropriate place to discuss personnel matters, but since we are talking about it; I received an email and it had some alarming things and that is probably what you are referring to, I did call city attorney and I am sure he called you all, but to me it was distasteful and I asked the person to call me and they would not so, I do not know who it is, but it did say the lady who did the investigation on Chief Horton is now a member of the Forest Park Police department, and if that is the case, well I know now it is, because she was just introduced tonight, it is definitely not a good look, although if somebody may say that was not the case, that is very much what it looks like to me and to others. I received a

message and called the city attorney, as I should, to ask him if this was the case if he knew about it and said to say, I just do not trust a lot of people, I do not know what he said or did about it, but yes it was alarming to me and so I wanted information on it so I reached out and today it was proven. So, it does not look right as a city to have someone to be accused of certain allegations and then the person that did the investigation, which I had my thoughts on that, is now a captain in the police department, officers feel that way and they reach out to me and people and they talk about it things are will not be all good and if I want to look into something, I am going to look into it and that is what I did. No, we do not have anything to do with the hiring process and we should not be involved in who is getting hired and who is not, but decisions need to make sense and to me that was not a great decision.

**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 the Executive Session at 8:13pm

Motion made by Councilmember James, Seconded by Councilmember Mears.

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

It was moved to reconvene back into the Regular Meeting at 9:16pm

Motion made by Councilmember James, Seconded by Councilmember Gutierrez.

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

**ADJOURNMENT:**

It was moved to adjourn the Council Regular Meeting at 9:16pm

Motion made by Councilmember Mears, Seconded by Councilmember Gutierrez.

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