



CITY COUNCIL REGULAR SESSION

Monday, August 18, 2025, at 7:00 PM
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 Delores A. Gunn
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 Butler called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

INVOCATION/PLEDGE: Elder Cook led the invocation and pledge.

ROLL CALL - CITY CLERK: A quorum was established.

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

Pauline Warrior, Chief of Staff; Josh Cox, IT Director; Rodney Virgil, Level 2 Support Engineer; Javon Lloyd, PIO; John Wiggins, Finance Director; Jeremy Patterson, Deputy Finance Director; Shalonda Brown, HR Director; Diane Lewis, HR Deputy Director; Nicole Dozier, PCD Director; Rochelle Dennis, Economic Development Director; Dorthy Roper-Jackson, Municipal Court Director; Tarik Maxwell, Director of Rec and Leisure; Alton Matthews, Public Works Director; Nigel Whatley, Deputy Public Works Director; Latosha Clemons, Fire Chief; David Halcome, Deputy Fire Derry Walker, Code Compliance Director; and Danielle Matricardi, City Attorney.

ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA WITH ANY ADDITIONS / DELETIONS:

It was moved to approve the Consent Agenda.

The motion was made by Councilmember James and seconded by Councilmember Akins-Wells.

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

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA WITH ANY ADDITIONS / DELETIONS:

It was moved to approve the Agenda.

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

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

1. **Council Approval of Council Work Session and Regular Meeting Minutes from August 4, 2025, and Special Called Meeting from August 13, 2025 - City Clerk**

It was moved to approve the Council Work Session and Regular Meeting Minutes from August 4, 2025, and Special Called Meeting from August 13, 2025.

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

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

PUBLIC COMMENTS: (All Speakers will have 3 Minutes)

There were two (2) Public Comment Speakers.

Dr. Folami addressed the Mayor and Council, first commending Director Matthews and Public Works for their work in her district to improve road safety. She then expressed her disappointment with the Mayor's conduct, citing concerns regarding behavior, ethics, and professionalism. She stated that the Mayor had not issued an apology to constituents or colleagues and asserted that the City could not thrive without accountability and transparency in leadership. Dr. Folami respectfully requested that the Mayor step aside to allow the City to move forward and thanked her for her service.

Ms. Franklin, representing Every Refuge, addressed the Mayor and Council to express concern that the Calvary Shelter was in crisis and at risk of closing due to the loss of grant funding. She reported that 44 homeless individuals were currently being housed at the shelter and emphasized the importance of preventing their displacement. She urged the City and community to consider fundraising efforts to sustain the shelter, noting that while a campaign was underway, donations were coming in slowly. She stated that she had volunteered and worked with Calvary for over 20 years and offered her continued support as a volunteer in any effort the City or community may undertake.

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT:

City Manager, Mr. Clark Jr. reported that staff had been in contact with community advocates and Clayton County regarding support for Calvary Refuge, noting efforts to restore water service at an additional facility. He stated that the City originally erected the structure and emphasized the importance of the governing body's focus, as it could increase shelter capacity from approximately 59 to over 100 residents. He then presented the July 2025 "Back to School Edition" City Manager's Report, highlighting community events and initiatives across all wards, including the Back-to-School Bash, monthly ward meetings, fitness activities, community closet efforts, and other neighborhood programs. He noted completion of Phase II of the Home Improvement Program and launch of the Performance Reporting Dashboard for public use. Within the City Clerk's Office, 62 open records requests were received in July, with 43 completed and 19 canceled. Code Enforcement handled 689 cases, including removal of 57 illegally placed campaign signs.

Mr. Clark Jr. further reported on the appointment of Rochelle Dennis as Economic Development Director, progress on property and infrastructure improvements, and the successful July 2 town hall regarding the proposed data center. He noted a record-breaking turnout at the recent job fair, upcoming events such as the Blues on Main festival, and nearly \$498,000 in purchase orders processed by the Finance Department in July. He concluded by recognizing the Fire Department as award-winning and invited Chief Clements to share a recent success story involving staff professional development and certification.

Chief Clemons addressed the Mayor and Council, reporting that some new recruits had faced challenges with the advanced EMT National Registry exam. She noted that Paramedic Steiner, a new hire who also teaches paramedic students, and Lieutenant Anderson worked with recruits to provide test-taking strategies. As a result, several recruits successfully passed the exam, including two who did so on their first attempt. She stated that additional recruits were making progress and thanked Mr. Clark for supporting the initiative. She concluded by affirming that the Fire Department continues to perform strongly.

Mr. Clark Jr. stated that he highlighted the Fire Department's success story because if recruits do not pass the EMT exam, they cannot continue employment with the City. He emphasized that, rather than terminating employees, the partnership provided them another opportunity to advance their professional careers, and he thanked Chief Clemons and her team for their efforts. He then continued with the City Manager's Report, noting that the Human Resources Department is steadily filling vacancies and has finalized pension plan details to ensure employees receive accurate and fair information. He reported that the IT Department achieved 100% of its baseline metrics for July and is expected to expand under the adopted budget. Municipal Court Services disposed of 737 citations and cleared 297 failures to appear during the month. The Planning and Community Development Office continues to implement a concierge model to streamline operations, and Code Compliance staff remain active in enforcement.

Mr. Clark Jr. reported that the Office of Public Information issued several news releases in July promoting City events, with the most popular social media post highlighting the Back-to-School Bash. He noted Public Works activities, including debris removal from nine locations, sweeping approximately 60 streets, hauling tires, and providing 15 hours of event setup time. He stated that ongoing projects include the Rock Cut sidewalk project, the Linda Way project (notice to proceed issued), a new storage shed for Building and Maintenance, and the planned groundbreaking of the Legacy Dog Park in Ward 2. He further reported that the Office of Recreation and Leisure issued \$481 in daily passes and collected \$30,456 in revenue during July. Activities for Legacy residents included field trips, a healthcare boot camp, church and senior events, a spa day at Macy's, a community healthcare event, and a six-week painting and craft workshop.

Mr. Clark Jr. concluded his City Manager's Report for July 2025 by thanking the Mayor, Council, and community, stating that it has been the thrill of his life to serve the City of Forest Park.

PRESENTATIONS:

2. **Proclamation in Recognition of Unidos Dual Language School Music Teacher, Roger Ruzow-Ward 1, Councilmember James**

Background/History:

Councilmember James would like to present Roger Ruzow with a proclamation honoring his commitment to music education and the enrichment of the Forest Park community.

Councilwoman James presented a proclamation to Mr. Roger Ruzow.

Councilmember Gutierrez stated that he had the pleasure of working with Mr. Ruzow as a colleague and thanked him for his dedication to music education. He noted the importance of having a male role model in an elementary school setting and shared that his own daughter, along with many other students, benefited from Mr. Ruzow teaching. He expressed gratitude for Mr. Ruzow's commitment, both in the classroom and through his continued communication with the City regarding community needs.

Mr. Ruzow expressed his gratitude to Mayor Butler, Councilmembers James, and Mears, Board Member Williams, Principal Brandy, and the City Council for the recognition. He stated that when he began teaching music in 2000, his focus was first on learning how to teach, and after several years, he sought to establish an elementary band program. He recalled asking why Clayton County did not have such a program and committed himself to building one by seeking donated instruments. He thanked his former band members, alumni, parents, and colleagues for their support, emphasizing that the work was simply something he loved to do.

3. **Proclamation in Recognition of the Boot's Family Contribution to Affordable Housing and Southern Crescent Habitat for Humanity-Ward 1, Councilmember James**

Background/History:

Councilmember James would like to present the Boot family with a proclamation to recognize their contributions to affordable housing and their longstanding commitment to the community; and, to Southern Crescent Habitat for Humanity, which has been a vital partner in the mission to eliminate substandard housing and homelessness in the Southern Crescent region of Georgia, including the City of Forest Park.

Councilwoman James presented a proclamation to the Boot's Family and Southern Crescent Habitat for Humanity; and two certificates to Tiffany Cobb and Krizia Williams.

A representative of Southern Crescent Habitat for Humanity thanked the Mayor, Council, and staff for their support and partnership. She noted that the organization's first house in the late 1980s was built in Forest Park and expressed appreciation for the City's recognition as Habitat approaches its 40th anniversary in 2026.

Councilmember James stated that she first met the honoree during a home dedication and learned that his family had donated land to Habitat for Humanity. She remarked that this generous act was inspiring and that she wished to recognize him for his contribution.

CONSENT AGENDA: APPROVED

4. **Council Approval of Blanket Purchase Order for Read's Uniform-** Fire & EMS Services Department
5. **Council Approval of Blanket Purchase Orders –** IT Department

OLD BUSINESS:

6. **Council Discussion and Approval of Case # CUP-2025-03- Conditional Use Permit for 4959 and 4965 West St. to establish a childcare center within the Single-Family Residential District (RS)-** PCD Department

It was motioned to approve the Ordinance for Case # CUP-2025-03- Conditional Use Permit for 4959 and 4965 West St. to establish a childcare center within the Single-Family Residential District (RS) with these conditions:

- The applicant must comply with Section 8-8-90 of the ordinance, which includes requirements for parking: all parking areas, including surfaces, drives, and ingress/egress, must be paved with asphalt or concrete and clearly marked for each parking space.
- The applicant must comply with Section 8-8-70, 78.3, which covers facility requirements for childcare centers.
- If the applicant ceases to operate the business at this location, any subsequent operator or the property owner must obtain a new conditional use permit before commencing operations.
- Continued use of the property for this business type within a single-family residential district is not permitted without prior approval of a new conditional use permit.
- The property owner must adhere to all parking and facility standards before the permit is granted.

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

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

NEW BUSINESS:

7. **Council Approval to enter into a contract with New Image Towing & Wrecker Services-**Police Department

It was motioned to approve the Resolution Authorizing a contract with New Image Towing & Wrecker Service.

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

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

8. **Council Approval of Surplus Items from the Public Works Fleet Department-** Public Works Department

It was motioned to approve the Resolution authorizing a list of Surplus items from the Public Works Department.

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

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

9. **Council Approval of a Temporary Construction Easement for 644 and 714 Linda Way for the City Sidewalk Project-** Executive Office

It was motioned to approve the Resolution of a Temporary Construction Easement for Linda Way.

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

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

10. **Council Approval of a Temporary Acquisition of certain real property located in land lot 79, 13th land district, city of Forest Park, Clayton County, Georgia, by weight of negotiated purchase, or where necessary, by way of eminent domain for public purposes, to authorize the approval of any necessary documents as to form and substance-** Executive Office

It was motioned to approve the Resolution of a Temporary Acquisition of certain real property located in land lot 79, 13th land district-5208 Austin Place

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

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

11. **Council Approval the Resolution accepting the Resignation and General Release Agreement between the City of Forest Park and Ricky L. Clark Jr.-**Executive Office

It was moved to Approve the Resolution accepting the Resignation and General Release Agreement between the City of Forest Park and Ricky L. Clark Jr.

The motion was made by Councilmember James and seconded by Councilmember Akins-Wells.

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

12. **Council Approval to accept Chief of Fire, Latosha Clemons to serve as the Interim City Manager-**Legislative Office

It was moved to Approve the acceptance of Chief of Fire, Latosha Clemons to serve as the Interim City Manager.

The motion was made by Councilmember Akins-Wells and seconded by Councilmember Gutierrez.

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

Chief Clemons thanked Mr. Clark, stating it had been a pleasure serving alongside him. She remarked that during her nearly five years with the City, this was the most stable she had felt with Mr. Clark's

leadership as City Manager. She praised Mr. Clark's energy and vision, noting their impact on the directors and the City as a whole. Chief Clemons emphasized her commitment to continue supporting the City's progress, stating that she believes in leading with legality, ethics, and empowerment so that staff may reach their full potential. She concluded by thanking the Mayor, Council, and community for the opportunity to serve.

13. Council Approval of the Temporary acquisition of certain real property located at 798 Linda Way-Executive Office

It was moved to Approve the Temporary acquisition of certain real property located at 798 Linda Way.

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

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

CLOSING COMMENTS BY GOVERNING BODY:

Councilmember James thanked Southern Crescent Habitat for Humanity, the Boots family, and welcomed new homeowners to the City. She commended the Fire Department for supporting employee development and reminded residents of her Ward meeting, held the third Thursday of each month at 5:00 p.m. at the Hartsfield Community Center, noting that this month's guest would be Ray Southern Food. She also invited the community to attend the upcoming homecoming parade on Saturday at 11:00 a.m., concluding at the amphitheater with Director Maxwell's tailgate celebration, and encouraged support for the City's youth.

Councilmember Gunn expressed excitement about the upcoming Legacy Dog Park groundbreaking, scheduled for Friday, August 29 at 2:30 p.m. at Bill Lee Park, 725 Main Street. She stated that the idea grew from conversations with residents, and after dialoguing with City leadership, everyone came together collectively to support the project. She noted that she was proud to stand behind the team's work and emphasized that the park would provide a place for families to enjoy with their "fur babies." She added humorously that she might even find a stuffed animal to bring on a leash for the occasion. Councilmember Gunn also reflected on her first experience attending Forest Park Day, describing it as a vibrant, shoulder-to-shoulder community celebration.

Councilmember Gutierrez thanked everyone for attending and expressed appreciation for community recognitions such as those for Mr. Ruzow and Mr. Boots. He stated that Forest Park Day was a success and shared lighthearted remarks about the event. He congratulated Chief Clemons on her new role, describing her as a well-rounded leader who will help the City transition following Mr. Clark's departure. He concluded by noting he had no additional updates and was surprised at how quickly the meeting progressed.

Councilmember Akins-Wells thanked Chief Clemons for stepping into the interim role, describing her as a phenomenal leader and expressing confidence in her ability to guide the City. She also thanked Mr. Clark for bringing Chief Clemons to the City, noting her proven leadership within the Fire Department. Councilmember Akins-Wells highlighted the recent job fair led by Economic Development Director Rochelle Dennis, calling it one of the most successful she had seen, with more than 400 registrants and strong participation from all City departments. She shared a personal story of a resident who had just lost her job and expressed gratitude for the immediate impact of the event. She commended all departments for their involvement in Forest Park Day, which drew thousands of residents without incident, and thanked Councilmembers Gutierrez and Gunn for their visible support. Finally, she reminded residents that Election Day is November 4 and stressed the importance of providing accurate information

to the public regarding polling locations. She urged citizens to be informed and to hold leaders accountable, emphasizing that the City deserves leadership committed to moving Forest Park forward.

Councilmember Mears commended Mr. Clark for his leadership in guiding the City forward and expressed confidence in Chief Clemons's ability to assume responsibility in her new role. He thanked everyone for attending and, in closing, emphasized the importance of respecting elders, recognizing Mr. Willie Finch for his continued presence and support.

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

ADJOURNMENT:

Mayor Butler adjourned the meeting at 8:04 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.

City Clerk Signature

Mayor's Signature