



**CITY OF FOREST PARK MAYOR & COUNCIL**  
**City Council Work Session**  
Monday, March 15, 2021 at 6:00 PM  
Virtual Meeting Via Zoom and YouTube Livestream

**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

**APPROVED MEETING MINUTES**

The Honorable Mayor Angelyne Butler, MPA

The Honorable Kimberly James                      The Honorable Dabouze Antoine  
The Honorable Hector Gutierrez                      The Honorable Latresa Akins-Wells  
The Honorable Allan Mears

Shalonda Brown, Interim City Manager  
Sharee Steed, City Clerk  
Mike Williams, City Attorney

**CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME:** The meeting was called to order at 6:02pm by Mayor Butler

**ROLL CALL - CITY CLERK:** All were present, and a quorum was established

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

**CITY MANAGER'S REPORT:** Nathaniel Clark, Police Chief/Public Safety Director

- We are recognizing officers for their work beyond the call of duty. Our first recipient is Raymond Daniel, a 24-year veteran with the department
- Finance Department is in the process of enhancing our service delivery to the community, citizens, and our guests by way of a drive-through window. Interim Finance Director, Ms. Darquita Williams, gave the following information, on Monday, March 22<sup>nd</sup>, we will be opening our Drive-Thru to the public from 8:00am – 4:00pm, to allow for balancing of the drawers. Will be taking the following payments – property taxes, business license, and sanitation payments. Thanks to the Public Works for the installation of the Drive-Thru. Notice have been placed on the city's website.
- Parks & Recreation Spring Fest on April 3, 2021 from 11am – 2pm at Kiwanis Stadium, South Avenue, Forest Park. There will food, games for all that participate.
- The Demolition of 890 Conley Road, formerly Briarwood Forest Apartments. The demolition is in process and is about 90% complete. We will work with the Land Bank Authority to clear the title to the property so that we can put the land up for bid for residential use. We have had several inquiries about the lot already.
- Councilmember James continues to have her Virtual Neighborhood Meeting every 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday at 5pm. An opportunity for residents to learn about the different things that are happening in the city, department heads giving updates on their departments.
- Councilmember Wells' "Wellness with Wells" starts back this Tuesday from 6:00pm-7:00pm at the Recreation Center. Congratulations to the Girls Basketball Team and Sanaya Fagin, a member of the team, is celebrating being the McDonald's All-Star American and her 18<sup>th</sup> birthday today, we wish you Happy Birthday. If you need rental assistance or any type of assistance, you can go to [www.georgiarentalassistance.ga.gov](http://www.georgiarentalassistance.ga.gov), please take advantage of this resource.
- Councilmember Gutierrez's Food Truck at the Fountain returns the first Friday in April. Will be starting a monthly cleanup in his area and will be identifying an area for the cleanup on the first Saturday of each month and on March 27<sup>th</sup> and April 3<sup>rd</sup>, he will be collaborating with a non-profit, who has a grant with USDA, who will giving away food boxes.
- Councilmember Antoine announced the Community Center on Main Street still money for energy assistance (\$800), for residents of Henry and Clayton.
- Councilmember Mears congratulated the Girls Basketball Team played in the state games and won it last year and barely missed it this year. We should be proud of them for bringing a lot of pride to our city and for all the hard work and efforts. So, when you see them, please congratulate them for a job well done.
- Mayor Butler and I have been discussing the re-opening of the city on April 1<sup>st</sup>. An action plan was previously distributed to council.

**COVID-19 UPDATE:** Deputy Fire Chief, Clemons and Division Chief, Joel Turner

The report was given by Deputy Fire Chief Clemons -There are general improvements in positive case numbers over the past two weeks. The current average rate of daily positives among those tested statewide is 5.4% for the past two weeks; 2.0% lower than two weeks ago.

As of today, 3/15/2021:

- Clayton County's 2-week average rate of daily positives is 8.1%, which is a 1.3% reduction since reported last meeting by DC Turner.

Currently reported by Clayton Co Health District this afternoon: 3/15/2021

- Forest Park currently has 2078 cumulative cases that is 9.6% of county cases in the 30297-zip code. This remains consistent with the numbers we have seen for the area over the past several weeks.
- Forest Park Fire has had three members test positive and are currently working the Isolation Protocol.

Everyone is still highly encouraged to follow good personal hygiene practices - wash hands frequently; use hand sanitizer; maintain physical distancing; and use of masks.

## OLD BUSINESS:

1. **Discussion of the status of Venue Night Club operating at 4730 Frontage Road - Councilmember Mears**

### Comments/Questions from Council:

**Attorney Williams** – This item was requested to be put on the agenda to give Council an update on where that stands; most of last year the Venue Nightclub was not in operation, and in late December early January they approached City staff to inquire about getting current on their operation fees and reopening and at the time when the request came in and we received it, we asked staff to stand down so we could look at the settlement agreement we had with the two clubs as well as the ordinance to make sure that we followed the proper process to allow them to reopen. I had previously communicated Council some of the information regarding that, but our ordinance provides as well as a settlement, as long as they are current on their fees, they have the ability to pay the fees and reopen. So, the administration of the ordinance is in the purview of the city manager as the Police Chief, and so that advice was given and subsequently they came in and paid all their fees and to my knowledge they are currently operating. And that is the update as it stands now and if there are any questions, I will answer them either here or in Executive Session.

**Councilmember Mears** – I was the one to ask for it to be on the agenda, the biggest problem I have is communication; this City is a beautiful, nice, and wonderful place to live, but it is has underground signal points and there is nothing that can be done around here that somebody do not know about it, just as soon as it happens, most of the time. I asked for a briefing on the situation, was primarily because I had received several calls, is to make sure that the integrity and safety of city is always at hand, I did not read the entire agreement, therefore I started asking questions and want to make sure we are where we are supposed to be, we are protected and everything is going to run like it is supposed to and we will not have any backdoor surprises.

**Councilmember James** – The Venue Nightclub, is this the same club that was operating before or is this a new company and ownership? The email that we recently received that names another company, name change and all, I do not want to be involved in any controversy. Is the amount of time that the business was closed and then reopened, isn't there a stipulation in the contract, that they have to come back before council? I understand that it was a large sum of money that was paid in fees, which means they were behind, so if they were behind why were they not in default, maybe that is an issue with staff, but I do not understand, and it does not make sense. Maybe we can discuss now or in Executive Session?

**Attorney Williams** – The same company that was part of the settlement agreement, (Red-Eyed Entertainment). I cannot speak to the ownership, but the company/entity that was party to the settlement agreement is the entity that has the business license. The company is Red-Eyed Entertainment or similar, they are currently listed as DBA the Venue; and a request came in about changing the DBA to another name, King of Diamonds, but as far as the city is concerned what you name yourself or how you do business is of no consequence, it is the corporate entity itself is the same entity they can call themselves whatever that is a civil between them and whoever else may have a claim to name. But in terms of the entity that is contracted with the city and the settlement agreement and the entity that has the license, is the same entity. No, there is a provision in the settlement about if they are behind or if they have not paid their fees and they are in default, then at that point there is an issue, but in the settlement, they do not lose their vested rights to operate they are in default and they do not cure the default. We can have the conversation now, it all depends on what instructions you give, so I would probably suggest that if you want to explore it further, that we discuss it in Executive Session.

**Councilmember Antoine** – It makes sense to me, we are in the time where businesses shutting down, we are in an epidemic and we have business owners or people wanting to do business within the city, I do not think it is the time to give them a hard time on trying to bring business here. I am aware of the name technicality and all that, but if they are caught up with their fees and want to open a business in Forest Park, understand they could go anywhere, cities are supposed to welcome businesses and we can make it customer friendly, and I am for letting them reopen.

**Councilmember Mears** - Do not misunderstand me, I am not against businesses coming here, we need all the businesses we can get. I just want to make sure Forest Park, which we are all stewards of the city, that we look after the best interests of the city and when there are people in your ward or in the city that come to you with questions, it is our responsibility to go out, research and find out what is what and then go back and give them answers. When I do not know the whole situation and cannot explain it to someone if I do not know myself. A point of information that I found out today about the situation, I understand that the club that is there leased all the rights and paperwork from the old club that was formerly there, which I have been told that is perfectly legal. It was never about whether they should be here, I just want to make sure that the council in the mix when everything works out, we are all on the same page and got the same information.

## **NEW BUSINESS:**

- 2. Discussion to Approve an Agreement Between Georgia Power Company and the City of Forest Park to Provide Engineering and Design Services Related to Street Lighting Poles for Main Street Phase 2** - Director of Planning, James Shelby, Interim City Manager, Shalonda Brown

### **Background and Summary**

Main Street Streetscape Project Phase 2 includes the existing spaces within the public rights-of-way between College Street (the Fountain) and Jonesboro Road. Phase 2 is divided into two parts. Phase 2A will extend from College Street (the Fountain) east to Phillips Drive. Phase 2B will extend from Phillips Drive to Jonesboro Road. Improvements includes new street lighting poles that will be engineered and provided by Georgia Power Company (GPC). GPC is asking to enter a preliminary engineering and/or design services agreement with the City of Forest Park to create a list of construction drawings and a billable estimate to the City of Forest Park related to new street lighting poles.

### **Comments/Questions from Council:**

**Councilmember James** – I would like to find out if the discussion about the poles will include underground wiring? Could that possibly be in the conversation?

**James Shelby** – If you recall there were several options for the poles on Main Street, and to put the poles with wiring underground, which we would all love to see, would cost us \$22million. To do the wiring underground is much easier on Phase 1, because we had torn down all the building and there were no buildings to extend wires to, so it was easier to go underground. We are going to try to go underground as much as possible, but the poles that we are using would be up so high, it would help camouflage the fact that we still have overhead wiring.

**Councilmember Gutierrez** – When are we getting started on this, because I think Jonesboro Road and Forest Parkway with new lights, would just transform our city, I love this that we are doing for Main Street, but in the future that will be something hopefully, if GA Power has grants, that is something we can talk about in the future.

**James Shelby** – I spoke with Public Works today, and we are looking to replace those little candy cane green poles on Jonesboro Road, they are getting an estimate for this and once received we will bring it back to council for approval.

**Councilmember Mears** – When we get these project expenses from GA Power, I hope it is including maintenance and upkeep.

3. **Discussion and Approval of Resolution 2021-13 for a Community Garden** – Tarik Maxwell, Recreation & Leisure Director and LaShawn Gardiner, Financial Analyst

**Background and Summary:**

The Georgia Department of Public Health with support from the Department of Human Services and the United States Department of Agriculture has available funding for eligible communities to develop Community Gardens through its Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-ED) and Obesity Prevention Grant Program. Priority is given to applications that are received from communities that are part of the 5 SNAP-Ed funded public health districts. Clayton County is designated within the 5 SNAP-Ed public health districts. DPH will award at least 30 grants in the amount of \$2,500.00 for each approved garden site for FY21. The Department of Recreation and Leisure Services will spearhead this project if awarded.

**Comments/Questions from Council:**

**Councilmember Gutierrez** – Do we have a site for this already? I have one constituent that is always asking about this, so I am excited we are doing this. We currently have a pocket park, is it possible or not to have a garden, can we get money for that one also?

**Tarik Maxwell** – We are going to look at some of the pocket parks within the city and once we determine how much grant we have we are going to try, if we can get them all approved. We are going to try to have a garden in each pocket park within the council's wards. Once awarded, we are going to reach out to some of the patrons within the community to help volunteer for the upkeep and maintenance of the gardens and follow the guidelines that is given to us. If we already have a location, we can add that to the request, because we request the locations, and they approve it. So, it does not if one exists, we just put in the locations and if we get approved for all of them, they give us the money per location, if not, we just pick which ones we will do.

4. **Discussion and Review of Ordinance to Provide for the Establishment of a Records Management Program and Records Retention Policy for the City of Forest Park** - Sharee Steed, City Clerk

**Background and Summary:**

The Records Management Plan and Retention Policy for the City of Forest Park needs to be updated and the Retention Schedule needs to follow the Local Government Record Retention Schedules provided by the GA Archives. The City Clerk's office is custodian of all City Records and is requesting the adoption of the attached Ordinance to Provide the Establishment of a Records Management Program and Records Retention Policy as well as adopting the GA Archives Records Retention Schedule. This will assist us in the destruction of files that can be destroyed which will free up storage of files in the Archive Room.

**There were no questions or comments from Council**

**5. Discussion of Recruitment Police/Fire Initiatives - Nathaniel Clark, Public Safety Director**

**Background and Summary:**

It should be noted that enhanced recruitment is the foundation of any law enforcement agency/fire department. Agencies cannot hire the best and most qualified applicants if they do not attract them. As such, the Public Safety Department is seeking your approval referencing the discussed initiatives to aid in our efforts to recruit, hire and retain a diverse pool of applicants.

**Comments/Questions from Council:**

**Councilmember Wells** – Thank you Chief for not only thinking about the employees that are here but the great employees to come. I wish you would talk with the other Directors about employee initiatives on having incentives for employees living in the city, because in some departments, they cannot even drive a city truck home and they live in the City of Forest Park on their lunch break.

**Councilmember Gutierrez** – This is great work Chief I commend you and this is a starting point.

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

**It was motioned to Recess into Executive Session at 6:39 pm**

Motion made by Councilmember Mears, Seconded by Councilmember Gutierrez.

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

**It was motioned to Reconvene the Work Session at 7:00pm**

Motion made by Councilmember James, Seconded by Councilmember Mears.

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

**ADJOURNMENT:**

**It was motioned to Adjourn the Council Work Session at 7:01pm.**

Motion made by Councilmember James, Seconded by Councilmember Gutierrez.

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