



CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL CALLED

Thursday, June 22, 2023, at 6:30 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 Allan Mears

The Honorable Dabouze Antoine
The Honorable Latresa Akins-Wells

Ricky L. Clark Jr, City Manager
S. Diane White, City Clerk
Mike Williams, City Attorney

APPROVED MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME: The meeting was called to order at 6:32pm by Mayor Butler.

ROLL CALL - CITY CLERK: A quorum was established.

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

Jeremi Patterson, Deputy Finance Director; LaShawn Gardiner, Director Planning & Community Development; Shalonda Brown, HR Director; Diane Lewis, Deputy HR Director; Bobby Jinks, Public Works Director; Nigel Wattley, Deputy Public Works Director; Bruce Abrahams, Director Economic Development; David Halcome, Deputy Fire Chief; Police Chief; Brandon Criss; Tarik Maxwell, Parks and Recreation, and Joshua Cox, IT Director.

PUBLIC HEARING:

- PUBLIC HEARING – 1ST Reading of the FY24 Fiscal Budget Ordinance – Executive/Finance Department**

Background/History:

Public Hearing for FY24 Proposed Budget - First Reading

The **Proposed Funded** dollar amount of the FY24 Budget is \$37,624,374.00. The full FY24 Budget can be viewed on the City of Forest Park's website by clicking the following link: [fy23-24_budget_book_1.pdf](#) (forestparkga.gov)

It was moved to close the Special Called meeting and open the Public Meeting at 6:38pm

Motion made by Councilmember James, Seconded by Councilmember Akins-Wells.
Voting Yea: Councilmember James, Councilmember Gutierrez, Councilmember Akins-Wells

There were no speakers in favor of or against the budget.

Mike William, City Attorney – Recommending allowing Sterling Seacrest and Pritchard to give a presentation on insurance connected to the budget.

Anthony Burger, Sterling Seacrest, and Pritchard - Gave a presentation on insurance as it relates to the budget.

Comments/Discussion from Governing Body:

Mayor Butler – When you are marketing the city and companies, how far back are they looking at our claim history?

Anthony Burger – They look back five years. As we get one more good year under the Employment Practices Liability, then one of the bad years drops off.

Councilmember James – The company that offered us the employment practice liability. You said there was only one willing to offer that. Is that company reputable?

Anthony Burger – Yes, they were going to non-renew the business, but we were able to talk to them when Mr. Clark came on board, and talked about the success he had in Jonesboro and the work he did there. We got them a lot more comfortable, and it went from not renewing to offering a program. This company does a wonderful job, and they their pay claims. I think we should be happy with them.

It was moved to close the Public Meeting and reconvene the Special Called Meeting at 6:46pm.

Motion made by Councilmember James, Seconded by Councilmember Gutierrez.
Voting Yea: Councilmember James, Councilmember Gutierrez, Councilmember Akins-Wells

Mayor Butler – Mr. Clark, I understand there are some changes you would like to present.

City Manager – Based on the presentation that you heard; it alarms me based upon the renewal. One thing I can assure you is when you are presented with something operational that needs to be fixed. This is a situation that is going to take all of us. Embedded in our plan moving forward one of the things he spoke about was the entity decided to finally bid, because we would have had no coverage.

They know of the programs that I have implemented to help mitigate those issues. Over the next few months, we will bring forth policies to start holding people accountable for their actions and wrecking our cars.

After going through this report, we have a lot of claims, and they are mostly on the automobile side and employment lawsuits. To be clear for every claim that we get we will have to pay 250,000 dollars. I shared with the broker that I feel the company can do better than that number. So, he will be having additional conversation and I will be talking to them as well.

To help with these accident claims we are going to implement an accident review committee. The employees will have a representative and we will review every accident in this city. It will be set up on a point system, so if the employee is not at fault, then there are no points. If they are at fault, there are points that count toward their employment based upon the infraction. It is not meant to be punitive but to bring awareness of what an accident does to our insurance policy.

The fiscal year 2023-2024 budget just to be transparent, there are additional items and changes just based upon dialogue. The first one I will talk about is the proposal that we just heard. We have increased our property and liability insurance across the city by \$137,000.00. It went from \$622,000.00 to \$759,000 and this is because of the various increases that you all just heard.

Mayor Butler - Where is that in here?

City Manager - I believe the line item is called Property and Casualty Insurance within the budget. In addition to that we mentioned this last time, we are recommending a five percent cost of living increase across the board. It has been placed in our contingency funds for us to spread across the member departments. In addition to that, on our last meeting I shared with you that this was to keep us from doing any reclassifications at this time. Today procurement started working on that RFP for the pay compensation and study planning. We hope to have that before the fourth quarter or third quarter of this year. In addition to that, for our public works department as we are going through the budget, we called out that there was an error in the amount of \$438,000.00. Based upon us being able to true up that era we were able to add additional updates to public works.

One is updating our gas pumps that are 22 years old, that amount is \$42,000.00. In addition to that for the public works department there is a four by four for their use. This is not an administrative vehicle and is total at \$63,000.00 and that is with the full-service body. In addition, just some different tools for the pickups and cars over at public works, as well as some additional tools for the heavy-duty trucks. This increase was a hundred and \$138,000.00. Keep in mind we removed the \$438,000 from their budget that was there, so we were still able to balance there. These additions that we are calling out are within our capital projects budget.

In addition to that for our fire department we were able to outfit them with three additional pickup trucks. The issue is with their equipment, which is sometimes hard for them to put in the back of a Tahoe when they are on the scene. This is just a new and cheaper way for them to still do their services. These three pickup trucks were \$60,000.00, including the outfitting it was a \$180,000.00. This \$180,000.00 increase from what we presented to you at our budget session of \$505,000.00.

Finally, the last addition to this budget as we stated in the last meeting. Councilmember James had four additional events that were added for a total of \$10,000.00. Those four events are only \$2500.00 dollars, for each of those events. That is your fiscal year 23 - 24 budget that we are proposing. This budget is \$37 million dollars, and we still have a net surplus of 602 thousand dollars as we reevaluate this budget in six months. This budget is not just a document for us, it will serve as a guide to lead us forward with fiscal responsibility, operational effect efficiency, and tightening our belts as to the way in which we do businesses every day as you know we continue to preach on revenue recovery effort. That means all eyes from every director is on

every penny that goes out of the city as well as the city manager looking and reviewing everything we pay out in this city, just to bring back dollars we may not be accounting for.

Councilmember James - I would like to talk about the 5% cross-the-board increase. I understand you said that it is cost of living increase, and we have had discussions about the difference between the highest paid and lowest paid employee. For example, someone making \$20,000 compared to someone making \$100,000, is a huge difference. Can you speak on the 5 percent and how you feel that is fair across the board.

City Manager – From what I see your compensation document is based upon steps and grades. Each step is based upon a percentage change across the organization from the lowest to the highest paid employee. The steps equate to years of service and the grades equal the percentages. While we recognize a 5 percent increase varies based upon the dollar amount that someone is paid the job requirements differ based upon that salary. I would say there is no right or wrong answer. I have seen it done several ways, but my recommendation is always going to be across the board to be equitable.

I am happy with whatever the pleasure of this board is. This recommendation gives us the opportunity to really evaluate the salaries. I shared with the mayor and council some of the things that I have found on how salaries and increases were provided, and it is alarming to me. Directors could hire individuals at rates they wanted based on mid-, medium- and high. To fix some of this, and before I give any additional raises, my commitment to this governing body is to study it all. To make certain every time I present you with something relative to a salary, that it is equitable from the lowest paid employee to the highest paid employee, based on those job descriptions and functions are.

I know we had the conversation Councilwoman James, and your feeling relative to a specific dollar. We want to make sure that the big vision and ideas that each of you have, that we keep big vision employees to keep that up. So instead of saying no increases, my recommendation was to give the 5 percent to continue to align with the market and then bring back to you a full comprehensive report. In addition to this I am looking at the study to ensure our rates are equitable across the region and that we are in line with other municipalities.

Councilmember Akins Wells – Councilwoman James and I are on the same page with this. We have employees that have been here 30 and 40 years that are just now making \$17.00. I trust you and I feel like some of our employees deserve a raise. That is why I will always be with the merit system and giving a raise based on their performance. I also understand what you were saying, what if their supervisor does not like them, and they do not get what they deserve.

City Manager – Councilmember Wells one of the things I will share, if we have an employee out of 250 employees with every one of our directors sitting here. If we have an employee that is not working and not doing their job, I will be looking at the director. Why are you not doing your job to ensure that first, you set the expectation of that job, second you measure that employee not just annually, but on a day-to-day basis and you lay out the path forward. If there is a deficiency, I am looking at the directors that you all have put in charge to ensure that those deficiencies are fixed. So, there will be no room for us to have any employees that are not carrying their weight, because if we do, I am looking to the supervisor to see what you are doing to fix that.

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 6:58pm for Personnel, Litigation or Real Estate.

Motion made by Councilmember James, Seconded by Councilmember Gutierrez.
Voting Yea: Councilmember James, Councilmember Gutierrez, Councilmember Akins-Wells

It was moved to reconvene back into the Special Called Meeting at 7:59pm.

Motion made by Councilmember James, Seconded by Councilmember Akins-Wells.
Voting Yea: Councilmember James, Councilmember Gutierrez, Councilmember Akins-Wells

ADJOURNMENT:

It was moved to adjourn the Special Called Meeting at 8:00pm.

Motion made by Councilmember James, Seconded by Councilmember Gutierrez.
Voting Yea: Councilmember James, Councilmember Gutierrez, Councilmember Akins-Wells

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, those requiring accommodation for Council meetings should notify the City Clerk's Office at least 24 hours prior to the meeting at 404-366-1555.

APPROVED