



CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION

Monday, May 20, 2024 at 6:00 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 Allan Mears

The Honorable Dabouze Antoine
The Honorable Latresa Akins-Wells

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

APPROVED MINUTES

VIRTUAL NOTICE

To watch the meeting via YouTube - <https://bit.ly/3c28p0A>

The Council Meetings will be live-streamed and available on the City's

YouTube page - "**City of Forest Park GA**"

CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME: Mayor Butler 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		✓
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- arrived at 6:02 p.m		✓
Allan Mears	Council Member, Ward 5		✓

John Wiggins, Finance Director; Jeremi Patterson, Deputy Finance Director; James Shelby, Interim Director of Planning & Community Development; Shalonda Brown, HR Director; Diane Lewis, Deputy HR Director; Bobby Jinks, Public Works Director; Nigel Watley; Deputy Public Works Director; Geoff May, Deputy Fire Chief; Rodney Virgil,

Level 2 Support Engineer; Pauline Warrior, Senior Management Analyst; Javon Lloyd, PIO; Derry Walker, Code Enforcement Director; Tarik Maxwell, Rec and Lesure Director; Rochelle Dennis, Interim Economic Director; Authur Geeter, Procurement; Talisa Clark, Procurement; Brandon Criss, Police Chief; Dorothy Roper-Jackson, Court Director and Danielle Matricardi, City Attorney.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA WITH ANY ADDITIONS / DELETIONS:

It was moved to amend the agenda to delete Item #1- Council Discussion and Approval to purchase a 2024 Chevy Tahoe from Jim Ellis Chevrolet for the Code Enforcement Department in the amount of \$68,939.00 and to hold Items #'s 10 and 11 as Public Hearings.

Motion made by Councilmember James, Seconded by Councilmember Antoine.

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

NEW BUSINESS:

1. **Council Discussion and Approval to purchase a 2024 Chevy Tahoe from Jim Ellis Chevrolet for the Code Enforcement Department in the amount of \$68,939.00**-Code Enforcement Department

Background/History:

The Code Enforcement Department is seeking approval to add an additional vehicle to the fleet. With the hiring of a Code Enforcement Supervisor, there will be the need for an additional vehicle. The Director currently drives the supervisor's vehicle. It is essential that the Director has a vehicle to perform the work duties of the job. The department would like to stay compatible with the other Director's vehicles, which are Chevrolet Tahoes. I have enclosed (3) quotes. The 2024 Chevy Tahoe from Jim Ellis Chevrolet quote of \$68,939.00, which includes the strobe lights in the grill and bumper, is the preferred choice and the lowest quote.

This Item was removed from the agenda.

2. **Council Discussion Approval of a Telework Policy**-Executive Offices

Background/History:

The Leaf Life initiative, which has been proposed by Mayor Butler and subsequently approved by the Council, is a comprehensive effort aimed at addressing various aspects of employee well-being. One of the key recommendations from this initiative is the telework provision, which has emerged as a popular trend among many organizations worldwide.

Telework, also known as remote work, allows employees to work from an alternative location while adhering to the same job requirements and terms as the central workplace. This provision offers a unique opportunity to utilize telework as a human capital management tool, providing employees with more flexibility and autonomy in their work.

However, it is important to note that while many of the City's services are typically provided in City office facilities that require employee presence, department directors have been given the authority to designate qualified employees for telework or alternative work arrangements. The City Manager has worked closely with all user departments to ensure that if a telework option for applicable, non-essential employees is approved, the delivery of our services and our commitment to our citizenry will remain uncompromised.

The City Manager has also established security measures and guidelines to protect sensitive information and ensure data privacy.

In addition, implementing telework requires using several technological tools, such as Asana, ADP, and Microsoft Teams, which are already implemented and utilized by applicable employees to ensure smooth workflow and accountability. These tools allow for effective communication and collaboration among team members regardless of their physical location.

The telework provision is a promising initiative that can attract, recruit, and retain top talent. It also offers numerous benefits to employees, such as reduced travel time and expenses, increased productivity, and improved work-life balance. The accompanying policy and agreement have been appended for review by the governing body, and it is recommended that careful consideration be given to this initiative to ensure its effective implementation and success. The City Manager anticipates executing this initiative on a date that will be determined in the 3rd quarter of 2024.

Mr. Clark, City Manager- Noted that he has gone through two different iterations of employee surveys in which the employees have voiced their excitement about having the option to telework. Mr. Clark said that he directed all department head directors to send a telework schedule and an implementation plan for their department, including creating an agreement for teleworking.

Mr. Clark, City Manager- stated that staff have been working with the IT Department to ensure all the tools necessary for teleworking are in place, like using a global task management system like Asana and answering phone calls using VoIP. Mr. Clark also mentioned that the number of teleworking days would not exceed two (2) days.

Mr. Clark, City Manager- expressed all departments would not participate in teleworking, and some departments decided to work 10 hours/4 days a week.

3. **Council Discussion and Approval of a Consent Agenda Introduction–Executive Offices**

Background/History:

One of the best-kept secrets of efficient boards and assemblies is the consent agenda, also known as the consent calendar. Contrary to popular myth, Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised does not require that every single item be handled with the full pomp and circumstance of a motion, second, debate, and vote. Some decisions are either routine or are so widely supported that approval a separate would be inefficient.

Staff is recommending by adoption of a special rule of order allowing for the consent agenda process. This means that the Council can group as many items together as they desired, and adopt them all at once without debate. The consent agenda can be a powerful tool for a council that is required to give approvals to items that are routine, non-controversial, or both. The secret of the consent agenda's success is twofold: choosing the right items to put on the consent agenda and educating members so they know how to handle the process. If either piece is missing, the consent agenda loses its effectiveness.

Here's how a typical consent agenda is handled: The chair places the consent agenda before the City Council and asks, "Does anyone wish to remove any item from the consent agenda?" Since any member who doesn't trust the process can easily remove any or all of the items, it is important (at least at first) that the items are not be confrontational or controversial. Similarly, if any member wants a separate vote on any item, or wants to discuss an item, that item must be removed from the consent agenda. It's all or

nothing. (For that reason, when minutes are to be placed on a consent agenda, it's a good idea to provide the draft minutes well before the meeting; that way, you can include the corrected version on the consent agenda.)

It helps to have each item numbered so a member can call out "Number 3" or whatever number they want to remove. In such a case, the chair responds: "Number 3 is removed." (At that time, the decision should be made whether to take up the issue immediately after the consent agenda is adopted or to place it under its "regular" category heading for that meeting.)

The chair then asks, "Are there any other items to be removed?" If there are none, the chair states: "Items numbered (listing remaining item numbers) are before you. If there is no objection, these items will be adopted." (Pause to see if there is an objection.) "There being no objection, by "whatever the vote is" the consent agenda is approved." A consent agenda can empower our Council to take care of routine issues efficiently and easily so you can reserve time for more urgent matters – and make faster progress toward your goals.

Mr. Clark, City Manager- Noted that staff are trying to streamline the agenda process by implementing the consent agenda, which requires one vote on items under the consent agenda.

Comments/Discussion from Governing Body:

Councilmember James Noted- that the timeline in which the council receives their books to review agenda items should be considerable and should give enough time for them to read through the agenda items. Mr. Clark expressed that the council receives a draft agenda before the approved agenda goes out for publication.

Councilmember James- stated that if an agenda item's deadline is not met before the due date, it should be added to the next meeting.

Councilmember Akins-Wells- agreed with Councilmember James and suggested allowing staff to start working on the next agenda right after a meeting has ended. Councilmember Akins-Wells also mentioned that all the reading of each agenda item adds to lengthy meetings.

4. **Council Discussion and Approval on the Employee Benefit's Renewal for Fiscal Year 2024-2025** – Executive Offices

Background/History:

The City's Employee Benefits Program renews annually on July 1st. Our current Medical, Dental, and Vision Insurance Carrier is Cigna. As you know, the City recently hired MSI Benefits Group as its new Insurance Broker following an RFQ for Employee Benefits Brokerage Services. MSI worked directly with Cigna to obtain a competitive renewal offer. The underwriting workup called for a 17% increase. Cigna released the initial renewal at +9% with a verbal non-marketing offer of +7%. The City Manager, HR Director, Deputy Director of HR, and MSI reviewed these options. The team agreed that if Cigna lowered the increase to +4% with additional wellness dollars, this would be the recommended option presented to the Mayor and Council for approval.

John Legit, MSI Benefits Group Representative, gave a brief presentation and Noted that Cigna offered 7% and, after negotiations, was able to negotiate down to 4%. Mr. Legit stated there would be no changes

to the three (3) plans provided to employees; the Health Reimbursement Arrangement (HRA) would stay intact, and there were no changes to the plan design.

Councilmember Gutierrez- inquired if the deductible would stay at \$1,500. Mr. Legit stated that the deductible is \$1,000 for the middle plan; he also mentioned that the \$1,500 deductible is for family, which is \$500 per individual and depends on the employee's plan.

Mr. Legit- Noted changes that will take place within Cigna, including their Health and Wellness program, which is currently with Motivate Me and will be moving over to Virgin Pulse; he also Noted that the recommended incentive option is Option 3. Mr. Legit expressed that Virgin Pulse is similar to Motivate Me and will allow employees to earn pulse cash dollars based on doing healthy things like biometric screenings and going to the doctor for preventative care exams. Mr. Legit Noted additions would include biometric outcomes, telephonic coaching, and the Cigna dental goal; he also Noted employees can earn points, which they can earn up to \$400/year. Mr. Legit stated the current wellness fund for the city is \$20,000 and has been increased to \$30,000, which would allow the city to reward employees using that funding line. Mr. Legit Noted that dental and vision did not change, there was a rate lock, and the life insurance would remain \$20,000 for employees.

Mr. Legit- Noted that the Health Reimbursement Arrangement is currently through MedCom and recommends changing it to Admin America. This would allow employees to sign up for a Flexible Spending Account (FSA) in which they could contribute up to \$3,200, with a recommended set minimum of \$250 coming out of their paychecks throughout the year, and is tax-free. The money would be placed on a debit card for doctor visits, bills, and pharmacy uses. Mr. Legit also Noted that the dependent care account (DCA) would be included, which allows the employee to pay for childcare.

Mr. Legit- stated the recommended option would be to renew medical, dental, and vision insurance with Cigna with no changes to the plans or employee costs. Basic life and AD&D insurance with Lincoln Financial will also be renewed with no changes. The HRA administrators would be changed from MedCom to AdminAmerica, and FSA/DCA would be offered to all employees.

Comments/Discussion from Governing Body:

Councilmember Gutierrez- inquired about having a sick bank. Mr. Clark Noted that the Human Resources Department has requested employees donate some of their time to other employees in need.

Councilmember Mears- inquired about hiring additional staff. Mr. Clark Noted that MSI Benefits will handle most of the tasks the HR department would handle.

5. **Council Discussion and Approval on Establishing the City of Forest Park as a Purple Heart City- Executive Offices**

Background/History:

The Purple Heart is a military decoration awarded to members of the armed forces who are wounded or killed in action. Designating a city as a Purple Heart City allows communities to express gratitude and support for veterans and their families.

Comments/Discussion from Governing Body:

Councilmember James- Noted seeing a lot of veterans present and thanked them for their services.

Councilmember Antoine-Thank the veterans for their services.

Councilmember Gutierrez- Noted that he is proud the city is becoming a purple heart city.

Councilmember Akins-Wells- Thanked everyone for being present.

Councilmember Mears- Thanked everyone for all that they did.

Mayor Butler- Noted presenting a proclamation at the regular session meeting for the veterans.

6. **Council Discussion and Approval of an Employee Assistance Program (EAP)**–Executive Offices

Background/History:

The Leaf Life initiative, championed by Mayor Butler and subsequently approved by the Council, aims to address the issue of mental health crises faced by employees. To that end, two employee assistance programs are being introduced to provide wrap-around services that can help employees navigate the complexities of such crises.

It is a well-known fact that stress is a common experience for many employees and business owners. Over 26% of business and HR leaders report being extremely or very stressed. This number increases to 35% of leaders from companies with 250 to 500 employees. In light of this, the city of Forest Park conducted a survey of its employees, which revealed that over half of them expressed concern about their mental health.

In response to these concerns, we are proposing the enlistment of two new providers for EAP services in the city. These providers, One Source Counseling and Tuck Holdings Therapy & Crisis Counseling Services, have been carefully selected to meet the unique needs of the city's employees.

One Source Counseling is an independent family-owned Limited Liability Corporation that specializes in catering to small to medium sized organizations and businesses. They have a network of clinicians throughout Georgia, and their services are streamlined to respond quickly and efficiently to employee needs. The organization has, in the past, provided services to our Fire Department through grant funding, and they have received very positive feedback from the fire personnel.

Tuck Holding Therapy and Crisis Counseling Services, on the other hand, is an independent company that prioritizes the well-being of city workers, recognizing the stresses and challenges inherent to municipal work. They provide comprehensive therapy services that are easily accessible to employees. Currently, Dr. Tuck provides chaplaincy services to our Police Department.

If approved, all city employees would have access to either service based on their preference. Both services charge a fee between \$90 and \$95 per hour. We recommend that both services be approved to provide the necessary support for the mental health of our employees. By doing so, we will be taking a significant step towards creating a healthier, more productive work environment. Staff recommends the approval of both agreements.

Comments/Discussion from Governing Body:

Councilmember James- inquired if employees can use any mental health provider or the ones issued by the city. Mr. Clark Noted that to receive the benefits of the city paying for it, employees would have to

use the two approved vendors. Ms. Brown, HR Director, included the city does have a program through Cigna that the employees could utilize by using Telemed or through empowerment.

Councilmember Akins-Wells- inquired about the rate and Noted it was too low. Mr. Clark pointed out that he was the one who cut the rate.

7. **Council Discussion and Approval of Board Appointments–Executive Offices**

Background/History:

Throughout the course of the year, various board appointments come up. Staff is seeking direction on the following board appointments:

1 – Planning Commission (Appointee to fill the **unexpired term of Andy Porter**. Said term to expire March 7, 2026.)

2 – Urban Design Review Board (Appointee to fill the **unexpired term of Leonardo Penaloza**. Said term to expire March 7, 2025).

3 – Downtown Development Authority (**Eric Stallings** to be reappointed to the Downtown Development Authority for a term to expire. The old term expired on April 30, 2024. New Term to Expire April 30, 2028).

This item will be discussed during the Executive Session meeting.

8. **Council Discussion and Approval of the Municipal Court Fines and Fees Schedule-Municipal Court Department**

Background/History: City of Forest Park Municipal Court fines and fees schedule. All offenses listed on the fines and fees schedule are derived from all traffic, misdemeanor, and city ordinances that fall within the jurisdiction of the City of Forest Park. Fines and fees are updated by judges within their jurisdiction every two (2) years.

Dorothy Roper-Jackson, Court Administrator- Noted that the fine and fee schedule derives from the official code of Georgia under Title 40-Motor Vehicles and Traffic; she also stated that once a fee is set, the judge over that jurisdiction cannot go under or over the set fee. Ms. Roper-Jackson also Noted completing a survey with surrounding jurisdictions to set the fees for the city. Ms. Roper-Jackson stated that the fine and fees are sent to the Georgia Superior Court Clerk, Peace Officers Immunity and benefits, and the Counterdrug, a.k.a. the city and local victims.

Comments/Discussion from Governing Body:

Councilmember James- inquired about the difference between cash and security. Ms. Roper-Jackson stated the cash amount is the fine amount, and if the arrestee decides to use a bonding company to bond out, the bond amount will be doubled, and the city has no control over the bonding company.

9. **Council Discussion and Approval of a Task Order for Falcon Design to assist the City of Forest Park with Bid Assistance and Construction Administration for Park Signs-Planning and Community Development Department**

Background/History:

The City proposes installing new monument signs at City Parks to reflect updated branding. The design for the signs is similar to the City's Gateway signs completed by Precision Planning, Inc. PPI. Falcon will assist the City with construction administration and bid assistance based on construction documents provided by PPI.

James Shelby, Interim PCD Director- Noted that the task order will assist with the bid assistance and the construction administration of park signs. Mr. Shelby also Noted presenting this item two meetings ago and pointed out that the only thing missing was ensuring each sign had the ward number.

10. **Council Discussion and Approval of Case # CUP-2024-01- Conditional Use Permit-**Planning and Community Development Department

Background/History:

The applicant is requesting approval for a Conditional use permit to own and operate a daycare center within the Single-Family Residential District (RS). **Per Sec 8-8-28. - Single family residential district (RS), Pre-k facilities and daycare centers require a conditional use permit to operate within the Single-Family Residential District.** This item was initially scheduled to be heard by the Planning Commission on March 21, 2024, but was deferred to April 18, 2024, due to the lack of quorum at the Planning Commission meeting. On April 18, 2024, The Planning Commission voted to approve the Conditional Use Permit Request. The proposed location has been granted a conditional use permit in the past to operate a daycare center, but due to a change of ownership and business name, the ordinance requires that any new applicant reapply for a Conditional Use Permit. If the Mayor and Council approve the Conditional Use Permit Request, the applicant will move forward with her business plans to own and operate a childcare facility for children ages 6 weeks of age to 12 years of age.

James Shelby, Interim PCD Director- Noted that the conditional use permit is based on the city's ordinance, which states that a conditional use permit is required anytime there is a change of ownership or a business name change. Mr. Shelby also Noted the planning commission board approved the conditional use permit on April 18, 2024.

11. **Council Discussion and Approval of Case # TA-2024-02 – Text Amendment-**Planning and Community Development Department

Background/History:

With a review of event centers and places of assembly, The City of Forest Park issued a 180-day moratorium on October 2, 2023, which prevented zoning verification applications and other applications for such businesses from being accepted until an amendment was approved. On April 18, 2024, The City of Forest Park Planning commission voted to approve Case # TA-2024-02 – Text Amendment to clarify and revise certain provisions relating to event centers and similar places of assembly in Article A.- General Provisions, Sec. 8-8-4. - Definitions of the City of Forest Park Code of Ordinances to amend such section (D) adding event centers to definitions, Article B. – Zoning Districts, Overlay Districts, and Design Guidelines Established, Section 8-8-40 General Commercial District (GC), to amend such section and terminate the permitted use of Theaters, assembly halls, concert hall, or similar places of assembly when conducted completely within enclosed building in the permitted Retail and Business Uses section and only maintain places of assembly and event centers being permitted as a conditional Use, and Article C. – Development and Use Standards, Section 8-8-84. Limitations on Certain Businesses of the City of

Forest Park Code of Ordinances to amend such section (g) spacing and add Subsection (11) Event Centers, within Chapter 8 (Zoning) of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Forest Park. By Mayor and Council approving this text amendment, The Planning & Community development department will be able to lift the moratorium and authorize such business uses within the guidelines of the City of Forest Park Zoning Ordinance moving forward.

James Shelby, Interim PCD Director- noted that the text amendment would clarify an event center, remove event centers, theatres, and assembly halls as permitted uses, and give more control over what happens at that site by being a conditional use permit.

Comments/Discussion from Governing Body:

Councilwoman James- inquired about the event centers already in existence or someone trying to hold an event. Mr. Shelby Noted that the existing event centers would be grandfathered in, and if someone is trying to come to hold an event, they would need a conditional use permit.

Councilmember James- inquired if the conditional use permit would need to be renewed multiple times. Mr. Shelby Noted that the permit would be used for the entirety of the building unless it is sold, or the ownership has changed.

Councilmember Gutierrez- inquired if it is common with other municipalities and noted having a problem getting a permit for every celebration. Mr. Shelby noted that a conditional use permit would not be used for celebrations but more so for zoning matters. Mr. Clark clarified that it would not be an event, but an actual business designed to hold events.

12. **Council Discussion and Approval to recognize the Forest Park Police E-911 Operators as First Responders**-Police Department

Background/History:

Forest Park Police 911 Communication Operators are dedicated professionals who work around the clock every day of the year. The Communications Department comprises twelve (12) operators and a manager, each assigned to one of four shifts.

It is important to recognize our 911 operators as first responders due to their crucial role in emergencies. These professionals are often the first point of contact in times of crisis, providing critical assistance, guidance, and support to callers until help arrives. They must remain calm under pressure, assess the situation quickly, and dispatch the appropriate emergency services.

Designating 911 operators as first responders will help raise awareness of their demanding jobs and highlight their vital role in public safety.

Acknowledging our 911 operators as first responders would be a positive step towards recognizing their critical contributions to saving lives and ensuring public safety.

Chief Criss- expressed his desire to recognize the city's 911 operators as first responders who allow police and fire to do their jobs effectively and efficiently.

13. **Council Discussion and Approval to Transfer a Service Weapon-** Police Department

Background/History:

Pursuant to the hire incentive approved by Mayor and Council, an employee who has reached twenty-five (25) years of service is privy to his/her own service weapon.

The Forest Park Police Department requests the transfer of a Glock 22 Gen 4, 40-caliber (Serial# WXW156) to George T. Orr Jr. who retired on 01/31/2020 with thirty-three (33) years of service to the department. There is no cost associated with this transfer.

Chief Criss- Noted that this was a transfer of a service weapon after servicing the city. Chief Criss also Noted that this was approved by the previous administration, but the actual transfer was never completed.

Comments/Discussion from Governing Body:

Councilmember Mears- inquired if this is something that will continue on an ongoing basis. Chief Criss Noted yes and explained that the previous legislation allows a transfer for anyone who has served the city for over twenty (20) years or more.

Mayor Butler- Noted that she remembers it being approved and is surprised it has not occurred. Chief Criss Noted that he was contacted and informed by the employee it was never executed, and he has no records of it being executed; he also Noted he would do additional research to ensure it was not completed.

14. **Council Discussion and Approval to award Omega Pest Solutions for Citywide Pest Control-Procurement Department**

Background/History:

The Procurement Department is seeking Council approval to award Omega Pest Solutions for citywide pest control services.

In an effort to centralize some of our professional services throughout the City. The City of Forest Park initiated a competitive bidding process for citywide pest control services on March 14th, 2024. Following a thorough evaluation, the Procurement Department is recommending the award of the contract to Omega Pest Solutions.

Background:

Three companies submitted bids for the pest control services contract.

Power House Termite and Pest Control, Inc- \$20,400 per year

Orkin, LLC- \$16,327.56 per year

Omega Pest Solution- \$5,940 per year

Omega Pest Solutions emerged as the lowest bidder meeting all necessary licensing and certification requirements.

The proposed contract is for a term of one year, with provisions for evaluation and potential renewal for up to two additional one-year terms.

Omega Pest Solutions will provide on-site pest control services on a monthly basis, as well as rodent removal as needed, servicing a total of 17 buildings throughout the city.

Financial Implications:

The monthly cost for services provided by Omega Pest Solutions is \$495.00 per month, resulting in a yearly cost of \$5,940.

Costs will be appropriated and paid monthly by each department under their Professional Services line-item budget.

Mr. Geeter, Procurement- Noted that there were three (3) competitors. Omega Pest Solutions was the lowest bidder, and it had good references.

Mr. Clark- Noted that staff is centralizing things and saving money; he also Noted that the company is minority-owned, and the city is considering a one-year period to evaluate whether the company will work out.

Comments/Discussion from Governing Body:

Councilmember Akins-Wells expressed hope that the city will get what it needs, given the low cost. Mr. Clark Noted that he shared the same sentiment and wanted to meet with the company; he also Noted that they are well-qualified and included some of the public works employees who can get certified to work in-house.

Councilmember Mears- Noted liking the idea of training employees to retrieve their chemical licenses and saving the city money. Mr. Jinks included some employees who have the book and have been studying to take the state test.

Councilmember Akins-Wells inquired if the employees who receive the certification will receive a pay increase. Mr. Clark Noted he would rather pay the employee for the certification and do it in-house.

15. **Council Discussion and Approval of Designating Public Works as First Responders**-Public Works Department

Background/History:

The Public Works Department seeks Council approval to recognize and designate Public Works as First Responders. This designation is in alignment with the national observance of National Public Works Week, celebrated annually from May 19th to May 25th.

Background:

President George W. Bush issued Presidential Policy Directive 8 (PPD-8) in 2003, officially recognizing public works as first responders.

In 2010, Mississippi, under House Bill (HB) 664, recognized public works professionals as first responders.

The APWA Board of Directors approved the adoption of a national "Public Works First Responder" symbol for use throughout North America in 2017.

The US Senate passed Senate Concurrent Resolution 15 (S.Con.Res.15) in 2019, expressing support for the designation of October 28, 2019, as Honoring the Nation's First Responders Day, with public works specifically included.

In 2022, New Hampshire Governor Chris Sununu signed into law SB325, formally recognizing public works employees as first responders.

Public works professionals are often referred to as "the silent arm of public safety," providing vital support to emergency response partners and helping protect and restore essential services following emergencies.

The National Incident Management System (NIMS) lists public works alongside police, fire, and public health as essential components of emergency response.

Public works professionals are often the first on the scene and the last to leave during disasters, providing critical support to other first responders. This designation would serve as an invaluable morale boost for Public Works staff and reaffirm their commitment to serving the community. Recognizing Public Works as First Responders does not diminish the heroic acts of law enforcement or fire departments but acknowledges the specialized support Public Works provides, such as maintaining clear and safe roadways during emergency situations.

Mr. Jinks- Noted since 9-11, everyone has seen the role that public works play, and allowing those employees to become first responders would boost morale.

Comments/Discussion from Governing Body:

Councilmember Akins-Wells- expressed that she believes public works employees are first responders and thanked staff for bringing this forward. Mr. Clark Noted he does not want to take all the credit because all the council members have brought it to his attention.

16. Council Discussion and Approval on a Five (5) Stall Portable Restroom for city events in the amount of \$20,250.00-Recreation and Leisure Department

Background/History: The City of Forest Park hosts various special events for the community within Starr Park throughout the year. With each event, the need for accessible restrooms grows. To meet that need, the Recreation & Leisure Services Department is looking to rent a 5-stall portable restroom through CleanSpace, which is the local Forest Park business. These five (5) Stall Portable Restrooms will be used for 15 upcoming city events for a total of \$20,250.00. We request to have this amount budgeted for the upcoming fiscal year 2024-2025.

Mrs. Adams- Noted the rec and leisure department was purchasing on an as-needed basis for events; procurement has worked with them to look at the cost efficiency of possibly purchasing the city's own five-stall restroom, which was more expensive due to the upkeep and maintenance. Mrs. Adams stated that the staff decided to stay with the portable rentals and use them for events already identified. Mrs. Adams also stated that the staff completed online market research and has chosen a local business that provides stalls and a discount to secure yearly.

Mr. Maxwell- noted the events roughly have over 400 people, but only three (3) restrooms are in use, and staff are looking to increase the number of restrooms.

Comments/Discussion from Governing Body:

Councilmember James- inquired if this will be looked into while the new facility is being built. Mr. Clark noted that the city center and gymnasium would be open to the public.

Mr. Clark- inquired about the selection of what events will have the portable stalls and wanted to be consistent across the board.

Councilmember Akins-Wells inquired if the city could build its own bathroom for the cost of renting portable restrooms. Mrs. Adams Noted that it costs \$68,000 to purchase, with an additional \$11,000 for the upkeep and removal of waste, and the staff cannot maintain that. Mr. Maxwell Noted most events are seven (7) hours or longer.

Councilmember Mears- Noted to make sure that is a part of the planning for the new park.

17. **Council Discussion and Approval on Senior Center Floor Repairs-**Recreation and Leisure Department

Background/History: The Recreation & Leisure Services Department is looking to repair the damage to the floor of the Multipurpose Room in the Senior Center building. We have received three quotes to complete the repairs from three different contractors. The quotes are as follows: SmiFam LLC: \$34,139.60 ATL Home Renovations, LLC: \$32,850.24 Hopkins Renovation And Design: \$31,750 The original lowest quote provided through Hopkins Renovation And Design has decreased from \$31,750.00 to \$20,300.00 due to the Department covering the cost of materials needed using the Home Depot account. Based on the quoted amount provided, the Department has chosen to go with Hopkins Renovation And Design to complete the repairs. Funding Source: Capital Outlay 300-41-6110-54-2503.

Mrs. Adams Noted receiving three (3) quotes; the lowest responsive bidder was selected along with reference checks. Mrs. Adams included that this would allow the city to purchase the materials needed to complete the project at a lower cost than the vendor going out and making the purchases.

ADJOURNMENT:

It was moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:12 p.m.

Motion made by Councilmember Antoine, Seconded by Councilmember James.

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

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

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