



# CITY COUNCIL REGULAR SESSION

Monday, February 05, 2024 at 7:00 PM  
Council Chambers and YouTube Livestream

Website: [www.forestparkga.gov](http://www.forestparkga.gov)  
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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

**CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME:** Mayor Butler called the meeting to order at 7:22 p.m.

**INVOCATION/PLEDGE:** The invocation and pledge were led by Bishop Fortson.

**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; John Wiggins; Finance Director; LaShawn Gardiner, Director of Planning & Community Development; Kwame Marshall, Multi-Media Specialist; Shalonda Brown, HR Director; Diane Lewis, Deputy HR Director; Bobby Jinks, Public Works Director; Nigel Watley; Deputy Public Works Director, Bruce Abrahams, Director of Economic Development; Rochell Dennis, Project Manager; Latosha Clemons; Fire Chief, David Halcome, Deputy Fire Chief; Tarik Maxwell, Recreation and Leisure Director; Joshua Cox, IT Director; Rodney Virgil, Level 2 Support Engineer; Derry Walker, Code Enforcement Director; Pauline Warrior; Senior Management Analyst, Chief Criss, PD; and Danielle Matricardi, City Attorney.

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

It was moved to amend the agenda to include item #11-Council Discussion and Approval to change the Ward 1 budgeted line item from Homecoming Parade to Black History Month Program.

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:

1. **Council Approval of Council Work Session and Regular Meeting Minutes from January 16, 2024-**  
City Clerk

It was moved to approve the Council Work Session and Regular Meeting minutes from January 16, 2024, as printed.

Motion made by Councilmember James, Seconded by Councilmember Antoine.

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

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

**Quan Rhea-** expressed her excitement about Wellness with Wells and would like Wellness with Wells to continue, especially with the great turnout from citizens.

**Zack Parker-** expressed his grievances with the Council's lack of knowledge of Robert's Rules of Order and Codes and noted having his civil rights violated. Mr. Parker said he would continue to express his sentiments regarding the mistreatment by the Council and speak until he moved, or every member of the Council would no longer be on the dais. Mr. Parker noted that the Council should know the Codes sections and he will continue to speak on the codes starting at the beginning and working his way through.

**Jay Evans-** expressed her problem with City pipes and noted the city needs to update its pipes. Ms. Evans noted upgrading her pipes from septic to connect to the city's pipes, which have not been connected, and asked the city to look into this.

#### CITY MANAGER'S REPORT:

**City Manager, Ricky Clark-** recognized the retirement of Economic Development Director Bruce Abraham, noting his last day with the city will be February 29<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Clark said the HOME program has 100% total applicants and is currently in phase 2; he also noted touring all city parks with staff and a representative from Senator Warnock's office to kickstart an initiative called Forest Parks "R" us that will repurpose or retrofit all of the parks throughout the city. Mr. Clark stated that the staff is looking into unifying the city's pocket parks with the same playground equipment. He also mentioned the two (2) options staff has been looking at: option one (1), which includes a total installation price of \$50,201.00, and option three (3), which consists of a total installation price of \$81,749.00. Mr. Clark gave an update on Starr Park and noted that the original cost of the park was high due to plans to demolish the whole park; however, only specific infrastructure will need to be demolished, such as the amphitheater area, which would also be moved to the side. Mr. Clark recognized Lisa Waller, who is celebrating 24 years with the City's Police Department, and Congratulated James Tant on his promotion to Lieutenant in the Fire Department. Mr. Clark mentioned the budget retreat had been rescheduled to February 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup>; he also noted that the House Bill for the hotel/motel tax was approved

and is currently at the Senate. Mr. Clark mentions finishing the programming with all directors for the City Center and will bring forth the plans within the next 90 to 120 days with an aggressive completion date of December 2026. Mr. Clark mentioned April 18<sup>th</sup> will be a cause for a celebration of the success of Fort Gillem for being recognized as the fastest rapid redevelopment of a decommissioned military base. Mr. Clark recognized Councilmember Gutierrez on his recent awards and certifications with the Carl Vinson Institute of Government by completing the Rober E. Knox Jr. Municipal Leadership Institute Training and the Certificate of Excellence.

## PRESENTATIONS:

### 2. Proclamation- Jonathan D. Rashmir

Mayor Butler and Council presented Mr. Jonathan David Rashmir with a proclamation for his ongoing dedication, leadership, and exemplary service to the residents, businesses, and constituents of Forest Park, Georgia.

## NEW BUSINESS:

### 3. Council Approval on a Black History Program – Councilwoman James

It was motioned to approve the Black History Program.

Motion made by Councilmember Akins-Wells, Seconded by Councilmember James.

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

#### Comments/Discussion from Governing Body:

**Councilmember Gutierrez-** wanted to make sure she had what was needed and asked if it would be brought up in the next meeting or if, she needed the money now to start working.

**Councilmember James-** yes.

**Councilmember Gutierrez-** noted they could bring it up if more funds are needed.

**City Manager Clark-** noted for transparency in a later line item they all approve the amendment funded in the amount of \$2500.00.

### 4. Council Approval on GMA Pension Plan – Executive Office

Mr. Clark requested holding the approval of this item to seek input from the governing body and to direct staff to continue conversations with the Georgia Municipal Association (GMA) to finalize the Ordinances and bring them back as a first and second reading.

It was motioned to approve to direct staff to continue conversations with Georgia Municipal Association (GMA) regarding the City's Pension Plan.

Motion made by Councilmember James Seconded by Councilmember Akins-Wells.

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

5. **Council Approval of the Comprehensive Classification Analysis & Compensation Study – Executive Office**

It was motioned to approve the Comprehensive Classification Analysis & Compensation Study.

Motion made by Councilmember Mears Seconded by Councilmember James.

**Comments/Discussion from Governing Body:**

**Councilmember Akins-Wells-** noted that anytime they are voting on things like this she would like to see the different companies that put in a bid; so, she knows what she is voting on.

**City Manager Clark-** noted he will ensure they get all the different companies tomorrow.

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

6. **Council Approval of Lobbyist Services- Carpri & Clay, Inc.– Executive Office**

It was motioned to approve Carpri & Clay, Inc. for Lobbyist Services.

Motion made by Councilmember James, Seconded by Councilmember Akins-Wells.

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

7. **Council Approval of the Service Agreement with Georgia Power to install the lighting on the new Welcome Signs – Executive Office**

It was motioned to approve the Service Agreement with Georgia Power to install the lighting on the new Welcome Signs.

Motion made by Councilmember James, Seconded by Councilmember Mears.

**Comments/Discussion from Governing Body:**

**Councilmember Akins-Wells-** wanted to know once approved when it would start.

**James Shelby –** noted that once approved he will get it back to Georgia Power and they will have to cut them a check. He stated that he did not know at the moment and would get back to them.

Point of order by Councilmember Mears. He wanted to know if they were the only ones that would be done. He asked if they would put up more signs in the future.

**Mayor Butler-** noted at some point they would like to get some signs at the logistics center but did not know about throughout the city.

**James Shelby-** noted that the only welcome signs they tried to do were at the main entrances of the city. He noted they do have some stick post signs like at McDonald's and coming in off Old Dixie. He noted the other signs were monument signs that they planned to light up. He noted that there are no other welcome signs that will be put up.

**City Manager Clark** – asked if there were other areas, they would like to see Gateway Signs deployed. He noted there has been dialogue about doing one on Old Dixie.

**James Shelby**- noted there is a sign coming from Tara Blvd. to Old Dixie Hwy.

**Councilmember Akins Wells**- noted it is really small.

**James Shelby** – noted the easement is so small, and that was the best that they could do.

**Councilmember Mears**- noted the reason he asked is because if there is going to be more, it is best to get them all up and hook them up at one time.

**James Shelby**- noted those would be the only ones.

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

**8. Council Approval of a Software Request with OpenGov/Carahsoft-Finance Department**

It was motioned to approve a Software Request with OpenGov/Carahsoft.

Motion made by Councilmember Antoine, Seconded by Councilmember James.

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

**9. Council Approval on the Use of Drones for the Police Department- Police Department**

It was motioned to approve the Use of Drones for the Police Department.

Motion made by Councilmember Antoine, Seconded by Councilmember Akins-Wells.

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

**10. Council Approval to Purchase two (2) Canines and to Enter into an Agreement between the Owners and the Forest Park Police Department- Police Department**

It was motioned to approve the Purchase of two (2) Canines and to Enter into an Agreement between the Owners and the Forest Park Police Department.

Motion made by Councilmember Antoine, Seconded by Councilmember James.

**Comments/Discussion from Governing Body:**

**Councilmember Gutierrez**- wanted to know if the city would have to take on the vet bills.

**Danielle Matricardi, City Attorney** – noted under the agreement the city is paying for food, vet bills training, and everything that relates to the dog.

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

**11. Council Approval to change the Ward 1 budgeted line item from Homecoming Parade to Black History Month Program- Councilmember James**

It was motioned to approve the Ward 1 budgeted line-item change from the Homecoming Parade to the Black History Month Program.

Motion made by Councilmember James, Seconded by Councilmember Antoine.

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

**CLOSING COMMENTS BY GOVERNING BODY:**

**Councilmember James-** noted that Mayor Butler was the first elected black Mayor. She noted Thursday at 5 p.m. would be her ward meeting, at the community center. She noted March 10<sup>th</sup> is the Hunger Walk and thanked Bruce Abraham.

**Councilmember Antione** – thanked everyone and wished them a Happy Valentine's Day.

**Councilmember Gutierrez-** thanked the public comments. He noted he has done Wellness with Wells, and it is fun. He noted he spoke with 2 citizens in his Ward, and they gave him some ideas. He asked Mr. Clark to come back with the cost of what it would take to have it all year. He noted obesity is real, and the more opportunities the city gives the citizens to engage in these events the better.

Councilmember noted he attended Councilwoman James's event at the high school, and he enjoyed it. He wished Mr. Rashmir a Happy Birthday and thanked him for all that he does and how he gives back to the community. He hopes more business owners will hop on the train and give back like he does. He thanked Bruce Abraham for everything he had done for the city and wished him the best. He gave a shoutout to the people who have dedicated 20-plus years to the city and thanked everyone for coming out. Councilmember Gutierrez noted that the Food Truck events will be back next month and the cleanups as it gets warmer.

**Councilmember Akins-Wells-** thanked Mr. Rashmir. She noted that she has been on Council for 12 years and 9 of those years she has adopted families for Christmas. She noted he has been there for Thanksgiving, Back to School, and any other event she puts on. She asked if they knew the first senior vans that were purchased by Mr. Rashmir's dad. She noted that for the businesses, the business owners and people that want to come in and do business. She thinks they need to be more open and help the businesses that are trying to come there so they do not leave and go do business somewhere else. She wanted Bruce Abraham to know she appreciated everything he had brought to and done for the City of Forest Park.

She noted Forest Park Day is the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday in August every year and they are looking for donations. She the residents wants to continue Wellness with Wells. She noted the people want more, they work for the people, and they should give this to them.

**Councilmember Mears** – thanked everyone for being there. He noted that they are getting big city problems. He asked the people to be with them when they are trying to make things better for the fire and police. He noted they need everything they can get their hands on. He noted if they do not get it for them to support them, they cannot blame anyone but themselves. They are only trying to ensure that everyone is safe.



Councilmember Mears asked for a point of order to announce Mr. Finch as the oldest member to attend the meeting.

**Mayor Butler-** echoed the sentiments of her colleagues. She told Bruce Abraham it was not easy starting a department from scratch, but he did it successfully. She noted a lot of the success the city has had in the last four (4) years is because of him. She thanked him for everything he had done.

**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 8:05 p.m. for Personnel, Litigation, or Real Estate matters.

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 Session at 8:59 p.m.

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 moved to adjourn the Regular Session at 9:00 p.m.

Motion made by Councilmember James, Seconded by Councilmember Mears.

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

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