



CITY COUNCIL REGULAR SESSION

Tuesday, September 05, 2023 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 Allan Mears

The Honorable Dabouze Antoine
The Honorable Latresa Akins-Wells

Ricky L. Clark Jr, City Manager
Michelle Hood, Interim City Clerk
Mike Williams, City Attorney

APPROVED MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME: The meeting was called to order at 7:00pm by Mayor Butler.

INVOCATION/PLEDGE: The invocation and pledge were led by Dr. Beeler.

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; Javon Llyod, PIO, Shalonda Brown, HR Director, Diane Lewis, Deputy HR Director; Bobby Jinks, Public Works Director; Bruce Abrahams, Director Economic Development; Latosha Clemons, Fire Chief, David Halcome, Deputy Fire Chief; Police Chief; Brandon Criss; Tarik Maxwell, Parks and Recreation, and Joshua Cox, IT Director, Authur Geeter, Procurement Manager.

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

City Manager – Recognized new hires: City Clerk Randi Rainey; Josh Cox, IT Director recognized IT Senior System Engineer Rodney Virgil; Mr. Clark noted new hires in the Fire Department; and Mr. Jinks, Public Works Director, recognized Ms. Carter.

Mr. Clark noted street resurfacing on Pine Ridge from the Lake City side to the Forest Park side. He reminded citizens of the 9/11 Memorial Service that will be held on September 11, 2023 from 9 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. at the Gillem Public Safety building and will be hosted in conjunction with the Fire Department and Public Safety.

With the Revenue Recovery efforts through the auditing of the Georgia Power accounts, the city was able to save \$15,000 for FY2023 and will be receiving roughly \$92.67 back from taxes that have been paid on the Georgia Power bills from the city seeing the city is exempt from paying taxes.

PRESENTATIONS:**1. Forest Park Fire & EMS Announces its Newest Paramedic – DEONDRE ROBBINS**Background/History:

Forest Park Fire & EMS is pleased to announce its newest Paramedic. Congratulations to **DEONDRE ROBBINS** for obtaining his Georgia Paramedic license. Paramedic Robbins satisfied the national standards for certification on August 7, 2023, with the National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians.

Chief Clemmons – Deondre spent his own time and money to attend Paramedic School. We are short on paramedics, and this is our advanced level of care for our residents. He will be training EMTs that will be on the trucks with him. He has the clinical hours and the institutional hours to provide this level of care to the citizens of Forest Park. He is not just a paramedic he is a registered paramedic and can take his talent anywhere.

Deondre Robbins - It was a long journey. I have my mom, two kids, and my wife here. The fire chiefs and lieutenant were there to support me on this journey. It is an honor to be here, I hope to serve you all and the citizens of Forest Park well.

Chief Clemons -This is part of that paramedic initiative that we just implemented, and we can give back to them because the money came out of their pockets.

Councilmember Antione – City Manager can we get an update about the new variant of Covid that is here?

City Manager – We will work with the Emergency Management Service to provide some information on what we are facing in the fall of this year.

Councilmember Akins-Wells – I was going to ask about the money we took away and the hours we took away, and now that it is coming back can we look into giving that back? Maybe can can be on the next agenda.

City Manager – I think it was done via an emergency order and ran parallel to the issuance of an Emergency Order from the City of Forest Park. We can get some information to the councilmembers on this.

2. Clayton County MathTalk Math Trails – Recreation and Leisure Department

Background/History:

The goal of this project is to use MathTalk and Sidewalk Math overlays along with student-designed overlays to enhance mathematical literacy in Clayton County by creating opportunities for community members, including parents and students, to engage in mathematical discussions, games, and applications while at play in the community.

Marinda Baker- Project Manager – Gave an over of the MathTalk Math Trails. Which creates opportunities for children. The goal of this project is to use MathTalk and Sidewalk Math overlays along with student-designed overlays to enhance mathematical literacy in Clayton County by creating opportunities for community members, including parents and students, to engage in mathematical discussions, games, and applications while at play in the community.

Tarik Maxwell – We are looking to add this to Bill Lee Park, Second Street Park, Theater Drive Park Perkins Park, and Alden Drive Park. These locations will not only connect with the City of Forest Park, but we are trying to make it state and county-wide.

City Manager – These plans have been on the books for two years to do the installation at Starr Park. My advice to them was instead of making it a One-Stop shop we make it a tour to get the kids to all of the parks to connect them throughout our city and connect them via the arts and the historical abstracts. This way people can continue to learn the history of the city.

Comments/ Discussion from Governing Body:

Councilmember James – Is this something that we have to approve?

City Manager – I do not know that you have to approve this, because the city already approved the IGA or Memorandum with MathTalk. Also, this is 100 percent funded by the Clayton County School. I asked them to come for an update to see if it is the desire of this governing body to install it all in Starr Park or spread it around the city.

Councilmember Antione – What about the Special needs kids? How many artists does this take?

Marinda Baker – I think partnering with the teacher and parents will allow them to send out a focus group. This allows for the differentiation of all able communities. It depends on the artist because sometimes we have more than others, and their schedule is always flexible. It should not take as long as it has in the past to complete them.

Councilmember Gutierrez – I loved the presentation, and I am very excited about this. We have a high bi-lingual population and maybe in the future consider that.

Marinda Baker – All of our math has Spanish translation.

Councilmember Gutierrez – What about the upkeep, will you all take care of that?

Marinda Baker – Yes, we actively monitor and do retouch.

Councilmember Gutierrez – Will we have a launch?

Marinda Baker – Yes.

Councilmember Akins-Wells – Thank you I think it is a great idea to put in all the parks because they are a part of this community as well. So, thank you all.

Councilmember Mears – Thank you. Are there any upfront costs?

Miranda Baker – It is already funded by Clayton County Schools.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: (All Speakers will have 3 Minutes)

There were (2) two public speakers:

Zack Parker – I have come before you and asked several questions in the last several meetings and you have not responded to one. City officials continue to retaliate against me for asking questions and speaking out against them. Thanks for not doing this at the last meeting as it has been done in the past. There are no rules stating I cannot say names here, but you threatened me twice to be thrown out of this space. You attempted to suppress my First Amendment Rights here in front of everyone, meaning the handful of people who participate in these meetings. It is evident looking around this room, it is evident no one running against the current council members and by the voter turnout. There are about 20,000 residents and the elected offices get less than 5 percent voter turnout.

I have continuously tried to be a part of this community and have been put at arm's length by you and previous city managers and the councilman who was shot near his home. It is my intent to continue to criticize each one of you for not performing up to the citizens' expectations. I do believe that I am reaching some citizens, and council people, who realize I am only trying to hold this government responsible for their shortcomings. I am glad you held this meeting today directly after the holiday. If the city attorney would allow me to have access to open records requests and not make up rules that would be wonderful, but I continue to be stoned walled. Tonight, there will be a vote to use summary minutes in lieu of verbatim minutes. It seems the government wants to do the minimum amount possible in their transparency. There have been detailed minutes for years, but not that I come to start holding you accountable they are being voted out of the agenda minutes. The last two meeting minutes online are draft minutes, and my guess is you are voting on that tonight and those minutes will not be on record in print. Thank you for listening tonight, not interrupting me, and enforcing fake rules.

Lawanda Falomi – I received a lot of calls on the approval of the regular meeting minutes agenda. They thought the chair was being harsh on one of the subordinates. It was necessary corrections, to get the approval. I would like to thank the citizens for making sure that our incumbents were able to return, without anyone running against them. We were having problems receiving information on the redistricting in the mail, so I called a community meeting. We are headed down a new pathway and you have to be focused to make a change. I have been getting calls about environmental research, Waste Management and we need to look into this.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA WITH ANY ADDITIONS / DELETIONS:

It was moved to adopt the agenda.

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:

- 3. Council Approval of Council Work Session and Regular Meeting Minutes from August 21, 2023 - City Clerk**

It was moved to approve the Council Work Session and Regular Meeting minutes from August 21, 2023.

Motion made by Councilmember Antoine, Seconded by Councilmember James.

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

OLD BUSINESS:

- 4. Council Approval of Conditional Use Permit (CUP-2023-04)- 5370 Ash Street – Planning & Community Development**

It was moved to approve the Conditional Use Permit (CUP-2023-04)- 5370 Ash Street.

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

Comments/ Discussion from Governing Body:

Councilmember James – I would like to make sure the approved motion includes the recommended conditions by the director.

Councilmember Akins-Wells - Withdrew her motion.

It was moved to approve the Conditional Use Permit (CUP-2023-04)- 5370 Ash Street with staff recommendation.

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

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

NEW BUSINESS:

- 5. Council Approval of Use of Summary Minutes in Lieu of Verbatim Minutes – Executive Offices**

It was moved to approve the Use of Summary Minutes in Lieu of Verbatim Minutes.

Motion made by Councilmember James, Seconded by Councilmember Mears.

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

Comments/ Discussion from Governing Body:

Councilmember James – I do hear Mr. Parker's sentiments on the minutes, and I was one of the ones who liked verbatim minutes. Because of the toll it has on staff if the summary is not detailed enough, we can always add to it. It is not to keep us from being transparent, it is to make things a little more efficient for our staff.

Councilmember Akins-Wells – I agree with Councilmember James, I think it will be easier for our staff. I do want to address his comment about the minutes right now before we vote on the summary minutes. They should be on the website verbatim and I want to make sure we get that taken care of.

City Manager – We will make certain of it. Once the minutes are approved, they should be final minutes. The approval for tonight will be for all subsequent meetings including these tonight.

6. **Council Approval of Animal Control Agreements with Lake City and Riverdale** – Police Department and Legal

It was moved to approve the Animal Control Agreements with Lake City and Riverdale.

Motion made by Councilmember Antoine, Seconded by Councilmember Gutierrez.

Comments/ Discussion from Governing Body:

Councilmember Akins-Wells – We only have two Animal Control Offices, and it does not seem worth it with the small amount of money we are receiving from these municipalities. My question is, besides the 15.00 and the 50.00 we charge, is there more?

Chief Criss – No mam, anytime there is a trip there are a few associated with it. As of now, Animal Control would be a backup for Riverdale. For instance, if all of the Animal Control in Clayton County was tied up or there was an extended ETA that would be the only time, they would reach out to us. We do have an Intergovernmental Agreement with Lake City and we probably get 1 to 2 calls a month to handle their issues.

Councilmember Antoine – I think it is a good idea, the population in Lake City is less than 2,000 people.

Councilmember Gutierrez – I just want to support you chief because we all rely on one another. I do not understand the fees, but I know you are charging what you should.

Councilmember Mears – In these new numbers did we factor in the wear and tear on the trucks, fuel, and equipment?

Chief Criss – Yes.

Mayor Butler – This contract is for 10 years?

City Attorney – The original contract was 5 years and we reduced it to 10. There is a provision where we can terminate if we have the desire too.

Councilmember Mears – So we have the option to back out if we see fit or if it is not suitable to our benefit?

City Attorney – Yes, there is a notice provision, we just let them know.

Voting Yea: Councilmember James, Councilmember Antoine, Councilmember Gutierrez, Councilmember

Mears

Voting Nay: Councilmember Akins-Wells

7. Council Approval of Truck Operating Hours Ordinance – Police Department and Legal

It was moved to approve the Truck Operating Hours Ordinance.

Motion made by Councilmember Antoine, Seconded by Councilmember James.

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

8. Council Approval of Resolution to Request Local Legislation to Increase Hotel-Motel Tax – Executive Offices and Legal

It was moved to approve the Resolution to Request Local Legislation to Increase Hotel-Motel Tax.

Motion made by Councilmember Antoine, Seconded by Councilmember James.

Comments/ Discussion from Governing Body:

Councilmember James – I think this is going to help, I have had calls of residential homes operating similar to a hotel/motel and I want to make sure we do everything we can to make sure this is not happening in our residential area.

City Manager – We are aware of the increase in calls relative to the Airbnb situation. We have an RFP we are about to elect to create legislation to directly enforce Airbnb. We are going to push that forward, but it is separate from this tax.

Councilmember Mears – I think we need to enforce something because it is taking over in my Ward 5, and we need to get a handle on it.

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

9. Council Approval of Resolution Recognizing Cancellation of 2023 Municipal Elections – Executive Offices and Legal

It was moved to approve the Resolution Recognizing Cancellation of 2023 Municipal Elections.

Motion made by Councilmember James, Seconded by Councilmember Antoine.

Comments/ Discussion from Governing Body:

Councilmember James – Congratulations, to Wards 3,4 and 5.

Councilmember Gutierrez – Thank you all for the trust you put in me.

Councilmember Akins -Wells – Thank you all. It is bittersweet because I feel we are taking away the people's voices. Even though we are the only ones that are on the ballot, I did not know it was state law and we would be breaking the law if we had an election, otherwise, I would not support it. I do want to make sure we get those cards mailed out to everyone because we had issues informing the people about the

ward lines. I want to make sure every resident in Forest Park is informed on why we are not having an election.

Councilmember Mears – I agree with Mrs. Wells on this. I am happy it turned out like it did, but I want everyone to understand why the process went the way it did.

City Manager – We will start working tomorrow with our PIO to develop some language relative to the redistricting and what those Ward maps look like now. Our PIO shared with me just before the meeting the tool is on the website, and you can type in an address and get that information. Thanks to the Deputy City Clerk, Ms. Michelle. She went through every street in this city to ensure the information that was sent to us matched what was in the county. I do not know how she did it, but it took a full 8-hour day that matched what the state got to us. We will work with the PIO office to get those cards out now that we have more time.

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

10. Council Approval of City-Wide Janitorial Contract – Public Works Department

It was moved to approve the City-Wide Janitorial Contract.

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 the Code Enforcement Department is hosting block parties all over the city. Ward 1 is scheduled for October 24th on Kennesaw Dr. and Rushmore Place. September 21st is the monthly Ward meeting at 5 p.m. at the Senior Center and Mayor Butler will host it. Saturday, September 23rd is the Forest Park Homecoming Parade and Sept 29th is the Homecoming Game. Google File is up, and you can use this to sign up to play in the Alumni Flag Football game.

Councilmember Antione – Shoutout to the new employees and thanks for joining the All-Star team. Wanted to ask Georgia Power about the increase in the power bill, which could be a concern. Is asking the Mayor and Council, if they could possibly help provide some type of Utility assistance. God Bless you all, and Good seeing you.

Councilmember Gutierrez – Gave a shoutout to the EMT person and is glad to have people like him working in the city taking care of the people. Running uncontested I was looking for the debate that the Ministers Association always put up because he had a lot of points to highlight. I will continue to serve, and I am glad the city will be able to save some money. This Friday is Food Truck Friday, and we will be showing the Little Rascals, from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m.

We are looking for vendors for the Hispanic Heritage Month on October 7th. Please reach out to anyone in the city if you want to be a part of this cultural celebration. Cleanup day for Ward 3, will be the following day on Saturday, the actual location will be on social media.

Councilmember Akins-Wells -Thank you for coming out, things are getting better. The reason I vote against things is because it has to make sense to me. I am always advocating for our residents and our employees, and I am not the one to put more on them, especially if they are not being paid for it. That is the reason behind my vote. I am a voice for the employees and residents and say what they cannot.

Happy anniversary Mr. Geeter, and thanks for all you do for the city. Welcome to the new employees, we are happy to have you. Shoutout to the chief, she has a girl future Fire Camp on October 11th for girls ages 12-17, and it is from 9 to 6 p.m. at Gillum Public Safety Building. I would like to let her use the rest of my time to speak, this is a great thing, and it is giving back to the community.

Chief Clemons – We are offering a free girl's camp and it is happening at fire stations throughout the nation. I wanted to bring it to the City of Forest Park, for the young ladies in this community. It provides an opportunity to learn about this profession. Also, I hope to tour over the dispatch, so they know that is another additional option.

Councilmember Akins-Wells – I would like to show appreciation to all our directors and employees. We are up here twice a month making decisions, but you all are here every day. So, thank you all for everything you do.

Councilmember Mears - My Block Party will be next Thursday at Cedar Circle with Code Enforcement in Ward 5. If you have questions, you can get them answered. I always recognize the sexy Senior Citizen of the night, which is Mr. Willie. We appreciate you coming and living here in Forest Park all your life.

Councilmember James – I want to recognize the City Manager; he had an all-white event, and it was beautiful. He raised over \$30,000.00 for the City of Forest Park beautification efforts. He also unveiled the One-Click app, which you can download; and if you see things going on in the city, it will go directly to the department and Mr. Clark will get a copy as well.

Councilmember Akins-Wells -Everyone was talking about their block party, and I would like to thank Director Walker, for bringing something different. People do not see Code Enforcement in the community fellowshiping and informing them on what they do. So, thank you and your staff for that.

City Manager - I would like to briefly go over this Legislative agenda because certain elements require an actual vote of this body and I want to make certain this body is in favor of the submission for this year's 2023-2024 legislative priorities. The priorities include Economic Development, Broadband Accessibility, Elections, Housing, Public Safety, and Transportation. I have seen Congressman Scott's office support local federal funding initiatives for these types of projects in other communities, so we are seeking approval to move forward to see if we can get some of those same dollars.

City Attorney, Mike Williams– If we are going to vote on approving the legislative agenda, we first need to vote to amend the agenda to add that hen vote on the legislative agenda.

It was moved to amend the agenda to add 2023-2024 Legislative Priorities.

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

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

11. 2023-2024 Legislative Priorities

It was moved to approve the 2023-2024 Legislative Priorities list.

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

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

City Manager – Councilwoman Wells has Fun Friday, September 15th from 7 to 11 p.m. at Starr Park, with guest artist Ear Candy. Councilmember Gutierrez's Block Party will be held at Edmonds Elementary School from 5:30 to 7:00 p.m., Tuesday, September 26. There will be free food, music and fun.

Councilmember James – We would like to continue to pray for the mayor as she had to leave for an emergency.

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 enter Executive Session for Personnel, Litigation or Real Estate matters at 8:04 p.m.

Motion made by Councilmember Antoine, 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 Council Regular Session at 9:42 p.m.

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

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

ADJOURNMENT:

It was moved to adjourn the Council Regular Session at 9:45 p.m.

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

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