



CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION

Monday, February 21, 2022, at 6:00 PM
Council Chambers and YouTube Livestream

MISSION STATEMENT

It is the mission of the City of Forest Park to enhance, strengthen, and grow our city by collaborating with our community to provide the highest level of service. Striving to be recognized as a diverse community that values and respects all members. We will strive to provide fair, professional, and courteous service through transparency and open communication. As we work to achieve this mission, we will have integrity beyond reproach while employing fiscal discipline and innovation. In this work there are no praises and raises for mediocrity.

Website: www.forestparkga.gov
YouTube: <https://bit.ly/3c28p0A>
Phone Number: (404) 366.1555

FOREST PARK CITY HALL
745 Forest Parkway
Forest Park, GA 30297

APPROVED MINUTES

The Honorable Mayor Angelyne Butler, MPA

The Honorable Kimberly James
The Honorable Hector Gutierrez

The Honorable Dabouze Antoine
The Honorable Latresa Akins-Wells

The Honorable Allan Mears

Dr. Marc-Antonie Cooper, City Manager
S. Diane White, City Clerk
Mike Williams, City Attorney

CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME: The meeting was called to order at 6:00pm 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, Mayor Pro-Tem		✓
Latresa Akins-Wells	Council Member, Ward 4		✓
Allan Mears	Council Member, Ward 5		✓

DIRECTORS PRESENT: Darquita Williams, Interim Finance Director; Shalonda Brown, Human Resources Director, Lashawn Gardiner, Management Analyst, Latosha Clemons, Fire Chief, Bruce Abraham, Director Economic Development, Tarik Maxell, Director of Recreation & Leisure, Bobby Jinks, Director of Public Works, Joshua Cox, IT

Director, Arthur Geeter, Purchasing Director, James Shelby, Planning & Community Development Director, Nathaniel Clark, Chief of Police and Javon Lloyd, PIO Director

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT: Dr. Marc-Antonie Cooper, City Manager

COMMUNITY INFORMATION/REMINDERS:

- On Monday, February 14 Mayor Butler and I met with the executive leadership of Norfolk Southern Railroad regarding parking the trains in the City of Forest Park. We discussed the concerns regarding residents' safety, inconvenience in mobility, as well as the lack of communication on the part of the railroad. The railroad committed to working with us to improve internal communications and offered some partnership opportunities with the city to obtain funding for public safety efforts and pre-emptive signage.
- Registration is now underway for the City of Forest Park Recreation & Leisure Department's youth spring sports. The following sports are currently being offered as a way to encourage Forest Park youth to get out and remain active:
 - **T-ball** (Ages 3 to 4)
 - **Baseball** (Ages 5 to 12)
 - **Softball** (Ages 9-17)

The cost to register is \$80 per youth, with league play scheduled to begin on Saturday, April 16. Fees for each sporting activity includes a uniform, photo, and participation award. Slots are limited for each sport, and registration is available on a first-come, first-served basis. To register or for additional details, visit bit.ly/fpy-springsports (type as displayed), and select the "Youth Programs" tab or call (404) 363-2908.

- The City of Forest Park entered into an agreement with Red Speed to have speed cameras set up in our school zones. From August 2, 2021 – February 17, 2022, a total of 14,187 violations were observed. These devices are in the areas of Reynolds Road, Phillips Drive, Rock Cut Road and Ash Street. We are asking everyone to slow down and monitor your speed on all our city roads, but especially in the areas with our young people attending school. These cameras are active 24/7 and if you are exceeding the speed limit you will be cited.
- The city has installed Speed Cushions at College St., Slaton Street, Cynthia Lane, and Ponderosa Park Drive. Stop signs have also been installed at Pineridge Rd and Springdale and at Pineridge Road at Cynthia Lane. Please be cautious as you are driving and adhere to all the rules of the road.

CITY OPERATIONS:

- We receive a lot of requests for Speed control devices in neighborhoods and roads in the city. Just understand that there is an entire process that we must go through required by law to determine if an area qualifies for a speed control device.
 - Those streets where the speed limit is 25 m.p.h. or 30 m.p.h.
 - Those streets where an average of traffic count of 400 – 4,000 vehicles per day.
 - Cannot be more than 4,000 vehicles per day. If more than 4,000 vehicles the road does not qualify.
 - City of Forest Park Public works will do a speed study and talk it over with the City Manager and Police Department.

- If determined that speedhumps may qualify, the Police Department will do a 30-day study to confirm, by looking at accidents reported, speed percentages etc.

CONGRATULATIONS / SHOUT OUT

- Shout out Cardiac Arrest Call – FAO Jeff Landrum, FF/AEMT Ryan Whitley, FF/AEMT Joseph Kidd, and FF/AEMT Takuya Gatlin. Responded to a 28 y/o diabetic dialysis patient was able to get Return of Spontaneous Circulation (ROSC) and hours later the patient was alive and doing impressively well.
- Company 2 Lt. Conway Ferguson, Paramedic Caleb Flood, and FF/EMT Deandre Robbins with Rescue crew FF/AEMT Takuya Gatlin and FF/AEMT Joseph Kidd delivered a baby boy at midnight in the McDonald's Parking lot at Forest Parkway and 1941. Dispatcher's Sierra Jackson, who is new to the city and Katherine Capps and Leah Shoemaker who walked her through the process did and outstanding in coaching our first responders through birthing instructions until Rescue 2 arrived.
- Forest Park Police Department's own Officer Anfernee Morgan who is currently deployed abroad, over this past weekend joined the ranks of a Non-Commissioned Officer in the U.S. Air Force, when he was promoted to the rank of Staff Sergeant. CONGRATULATIONS TO Officer Morgan and to all our men and women whom currently and have served in the armed forces – Thank You for your service.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. **Council Discussion of a Telecommunications and Right of Way Management agreement (TRM) –**
Chief Executive Offices

Background/History:

Currently in Georgia, franchise fees are required and telephone, cable, electric and natural gas companies pay approximately \$188 million dollars each year. Cities receive 91% of these fees and counties receive 8% of the fees. The City of Forest Park is entitled to a portion of the nearly \$171 Million dollars in fees paid to cities throughout Georgia annually.

The City Manager is seeking the City Council's approval to enter into an agreement with the Georgia Municipal Association (GMA) to help us manage and collect our share of revenue. The Telecommunications and Right of Way Management (TRM) program through GMA will aid with all aspects of federal and state cable and video franchising, including by not limited to franchise renewals and modifications, state franchise applications process, franchise fee reviews and customer service issues.

Comments/Discussion from Governing Body:

Mayor Butler – this could not have come at a better time, given that we are in the preliminary phases of our budget talks for the next year. And one of the things that we have uncovered is that we are not collecting nearly as much money as we are due as a municipality. So, we are asking departments and even the governing body to re-examine our priorities for fiscal year. This is a huge indicator why, because if we were collecting the revenues that we are entitled to as a municipality then we may not have to ask people to cut as much as their desired wish list for the upcoming fiscal year. I do urge the city council to pass this so, we can make sure that we are collecting all that is due to us.

2. **Council Discussion of the Homeland Security Grant Program SHSP FY2020 Grant from GEMA - Fire Department**

Background/History:

The fire department and EMA division applied for a grant available through the Georgia Emergency Management Agency and Homeland Security office, named the "State Homeland Security Program" or SHSP for short. The department was awarded a total of \$36,523 for two separate projects from SHSP FY2020 funding. One project, "HazMat", was awarded \$30,800 and the other project, "GSAR", was awarded \$5,723. This grant is 100% reimbursed by the State and will assist the department in obtaining a portion of the necessary and required equipment for safe operations in these areas.

Comments/Discussion from Governing Body:

There were no comments/discussion.

3. **Council Discussion of the Appointments to Urban Design Review Board and Planning Commission – Department of Planning & Community Development**

Background/History:

On September 7, 2021, the City Council passed a new Zoning Ordinance. The new ordinance established the Urban Design Review Board and the Planning Commission. The Urban Design Review Board shall consist of five (5) members, who shall be appointed by the Mayor and City Council (Governing Body) for terms of three (3) years each. Each member shall be a resident or working professional within Clayton County.

Qualifications of individuals considered for appointment to the Board shall meet either one (1) of the two (2) following minimum requirements:

1. He or she shall be educated and/or experienced in the field of land development, arts and culture, engineering, architecture, urban planning, landscape architecture, real estate, or similar professional field; or
2. He or she shall be a design professional registered and licensed by the State of Georgia in one (1) of the following professional fields: architecture, engineering, or landscape architecture.

The Planning Commission shall consist of and continue as a five (5) member commission. Members shall be appointed and confirmed in accordance with Mayor and City Council approval. Planning Commission members shall be residents or property owners within the city and shall not be members of the city governing authority. Members shall be appointed for four (4) year terms and shall serve until their successor is appointed and qualified. Each successive appointment shall be for three (3) years.

Comments/Discussion from Governing Body:

Mayor Butler – this is something that we can have an in-depth conversation in executive session

4. **Council Discussion of the Reappointment of James Shelby, Director of Planning and Community Development to the Land Bank Authority – Executive Offices**

Background/History:

The City of Forest Park has appointment power over 1 seat on the Clayton County Land Bank Board. The Board Members' terms are staggered, such that some terms expire every April. Forest Park's current designee for the Land Bank Board is James Shelby. His seat is one of the ones where the term ends 4/21/22. Mr. Shelby was elected as Chairman of the Board for 2022 in the last meeting of the Land Bank Authority.

Comments/Discussion from Governing Body:

Marc-Antonie Cooper – We are asking that Mr. Shelby be reappointed to that board.

Mayor Butler – Yes, I have heard a lot of amazing things about his role on this board and it would be an honor to have him continue to serve.

5. **Council Discussion on a City-Wide Salary Increase Proposal** – Executive Office

Background/History:

The City Manager is requesting approval for a city-wide salary increase. This increase includes a 15% increase for public safety personnel, and a 7% or greater increase to nonpublic safety personnel. The approval of this increase will provide our employees with a livable wage and allow the city to offer competitive wages that are comparable to other employers in our market.

Comments/Discussion from Governing Body:

Councilmember Akins-Wells – I am in favor of giving raises, I know we talked about during the budget retreat, but I just want to make sure the city is, because I got questions regarding this from employees and residents, in the position to do this. I know we are supposed to be getting a finance director on March 2nd and so, I just want to make sure the city is in the situation this. I am 100% for it, but we keep saying we need to cut this and that, and we are giving all these raises and I do want to revisit the merit system as well.

City Manager – I will say Councilmember Akins-Wells, the city is well positioned to be able to do this. We do have the money to take us to the end of the fiscal year, which means our end of June to make these raises effective immediately to go into the end of June, we have those funds and going into next year those funds are being worked into the budget, so we will have those funds to continue the raises next fiscal year. The minimum increase of \$17.00 for everyone else so, we are well position to be able to do that. As for as the merit system, that proposal will be coming to you at the first meeting in March. Again, that is a full process that we must go through to put that all together, so the employee personnel policies will be coming to council the first meeting in March. This is really needed, when you look at the surrounding areas and municipalities and what they have been with salaries and wages and different things of this nature, we are losing our police officers, public work staff, we are losing staff due to our pay structure so one of the reasons why this come so early and we made sure that the funds are available to do this, is to kind of hopefully slow loss in those departments that are so vital to the city. So, the answer to your question is yes, we are well positioned to be able to do this.

Councilmember Akins-Wells – Just for transparency, because I know I was kind of confused as far as the budget, when we are saying that we need to cut \$13 million dollars, for transparency for the residents, I would like to make sure they know that we are not in debt and that the budget that was presented was a proposed budget and we are not \$13 million dollars in debt. Because I was getting emails and calls saying that we need to cut this and we need cut all the events that the governing body, so it contradicts itself, we

are giving these raises and we had the money to do that, but we need to cut \$13M. That \$13M comes from the directors and their wish list?

City Manager – Not necessarily a wish list. The budget that was presented to council was a preliminary budget to let council know everything that is needed. Now not saying that there were not some wish items there, which is why the department's cutting, the exercise we went through last year where the departments put together their budgets and had to cut out certain amounts from their budget to make sure that we had a balanced budget. Everything that council saw at the retreat are needed things to grow our city, maintain our city, keep our city moving right direction. Maintain our staff safety and everything else so it is not an entire wish list. Some things are wishes with some of the more futuristic things that were requested, but most of it is what is really needed.

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 6:20pm for Personnel, Litigation and Real Estate.

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

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

It was moved to reconvene back into the Work Session at 7:03pm

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 Work Session at 7:06pm

Motion made by Councilmember Antoine, Seconded by Councilmember Gutierrez.

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