

City Council Meeting Minutes

City of Sylvester
City Council Regular Meeting
City Hall Council Chambers
Monday, March 17, 2025
Call to Order 6:00 p.m.

Attendees: Mayor Harold Proctor, Jr.
Councilman Melvin Powell, Ward 1
Councilman Isaac Jackson, Jr., Ward 2
Councilman Mark Giddens, Ward 3
Mayor Pro-Tem Councilman Earnest Carter, Jr., Ward 4
City Manager Chris Davis
Assistant City Manager Richie Childers
Assistant City Manager Tanita Norris
City Attorney Lester Castellow.
City Clerk Markesha Bivens

Call to Order: Mayor Harold Proctor, Jr.

Invocation/Pledge: Dr. Willie Mae Marlin

Agenda Amendment/Approval

Upon motion by Councilman Jackson, seconded by Councilman Giddens, the Council Meeting Agenda gained approval. Voting yes were Mayor Proctor, Councilmen Carter, Giddens, Jackson and Powell. The vote passed 5-0.

Minutes Approval

Upon motion by Councilman Jackson, seconded by Councilmen Giddens, the March 3, 2025 – Regular Meeting minutes gained approval. Voting yes were Mayor Proctor, Councilmen Carter, Giddens, Jackson and Powell. The vote passed 5-0.

Speakers Appearance

Pastor Ronnie Banks of New Vision Worship Center invited the Mayor, Council and City Manager to their church's 3rd annual Christian Community Event. This will be held on April 19, 2025 from 10 am - 2 pm. He also invited the city officials to the Concerned Citizens of Sylvester meetings, held every second Saturday at 11 am. The church address is 614 Madison Street, in Ward 2.

Ms. Sharon Lyles of Cancer Awareness 365, spoke before the Mayor and Council, providing a history of the annual cancer event that began 12 years ago. The Pink-Out Event is held at the Pedestrian Mall in October and Ms. Lyles expressed thanks for the continued support not only financially and physically, but mentioned idea requests for future events.

Unfinished Business

A. Land Bank Authority

City Attorney Lester Castellow reviewed for the Mayor and Council of the Land Bank Authority which was reconsidered approximately 1 ½ years ago, in which the City of Poulan and Worth County entered into an Intergovernmental Agreement with the City of Sylvester.

No meetings have been held to date. However, two (2) Board of Directors need to be appointed by Mayor Proctor for Sylvester. Councilman Jackson volunteered at a past Council Meeting and Mr. Frederick Dowell is appointed as community participant. The two-year term will be staggered for this authority, with Councilman Jackson's two (2) years beginning August 3, 2023, through August 3, 2025, and Mr. Dowell's will be August 3, 2024, through August 3, 2026.

B. Four-Way Stop: E. Price Street and N. Westberry Street Survey

Captain Jonathan Luna approached the Mayor and Council with the results of the survey conducted, concerning speeding and the possibility of a four-way stop at E. Price Street and N. Westberry Street.

In the past weeks, the Sylvester Police Department spoke with residents in the one-to-two-block range of this intersection, regarding options; speed bumps, speed tablets, a four-way stop and stop sign enforcement were discussed. No action was taken.

New Business

A. Pastor Judy Hall - Family Visions Outreach Fundraiser Event

Pastor Judy Hall approached the Mayor and Council with the request to use the Henry Hall Woolard Center for a three-on-three basketball tournament. This "food-raiser" event will take place on April 19, 2025, to accept food donations and canned goods for the community food bank. Waiving facility rental fees for non-profits, sponsorship, trophies and giving back to the community were all discussed.

Upon a motion by Councilman Carter, with a second by Councilman Jackson, the request to waive the rental fee for Family Visions Outreach for the basketball event at the H. H. Woolard Center gained approval. Voting yes were Mayor Proctor, Councilmen Carter, Giddens, Jackson and Powell. The vote passed 5-0.

B. Request to Close Street Application: New Vision Worship Center

Mrs. Glenice Stephens, Community Development Director, provided details of the 3rd Annual New Vision Worship Center Christian Community Event, also to be held April 19, 2025, from 10 am until 2 pm. There will be fun, vendors and food for the public at 614 N. Madison Street.

Upon a motion by Councilman Jackson, with a second by Councilmen Giddens and Carter, combined, the event application for the New Vision Worship Center Christian Community Event gained approval. Voting yes were Mayor Proctor, Councilmen Carter, Giddens, Jackson and Powell. The vote passed 5-0.

C. Discussion: Building Location – 203 W. Willingham Street

Mr. Chris Davis informed the Mayor and Council of the current situation at 203 W. Willingham Street, presently housing the Worth County Fire Department. Storm drainage at this location has affected the foundation, which is held up by steel plates, and staff were contacted with safety concerns by Worth County Fire Chief Ray Salter.

City Staff enlisted the aid of Henderson Structural Engineering, who assessed the damage and provided details, where, in summary, this location had been deemed unsafe. Possible repair options were mentioned, and a letter will be drafted to advise 60-day notice to vacate and that the City of Sylvester will not be liable for damage to equipment or injury accordingly. Attorney Castellow will draft a legal document for delivery as early as Tuesday, March 18, 2025.

Reports/Remarks

Councilman Melvin Powell, Ward 1 – Councilman Powell inquired about the West Street Project, discussed in a previous council meeting. E. Crockett Street paving was also discussed and will be observed for completion.

Councilman Isaac Jackson, Jr., Ward 2 – Councilman Jackson gave kudos to the Public Works Department who have begun paving in Ward 2; a work order will be placed for streetlights out in the area.

Councilman J. Mark Giddens, Ward 3 – Councilman Giddens mentioned the intersection of Highway 82 and Moultrie Highway and potholes. Mr. Greg Jackson, Public Works Director, advised the area engineer of with the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) has been contacted and May 2025 is the target date for bid completion. Patching is possible, but the holes do not meet the depth requirement.

Councilman Earnest Carter Jr., Ward 4 – Councilman Carter reported lighting issues on Davis Street; a dusk to dawn light issue will need review by the City Manager.

Mayor Harold Proctor, Jr. – Mayor Proctor mentioned the benefits of an Energy Consultant for the elderly and interested citizens similar to Mitchell EMC. They have tools to report outages and possibly train employees for energy consulting could occur in the future.

City Attorney Lester Castellow – Attorney Castellow had no report.

City Manager Chris Davis – Mr. Davis informed the staffing changes last year postponed the West Street Project, and other grant projects. However, with multiple staff members gaining proper certification, these projects will be underway. Staff are also seeking reimbursement for fees eligible for grant funding. City Hall received a letter recently regarding the inspection at the Sylvester Municipal Airport; the city passed with flying colors. There were no major issues or repairs needed.

Executive Session: None

Announcements: None

Adjournment

With all agenda items covered, Councilman Jackson motioned to adjourn, with a second by Councilman Carter. Voting yes were Mayor Proctor, Councilmen Carter, Giddens, Jackson and Powell. The vote passed 5-0.

Mayor Proctor duly adjourned the meeting at 6:51 p.m.

CITY COUNCIL
SYLVESTER, GEORGIA

HAROLD PROCTOR, JR., MAYOR

ATTEST:

MARKESHA BIVENS, CITY CLERK

APPROVED