

City Council Meeting Minutes

City of Sylvester
City Council Regular Meeting
City Hall Council Chambers
Monday, April 7, 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
City Manager Chris Davis
Assistant City Manager Richie Childers
City Attorney Lester Castellow.
City Clerk Markesha Bivens

Absent: Mayor Pro-Tem Councilman Earnest Carter, Jr., Ward 4
Assistant City Manager Tanita Norris

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 Giddens, and Jackson. The vote passed 3-0.

Councilman Powell enters at 6:02 p.m.

Speakers Appearance: None

Discussion:

Camp Sylvester 2025

Ms. Felicia Baisden, Camp Sylvester Director, was absent. However, she plans to provide statistics from 2024 and bring the Mayor and Council up-to-date on summer camp fine points and provide recommendations for this year. This item will be placed on a future agenda.

Best Friends Humane Society

City Manager Davis summarized a call received by the Code Enforcement Officer, referencing turkeys in the city limits and the response from Best Friends Humane Society (BFHS). Mr. Jason Orr, Director of BFHS, was present, and advised that their organization is not licensed to house and/or handle fowl or livestock, outside of dogs and cats. Animal Control ordinances, responsibility, licenses, contract validity and citations were discussed. Contract negotiations for the next year are upcoming and will be addressed.

New Business

A. Resolution 2025-04: Georgia Cities Week

Mrs. Karen Singletary, Main Street Director, provided details of the annual Georgia Cities Week events and requested approval of this annual resolution. The Annual Car Show, Customer Appreciation Lunch, a Mock City Council meeting, with “If I Were Mayor Essays,” the Legislative Luncheon, Talent Show and the Great Sylvester Clean-Up are events to take place this year.

Upon motion by Councilman Giddens, seconded by Councilman Jackson, Resolution 2025-04 gained approval. Voting yes were Mayor Proctor, Councilmen Giddens, Jackson and Powell. The vote passed 4-0.

B. Golden Triangle RC&D Community Grant

Assistant Fire Chief Casey Chapman, alongside Mrs. Singletary detailed the community grant awarded to both Sylvester Main Street and the Fire Department by Golden Triangle RC&D. Honoring the grant guidelines, each department is scheduled to receive a \$2,000 reimbursement toward their project. Self-watering flower pots will be placed at downtown area businesses and car fire blankets will be purchased to extinguish electric vehicle fires.

C. Event Applications

1. Sylvester Police Department (SPD) Easter Egg Hunt

Police Department Captain Jonathan Luna provided details of the annual SPD Easter Egg Hunt, to be held April 18, 2025. This event will be held from 6 p.m. until 8 p.m. at Jeffords Park. Approximately 3,500 eggs filled with candy will be hidden, and there will be prizes. Various community groups will set up tents, and hotdogs, chips and drinks provided for the public. No street closures are required for this event.

Upon a motion by Councilman Giddens, with a second by Councilman Powell, the event application for the Annual Easter Egg Hunt gained approval. Voting yes were Mayor Proctor, Councilmen Giddens, Jackson and Powell. The vote passed 4-0.

2. First Responders Contribute Cook Off Festival

Mrs. Glenice Stephens, Community Development Director, delivered details of the First Responders Contribute Cook-off Festival, by South Georgia Spill Response Traffic Control Division (SGSR). This event will be held May 3, 2025, from 10 a.m. until 5 p.m. There will be trophies awarded, vendors and entertainment at this public event, as discussed in previous meetings, for the support of the community’s first responders.

Upon a motion by Councilman Jackson, with a second by Councilman Giddens, combined, the event application for the First Responders Cook Off gained approval. Voting yes were Mayor Proctor, Councilmen Giddens, Jackson and Powell. The vote passed 4-0.

3. Stars in the Making Fundraiser

Mrs. Glenice Stephens, Community Development Director, on behalf of Event Coordinator, Ms. Michelle Caldwell provided details of the Stars in the Making Fundraiser. This event will be held May 24, 2025, from 8 a.m. until 6 p.m. This is a fundraiser for her dance group out of Albany, which will have a DJ, and majorette dancing that's held every few months at the Henry Hall Woolard Center.

Upon a motion by Councilman Giddens, with a second by Councilman Jackson, the Stars in the Making Fundraiser application gained approval. Voting yes were Mayor Proctor, Councilmen Giddens, Jackson and Powell. The vote passed 4-0.

D. Beer and Wine License Application: Family Dollar #32851

Mrs. Tenneisha Cushion, Deputy City Clerk, informed the Mayor and Council of the new application for Family Dollar to obtain a license to sell Beer and Wine. All criteria has been met and staff is seeking approval of this application.

Upon a motion by Councilman Giddens, with a second by Councilman Jackson, the Beer and Wine License Application for Family Dollar #32851 gained approval. Voting yes were Mayor Proctor, Councilmen Giddens, Jackson and Powell. The vote passed 4-0.

E. CDBG Engineering and Grant Writing Bid Award

Ms. Jinny Boyd, Special Projects Manager, requested the Mayor and Council to approve the bid for services for CDBG 2025 Grant Writing and Engineering Services. The city received six (6) bids for grant writing and (5) for engineering services. There was a scoring system used, based on total project cost of water line upgrades and infrastructure improvements, along with presentation, experience, similar projects, fees and services. Three top bids for each category were provided, and a vote is necessary to award the bid.

Upon a motion by Councilman Powell, with a second by Councilman Jackson, the CDBG Engineering Grant Writing Bid was awarded to Carter and Sloope. Voting yes were Mayor Proctor, Councilmen Giddens, Jackson and Powell. The vote passed 4-0.

Reports/Remarks

Councilman Melvin Powell, Ward 1 – Councilman Powell had no report.

Councilman Isaac Jackson, Jr., Ward 2 – Councilman Jackson mentioned rain in the weather forecast and requested Public Works check ditches throughout the city.

Councilman J. Mark Giddens, Ward 3 – Councilman Giddens thanked the Public Works Department for paving throughout the city and mentioned the sponsorship of the Engine 100 Driver is a good idea.

Councilman Earnest Carter Jr., Ward 4 – Councilman Carter was not present.

Mayor Harold Proctor, Jr. – Mayor Proctor mentioned the awesome job of Dr. Willie Mae Marlin and how she's taken on additional duties for the city; she is assisting at the H. H. Woolard Center for open gym recreation in the evenings, and the Mayor thanked her for stepping up to the plate.

City Attorney Lester Castellow – Attorney Castellow had no report.

City Manager Chris Davis – Mr. Davis had not report.

Executive Session

Councilman Giddens moved to convene an Executive Session to discuss personnel, seconded by Councilman Jackson. Voting yes were Mayor Proctor, Councilmen Giddens, Jackson and Powell. The vote passed 4-0.

Executive Session: 6:42 p.m.

Councilmen Giddens and Jackson, combined, motioned to accept minutes as read in Executive Session and reconvene, seconded by Councilman Powell. Voting yes were Mayor Proctor, Councilmen Giddens, Jackson and Powell. The vote passed 4-0.

Regular Session Reconvened: 7:27 p.m.

Announcements

Discussion of the property at 203 E. Willingham Street, currently occupied by Worth County Fire Department took place. Donating nor selling the property is not an option at this time. Future use or other options will be discussed at the next appointed meeting.

Councilman Powell, motioned to sell the property, with the condition of repair, seconded by Mayor Proctor. Voting yes was Mayor Proctor and Councilman Powell. Voting no were Councilmen Giddens and Jackson. Motion failed for lack of positive votes 2-2.

A second motion was made by Councilman Jackson for the city to keep the property, seconded by Council Giddens. Voting yes were Councilmen Giddens, Jackson and Powell. Voting no was Mayor Proctor. Motion passed with a majority vote, 3-1.

Adjournment

With all agenda items covered, Councilman Jackson motioned to adjourn, with a second by Councilman Powell. Voting yes were Mayor Proctor, Councilmen Giddens, Jackson and Powell. The vote passed 4-0.

Mayor Proctor duly adjourned the meeting at 7:30 p.m.

ATTEST:

CITY COUNCIL
SYLVESTER, GEORGIA

MARKESHA BIVENS, CITY CLERK

HAROLD PROCTOR, JR., MAYOR