

## City Council Meeting Minutes

City of Sylvester  
City Council Regular Meeting  
City Hall Council Chambers  
Monday, May 5, 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  
City Attorney Lester Castellow.  
City Clerk Markesha Bivens

**Absent:** Assistant City Manager Tanita Norris

**Call to Order:** Mayor Harold Proctor, Jr.

**Invocation/Pledge:** Dr. Willie Mae Marlin

### **Agenda Amendment/Approval**

With request by Mayor Proctor to remove agenda item B: Jesus Christ Tabernacle of Deliverance (JCTD) Brotherhood Breakfast, upon motion by Councilman Giddens, seconded by Councilman Powell, the council meeting agenda gained approval. Voting yes were Mayor Proctor, Councilmen Carter, Giddens, and Powell. The vote passed 4-0.

Councilman Jackson enters at 6:02 p.m.

### **Minutes Approval**

Upon motion by Councilman Jackson, seconded by Councilmen Giddens and Powell combined, the April 7, 2025 – Regular Meeting minutes gained approval. Voting yes were Mayor Proctor, Councilmen Carter, Giddens, Jackson and Powell. The vote passed 5-0.

**Speakers Appearance:** None

### **New Business**

#### **A. State of Georgia First Responders Grant**

Captain Jonathan Luna of the Sylvester Police Department (SPD) informed the Mayor and Council of the two (2) grants that SPD applied for and were awarded. The first, a reimbursement grant amounting \$15,000, will be used for tactical equipment, where in the past, equipment was borrowed from the Worth County Sheriff's Department.

**A. State of Georgia First Responders Grant Continued**

The second, totaling \$3,000, will be used for a civic event. In the past, a basketball game of the Fire versus Police took place. However, this may be changed to kickball. The annual back-to-school sponsorship event was also discussed.

**~~B. Jesus Christ Tabernacle of Deliverance (JCTD) Brotherhood Breakfast~~**

**C. 2025 Summer Labor**

Mr. Chris Davis, City Manager, advised that planning is underway for the city's summer camp and summer labor programs. Staff recommends suspending the summer labor program for 2025 and revisiting it in the future. Summer labor in past years was mentioned, as well as labor restrictions and overall program concerns, citing a cost of \$60,000 for summer labor.

Upon motion by Councilman Carter, seconded by Councilman Giddens, the suspension of the 2025 Summer Labor Program gained approval. Voting yes were Mayor Proctor, Councilmen Carter, Giddens and Jackson. Voting no was Councilman Powell. The vote passed 4-1.

**D. MEAG Cities Contract**

Mr. Davis informed the Mayor and Council of the electric agreement with MEAG Power, and summarized how Sylvester has an end-of-the-year power surplus. MEAG Cities have the ability to sell excess power to cities that have a higher demand. Sylvester can agree to sell to Robertsdale, Alabama, at an above the market rate, but reasonable price. Staff recommends approval for the Mayor and City Clerk to execute MEAG Contract.

Upon motion by Councilman Powell, seconded by Councilman Jackson, execution to sell excess power to Robertsdale, Alabama gained approval. Voting yes were Mayor Proctor, Councilmen Carter, Giddens, Jackson and Powell. The vote passed 5-0.

**Reports/Remarks**

Councilman Melvin Powell, Ward 1 – Councilman Powell inquired about the age for student work permits, the current status of the revolving loans and consequences and/or sue for judgment if in default; mention of an additional day for the Senior Citizens at the Mary Alice Shipp Center and budget workshop dates, called for a town hall meeting to be scheduled in the future, on Thursday for public participation; requests of Code Enforcement compliance information to ensure complaints are handled promptly for Ward 1 and community cleanliness, and inquired on court involvement, where in the past a monthly report was provided to the council, for updates on dilapidated buildings, other eye sores, citations, etc. He also mentioned flag training is required for staff to remain safe at work sites.

Councilman Isaac Jackson, Jr., Ward 2 – Councilman Jackson informed the senior citizens who may desire to have an additional day, due to their active schedules and reports of the Sowega Council on Aging providing five (5) meals, with a waiting list; reported a hazardous incident with the Water/Wastewater Department working on US 112 last week, with no caution/working signs posted, just city trucks parked to block traffic and one (1) young employee directing traffic. This is a dangerous situation, and if needed, the city should invest in work zone signs for employee safety and worth with other departments if necessary, especially on a state highway. Reports of a faulty water meter in Ward 2 was noted, with inspection after two (2) hours of usage and no movement. A water meter replacement may be needed.

Councilman J. Mark Giddens, Ward 3 – Councilman Giddens had no report.

Councilman Earnest Carter Jr., Ward 4 – Councilman Carter reported illegal water usage at the baseball fields where the teams spray the fields.

Mayor Harold Proctor, Jr. – Mayor Proctor mentioned the importance of another senior citizen day, Monday, if schedules allow, and Dr. Marlin is available. Brown water was also mentioned, experienced in some areas of the city; and with the Sylvester Fire Department flushing hydrants and running a faucet momentarily, the water will clear as normal.

City Attorney Lester Castellow – Attorney Castellow requested council direction for next steps with the revolving loans in default. With no objection, the city council agreed to proceed with filing the lawsuit for a default revolving loan. A report of a multidistrict litigation for water systems of local governments took place, where 3M and DuPont companies developed PFAS or hazardous chemicals, determined to be cancerous, due to concentrated amounts of PFAS present in water systems. A settlement was reached, with an agreement to pay \$13.6 billion to municipalities throughout the country. Testing needs to take place and the city must agree to file a claim by the end of the year.

City Manager Chris Davis – Mr. Davis will confirm the student work permit age with the Human Resources Department for the summer program. The additional day for the Senior Citizens is scheduled to start in the next few weeks. The recent trip with the senior citizens was a great time and more may be scheduled in the future. Regarding budget, departments are in the stages of working through the individual budgets and trimming by 20-30%, with dates for the budget workshops and public hearings to be discussed on a future agenda. Referencing Code Enforcement, phone calls can be made, but written complaints are the preferred method for reporting; court judgements can be lengthy for the full cycle. However, a report will be provided to the panel monthly. Discussion of new equipment, repairs, lifespan and employee accountability took place concerning city staff. Daily equipment/vehicle inspections will take place, to be tracked by each department and submitted to the city maintenance department to ensure discipline records for employees, proper usage, less damage and longer equipment life occurs.

**Executive Session:** None

**Announcements:** None

**Adjournment**

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

Mayor Proctor duly adjourned the meeting at 6:59 p.m.

CITY COUNCIL  
SYLVESTER, GEORGIA

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HAROLD PROCTOR, JR., MAYOR

ATTEST:

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MARKESHA BIVENS, CITY CLERK