

## City Council Meeting Minutes

City of Sylvester  
City Council Regular Meeting  
City Hall Council Chambers  
Monday, June 2, 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 Clerk Markesha Bivens

**Absent:** City Attorney Lester Castellow

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

**Invocation/Pledge:** Deacon John L. Green

### **Agenda Amendment/Approval**

With a request by Mayor Proctor to remove the Executive Session, scheduled for personnel on the agenda, upon motion by Councilman Carter, seconded by Councilman Jackson, the city 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 Councilman Giddens, the May 5, 2025, Regular Meeting minutes gained approval. Voting yes were Mayor Proctor, Councilmen Carter, Giddens, Jackson and Powell. The vote passed 5-0.

### **Speakers Appearance:**

Mr. Johnny Blake, Sylvester resident, approached the Mayor and Council to voice concerns about the Worth County Alumni Reunion events and the request to hire private security. He also voiced a safety concern with three (3) financial institutions in the same area as Newell Firearms and Outdoors.

## **New Business**

### **A. Resolution 2025-07: Appointing Municipal Court Judge Gregory Williams**

Mr. Chris Davis, City Manager, advised the Mayor and Council of the resolution to appoint Judge Gregory Williams, the current acting judge for the Sylvester Municipal Court. Judge Williams is willing to permanently fill the position and expressed it as an honor and privilege to serve the City of Sylvester, with plans to become familiar with the city council, community and citizens with the approval of Resolution 2025-07 and administering of the oath with signatures the city council will fulfill the requirement of appointment.

Upon motion by Councilman Giddens, seconded by Councilman Jackson, Resolution No. 2025-07: Appointing Municipal Court Judge Gregory Williams gained approval. Voting yes were Mayor Proctor, Councilmen Carter, Giddens, Jackson and Powell. The vote passed 5-0.

### **B. Discussion: Public Hearing Dates for Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Proposed Budget**

Regarding the Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Proposed Budget, Mr. Davis proposed dates to the Mayor and Council. Once the budget is provided for review by the City Council, Budget Workshops and Public Hearings will take place on the following proposed dates:

- June 12, Special Called Meeting - 6:00 pm
- June 16, Regular Council Meeting - 6:00 p.m.
- June 26, Special Called Budget Adoption Meeting - 6:00 p.m.

With unanimous consent, the dates for Fiscal Year 2025-2026 gained approval, upon mention.

## **Reports/Remarks**

Councilman Melvin Powell, Ward 1 – Councilman Powell inquired about the West Street Project and informed the attendees of Georgia Power’s electric rates freezing for two (2) years. He also noted an increase imposed before the freeze and profits near two (2) billion, causing citizen concern in Sylvester; reminding of the importance of the upcoming election for Power Commission on June 16, 2025.

Councilman Isaac Jackson, Jr., Ward 2 – Councilman Jackson mentioned the unfortunate drowning of a citizen in a neighboring ditch, with questions about fences or barricade placement for safety. Private or public access, Sylvester Housing Authority and property ownership were mentioned for the area for this walkway that looks like a road, highly traveled by citizens. New Vision Worship Center provided videos of dogs in the area, with a request for animal control for assistance.

Councilman J. Mark Giddens, Ward 3 – Councilman Giddens gave thanks to the Public Works Department for ditch maintenance at North Main Street and US Highway 33. He also reported that at Gervaise Lawhorne Park (Duck Pond), citizens do not honor the “No Fishing” signs.

Councilman Earnest Carter Jr., Ward 4 – Councilman Carter also extended thanks to the Public Works Department for the signs placed on Worth Street and guard rails at Pope Park and Kelly Street were also appreciated; with the revitalization of the park, it is a good time to be proactive in preventing future hazards. An update on the Jeffords Park Sign Board Project was also requested.

Mayor Harold Proctor, Jr. – Mayor Proctor voiced concern about placing fences or railings at the ditch mentioned; a review of public or private property is required. Sending pictures of loose dogs is the best way to ensure Best Friends Humane Society can move quickly with animal control and a follow-up call may be necessary. The signs placed in Ward 4, similar to the small election signs, are noticeably better looking and hopefully citizens will pay attention and clean up the community. Referencing the question posed for Worth County Alumni's Events, the budget should be revisited, with security and patrol addressed for a large event; outside resources might be necessary.

City Attorney Lester Castellow – Attorney Castellow was absent.

City Manager Chris Davis – Mr. Davis informed of the West Street Project is awaiting grant payments, but has reached final approval stages. Once final, a start date will be provided. There is no mention of increasing the utility rates for several years, with discussion of a freeze on Georgia Power's rates. The Mayor and City Council Personal Financial Disclosure Statements (PFDS) are due to the City Clerk by June. The bid opening for the parcel of land near the City Maintenance Shop took place with one (1) bid received for \$8,000. This month's events are two (2) ribbon cuttings, the Downtown Sip and Stroll event on Friday. An inventory of City Cell Phones is underway; council is requested to submit information on their equipment as soon as possible.

Assistant City Manager Richie Childers – Mr. Childers informed the council that the quotes for sign boards at Jeffords Park have recently been approved and, with the redesign submitted, the project is now in process.

Public Works Director D. Greg Jackson – Mr. Jackson detailed the issues of maintaining canals/ditches with the side-mount tractor, should a fence be placed in the area. Vegetation, city and privately owned property as well as traffic visuals were mentioned.

**Executive Session:** None

### **Announcements**

Discussion about the Fishing Rodeo took place. With many Elected Officials and city employees out of the city for training on the scheduled date of June 28, 2025, the event was rescheduled to June 14, 2025.

**Adjournment**

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

Mayor Proctor duly adjourned the meeting at 6:39 p.m.

CITY COUNCIL  
SYLVESTER, GEORGIA

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HAROLD PROCTOR, JR., MAYOR

ATTEST:

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MARKESHA BIVENS, CITY CLERK