

## City Council Meeting Minutes

City of Sylvester  
City Council Regular Meeting  
City Hall Council Chambers  
Monday, July 21, 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**

With the request to add an Executive Session for Real Estate, by Mayor Proctor, upon motion by Councilman Jackson, seconded by Councilman Powell, the Council Meeting Agenda gained approval. Voting yes were Mayor Proctor, Councilmen Carter, Giddens, Jackson, and Powell. The vote passed 5-0.

### **Speaker Appearance**

Ms. Felicia Baisden, Camp Sylvester Director, approached the Mayor and Council with a yearly closing report. Ms. Baisden said it was a successful summer with twenty-six (26) campers payment vouchers received and 14 pending. Expenditure has decreased compared to last year and she and her staff are grateful for the city's support, looking forward to next year.

The Mayor and Council extended appreciation to the Camp Sylvester Staff and thanked Ms. Baisden for her presentation at a recent Kiwanis Club Meeting. With her vision for the camp to benefit the city financially, with her educational staff and students, they continue to hope for a better year next summer.

Mr. Todd Spence of 3G's Auction Company, presented the city with the results of the recent auction. Generating funds of \$17,437, most of the inventory was firearms and knives, confiscated by the Sylvester Police Department. He also expressed thanks to city staff for their efforts in the auction.

Ms. Shelia Williams, Sylvester Resident, extended thanks to City Manager Chris Davis and Assistant City Manager Richie Childers for helping her with a water/sewer issue with the Sylvester Housing Authority.

Mr. Brian Flack, Sylvester Resident, addressed the City Council concerning the budget and accounts payable by the city, referencing past years' financial data, City Manager payments, professional fees, and other monetary issues, such as training and hotel accommodation. Mayor Proctor recommended it best for Mr. Flack to schedule a meeting with City Hall for further assistance.

Mrs. Connie Collier, Sylvester Resident, requested an update on the West Street Paving Project. This will be addressed by an item on the meeting agenda.

### **Presentation – Carter & Sloope Engineers Grant Update**

Mr. Stephen Rakestraw of Carter & Sloope Engineering provided the Mayor and Council with an update concerning the upcoming water meter and water/wastewater projects. A bid opening will take place on August 28, 2025, for the water meter upgrade project and water line repairs and water pressure modifications. The project will take place in two (2) phases, costing \$2 million dollars, with funding received by a grant of \$4.5 million dollars.

Mr. Rakestraw also noted the sludge degradation project for minor upgrades at the facility, and fencing at the ponds in the city. This project bid opening will also be held August 28, with funding from a \$7 million dollar loan.

Ms. Jinny Boyd, Special Projects Manager, informed the Council on upcoming projects, including sewer, downtown water pressure and pending grants. The West Street Project is in the final stages of approval and recertification for training. Figures were provided for FEMA and GEMA projects obligated from various categories for reimbursement totaling over \$200,000. The Historical Pope Park is the focus of the T-Mobile Grant, per Ms. Boyd and Councilman Carter, for aiding in renovations and keeping it operational, as the Worth County High School baseball team will not be using the facility any longer. Memorials, pavilions and plaques have all been mentioned for preserving history.

### **New Business**

#### **A. Event/Request to Close Street Applications**

##### **i. Spooky Halloween Dance Team Fundraiser**

Mrs. Glenice Stephens informed the Mayor and Council of the request to use the Henry Hall Woolard Center for a dance team fundraiser. The Spooky Halloween Event will take place on October 25, 2025, from 7:00 am until 6:00 pm. There will be a DJ, dance teams will perform with a charge for admission and food will be sold.

Upon a motion by Councilman Jackson, with a second by Councilman Giddens, the Spooky Halloween 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.

**ii. Georgia Peanut Festival 5K/Fun Run**

Mrs. Stephens detailed the application to close streets for the Georgia Peanut Festival 5K/Fun Run on October 4, 2025, hosted by Best Friends Humane Society. This event will begin at 7:30 am - 10:30 am and will require a route for participants: Bryant Drive, Highway 33, Isabella Street, West Pinson Street, Pinson Street, Washington Street, Washington Street and King Street.

Upon motion by Councilman Jackson, and second by Councilman Carter, the Georgia Peanut Festival 5K/Fun Run Application gained approval. Voting yes were Mayor Proctor, Councilmen Carter, Giddens, Jackson and Powell. The vote passed 5-0.

**B. Worth County Alumni Weekend**

Mr. Jarvis Jefferson, Worth County Alumni President, proposed details of the annual alumni weekend. This event will be held October 2<sup>nd</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup>, 2025. Thursday night's event takes place in Albany, with bowling at Albany Strikers. On Friday night, alumni are encouraged to attend the high school football game, with a Meet and Greet block party at the Train Depot Pedestrian Mall, immediately following. It is noted that the alumni group will provide added security, and request road closures at Isabella, Front and North Main Streets for the event. A DJ will be present at this event from 9:00 p.m. until 12:00 p.m. Saturday will hold the Alumni Tailgate Event, beginning at 9 a.m. through 4 p.m. at the Holley Grounds. The group will have insurance as they do annually. Saturday night, they will have the Met Gala Style Event at the Worth County Community Center. With Sunday's events to be decided, with mention of a Field Day at the H. H. Woolard Center with both inside and outside events. There is a \$5,000 sponsorship request noted on the itinerary.

Discussions about security, Worth County Sheriff Office Deputies, off-duty Sylvester Police Officers, early starting times, traffic and crowd control and downtown citizen parking and business concerns were all made. Council requested a layout of a security plan for the event.

Upon motion by Councilman Powell to table the agenda item, seconded by Councilman Giddens, there was no action taken on this agenda item. It will be revisited on August 4, 2025. Voting yes were Mayor Proctor, Councilmen Carter, Giddens, Jackson and Powell. The vote passed 5-0.

**C. Sylvester Worth County Chamber**

Mrs. Kayla Myers, Sylvester Worth County Chamber President, extended thanks for the partnership and sponsorship with the city. Mr. Chris Davis and the Chamber plan to meet monthly for efficient communication. She invited the Mayor and City Council to the upcoming Boots and Pearls event in September. Mr. Davis advised the request for a budget increase from 2023, which was brought forth in the current fiscal year budget. The Mayor and Council agreed that Mrs. Myers is doing an excellent job in her 1<sup>st</sup> year, and discussed fence installation, alongside the drainage ditch for safety at the Chamber Annex.

#### **D. City Manager Contract Final Draft**

Mr. Castellow requested clarification on the vote for the City Manager's Contract. With brief discussion, it was determined that a unanimous vote took place on the amount offered, with details set at the previous meeting. There was no action taken on this agenda item.

#### **Reports/Remarks**

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

Councilman Isaac Jackson, Jr., Ward 2 – Councilman Jackson inquired about the four-way stop at Washington and Willingham Streets and city ordinance details of establishments allowing customers to carry alcoholic beverages out of the restaurants. Mentions of concealed to-go cups and legal review will take place. Mr. Castellow will follow up in a future council meeting. Signs were requested for parking at pavilions and playing loud music in the park. A stronger police presence is needed as well.

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

Councilman Earnest Carter Jr., Ward 4 – Councilman Carter reported lighting issues on Worth, Welch and Pope Streets. Mr. Tyree McGee, Utilities Superintendent, will be contacted. Discussion about trash bins left near the road and safety were all mentioned. Letters will be delivered to residents as a reminder. A tree blocking a ditch at Worth Street was also mentioned for concern.

Mayor Harold Proctor, Jr. – Mayor Proctor mentioned fencing at the Holley School Grounds needing repair to keep beauty in the community. A high-speed chase may have been the cause of damage to the fence.

City Attorney Lester Castellow – Attorney Castellow had no report.

City Manager Chris Davis – Mr. Davis requested a count of attendees for the Boots and Pearls Event and The Margaret White Night Out Against Crime/Back to School Bash is July 25 at Jeffords Park from 6:00-7:30 p.m.

#### **Executive Session**

Councilman Jackson moved to convene an Executive Session to discuss Real Estate, seconded by Councilman Carter. Voting yes were Mayor Proctor, Councilmen Carter, Giddens, Jackson and Powell. The vote passed 5-0.

#### **Executive Session Begins: 7:06 p.m.**

Councilman Jackson motioned to accept minutes as read in Executive Session and reconvene to a regular meeting, seconded by Councilman Giddens. Voting yes were Mayor Proctor, Councilmen Carter, Giddens, Jackson and Powell. The vote passed 5-0.

#### **Regular Session Reconvenes: 7:31 p.m.**

**Announcements:** None

**Adjournment**

With all agenda items covered, Councilman Giddens 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 7:32 p.m.

CITY COUNCIL  
SYLVESTER, GEORGIA

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HAROLD PROCTOR, JR., MAYOR

ATTEST:

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MARKESHA BIVENS, CITY CLERK