

## City Council Meeting Minutes

City of Sylvester  
City Council Regular Meeting  
City Hall Council Chambers  
Monday, December 1, 2025  
Call to Order 6:00 p.m.

**Attendees:** Mayor Harold Proctor, Jr.  
Councilman Melvin Powell, Ward 1  
Councilman Mark Giddens, Ward 3  
Mayor Pro-Tem 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

**Absent:** Councilman Isaac Jackson, Jr., Ward 2

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

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

### **Agenda**

Upon motion by Councilman Giddens, seconded by Councilman Carter, the City Council meeting agenda was approved. Voting in favor were Mayor Proctor and Councilmen Carter, Giddens, and Powell. The motion carried, 4-0.

### **Minutes Approval**

Upon motion by Councilman Powell, seconded by Councilman Carter, the November 3, 2025 – Regular Meeting gained approval. Voting in favor were Mayor Proctor and Councilmen Carter, Giddens, and Powell. The motion carried, 4-0.

### **Speakers Appearance**

Mrs. Vernesta Jordan, Sylvester resident, spoke before the Mayor and Council regarding speed bumps on Carrol Lane. Vehicles speed and children play, and she is concerned with safety and mentioned speaking with Councilman Isaac Jackson about the request.

Ms. Shelia Williams, Sylvester resident, voiced concern about the parking lot at the Mary Alice Shipp Center and the restriping needed. She has spoken with City staff in the past; she just wanted to approach Mayor and Council.

Mayor Proctor informed of the petition required for the speed bumps and staff will review the parking lot Ms. Williams mentioned.

## **Public Hearing**

The Public Hearing was called to order, unanimously, at 6:06 p.m.

Mr. Davis advised this was the third Public Hearing to propose the new millage rate and hear public comments, prior to a vote. The Mayor and Council were provided with data explaining the calculation of the proposed millage rate.

All advertising and public notice requirements were met. Staff recommended a millage rate of 6.177. An informational video was also posted on social media, summarizing the property value reevaluations, applicable public information laws and a five-year tax digest provided by the Worth County Tax Assessor's Office. This proposed rate represents 66.28% increase, which includes the largest rollback in the City's history. Adoption of this rate allows the City to proceed with the same billing timeline as other municipalities and Worth County entities.

## **Mayor and Council Remarks**

The Council discussed the agreement with the County for billing and noted that an appeals process is available should residents disagree with the property reevaluation. The goal is minimizing the monetary impact on citizens, avoiding unnecessary burden, and continuing funding the capital projects when possible. Regarding the rollback, it was noted that other communities have chosen not to implement a rollback and are less concerned with citizen impact. It was further noted that the completion of appeals next year will provide more accurate figures and adjustments to the millage rate may be made at that time, if necessary.

## **Public Comment**

There was no citizen comment.

With no further discussion, Councilman Powell made a motion to adjourn the Public Hearing, which was seconded by Councilman Giddens, the Public Hearing adjourned. Voting yes were Mayor Proctor, Councilmen Carter, Giddens, and Powell. The motion passed, 4-0.

## **The Public Hearing adjourned at 6:22 p.m.**

Upon motion by Councilman Giddens, seconded by Councilman Carter, the proposed millage rate of 6.177 was approved. Voting yes were Mayor Proctor, Councilmen Carter, Giddens, and Powell. The motion passed, 4-0.

## **New Business:**

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

#### **i. Christmas Parade**

Mr. Davis approached the Mayor and Council on behalf of Mrs. Karen Singletary, Main Street Director, requesting approval for the annual Christmas Parade. The road closures are the usual parade route, and the event will take place Thursday, December 4, 2025, from 6:00 p.m. until 7 p.m.

Councilman Carter made a motion to approve the Christmas Parade Event/Request to Close Street Application, with a second by Councilman Powell. Voting yes were Mayor Proctor and Councilmen Carter, Giddens, and Powell voted in favor, passing the motion 4-0.

**ii. Sylvester Woman's Club Fun/Glow Run**

Mrs. Kristi Jordan, President of the Sylvester Women's Club, requested approval of the application submitted for the Fun/Glow Run. This public event is scheduled to be held on January 1, 2026, in celebration of the New Year. Road closures will begin at 6:30 p.m., although the application indicates 7:00 p.m., and will remain in effect until approximately 10:00 p.m. The route will mirror that of the annual Turkey Trot, including both a one (1) mile fun run and a five (5) kilometer (5K) run, beginning at Unity Baptist Church and concluding at CVS Pharmacy.

Upon motion by Councilman Giddens, seconded by Councilman Carter, the event application was approved for the Woman's Club Fun/Glow Run. Voting in favor were Mayor Proctor and Councilmen Carter, Giddens, and Powell. The motion passed, 4-0.

**B. Beer, Wine, and Alcohol License(s)**

**i. Package Store Application: Dynamic Spirits**

Mrs. Tenneisha Cushion, Deputy Clerk, offered details of the Beer, Wine and Alcoholic Beverage Application submitted by the new owner of Dynamic Spirits Package Store. Staff seeks approval of this application, with all documentation completed and submitted as required.

Upon motion by Councilman Carter, with a second by Councilman Powell, the Dynamic Spirits Package Store Application gained approval. Voting in favor were Mayor Proctor and Councilmen Carter, Giddens, and Powell. The motion passed, 4-0.

**ii. Renewals:**

Circle K	El Metate	El Supremo Grill	EZ Corner #1	EZ Corner #22	EZ Corner #33
Handy Express	Harry's Food Mart	Joe's Food Mart	Sylvester Express	Walmart #724	

Mrs. Cushion also informed the panel of the Beer, Wine and Alcoholic Beverage Application Renewals submitted by the above-mentioned establishments. Staff seeks approval of these renewals, with all documentation completed and submitted as required.

Upon a motion by Councilman Carter, with a second by Councilman Giddens, The renewals for the noted Beer, Wine and Alcohol License Applications gained approval. Voting yes were Mayor Proctor, Councilmen Carter, Giddens, , and Powell. The vote passed 4-0.

**C. Southwest Georgia Regional Commission 2026 Appointment**

Mr. Chris Davis advised the Mayor and Council of the annual appointment required for the Southwest Georgia Regional Commission (SWGRC) Council for 2026. He reported that Mr. Christopher Wheeler, Warwick City Council representative, and Mr. Melvin Harris, Non-Public Representative, have both agreed to continue serving on the Council. Staff requested authorization for the Mayor to execute the letter of appointment.

Upon motion by Councilman Powell, seconded by Councilman Carter, the SWGRC Council appointments for 2026 were approved. Voting in favor were Mayor Proctor and Councilmen Carter, Giddens, and Powell. The motion carried unanimously, 4-0.

**D. MEAG Power Resolution No. 2025-13**

City Manager Chris Davis informed the Mayor and Council that an update was required to confirm the City of Sylvester's designated appointees for the Municipal Competitive Trust and for communicating official City decisions. He noted that, historically, the Mayor and City Manager have served in this capacity.

Councilman Powell emphasized that City Council approval is also required for funding drawdowns, along with the adoption of a resolution. Attorney Castellow and Mr. Davis agreed, noting that the item before Council was only an update to the authorized appointee names.

Councilman Carter made a motion to approve the update of the MEAG Power appointees through Resolution No. 2025-13, designating Mayor Harold Proctor, Jr., and City Manager Chris Davis as the City's official delegates. The motion was seconded by Councilman Powell and approved unanimously. Voting in favor were Mayor Proctor and Councilmen Carter, Giddens, and Powell. The motion carried, 4-0.

**E. SlyTel – TruVista Contract Execution**

Mr. Davis reminded the Mayor, Council, and meeting attendees of the ongoing negotiations regarding the sale of SlyTel Broadband Services to TruVista. He reported that legal document review has been completed by both parties, and the next step in the process is to schedule a date for execution of the official paperwork.

Attorney Castellow advised that a vendor schedule remains one of the final items needed; however, he indicated that proceeding with the signing of the documents is appropriate. Mayor Proctor and Councilman Giddens agreed to coordinate and determine a future date to execute the paperwork with TruVista.

No action was taken on this agenda item.

**F. Discussion: Playground Equipment**

Mr. Davis presented the Mayor and Council with information regarding proposed playground equipment improvements for T.C. Jeffords Park and Pope Park. He reported that he contacted six (6) vendors and met with two (2), River City Swing Set and Pro-Playground.

The goal for T.C. Jeffords Park is to increase the size of the playground equipment and to install climbing features and handicap-accessible swings. Compliance with regulations and safety standards was noted as the primary consideration in selecting equipment.

River City Swing Set was identified as the less expensive of the two vendors; however, when considering the desired additions at Pope Park—including outdoor exercise equipment, a walking track, and swing set upgrades—the overall project cost may be higher. Discussion also included completion of pavilions at Pope Park. Two (2) pavilions with picnic tables are proposed with concrete installation, and it was mentioned that for these upgrades, it would be less costly than similar work completed in the past.

Additional time is needed for Council review, and this matter will be revisited at a future Council meeting. No action was taken on this agenda item.

### **Reports/Remarks**

Councilman Melvin Powell, Ward 1 – Councilman Powell requested an update on matters discussed at the previous meeting. Staff advised that the Public Works and Light Departments continue to work diligently and with safety as a priority to complete tree cutting near power lines. Public Works is also addressing maintenance of the canals, while Code Enforcement is actively working on compliance issues along Ayers Street and Martin Luther King Jr. Drive. Additionally, employees are working to complete the installation of downtown Christmas lights in preparation for upcoming holiday events. Councilman Powell also mentioned the possibility of partnering with Councilman Carter on a consulting basis.

Councilman Isaac Jackson, Ward 2 – Councilman Jackson was not present.

Councilman J. Mark Giddens, Ward 3 – Councilman Giddens stated that there were no issues to report and that Ward 3 is in good order.

Councilman Earnest Carter Jr., Ward 4 – Councilman Carter reported a water leak near the intersection of Worthy and Way, by the Housing Authority near Welch Street. Staff advised that the issue was reviewed earlier in the day. He also gave kudos to the Public Works Department for the cleanup near J&J Grocery and expressed appreciation for working with the Council and City staff, hoping that the City Manager and staff continue to do a great job serving the community. Councilman Carter added that this was his last Council meeting. He thanked the Mayor, Council, and City staff for their support and teamwork during his time in office and expressed well wishes to everyone. He added, with a smile, he would be available to consult for Councilman Powell, if the price were right.

Mayor Harold Proctor, Jr. – Mayor Proctor thanked Councilman Carter and noted that he had neglected to mention earlier the City's hopes to add adult workout equipment at Irene P. Hall Park. The Mayor also encouraged everyone to participate in the various events held throughout the City, particularly the walk/run events, and emphasized the importance of keeping family and friends safe during the holiday season.

Lastly, Mayor Proctor commended Councilman Carter for his attention to detail over the past four (4) years, sharing that he had learned from working with him on the City Council and from his dedication to due diligence. The Mayor led a round of applause in recognition of Councilman Carter's service to the community.

City Attorney Lester Castellow – Attorney Castellow had no report.

City Manager Chris Davis – Mr. Davis reminded the Mayor and Council that there will be only one (1) Council meeting in December. He noted that the Christmas Parade and Tree Lighting Ceremony is scheduled for Thursday, December 4th at 6:00 p.m. The Employee Holiday Dinner will take place on Friday, December 19th at the Train Depot. City Hall will be closed on Wednesday, December 24th, and Thursday, December 25th in observance of Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, with normal business hours resuming on Friday, December 26th. For the New Year's holiday, City Hall will be closed Thursday, January 1, 2026. Mr. Davis also expressed that he enjoyed the brief time working with Councilman Carter and commended him for his thoroughness during his service on the Council for the citizens.

**Executive Session:** None

**Announcements:** There were no announcements.

**Adjournment**

With all agenda items addressed, Councilman Giddens made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Councilman Carter. Voting in favor were Mayor Proctor and Councilmen Carter, Giddens, and Powell. The motion carried, 4-0.

Mayor Proctor duly adjourned the meeting at 6:50 p.m.

CITY COUNCIL  
SYLVESTER, GEORGIA

HAROLD PROCTOR, JR., MAYOR

ATTEST:

MARKESHA BIVENS, CITY CLERK