

## City Council Meeting Minutes

### City of Sylvester

### City Council Organizational Meeting

City Hall Council Chambers

Tuesday, January 5, 2026

6:00 p.m.

### Call to Order

City Manager Chris Davis called the meeting to order.

### Quorum

Councilman Melvin Powell, Ward 1	Present
Councilman Isaac Jackson, Jr., Ward 2	Present
Councilman Elect J. Mark Giddens, Ward 3	Present
Councilman Elect Nykemius J. Hamilton, Sr., Ward 4	Present
Mayor Elect Harold Proctor, Jr.	Present

### Attendees

City Manager Chris Davis  
Assistant City Manager Richie Childers  
Assistant City Manager Tanita Norris  
City Attorney Lester Castellow  
City Clerk Markesha Bivens

### Invocation/Pledge

Dr. Willie Mae Marlin

### Oath of Office – City Council

City Clerk Bivens administered the City Council Oath of Office to:  
Councilman Elect J. Mark Giddens, Ward 3  
Councilman Elect Nykemius J. Hamilton, Sr, Ward 4

### Oath of Office – Mayor

City Clerk Bivens administered the Oath of Office to:  
Mayor Elect Harold Proctor, Jr.

All oaths were signed, attested, and filed with the City Clerk.

### Agenda

Upon motion by Councilman Jackson, seconded by Councilman Powell, the City Council approved the meeting agenda. Voting in favor were Mayor Proctor and Councilmen Giddens, Hamilton, Jackson, and Powell. The motion carried unanimously, 5-0.

## **Speakers Appearance**

Mr. Aubrey Vance, a Sylvester resident, addressed the Mayor and Council regarding compliance with Federal and State electrical utility regulations (FAC-003-4), vegetation maintenance, and submitted an informational packet expressing safety concerns for disabled and handicapped residents in his neighborhood.

Utilities Director Tyree McGee reported that, following discussions with Mr. Vance, the department trimmed trees located near the referenced utility lines, including several on private property. He also noted that Utilities Office Manager Kendra Wise provided contractor information, and the department assisted beyond its typical scope of work by temporarily removing utility lines to ease access for the tree removal.

Mayor Proctor mentioned that the City is not obligated to access private property. With the Utilities Department reviewing and trimming trees near the power lines, then assisting the contractor, they went above and beyond, commending the temporary removal of lines and taking appropriate precautions regarding insulation and voltage.

No action was taken on this agenda item, and no additional speakers were present.

## **New Business:**

### **A. Resolution 2025-14: Fiscal Year 2026 CHIP Grant Application**

Mrs. Ebony Moore, Community Development Director, informed the Mayor and Council of recent communication with the Southwest Georgia Regional Commission and requested approval of Resolution 2025-14 for the Fiscal Year 2026 CHIP Grant Cycle. The resolution updates program guidelines only and does not amend any existing plans or policies adopted in the past. During the discussion, concerns were expressed regarding contractor availability and reimbursement challenges.

Upon motion by Councilman Jackson, seconded by Councilman Giddens, Resolution 2025-14: Fiscal Year 2026 CHIP Grant Application was approved. Voting in favor were Mayor Proctor and Councilmen Giddens, Hamilton, Jackson, and Powell. The motion carried unanimously, 5-0.

### **B. Event Application: New Year's Dance Competition/Fundraiser**

Mrs. Moore requested approval of the application submitted by Ms. Melissa Caldwell for a New Year's Dance Competition and Fundraiser. Ms. Caldwell regularly hosts events at the H.H. Woolard Center for her dance team, the Black Fire Divas. The event is scheduled for January 31, 2026, from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., including setup and breakdown/cleaning. According to the application, a concession stand, DJ services, and on-site security will be provided. No road closures are required.

Upon motion by Councilman Powell, seconded by Councilman Giddens, the Council approved the event application for the New Year's Dance Competition and Fundraiser.

Voting in favor were Mayor Proctor and Councilmen Giddens, Hamilton, Jackson, and Powell. The motion carried unanimously, 5-0.

City Manager Chris Davis announced the retirement of Mrs. Glenice Stephens and commended Mrs. Moore for her performance in the role to date. He also announced that Mr. Monroe Herrin has joined the City staff as Code Enforcement Officer.

**C. Beer, Wine, and Alcohol License**

**i. Renewals**

CVS Pharmacy #5606	Fat Boys Backyard BBQ	J&J Grocery	Kuntry Boy BBQ
Handy Express	Harry's Food Mart	Joe's Food Mart	Sylvester Express

**ii. Package Store Renewal: Pour House Liquor**

Mrs. Cushion informed the Mayor and Council of the Beer, Wine, and Alcoholic Beverage License renewal applications submitted by the above-referenced establishments. Staff recommended approval, noting that all required documentation had been submitted and all applicable fees had been paid.

Upon motion by Councilman Powell, seconded by Councilman Jackson, the Council approved the Beer, Wine, and Alcoholic Beverage License renewals. Voting in favor were Mayor Proctor and Councilmen Giddens, Hamilton, Jackson, and Powell. The motion carried unanimously, 5-0.

A separate vote was conducted for the renewal of the Package Store License for Pour House Liquor, and upon motion by Councilman Jackson, seconded by Councilman Giddens, the license renewal was approved. Voting in favor were Mayor Proctor and Councilmen Giddens, Hamilton, Jackson, and Powell. The motion carried, 5-0.

**D. 2026 Mayor Pro-Tem, Municipal Court Judge, and City Attorney Appointments**

Each year, the Mayor and Council appoint the Mayor Pro-Tem, Municipal Court Judge, and City Attorney. Upon acceptance by the appointees, the appointments become effective for the 2026 calendar year.

Councilman Melvin Powell accepted the appointment as Mayor Pro-Tem. Upon motion by Councilman Giddens, seconded by Councilman Jackson, the appointment was approved unanimously, 5-0.

Upon motion by Councilman Powell, seconded by Councilman Jackson, Judge Gregory Williams of the Sylvester Municipal Court was reappointed, and the appointment was approved unanimously, 5-0.

With the acceptance of City Attorney for 2026, by Mr. Lester Castellow, upon motion by Councilman Powell, seconded by Councilman Giddens, with the appointment approved unanimously, 5-0.

**E. 2026 City Council Meeting Schedule**

Mr. Davis presented the proposed 2026 City Council Meeting Schedule. He noted that the schedule mirrors the previous year, with certain meetings moved to Tuesday in observance of holidays, as noted. He further advised that only one (1) meeting is scheduled for July, November, and December, unless otherwise approved by Council.

Upon motion by Councilman Giddens, seconded by Councilman Jackson, the 2026 City of Sylvester Council Meeting Schedule was approved. Voting in favor were Mayor Proctor and Councilmen Giddens, Hamilton, Jackson, and Powell. The motion carried, 5-0.

**F. 2026 City of Sylvester Holidays**

Mr. Davis presented the proposed 2026 City of Sylvester Holiday Schedule, noting that the number of holidays remains the same as the previous year. He advised that the observances for Thanksgiving and Christmas have been clarified to avoid the confusion experienced last year, with holiday eves and official holiday dates.

Upon motion by Councilman Jackson, seconded by Councilman Powell, the 2026 City of Sylvester Holiday Schedule was approved. Voting in favor were Mayor Proctor and Councilmen Giddens, Hamilton, Jackson, and Powell. The motion carried, 5-0.

**Reports/Remarks**

**Councilman Isaac Jackson** expressed appreciation for new opportunities in 2026, stated that he looks forward to working with the newly elected Councilman for Ward 4, and extended his well-wishes for the New Year.

**Councilman Melvin Powell** had no report.

**Councilman J. Mark Giddens** extended a welcome to Councilman Hamilton.

**Councilman Nykemius J. Hamilton, Sr.**, stated his appreciation for his election to the Council.

**Mayor Harold Proctor, Jr.** expressed gratitude for his re-election to a second term as Mayor of Sylvester. He welcomed the fresh perspective of Councilman Hamilton and noted he would research whether Hamilton is the youngest member in City Council history.

**City Attorney Lester Castellow** had no report.

**City Manager Chris Davis** reminded the Mayor and Council of the upcoming offsite training at the GMA Cities United Conference scheduled for January 21–26, 2026. He requested that attendance confirmations be submitted to Ms. Bivens as soon as possible. Correspondence from Express Disposal notifying the City of a 3% increase in garbage collection rates was read aloud, and it was noted that the City remains under contract through 2027. This increase will be reflected on citizens’ utility bills.

**Executive Session:** None

**Announcements:** There were no announcements.

**Adjournment**

With all agenda items addressed, Councilman Jackson moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Councilman Powell. Voting in favor were Mayor Proctor and Councilmen Giddens, Hamilton, Jackson, and Powell. The motion carried unanimously, 5-0.

Mayor Proctor 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