



# CITY COUNCIL REGULAR SESSION

Monday, April 15, 2024 at 7:00 PM  
Council Chambers and YouTube Livestream

Website: [www.forestparkga.gov](http://www.forestparkga.gov)  
YouTube: <https://bit.ly/3c28p0A>  
Phone Number: (404) 366.4720

**FOREST PARK CITY HALL**  
745 Forest Parkway  
Forest Park, GA 30297

The Honorable Mayor Angelyne Butler, MPA

The Honorable Kimberly James  
The Honorable Hector Gutierrez  
The Honorable Allan Mears

The Honorable Dabouze Antoine  
The Honorable Latresa Akins-Wells

Ricky L. Clark Jr, City Manager  
Randi Rainey, City Clerk  
Danielle Matricardi, City Attorney

## DRAFT MINUTES

**CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME:** Mayor Butler called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.

**INVOCATION/PLEDGE:** The invocation and pledge were led by Dr. Paden.

**ROLL CALL - CITY CLERK:** A quorum was established.

Attendee's Name	Title	Absent	Present
Angelyne Butler, MPA	Mayor, At-Large		✓
Kimberly James	Council Member, Ward 1		✓
Dabouze Antoine	Council Member, Ward 2		✓
Hector Gutierrez	Council Member, Ward 3		✓
Latresa Akins-Wells	Council Member, Ward 4 - ZOOM		✓
Allan Mears	Council Member, Ward 5		✓

Jeremi Patterson, Deputy Finance Director; John Wiggins; Finance Director; Nina Robinson; Senior Staff Accountant; LaShawn Gardiner, Director of Planning & Community Development; Kwame Marshall, Multi-Media Specialist; Diane Lewis, Deputy HR Director; Rochell Dennis, Project Manager; Geoff May; Deputy Chief Operations, Dorothy Roper-Jackson, Court Administrator, Joshua Cox, IT Director; Rodney Virgil, Level 2 Support Engineer; Derry Walker, Code Enforcement Director; Pauline Warrior; Senior Management Analyst, Chief Criss, PD; and Danielle Matricardi, City Attorney.

**ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA WITH ANY ADDITIONS / DELETIONS:**

It was moved to approve the agenda with the deletion of item 7 and the addition of the approval of MSI as the Official Broker of Employee Benefits to be effective immediately.

Motion made by Councilmember James, Seconded by Councilmember Antoine.

Voting Yea: Councilmember James, Councilmember Antoine, Councilmember Gutierrez, Councilmember Akins-Wells, Councilmember Mears

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

1. **Council Approval of Council Work Session and Regular Meeting Minutes from April 1, 2024-City Clerk**

It was moved to approve the minutes as printed.

Motion made by Councilmember Mears, Seconded by Councilmember James.

Voting Yea: Councilmember James, Councilmember Antoine, Councilmember Gutierrez, Councilmember Akins-Wells, Councilmember Mears

**PUBLIC COMMENTS: (All Speakers will have 3 Minutes)**

There were three (3) Public Comment Speakers:

**John Randle-** wanted to get training for paramedics. Noted he called to be transported to the hospital because he had difficulty breathing. He noted the paramedics were fighting over who would drive to the hospital. He noted it was unacceptable and he was not given any oxygen until the ambulance started up. He noted knowing that the city has millions of dollars in their bank account, to try and use some of the money to help the homeless people in the city. He noted that last week an officer approached one of his friends who was asleep in Billy Lees Park and this officer caused the lady to take her life. Mr. Randle noted they should be trying to help the people instead of threatening to take them to jail for loitering and prowling. He noted he received a call from an Atlanta detective because he was in the victim's phone as an emergency contact.

**Mr. Evans** – noted he thinks they should rethink purchasing AV's. He noted there are studies to prove the mining of those materials is higher than the eternal combustions. He noted about 46 of the emissions and internal combustion engines equate to about 26 percent. He noted they are 30 percent heavier than the standard vehicle and will wear out the roads considerably quicker. He noted the compound on the tire breaks off and gets into the water system and pollutes it. He noted that if the battery catches fire it takes 36 thousand gallons of water to put it out and a regular vehicle takes less than 500 gallons of water. He noted it is something that needs to be looked into before purchasing.

**Mr. Ibenez-** noted the police chief is bringing up a lot of good things and he was asked to work with him and he is. He noted at Texaco a guy almost ran him over, he called the police and they would not do an incident report because no one was hurt. He noted he contacted the Chief of Police to see what happened and he still has not received a report and is hoping to get a follow-up. He hopes the dog can tell if a person is on drugs or tell the emotions of a person. He also would like to know if the dog can work undercover.

**CITY MANAGER'S REPORT:**

Mr. Clark noted they are celebrating Georgia Cities Week in conjunction with the other cities. He noted they plan to hold their first Public Safety Pinning and Promotion Ceremony at 6 pm in the gymnasium. He noted on the 25<sup>th</sup> they have a Coffee with the Chief event at Jerry's Café at 9 am and on the 26 there will be a Food and Wine Crawl at 5 pm at the fountain. He sent condolences to the family of Skip Leighton of Falcon Engineering who recently passed. He noted that they are in the process of the acceptance and denial stage of the Home Program and it should be finalized over the next few weeks. He noted that 29 contractors have been qualified to perform the home renovations. He thanked Mr. Shelby and the Fire Dept for winning the D R Brown Award, from the Georgia American Concrete Institute for best public project for the public safety building at Gillum.

He thanked everyone for his accomplishment of City Manager of the Year. He noted his commitment to the community was to leave the city better than it was before he got there. He highlighted the work anniversary of Todd Bailey who has been with the city since 1996 and Keith King and Todd Mathis since 2008, along with other employees. He noted that there have been 2 additional slides to highlight the events in the city and the new businesses by ward. He highlighted the legislative office and directors' events and projects. He noted as they begin to work on the budget they have put a lot of effort into littering and the beautification of the city. He gave an update on the Business Incubator, the Forest Park Landscape Median, and other Forest Park projects.

#### **CEREMONIAL:**

#### **Proclamation recognizing Georgia Cities Week April 21-27, 2024.**

##### **Background/History:**

Georgia Cities Week is an annual event in the state of Georgia dedicated to celebrating and raising awareness about the importance of cities and local government. Typically held during a designated week in April, it aims to highlight cities' role in providing essential services, fostering community engagement, and driving economic growth.

During Georgia Cities Week, municipalities across the state organize various activities and events to engage residents and promote civic pride. These activities may include open houses at city facilities, educational programs about local government functions, community service projects, environmental initiatives, arts and cultural events, and recreational activities for residents of all ages.

The Mayor and the Council took pictures.

#### **Proclamation recognizing the City of Forest Park as a Purple Heart City-Legislative Offices**

##### **Background/History:**

The Purple Heart is a military decoration awarded to members of the armed forces who are wounded or killed in action. Designating a city as a Purple Heart City allows communities to express gratitude and support for veterans and their families. Mayor Butler would like to present a Proclamation proclaiming the City of Forest Park as a Purple Heart City.

The Mayor and the Council took pictures.

#### **Proclamation in Recognition of our Communication Officers for Telecommunicators Week-Police Department**

##### **Background/History:**

The Forest Park Police Department currently employs 11 Communication Operators who handle incoming emergency and non-emergency calls from citizens 24/7, 365 days a year. These operators are responsible for dispatching calls for service to both police and fire personnel.

Each year, during the second week of April (April 14-20, 2024), the telecommunications personnel within the public safety community are honored. This week-long event, established in 1981 by Patricia Anderson of the Contra Costa County Sheriff's Office in California, serves as a time to recognize and express gratitude to those who dedicate their lives to serving the public. It's an important week dedicated to raising awareness of their hard work and unwavering commitment.

The Mayor and the Council took pictures.

### **Proclamation recognizing Steaven L. Misher as the official Poet Laureate for the City of Forest Park**

#### **Background/History:**

Mr. Steaven L. Misher is a professional poet with a passion for poetry; he is also the author of four poetry books and the founder of The Poetic Outreach that Empowers & Transforms (P.O.E.T.) Foundation and the co-founder of The Poets' Place, LLC, and has been chosen to be the City's official Poet Laureate.

The Mayor and the Council took pictures.

#### **PRESENTATIONS:**

- 2. Presentation by The Forest Park Ministers Association and Proclamation presented to The Forest Park Ministers Association on behalf of Councilwoman James-Legislative Offices**

#### **Background/History:**

The Forest Park Ministers Association is a non-profit organization that supports the City of Forest Park's vision by partnering with elected governmental officials, businesses, charities, and local and surrounding communities. To highlight its purpose, the Forest Park Ministers Association would like to give a brief presentation. Followed by receiving a proclamation on behalf of Councilwoman James.

Noted it is an honor to be able to partner with the City of Forest Park. He believes if a church is in a community, that it should serve the community that it is in. He read the mission statement and noted that positive growth within the community is based on improving communication between citizens, government, religious groups, and businesses. He noted one important mission was to make sure everyone in the community has a voice to be heard. He noted they were founded in 2004 by Dr. Leon Beeler, Pastor of Gateway Restoration Church after having a convention with the Mayor. It was discovered by Mayor Chuck Hall that there was a disconnect between the community, the government, and businesses. He encouraged Dr. Beeler to start the Forest Park Minister Association. He noted their goals were to unify the city and to make sure no homeless or underprivileged child went hungry. He noted that the Annual Day of Prayer is held in Starr Park, and local churches come to sing, minister, and praise dance. He thanked the Police and Fire Chief and noted they give Christmas bags to these departments for all they do. He noted there is a Community Cleanup on Saturday where they pray and clean. He noted they have a living Legends Banquet where they honor the people who have served the community faithfully. He noted they have a City Wide Revival yearly to make sure souls are saved. There is a back-to-school Youth Gathering held by Justin Cook to let them know they are not by themselves. He noted they have monthly meetings which is also a networking event and a number of other events.

3. **Presentation on Autism Awareness Month 2024: Building Community Within Forest Park-Recreation and Leisure**

**Background/History:**

Autism Spectrum Disorder, also known as ASD, is a developmental disability caused by differences in the brain. Individuals with ASD often have problems with social communication and interaction or restrictive or repetitive behaviors or interests. According to studies conducted by the CDC in 2020, within Georgia, around 1 in 46 children aged 8 were identified with Autism. Studies also show that early detection can help children with Autism achieve optimum health and reach their full potential when they reach adulthood. April is Autism Awareness Month where it strives to bring social and community awareness about autism acceptance and promotes inclusion and connectedness for people with autism as cases continue to rise. On Saturday, April 27, 2024 at 9:00 am in the rear parking lot of the Elaine Corley Recreation Center, the Recreation & Leisure Services Department will host its first annual Autism Awareness Walk to bring more awareness to the City of Forest Park.

**Director Maxwell** noted he has been encouraged to take the time to help his team grow as far as staff members. He noted he took on the challenge to do this and introduced ReShai Reeves Program Coordinator.

**ReShai Reeves**- she thanked them for having her for Autism Awareness Month also known as Autism Acceptance Month. She noted children start to show signs around 3 years old. She noted boys are impacted more than girls and girls should be tested if they exhibit any signs. She noted there are 3 levels to Autism. She noted there are organizations in the Northern Counties of Georgia to help families with Autism, but not in Clayton County. Ms. Reeves noted the way they can help is by embracing differences. She noted if they would like to learn more, they are having their first Annual Autism Awareness Walk at 9:00 am in the rear parking lot of the Elaine Corley Recreation Center on April 27<sup>th</sup>, which is a rain or shine event.

**Councilmember James** – thanked her for the presentation and noted she knows the diagnosis for Autism has increased.

**Council member Gutierrez**- thanked her for the educational presentation.

**Councilmember Akins**-Wells thanked her for the presentation.

4. **Presentation on the February FY23-24 Financial Report**-Finance Department

**Background/History:**

The Finance Department is presenting FY2023-2024 Monthly Financial review of the City's financials. The purpose of the monthly financial review is to help us know how healthy the City's cash flow is and help evaluate department performance to see if the executive office needs to reallocate resources to achieve the financial goals for the City.

**John Wiggins** – gave an update on the year-to-date revenues which is \$32,109,49. He noted the expenses are \$24,379,841. This gives the difference of \$7,729,650. He showed a slide from the General Expense Fund by department for March of what has been spent. He noted they are cleaning up the Special Revenue Fund and the 200 Fund. Mr. Wiggings noted they will be moving on to the 300 Fund which is the SPLOST and Capital Fund.

**Councilmember James-** noted she wanted to make sure that she brings to the Council attention on page 67, the investment income YTD \$121,000 plus dollars.

**Councilmember Antione-** thanked him for the presentation.

**Councilmember Gutierrez –** thanked him.

#### NEW BUSINESS:

**5. Council Approval of a Property & Liability Brokerage Services – Executive Offices**

It was moved to approve Gallager Risk Management Services as the city's Broker of records for Property & Liability Services.

Motion made by Councilmember Antoine, Seconded by Councilmember James.

Voting Yea: Councilmember James, Councilmember Antoine, Councilmember Gutierrez, Councilmember Akins-Wells, Councilmember Mears

**6. Council Approval of the Budget Amendment for Special Revenue - Finance Department**

It was moved to approve the Budget Amendment for Special Revenue.

Motion made by Councilmember Antoine, Seconded by Councilmember Mears.

Voting Yea: Councilmember James, Councilmember Antoine, Councilmember Gutierrez, Councilmember Akins-Wells, Councilmember Mears

**7. Council Approval to enter into a contract with Garrard Construction to make exterior repairs to the Rite Aid Building in the amount of \$28,319.00-Planning and Community Development Department. **This item was deleted from the agenda.****

**7. It was moved to approve to immediately designate MSI to be the Official Benefits Broker for the City of Forest Park. **New Item that replaced the original item.****

Motion made by Councilmember James, Seconded by Councilmember Antoine.

Voting Yea: Councilmember James, Councilmember Antoine, Councilmember Gutierrez, Councilmember Akins-Wells, Councilmember Mears

**8. Council Approval of certain Purchases for the Fire Department-Fire Department**

It was moved to approve certain Purchases for the Fire Department.

Motion made by Councilmember James, Seconded by Councilmember Gutierrez.

Voting Yea: Councilmember James, Councilmember Antoine, Councilmember Gutierrez, Councilmember Akins-Wells, Councilmember Mears

**9. Council Approval to Authorize the Police Department to Submit and Accept an Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) Canine Grant- Police Department**

It was moved to approve to Authorize the Police Department to Submit and Accept an Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) Canine Grant.

Motion made by Councilmember James, Seconded by Councilmember Antoine.

Voting Yea: Councilmember James, Councilmember Antoine, Councilmember Gutierrez, Councilmember Akins-Wells, Councilmember Mears

**10. Council Approval to Accept the Donation of a Bloodhound-Police Department**

It was moved to approve the Donation of a Bloodhound.

Motion made by Councilmember James, Seconded by Councilmember Antoine.

Voting Yea: Councilmember James, Councilmember Antoine, Councilmember Gutierrez, Councilmember Akins-Wells, Councilmember Mears

**11. Council Approval of the Special Facilities Request at Starr Park and sponsored by Legendary WIGO 1570 AM and Operation Push Too, LLC for Saturday, May 11, 2024 between 12pm-6pm—Recreation and Leisure Department**

It was moved to approve of the Special Facilities Request at Starr Park and sponsored by Legendary WIGO 1570 AM and Operation Push Too, LLC for Saturday, May 11, 2024 between 12pm-6pm; and for them to provide a Certificate of Insurance.

Motion made by Councilmember James, Seconded by Councilmember Antoine.

**Council Comments/Discussion:**

Councilmember James wanted to know if there were any other stipulations to be identified.

**Mr. Clark** noted that they provide a Certificate of Insurance for a total of 1 million dollars. The second condition is that they provide ample security, determined by the Recreation Director based on the size of the event.

**Councilmember James** amended her motion to include the addition of security based on Director Maxwell's recommendations.

Motion made by Councilmember James, Seconded by Councilmember Mears.

Voting Yea: Councilmember James, Councilmember Antoine, Councilmember Gutierrez, Councilmember Akins-Wells, Councilmember Mears

**CLOSING COMMENTS BY GOVERNING BODY:**

**Councilmember James-** thanked everyone for coming out and the support they show to the city. She noted this Thursday she will not have her Ward meeting. She noted they have received a Debt Satisfaction Certificate, from the United States Department of Army, that they borrowed in 2004.

**Councilmember Antione** – thanked everyone for coming and looks forward to seeing them at the next meeting.

**Councilmember Gutierrez** – thanked everyone for coming out. He thanked Chief Criss for being innovative when it comes to the city. He thanked the Forest Park Minister Association for everything they did. He noted they have an amazing impact on the community. He thanked the 911 operators for always doing a great job when it come to the



community. He noted he is excited about the Fort Gillum news and that it is a huge accomplishment. He noted this Saturday they are celebrating Selena Day, and he looks forward to seeing everyone.

**Councilmember Mears**- thanked everyone for coming and noted that Mr. Willie Finch is the oldest citizen to attend the meeting. He noted everyone should attend the meetings because it is where they come to take care of their business.

**Councilmember James**- noted that May 18 is Community Field Day. She noted the Seniors will parade around town and at the end Alumni Sania Fagen who plays with the University of South Carolina will be the Grand Marshal.

**Mayor Butler** – noted Justin who graduated from Forest Park High School went to the University of Alabama is up for NFL draft. She thanked everyone for being there and for the work that they do.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:** (When an Executive Session is required, one will be called for the following issues: Personnel, Litigation or Real Estate)

It was moved to recess into Executive Session at 8:27 p.m. for Personnel, Litigation, or Real Estate matters.

Motion made by Councilmember James, Seconded by Councilmember Mears.

Voting Yea: Councilmember James, Councilmember Antoine, Councilmember Gutierrez, Councilmember Akins Wells, Councilmember Mears

It was motioned to reconvene into the Council Regular Session at 8:44 p.m.

Motion made by Councilmember James, Seconded by Councilmember Mears.

Voting Yea: Councilmember James, Councilmember Antoine, Councilmember Gutierrez, Councilmember Akins Wells, Councilmember Mears

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, those requiring accommodation for Council meetings should notify the City Clerk's Office at least 24 hours prior to the meeting at 404-366-4720.

#### **ADJOURNMENT:**

It was moved to adjourn the Regular Session at 8:45 p.m.

Motion made by Councilmember James, Seconded by Councilmember Antione.

Voting Yea: Councilmember James, Councilmember Antoine, Councilmember Gutierrez, Councilmember Akins Wells, Councilmember Mears