



## CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION

Tuesday, September 06, 2022, at 6:00 PM  
Council Chambers and YouTube Livestream

### MISSION STATEMENT

It is the mission of the City of Forest Park to enhance, strengthen, and grow our city by collaborating with our community to provide the highest level of service. Striving to be recognized as a diverse community that values and respects all members. We will strive to provide fair, professional, and courteous service through transparency and open communication. As we work to achieve this mission, we will have integrity beyond reproach while employing fiscal discipline and innovation. In this work there are no praises and raises for mediocrity.

**Website:** [www.forestparkga.gov](http://www.forestparkga.gov)  
**YouTube:** <https://bit.ly/3c28p0A>  
**Phone Number:** (404) 366.1555

**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

Dr. Marc-Antonie Cooper, City Manager  
S. Diane White, City Clerk  
Mike Williams, City Attorney

### APPROVED MINUTES

**CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME:** The meeting was called to order by Mayor Butler at 6:00pm and she read the Mission Statement.

**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		✓
Allan Mears	Council Member, Ward 5		✓

Joshua Cox, IT Director, Javon Lloyd, Public Information Officer, Chiquita Barkley, Finance Director, Shalonda Brown HR Director, LaShawn Gardiner, Director PBZ, Latosha Clemons, Fire Chief, Bruce Abrahams, Economic Development Director, Bobby Jinks, Public Works Director, Nigel Wattley, Deputy Director Public Works, Tarik Maxwell, Rec/Leisure Director, Nathaniel Clark, Police Chief, and Arthur Geeter, Purchasing Manager

**CITY MANAGER'S REPORT:** Dr. Marc-Antonie Cooper, City Manager**COMMUNITY INFORMATION/REMINDERS:**

- Please keep the family of Former Ward 3 Councilwoman Sandra Bagley, who passed away on August 30, 2022, in your thoughts and prayers.
- Councilman Dabouze Antoine in cooperation with BlackPush, Inc would like to invite everyone out to a Gun Violence Round Table on Saturday, September 10, 2022, at First Iconium Baptist Church located at 542 Moreland Ave, SE, Atlanta, GA 30316 from 11:00am – 2:00pm. The roundtable's discussion will highlight stories of survival as well as proposed actions needed to ensure a safer America for all its citizens.
- On Thursday, September 8, the Forest Park Police Department is hosting a Community Meeting at the Liberty Ministries Family Worship located at 654 Main Street, Forest Park, GA. This event is open to the public and all are welcome.
- On September 11, 2022, Recreation and Leisure will host the "Ultimate Tail Gate Experience" for the Falcons vs Saints game. The event held at Starr Park and will kick off at 11:00am.
- On September 24, 2022, Recreation and Leisure will host its "5K Fun Run/Walk" event at Starr Park and this event kicks off at 8:00am.
- Every 2<sup>nd</sup> Friday from 5:00pm – 9:00pm join the Senior Panthers in Action for "Bingo Night" at the Forest Park Senior Center, 5087 Park Ave. Forest Park, GA. Join them for a great game, more fun and prizes.
- On September 29, 2022, from 9:30 am – 11:00am, the City of Forest Park's Economic Development Department invites you to breakfast-on-the-go networking event with local business owners and city officials. This event held at 696 Main Street and will have refreshments provided by our local vendors. For more information, please contact our Economic Development Department at 404-366-4720, option "6".

**CITY OPERATIONS:**

- **REMINDER - ONE CALL TO CITY HALL** – the City of Forest Park has officially migrated our city telephone vendor, and now have one number for residents to call. Now anyone can contact the main city hall number **(404)-366-4720**. Please ensure you listen to the prompts to get to the correct department to assist you.
- The City of Forest Park's second round of Federal ARPA Funding has been approved. Staff is working on a survey to receive the community's input to help us develop a list of priorities to bring forward to City Council for funding approval. We are working to have this survey ready for distribution by the next council meeting September 19, 2022.

**EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT/SHOUT OUT:**

- On Thursday, September 1, 2022, at 7:02 am the Forest Park Fire Department's own Sarah Hudson welcomed a new baby girl.
- **CONGRATULATIONS** – Human Resource Director Shalonda Brown who obtained a Workplace Mediator and Trainer in Conflict Resolution Certification from Eckerd College and Mediation Training Institute.

**COVID-19/MONKEY POX UPDATE:** EMS Coordinator, Andrew Gelmini

Between 8/29 – 9/04 there were 270 new positive cases in Clayton County, a decrease from last month's numbers with only 17 hospitalizations and zero deaths. Case breakdown still shows approx. 58% of Cases to be female and 42% Male with any remaining to be unknown sex.

Forest Park continues to make up 8.7% of County cases. Forest Park shows tracking 21 new cases last week. The 30 to 39 age group shows the highest percentage of positive cases

We have showed a small improvement with vaccines from last month staying at 56% of County residents have received at least one dose of vaccine and 50% are fully vaccinated. 20% of vaccinated citizens have received the additional booster dose. The 35 - 64 age groups show the highest vaccination rate.

The CDC continues to encourage and recommend vaccination and boosters for Covid 19 which are available through several means. The current recommendations for vaccines are anyone 5 years and older. The current recommendation for boosters is at least 5 months after receiving the final dose of the first series for Moderna and Pfizer or 2 months after receiving the single dose Johnson and Johnson. A second booster dose is currently being recommended to people 50 and older with underlying medical conditions and should be administered at least 4 months after prior dose was received.

To locate a vaccine site. You can text your zip code to 438829 or call 1-800-232-0233 to find local vaccine providers. Contacting your Primary Care Physician or local pharmacy to see if they are giving vaccines and boosters or visit [vaccines.gov](https://www.vaccines.gov). The Clayton County Health District is giving vaccines based on availability and are rotating their locations to allow for easy access. They are requesting people wishing to receive the vaccine or booster to call and make an appointment at (678) 479-2223 or visit [www.claytoncountypublichealth.org](http://www.claytoncountypublichealth.org). All this information is also available on the city website under the fire department tab under Covid 19.

Monkey Pox shows an increase in cases this month now totaling 1,445 cases in Georgia. According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), monkeypox is a "rare disease caused by infection with the monkeypox virus. Monkeypox virus is part of the same family of viruses as variola virus, the virus that causes smallpox. Monkeypox symptoms are similar to smallpox symptoms, but milder, and monkeypox is rarely fatal." Visit the Georgia Department of Public Health's monkeypox page for details about virus spread, prevention, testing, vaccinations, and treatments in the state. [Dph.georgia.gov/monkeypox](https://dph.georgia.gov/monkeypox)

**PRESENTATION(S):**

1. **Presentation – Landmark Consulting – Chief Executive Offices**

**Background/History:**

Landmark Consulting is a portfolio management firm that specialized in reporting of Federal Programs.

**City Manager –** The reason he asked Landmark Consulting to come in is, because of the promotion of Mrs. Gardiner, to Planning and Community Development. The city would need an organization to come in and help with grants and reports. He stated that Mrs. Lashawn did a wonderful job, and she did it all by herself. Landmark was asked to come in to see, if this were something that council would like to pursue.

**Debra Henson, Regional General Manager –** Has worked for the City of Atlanta, and recently was the Assistant General Manager, for the Department of Aviation, where she had the department of facilities and

know Forest Park well, because her team cut the grass all around. She has also worked with Watershed Management for six and a half years, which is how she knows Dr. Cooper.

Landmark is an engineering firm that does four things well. One is compliance work where they report on federal, state, and other fundings, which her team will inform you of. She stated she came up with Landmark, because she knows what it is like to work in state government, to have no reporting and to get audited, but not have all the paperwork needed for audit.

**Keely Thibodeaux, Senior Principal** – The firm provides grants management, compliance service and project control, which is more on the finance side. Program management is managing a series of projects that comes from allocation of the federal grant fund. The firm practice architect and she is a licensed architect here in Georgia.

They combine their knowledge on large scale building programs and have always worked on large-scale capital programs in the City of Atlanta, City of New Orleans, and other places. They use federal funds to get those programs, buildings, and infrastructure built, where they manage the funds and manage the projects too.

There are three types of funds: entitlement funds, competitive grant funds, for infrastructure and other federal sources and formula grants, which FEMA is an example of. In the Infrastructure Investment Jobs Act, you can expect to receive what they have for the state of Georgia, either directly or through the county, for roads and bridges and improving sustainable transportation, EB chargers, high speed internet for small rural areas and a variety of other things.

The pre-awards service offers a clearinghouse for grants management opportunity, where they search for opportunities with requirements met by the city. They will present it, and the city will decide if it is something they would like to move forward with. If a decision is made to move forward with the proposed grant, they prepare the grant application and proposal, and work with various departments and senior leadership with tracking until the applications get funded.

Post-award services are after you have been awarded, the monitoring and oversight of all the funds and tracking if they were spent, for which they were given. Each grant provides some administrative fees to manage it according to the way they like to receive the reporting.

**Cedric Pippins, Principal** – The portfolio you are seeing is a dashboard used to manage all your grants and funds coming in. They manage the programs, track costs, and bring the information into one place, so the leaders can make decisions. It also helps with managing audits and risks. His background is in project controls, managing budgets and cost and reporting and providing transparency to leaders and team members, collaborating to make good decisions.

The system dashboard will provide accurate and real-time reporting, transparency and coordination and cost savings. They manage millions of dollars daily for the City of Atlanta, opera, and cares funds, track cost for all programs that are eligible, work with finance to gather data, centralize the information, track all the cost, and manage risk as it goes through the life cycle. By the time an audit happens you will be prepared, the documents will be in place, as well as the reporting and costs and you will be able to manage it daily.

The Code and Financial Recovery Compliance provides administrative framework and organization and internal control, which is important advisory services, risk reduction monitoring and compliance, program solution and disaster fund management.

**Comments/Discussion from Governing Body:**

**Councilmember Antione** – Experience and trust is what I am looking for, so I am in favor of it.

**Councilmember Gutierrez** - Is this temporary or are we not going to have a grant writer anymore?

**City Manager** – For the time being, they would serve as the grant writer, and they can look at it on an annual basis to see if it were something council would want to continue. Can you talk about how you are paid?

**Keely Thibodeaux** – All of the grants have administrative fees that are a part of receiving those funds. Stated they are paid out of the administrative fee from the grant dollars.

**Councilmember Gutierrez** – So like an attorney if you get the grant then you get paid?

**Keely Thibodeaux** – Once the grant has been received, then the administrative fees kick in. If you are talking about a competitive grant where we would develop a proposal, there is a separate fee structure for that, and it is based on a level of hourly effort.

**Councilmember Gutierrez** – If approved will they come back with the pricing?

**City Manager** – Tonight I am not asking for approval, I wanted them to give the presentation and if council chooses to move forward with discussing this, then it would come back before council for approval on how to move forward. Would it be temporary or permanent depends on if that is what council wants.

**Mayor Butler** – You will be doing reporting for auditing purposes correct? If there is a discrepancy who has the liability?

**Keely Thibodeaux** – It would depend on what the discrepancy is. We have a responsibility to make sure that we have prepared everything accurately and support you all through the audit process. We manage the audit process with our clients, by answering all the questions and making sure everything goes smoothly.

Our whole design is around knowing what the requirements are and planning the program from the very beginning. The tools in the dashboard are lessons learned from years of doing this, which started 17 years ago and having perfected it over time. The record retention and accounting used in our system supports that effort.

**Councilmember Gutierrez** – Where can we see your work?

**Keely Thibodeaux** – The City of Atlanta is a local client; you can contact them as a reference, we have been managing funds for them for the last 2 years. Douglas County is a new client that is also local, you can contact them, and we can provide you with other references as well.

**Councilmember Antione** - The management analysis was doing the same thing this company is doing?

**City Manager** - Lashawn, was doing what they are going to be doing, but they will be doing it on a larger scale. Lashawn did a search, but one person can only search so much. Now we will have a whole company that is searching, and obtaining the Lap Certification, which leads to more federal funds. Now we need someone that is going to go after those funds and making sure we are remaining complaint, because they are very detailed in what they are expecting.

## 2. Leadership Clayton Class of 2022: Food4Clayton- Planning & Community Development

### Background/History:

Food4Clayton is a 6-member group from the Leadership Clayton Class of 2022. Our group project consists of providing a resource that Clayton County residents in need of food can use to locate agencies and nonprofit organizations that provide such services.

With assistance from local partners, we have created a map tool, that residents can download a link or QR code that provides the name, addresses and transportation access to the agencies and nonprofits.

**Lashawn Gardiner** – They are one-third of the 2022 leadership class, and their six members consist of: Lashawn Gardiner, Caroline Angelo, Chief Kevin Roberts, Stephanie Oliver, Sydney Bourget, and Derrick Gilchrist. One of the things that they had to do as part of the Leadership Clayton was to develop a project, they thought would benefit the community and be sustainable.

After looking at food security and doing some brainstorming, they came up with Food for Clayton as the name of their group. Food insecurity, defined by the United States Department of Agriculture, is a lack of consistent access to enough food for an active and healthy lifestyle. Low income, nor limited access to transportation, lives more than a mile from a grocery store. Low-income populations, plus low access to fresh affordable foods one mile or more equals the acronym LILA. Food insecurity in Clayton County in 2019 consisted of 11.6 %, over 32,000 residents and in 2021 it increased to 19.9 percent of over 56,000 residents.

**Kevin Roberts** – He is excited about this, and the task put before them to create an impact on the citizens of Clayton County, in the city and unincorporated part. The purpose is to address food insecurity, by connecting people with local food resources. The mission was to create a food map to connect people with the local food resources in and around Clayton County.

They created a food map to do this, and it contains information about the different entities in the community that provide food for community food sources CFS's. The map will outline this and be accessible via website, a QR Code and a link for access. You mentioned something in your mission statement about collaboration, and everybody in the city and unincorporated Clayton County, struggle with food insecurity.

We have overcome that barrier through our partnership with Clayton County Community Development. The food map will be maintained through ARCGIS, and regardless of whom is here later down the road, they will still be able to add food resources to the map, if there is a community development agency in the county. The database is simple, it contains the name of the organization, address, website email, phone number and service description. He stated he was excited and would like for everyone to share this information.

**Caroline Angelo** – Is excited about the project, and works for Atlanta Technical College, and is aware of the need for food for the residents in Clayton County. They have a food pantry at the college, and sometimes have trouble keeping it stocked, because many students need a little something to eat before they take a test.

With a food map like this you will be able to click on the red hearts and on the side, it will display the address, the city and zip. Also, if there is something special that is needed like proof of residency, be over 18 and things of that sort will appear in the note session. When used on your phone, it will ask if it can search your location, and once it pops up, it will show the locations closest to you. The direction will appear on the side, to show how to get from where you are to where the food is.

We have rack cards printed in English, Spanish and Vietnamese. Each card will be distributed as a PDF file to government entity, recreation centers, churches, schools, and libraries. They will be handed out at community events, the Mental Health Fun Run on Saturday, the Lovejoy Fall Festival, and other events. On the back is the QR Code that can be scanned, there is also a link, and as of today it will be added to the Clayton website under resources. Our big goal is to get the message out, and we ask that you share this. Plenty of people are in need, and we want to make sure that they know this map exists. There are a lot of organizations trying to get the food to the people, and we need help trying to get the people to the food.

#### **Comments/Discussion from Governing Body:**

**Councilmember James** – Went to an event at Forest Park Middle School, and the kids listed six things that were top of the line to really focus on. They are getting a new middle school and at the top of their list was food insecurity. One thing they shared was the local grocery store closest to them is Piggly Wiggly. They pay more for milk and other things, opposed to going down the road to Kroger. This is a huge issue in our community, so we need to point people in the direction, where they can get the most for their money.

**Councilmember Antione** – Teaches government and has initiated a group project for them to collect canned goods, bring them to class and take them to Mrs. Kimberly, parent liaison room and drop them off. He states, he is from a country that needs food and suggested they help his country out.

**Lashawn Gardiner** – Mentioned their first event was at Forest Park Fun Day, and they handed out several rack cards, to the people there.

**Councilmember Gutierrez** – This Clayton Leadership Program is amazing. There is another resource called Findhelpga.org, and it is a similar program that is specifically for food. He loved the logo they created for their website. Stated they could add something like this to the city website, under resources, so people could easily access it.

**Lashawn Gardiner** - Wanted to ask, if they could place it on the city website or social media platforms.

**Councilmember Wells** – Think it is a great idea and is what she calls collaborating with the community, getting out and getting involved. There are a lot of people in need, and they do not know where to go. This is a wonderful thing and if she can assist them in anyway feel free to reach out to her.

### **3. FUSUS Real-time Crime Center Camera– Police**

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

The Fusus Unified Intelligence Platform is an open ecosystem that integrates and enhances all public safety and investigation assets. It unifies live video, data, and sensor feeds from virtually any source, creating a Real-Time Crime Center in The Cloud.

The Fusus platform makes it easy for community members such as businesses and schools to share their cameras with local law enforcement, and the option to only do so at the click of a panic button. This means they do not have to sacrifice their privacy to ensure greater safety in our city and neighborhoods.

This is a public safety ecosystem around Atlanta that includes over 20,000 cameras and is slated to double within a year. All cameras are combined with other public safety utilities like video management software, drones, departmentally issued cell phones, gunshot detections systems, License Plate Readers, and

integrates all this information with the Department's 911 computer aided dispatch (CAD) software. The FUSUS platform has enabled law enforcement agencies to rapidly and effectively respond to, and solve, a variety of crimes they may not have otherwise been able to, including shootings, homicides, and car jackings. Using this Network around Metro-Atlanta will enable our department to partner with agencies like Atlanta Police, Fulton County Sheriff, Fulton County Police, Cobb County Police, Henry County Police and soon Clayton County Police and Dekalb County Police. Partnering with these agencies gives us access to all their video resources and ALPR's (license Plate Readers) across the Metro Atlanta area for investigative resources at no additional costs than our platform.

**Jim Price, Public Safety Advisor** – Retired in 2018 from Gwinnett County PD, after 29 years. He has been with FUSUS over a year, and they are a Georgia based company, located in Peachtree Corners in Gwinnett County, and the company is about two and a half years old. They were contacted by the chief to come and explain what it is they do.

FUSES has about 130 agencies across the country, they do not sale cameras, are compatible with over 200 different camera systems or LPRS and integrate everything into a single pane of glass. Instead of having to log onto 2 or 3 different platforms, they store data in one place. End to end service provider, training 24/7 365 days and are in-house, manufacturing, customer support and engineers in Peachtree Corners.

Built by law enforcement for law enforcement 70 percent of the company is either retired law enforcement or military background. They are looking to have about 12-15 agencies in Metro Atlanta, by the end of the year. What this means for Forest Park, is that everyone with a FUSES platform will be able to share with one another, what they have on a platform for no additional cost. They bring in license plate readers, city own camera systems, drones, robots, and the important thing which is the private video.

The private video is when all businesses will have the opportunity to join this platform. They will build a registry for the city, and the residents and businesses will have several factors they can go in. The first step is for them to say, I have cameras and would like to cooperate with the city police department if there is ever an issue around me. This costs nothing; they register their cameras and become a little dot on the operational map. If an incident occurs and there are cameras, instead of the police going through the neighborhood or the businesses when a crime occur, asking if there is video, if they are in the registry, we can send an email to residents or businesses about the crime and request them to share the video via a link immediately.

The second part of this is a business can say, if something happens at my business and I call 911, I want you to be able to see what is going on here. They can register and purchase a device that sits at the location and connect the video live to the police department, as they are responding to an emergency call for service. This helps the police to know what they are going into, and if it is still in progress, because it will be live. They will be able to see the perpetrators, see them leaving the scene and what kind of vehicles they are getting into. This will help to find the right person faster and eliminate complaints.

The information will be available via phones, computers and the dispatch centers which gives you a variety of resources to see things live, and to be able to move on it immediately. Once the donor releases their videos and the police department receive it, they can decide who they want to see it. These cameras can be audited to see who is watching, how long they have been watching and is available to the administrators. This will help make the community feel safer, help officers use their time wisely, and help with catching the perpetrators and not innocent people that match the description.



**Councilmember Antione** - At the last meeting, we had a company called ShotSpotter speak on gun shot detection. How would that work together.

**Jim Price** - Yes, there are three different major companies that we integrate with that do gunshot detection. For example, Atlanta made sure they put cameras close to their gunshot detector, if there is not a camera nearby then all you will get is a gunshot alert. With cameras, LPRS and the gunshot detector you get other descriptions that are needed and FUSUS integrate all this into one platform.

**Councilmember Gutierrez** – This is essential, and it is great that all these different platforms can work together. It is impressive and it is needed.

**Councilmember Wells** – Appreciates his presentation and thinks this is something that the city needs and can benefit from. At the last meeting someone spoke, and it sounds like the same thing, she wants to know the difference?

**Mayor Butler** – The presentation at the last meeting was ShotSpotter and Omnilert and they are both gun detections companies. One uses audio and the other uses video. This is a camera system that can connect it all in one platform.

**Jim Price** – Stated they are a software platform, which connects everything to work together.

**Mayor Butler** – Including those two entities as well.

**Councilmember Mears** – How far out do this go, do we determine where they will go, or will this go in the city? How long will it take to bring the field officers up to speed with this system.

**Jim Price** – We are an internet-based platform, and we can have it up in 35-40 days, if we do not hit any snags with your software companies. The system is also very user friendly, but we will do all the in-house training for you which is part of the platform fee.

**Councilmember Mears** – His biggest problem is, a lot of the crimes are in the outlying areas not around main streets, but in the neighborhoods. So how hard will this be to incorporate into those areas and for the officers to get that information?

**Jim Price** – It is all based on where you would like to put cameras and the community response to the register we set up. It all depends on the feedback you receive and how many cameras you bring into the system.

**Councilmember Mears** - Who determine where the cameras go?

**City Manager** - That will be determined by the city, and whatever vendor is used to implement the cameras.

**Councilmember Mears** - Stated he is for anything that will make the community safe.

**Councilmember Wells** – How much will it be to get started?

**Jim Price** – There are several different packets. It is based on the number of inputs you are bringing into it. The basic package is for 150 inputs, then there is a pro packet with 500 input and the enterprise package of 1500 input. The basic package does not give you the registry program, like the pro package, which is the medium of 75,000 a year, and gives you everything that was talked about today.

**Councilmember Mears-** Is that yearly?

**Jim Price** - That is yearly.

#### **NEW BUSINESS:**

#### **4. Council Discussion of Amending Ordinance on Text Amendments--Planning & Community Development Department**

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

The Planning & Community Development Department is proposing two text amendments to the Code of Ordinances. PC-2022-07 (TEXT) includes an update to Article P. Exterior Finishing Standards and Requirements – Residential Dwellings. Also included is an update to Article E. Tree Protection Plan. On August 18, 2022, both text amendments were approved by the Planning Commission Board.

An update to Article P. Exterior Finishing Standards and Requirements – Residential Dwellings Ordinance Sec. 8-2-160, Section 8-2-161, and 8-2-162 has been proposed. This update creates a standard for residential design. The previous ordinance was not explicit in its requirements, leaving too much room for interpretation. This update will clarify the requirements.

An update to the Tree Protection Ordinance. The purpose of the update to this Ordinance is to Provide standards for the conservation or replacement of trees as part of the land development and building construction process within the city. The previous ordinance was not explicit in its standards, leaving too much room for interpretation. This update is more specific with its standards.

**LaShawn Gardiner, Director of Planning & Community Development** – I will start with Residential dwellings Sec. 8-2-160, gives more specifics on the type of exterior finishings that can now be provided on the front side of construction of single-family residential dwellings, that one change. It also added, additional language that was a little bit more specific in terms of what materials will be prohibited. Item B and Item D gave exceptions for the type of products, which could be used based on the situation with the residential structure and added Section E, which talks about the architectural design features on single family attached and/or detached dwelling units. Section B – Windows and Doors – two additional elements were added which lists the prohibited materials which would be metal, vinyl and wood sidings and metal canopies; and a list of exceptions, such as, if a resident's home is already constructed with some type of vinyl, then if they are only replacing it, they could replace it with what has been damaged. There are the changes for the exterior finishings standards that was added for residential dwellings. Article E – Tree Protection Ordinance the revisions give a little more teeth adding language where 20% of an existing tree caliber should be maintained and it speaks to the tree replacement, that a developer or landowner would have to comply with when developing particular land and it also goes into a tree recompense pool that a person or company could pay into.

##### **Comments/Discussion from Governing Body:**

**Councilmember Antoine** – We are talking about the tree protection ordinance, in the state of Georgia there is a big concern around if a tree on your property falls on another tree in another's property, you are responsible. Does that cover that in this? If not, where is it address?

**LaShawn Gardiner** – That subject you are inquiring about, does not come under this statute. I would need to look in the code, but for purposes of what we are doing with the text amendments, it is only talking about

the percentage of the tree canopy that exists in the city that would have to be replaced or the person will have to pay into the tree protection recompense fund.

**Attorney Williams** – CM Antoine, what you are referring to is part of general case law, which is developed over the decades and this ordinance does not address that all, it only addresses when developers are developing their land and what they need to do to preserve a minimum level of tree coverage on that property.

**Councilmember Gutierrez** – What is the tree recompense?

**LaShawn Gardiner** – If a developer developed and a certain percentage of trees were cut down, they would pay the city a particular amount. This would go into a fund and the city would have the authority to replant trees on city property or where there is a need.

**Councilmember James** – Speaking on the single- family dwelling first. Is this in reference to remodeling your home or just new development?

**Lashawn Gardiner** – If you are remodeling your home, it will be on a case-by-case basis, and you will be able to use existing material that is currently on your home, and this covers the exterior.

**Councilmember James** - Plans to remodel, and on the front of her brick home she wanted to build a wraparound porch and needed to understand the language of the material.

**Lashawn Gardiner** - The section you are referring to Section A, the exterior finishing, in the original section it stopped at fully constructed stone or stucco. For this purpose, it adds additional types of materials that can be included.

**Councilmember James** - Has there been cases that come up that made the planning department, consider making it more defined? Is there a particular issue that brings this to the table or is it more proactive?

**Lashawn Gardiner**- Not to my knowledge, I would have to say it is more proactive.

**Councilmember James**- This question involves the tree. We have developers coming, one on Main Street, the apartment complex Forest Manor. Behind there is full of trees and the owner is planning to develop that area, and most of the trees will have to come down. The whole complex is old and when they initially started, they planned to build a whole apartment complex, about 30-40 years ago. Now he plans to make them town homes or condominiums. With this new update when he starts to remove some of the trees, will he have to pay a fee for those trees?

**Lashawn Gardiner**- He do not have to pay that fee; he can designate a number of trees; he decides to leave on there, before he clear cuts it. Those are things we would need to discuss, with the developers prior to doing the full site plan review process and explain these code sections to him.

**Councilmember James** - Do this affect the people that have already cut their trees, is this grandfathered?

**Lashawn Gardiner** – This will apply to anything moving forward.

5. **Council Consideration of an Amendment to the Elections Ordinance Barring Persons That Have Violated Election Laws from Serving as Election Officials** – Legal

**Background/History:**

It is proposed that the City's election ordinance be amended to include the following language:

*No person may serve as an election official in the City of Forest Park if such person has been found to have violated the election laws of the State of Georgia or any other state of the United States of America. In addition to the final adjudication of any court of competent jurisdiction, a factual determination of the Georgia State Elections Board shall be conclusive as to whether a person has violated the election laws of the State of Georgia.*

This provision is intended to enhance trust and confidence in the City's elections by prohibiting persons who have previously been found to have violated elections laws from serving as election officials.

**Comments/Discussion from Governing Body:**

**Councilmember Mears** – Is the one that implemented this and feel that they need to put more emphasis on people background checks, which are being put into these positions. Just for clarity and to show the people in Forest Park, that things are right. Anything that has happened in the past, can happen in the present. This should give the people in Forest Park, a little more confidence that the elections are going to be honest.

**6. Discussion and action regarding guidelines for Usage of Discretionary Ward Funds and Capital Outlay Funds – Chief Executive Office**

**Background/History:**

We have been asked to review and prepare a set of guidelines regarding the usage of the discretionary funds and Capital Outlay Funds each Councilmember is entitled to spend in furtherance of their duties as a member of the City Council. The City Manager is seeking council's direction on the guidelines presented.

**City Manager** – These are the guidelines that was requested and are this year budget talks. I am aware that there are guidelines for council, and so we are presenting those with a few requests, to figure out how each council member will be able to use the ward and capital outlay funds. Then we can release those funds back.

**Councilmember Gutierrez** - What is the timeline on this?

**City Manager** – If it is approved tonight, the funds can be placed back in tomorrow. The direction from council, was after guidelines were presented and approved, the funds will be released.

**Councilmember Wells**- Right now has the ward money been taken away?

**City Manager** - No, you have the ward money we are talking about the capital outlay money.

**Councilmember James** – You mentioned we already have some things in place, but what are the differences that were outlined. Can you tell me what the differences are?

**City Manager** - The only thing that we ask, are the funds that are donated to the city is donated to the vendor via the councilmember and checks not be written to the city, because that is an accounting nightmare, for finance to try and keep up with. When councilmembers get those funds from individuals and for transparency that money can be written out to that vendor that has to be paid. This will take council aides, out the equation of soliciting funds for the council. They will not be asked to do that but be there to follow-up for them on those items.

**Councilmember Gutierrez** – I thought we were talking about capital outlay funds, what do this have to do with that?

**City Manager** – It is the same thing the ward money and capital outlay funds were put together. The ward money is used how you deemed them necessary as stated in the document. The capital outlay funds are used as it is spelled out in the document. If you want to use your ward funds for a program that is fine, if it comes to having someone donate to your ward funds to be used for a program that is a nightmare for the finance department, because there is no separate line for that to be added to.

**Councilmember Gutierrez** – Thought it was just capital outlay related. It makes sense if it is outlined.

**Councilmember Wells** – We have council aides to aid the council, and the things that the council have going on. You all take the money away for the events, then we get sponsors. Now you are saying that the council aide, cannot assist the council in getting sponsors, is that what this is about?

**City Manager** – No, it is not that they cannot aide in getting sponsors, they should not be the one initiating calling sponsors, on behalf of the council.

**Councilmember Wells** – What does that have to do with the discussion of regarding guidelines for usage of discretionary funds?

**City Manager** – Most ward funds that council have been discussing with me have been used for different programs that they would want to receive donations for. So, if a councilmember has received donations from someone and they ask the council aide to follow-up is one thing, but to call these people to get donations is not what a council aide should be doing. They should not be raising funds for council.

**Councilmember Wells**- Is that something a council aide cannot do?

**Councilmember Gutierrez** - Are you saying they cannot initiate, but we can?

**City Attorney** – A major part of that is to eliminate unethical shortfalls, on the part of the staff. Council members and the mayor are free to go out and solicit and if there is a follow-up, this business agree to contribute, then the staff can finish the process. They can collect goods donated or arrange for vendors to be paid. They just will not be initiating anything and that is to avoid any issues with city staff soliciting funds on behalf of any issue.

**Councilmember Mears**- Stated, it sounds good, and he understands.

**Councilmember James** – My very first event was recognizing the teacher of the year, and I solicited donations from the public, because I knew I could not use city funds to feed the teachers. At that time, I was told I could have a line item that said teacher appreciation, and whatever donations that where made they wrote it to the City of Forest Park, and it went to that line item. I was able to get a check for whatever catering company was used. What I am seeing now is, it is better not to do it that way, because of accounting issues.

**City Manager** – It not only could make for accounting not to be correct but having to keep up with six different councilmember accounts, different events and different people giving this and that will be a nightmare for finance who is already overburdened with the daily processes we must do.

If council will be soliciting donations, based on the program being done, if you are doing a dinner that will be paid for with sponsorship, they can just write the check out on behalf of the councilmember to that vendor.

## 7. Discussion regarding the City's Sanitation Contract – Legislative Offices

### Background/History:

For City Council's discussion and direction around the city's sanitation contract.

**Councilmember James** – The sanitation services we have an RFP is out and we are seeking to get a new contract. I propose to council, to cancel the RFP and work with the company that we currently have. We have Waste Management, which is already in the community, and they have had their issues during covid, with staff and things of that nature, otherwise they provide the services that are needed. I think it would be more costly to the city to continue to go with the RFP process and to try and get a new bidder. I do not think it is an effective use of the city's resources and funds to continue to go forward with an RFP. Again, my suggestion to council is to cancel the RFP process, and to work with Waste Management.

### **Comments/Discussion from Governing Body:**

**Councilmember Antione** – Is curious to see what Mr. Geeter, has to say about this, because it is easy for us to say cancel something, when there is a lot more work to be done.

**Arthur Geeter** – I would like to really understand the question, because the RFP is already out.

**Councilmember Antione** - Councilmember James, would like to cancel it and start a new process. How do you feel about that?

**Councilmember James**- I did not say start a new process. I said cancel it, and work with the company we have.

**Arthur Geeter** - A lot of work when into this RFP. We identified the scope of the work that public works has been doing with Waste Management. The reason they were going out is to try and get a better situation, in terms of the numerous complaints. It is my understanding that the company has not been forth coming in trying to clear up some of these complaints. The competition is healthy, and we are trying to see if we can get a better deal.

The RFP went out to 11 different companies, which is listed on the Georgia Procurement website, so all the businesses had the opportunity to participate. If you want to go into a negotiation with Waste Management about the issues that is something different. We extended the existing contract because that contract ended in July. The contract that we are in now ends in December of this year.

We need to decide, because soon no one will be picking up the trash. I have expedited the timeline of the RFP, and will start receiving the proposals in October, and the evaluation committee has already been set. We only received 2 proposals last time and was in negotiation with the top opponent at the time. Again, a decision needs to be made, because come December 31<sup>st</sup> we want have anyone.

**Councilmember Gutierrez** – You stated competition is health, and it is capitalism we cannot just settle and let people feel as though they can treat us however, they want. I think the complaints are valid, I have spoken with the people in public works, but I have not had any community complaints. Honestly, I am very happy with Waste Management. We are paying for these services and need to figure what is going to be

better. I do not agree with Councilmember James, on cancelling this especially after putting all this work into it.

**Councilmember Wells** – I agree with Councilmember James, because of the complaints and the citizens pay for it not public works. The community is what matters, and that is what we base our decision off. I am not a fan of Waste Management transfer station, being in the middle of Ward 4, but as far as the complaints I would like to see them. I am in the community and my ward daily and I do not get complaints, about the trash pickup. Things are going to happen, because that is normal, but I would need to see these complaints before we decide to start over.

**Councilmember Mears** – I agree with most of the board. The transfer station is owned by them and that gives them the heads up. Like you stated we only had two companies to respond this last time.

The people that are here we need to be able to work with, and they need to get on board with answering complaints. I do not have many complaints in my ward. Whatever the council decide I am, in agreement with, but we must be careful not to get a higher rate and to decide within the time frame.

**Councilmember James** – I have been able to sit in on a meeting with public works, the city manager, and Waste Management. We talked about the customer service and having a platform online for our residents and a phone number where they can call Waste Management directly, instead of calling public works.

This will cut out a lot of the internal complaints we get. They are a multibillion-dollar company, with a piece here in Forest Park, so they can handle the phone calls. We can get the information about the calls, which is something that is beneficial to us, and there is a lot of benefits that we can utilize by keeping the lines of communication open.

The contract ends in December and right now we are in September, even if the RFP ends, and in October we start getting people in. When we start getting them in that bids on it, the process is not over at that point. We must look at what they are bidding how much they are offering. Then by the time we get to December, we do not have anyone or must pay this huge extra cost to our residence is just not fair, so we need to continue with what we have and offer a long-term contract with Waste Management.

**Mayor Butler** – I do not care who acquire our business. However, I do care about the process we establish being followed and followed through completely. Starting a process and then stopping things in the middle do not rest well with me, and that is where I stand on this issue.

**Councilmember Wells** – How much are we paying month to month as of now without a contract.

**Bobby Jinks** – We are paying 507, 382.20 a month. Not including all the other restrictions, that they are trying to push on us, that they claim was added on to the extension when we only extended the contract and the price. If you have seen the brochure, you will see the stipulations.

**Councilmember Wells** – Thanks for the information. I am just being transparent and not saying I do not care, because I do. This is going to impact the people, and I feel like it is an issue with Waste Management and public works. You all need to try to communicate and figure things out. Continuing the process is okay, but I do not agree with changing companies.

The transfer station is in the middle of a residential area, and that is not going to change. This is what is impacting the citizens the most and no one is talking about that. We are going back and forward about this trash; we just want the trash transferred.

**Councilmember Mears** - What are some of the reasons that we have such a low turnout on our services. You stated it was only about two.

**Arthur Geeter** - Yes, we only received two proposals

**Councilmember Mears** – Even with the amount of money, did they give you a reason why?

**Bobby Jinks** – Waste Management, has bought everyone out except maybe 3-4 people.

**Councilmember Mears** - We do not want to wait around and get in a situation where we are locked in and do not have anywhere to turn, because when they get a lock on you, they going to squeeze you. We need to figure this out so we can have some sort of leverage. We need to be able to negotiate. The transfer station is not going anywhere so we need to come to some sort of agreement for the betterment of the people of Forest Park.

**Bobby Jinks** – One of the things were calling and making an appoint for bulk removal and organic material. Do you think the citizens would be willing to go on the website instead of having them burning fuel going down every street, if so, that should be a large discount to the city. It should lower the price instead of going up.

**Councilmember Mears** - That is a good idea. But in my ward, we have had training, brochures, videos, and people still do not know how to put the garbage out. That would help a lot, because I know that you all get a lot of calls with people saying you all missed their trash when it is not you all fault.

**Bobby Jinks** – What I had in mind was to do the mailing and partner up with code enforcement, since the rental program has been passed. When they change tenants they can give them a sanitation packet, with all the rules and regulations.

## 8. Discussion regarding a Public Safety Increase – Legislative Offices

### Background/History:

For City Council's discussion and direction around a Public Safety Increase.

**Councilmember James** - I asked Dr. Cooper what the numbers would be to give our police department, except for the chief and deputy chief, a 15% increase, and our fire department except for the chief and deputy chief, a 10% increase. Do you have those numbers Dr. Cooper, and is this something affordable for our city?

### **Comments/Discussion from Governing Body:**

**City Manager** - Based upon the numbers it is affordable, but there are other undue consequences that we have been trying to address with pay. We are talking about pay compression, salary inversions throughout the city not just with police and fire. When you look at the current structure in the county of the police department, right now Forest Park is the highest paid department in the entire county. The only people paying more than us is the county. With the additional pay that would increase the pd budget and the fire budget substantially and would put us at that higher level, but this does not include the other incentives that police and fire already get that other employees do not get. I am not against any employee getting pay increases or moving forward, but if we are going to address pay inequities, we need to address it city wide, and not with just public safety.



**Councilmember James** – Being the highest in the county do not mean to much because of our county. There is a big push in the country for public safety. Florida gives a big 5,000 signing bonus for police officers, and they are looking for people to move to Florida. There is a big competition going on for public safety people. No disrespect to any of our city employees, but I feel like our police department put their life on the line every day and having to face the mental health climate and other things, compensation is not something they should be concerned about.

We want to maintain and keep those that we have. With the new generation of officers if you pay them a couple of hundred dollars more they are gone. We want to let them know we are appreciative of them and want them to stay. If we can afford this, I would hope that council would agree to move forward with making this happen for the public safety department.

**Councilmember Antione** – Stated he is for the salary increase across the whole board. He is in favor of reviewing the number to see how it would affect them. There is a lot of revenue that is supposed to be coming in to offset everything, but he would like to see the numbers and make sure it is the right thing to do. He would like to do raises across the whole board and need to see the numbers to make a good decision.

**Councilmember Gutierrez** – I love giving money to the employees, because they are the motor in the city. I spoke to Dr. Cooper, about it and rely heavily upon his leadership and department and want to do what is right. He stated, he would like to see the numbers to analyze the situation to make the right decision, and that it is very competitive right now. He would like to get to the bottom of what is going on to make sure that pay is the factor with so many vacancies. I am on the fence about this but do think it needs to be across the board.

**Councilmember Wells** – I am for whatever makes sense, and I am a cheerleader for all our employees, but I am not in favor of that. If it is across the board then yes, but I do not feel like one department is more important than others. We had an employee leave from public works after years for one dollar, and we just gave raises. Now we come back to talk about a 15 percent raise for two departments and I do not think that is the right thing to do, it must make sense, for me to vote on it.

I never go against our employees getting anything because I feel like they deserve more than they get, but the city is not rich. If we are going to do this let us do it across the board and be fair, because no group of employees is more important than the other. They all serve the people; they all serve the community, and they all are public servants. If we do an across-the-board raise, I will be more inclined to speak on that, but not for just public safety.

**Councilmember Mears** – Stated he was raised in the union earning 1.97. He was told if he wanted to move up get smart. It was on a merit basis, and if you wanted top money you had to go to school or get training. We have a good starting, we need some sort of merit system, or incentive so when people come in, they can get smarter and more money as they move up. These young people are jumping from place to place getting all the money they can get. I feel if you give a person the opportunity to educate themselves and get more money, would be better than just giving them money.

**Councilmember James** – Asked Chief Clark to speak on what a pay increase would do for his department.

**Councilmember Wells** – Thinks it is more than money because they know what the pay is before they take job, but once they get on the job they want to leave.

**Chief Clark** – I spoke with one of my millennial supervisors and everybody said they want things they want money. Chief if you do not give us things and money and someone else do, we are going to leave and bad mouth you and the department. When you look at places like Stockbridge, Sandy Springs and even East Point, it is like we are all fishing in the same pond. If we do not keep up with that these millennials have said will leave. When I started, we looked at retirement, the millennials look at things and money, and if we cannot compete, we are going to lose officers.

**Mayor Butler** – There is a quote, from Richard Branson, who owns Virgin Records. He says, “train employees so well they can go anywhere, but treat them so good that they want to stay.” I also understand since the last pay increase, there was an increase in applicants, but the money is not going to keep them here. We know that, because several people have resigned or retire for whatever reason they choose to do so.

I think we may be having a bigger problem, which may need to be addressed as a council, which I would like to address in executive session, to try and get down to the bottom of why we are having so many people leave our police department. We will discuss this in executive session because, it is a concern.

**9. Discussion and Appointment of Development Authority Board Members – Chief Executive Office**

**Background/History:**

The City of Forest Park’s Development Authority was established to promote the development of trade, commerce, industry, and employment opportunities in the City. Development Authority members are appointed by City Council, and currently has two of its members whose terms expired August 30, 2022. The expiring members can be replaced or reappointed to serve as a member of this board.

Under the criteria for the Development Authority members shall be taxpayers residing in the county or municipal corporation for which the authority is created. The City Manager is seeking the direction of the City Council as to how they would like to proceed in this matter.

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

**ADJOURNMENT:**

It was moved to adjourn the Council Work Session of September 6, 2022, at 8:00pm.

Motion made by Councilmember James, Seconded by Councilmember Antoine.

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 404-366-1555.