



## CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION

Tuesday, June 21, 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

### DRAFT MINUTES

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

**ROLL CALL -DEPUTY 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, Mayor Pro-Tem |        | ✓       |
| Latresa Akins-Wells  | Council Member, Ward 4 -              |        | ✓       |
| Allan Mears          | Council Member, Ward 5 -Via Telephone |        | ✓       |

**DIRECTORS PRESENT:** Darquita Williams, Deputy Finance Director; Tarik Maxell, Director of Recreation & Leisure, Arthur Geeter, Purchasing, Michael Brunson, Deputy Police Chief, Bruce Abrahams, Director of Economic Development, Bobby Jinks, Director of Public Works, Joshua Cox, IT Director, Javon Lloyd, PIO Officer, David Halcome, Deputy Fire Chief, LaShawn Gardiner, Management Analyst and Shalonda Brown, Director of HR

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

**COVID-19 UPDATE:** EMS Coordinator, Andrew Gelmini - Removed until July meeting

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**1. Sanitation Contract – Waste Pro Services – Chief Executive Offices/Public Works**

**Background/History:**

The City of Forest Park initiated a Request for Proposal (RFP) process to procure contractual services for citywide, commercial, and residential sanitation. Results of the process ranked Waste Pro USA as the top vendor to which contraction negotiations were initiated. Staff presented a negotiated contract to Mayor and Council during the June 6, 2022, Meeting, where council expressed concerns over the elimination of recycling, recycling education, as well as concerns over commercial rates. At that time City Council voted to table the contract.

Staff took this direction and conversed with Waste Pro USA regarding council members' concerns. The attached document highlights how these concerns will be addressed, and the City Manager is seeking council direction as to how they would like to proceed in this matter.

**Comments/Discussion from Governing Body:**

**City Manager-** When I came on as city manager in March 31, 2021, there were several complaints from council and residence about the services we were receiving amongst other things with our current vendor. At that time, we were working with a lot of issues and concerns. They continued, so we went back to the current vendor and gave them an opportunity to discuss with us these concerns and to renegotiate. There was an automatic renewal if we did not cancel within a certain period.

We did go back to our current vendor requesting to speak about that to add some of the things I heard from council as far as performance. With performance, I guess you can say fines and different things for failure to perform. We went out and spoke with them, they declined to do that and said they would participate in the RSP process if we chose to go that way. We did and we informed council that we would be seeking an RSP process for waste services.

Waste services is handled through public works with two of the staff members. We sat down with our procurement manager and went through all the stipulations that we would be looking for with the contract and different things we would be asking for. We put the RSP out and we only had two bids come in. However, in the beginning when that process starts you gather the information, put the information in the form of a request for proposal, send it out and post it public for anyone in the business to apply and submit their information on their services and how they do their services in the city.

Once that happens there is a deadline and they are then collected by procurement. Procurement puts together a panel, this consist of the individual that handle the sanitation, me and the public works director. You review not only the proposal but the financial and everyone gets a score and based on that score you come out with a ranking for the top. Under the procurement rule what you do is once you have the ranking you start negotiating with your top person to work on a contract.

If you cannot come to an agreement with the first person, the procurement rules if I am not mistaken, Mr. Geeter, correct me; the rules do allow for the contract negotiation to cease and to move on to the second,

third or until you either get a contract or decide there is no one and to close it and go out for a new procurement.

That brought us to the last meeting where we spoke with the winning bidder about it, which was Waste Pro. Council did express some concerns about recycling, recycling education and some of the commercial's rates and different thing of that nature. When council voted to table that, staff and I decided to go back and address this with Waste Pro and we did. We addressed the concerns with Waste Pro, and we did come back with a very suitable contract for council consideration, and that is where we are this evening.

**Councilmember James-** Yes, just to update just a few things. There were eleven people the RFP was sent out to and eight came to the Prebid to submit their bids. So, the process went through fine, the problem I have for mayor and council is that I am not understanding how the two companies that won the bid won. When you look at it, they were much higher when comparing apples to apples. They were much higher in residential and commercial. I understand we went back to the drawing board to renegotiate somethings.

Based upon my research I am going to ask that we vote no, and my decision is based upon the lower rate we will have with the other contractor. The communication that I have had with residents and other municipalities regarding the facility we have in our city right now and part of the RFP has to do with securing incentives for minority-based businesses that are in the community. That is something that I do not think was addressed and based upon my own research and finding out the scoring I do not see how they won with the financial end of it when they were much higher. I feel a way about this so I will bid no on this.

**City Manager-** I would like to say this Councilwoman James, one thing about the scoring is the financial piece is just one of the six categories someone is scored in. So, you technically score low in one category and still win the bid because you scored high in the others. So, the financial is just one piece in the whole scoring and I just wanted to make that clear.

**Councilmember Antione-** I am sure with the qualified vendors and experts that we have, they know how the process works and I respect everybody opinion. They would not present us with the final plan of the final vendor if they did not go through the channels of process. This is the right decision, and we need to act on it fast, because our citizens deserve qualified vendors and trash companies. I am in support of what the city manager opinion is about this.

**Councilmember Gutierrez-** I never had any complaints about Waste Management, but I am not happy that they are in a residential area. If Waste Pro comes, they are going to be in the same space that our community lives in. This is a long-term problem we need to address as a city. The financial piece is one part of it, and it is a big part of it. The biggest decision we make up here is the budget, and we cut a lot of things out because we want to be physically responsible. If it is not broken why change it. I am in the air about this because I do know there is miscommunication between the gentleman at waste management and our city at times and they waited awhile to submit their bid right Dr Copper, but I do not have any complaints.

**Councilmember Akins-Wells-** I feel the same way. I have complaints and I think I have been very vocal about my complaints and adding another company. That would make me, and other residence have more complaints. It is going backwards when we say we want to get rid of waste management, and we need to be getting rid of the transfer. We need to be communicating with them to see if we can come to a mutual agreement to remove the transfer station out of a community. That is my issue with waste management. This do not help because if Waste Pro is servicing our community, they will be using that transfer station even more and that is a slap in the face to the residence. So, I am not going to vote to bring in another trash company. I do have my issues and concerns, but it is my main one and has fallen on death ears because no one has done anything about it, and I have been talking about it for years.

So, I am not in favor of another trash company. I know we get complaints that they may be a day late, but I feel it can be worked out. I am willing to work with them and I wish they would work with the city to find another property, so our citizens can live in peace and not in the middle of a transfer station.

**Councilmember Mears-** The city manager and public works director oversees finding these people and I think we should go on their recommendation. We should go with who they think will do best by the city.

**Mayor:** Mr. Geeter can you come up. Mike you two, able to tag team this thing. The way I am processing this. There was conversation had with Waste Management pre the RFP. The RFP went out and each company presented their scope of service that they were going to provide to the city. So, the people on the panel are based on each company scope of service. Some items were addressed and somewhere not, but it was up to the company to address those scope of services, correct.

**Mr. Geeter-** Based on the scope of service that public works put together. That is correct

**Mayor-** Now that the RFP process is technically still open. If we shut this down and vote against Waste Pro what are the legal ramifications, that we are putting ourselves in? I also want to make sure we are protecting the procurement process integrity. I do not want there to be any misconceptions that this process was flawed, just because we may not agree on who the outcome was. Can we even discuss what those fees are and that they will be increased regardless? Can you speak about the procurement integrity process?

**Mr. Geeter-** I followed the procurement code of the RFP process. The scope of service was put together by the user agency, which in this case was public works. We address most of the concerns from the citizens, which is included in the scope of services. We look at different facets in terms of penalties when things are not done according to the contract. That was all a part of negotiation.

The original contract cost that was presented to us in the RFP indicated that we would go through negotiation once we have gone through the evaluation process. That is where we are right now. We are still in the negotiation phase, with the top rank opponent.

**City Attorney-** I agree with that we follow the process that we established. My concern is that if the council have a different preference to either go with the other bidder or start the process over. To follow the procurement, process the best route is to start the process over and reject all bids and start over. If that is majority of council major concern. The alternative is to put the current bidder we are negotiating in an unfair disadvantage because their cards are on the table, and we have already negotiated a deal at the staff level. Now that their card is on the table if we go to the next bidder there is a disadvantage. It muddies the water. My suggestion is to go with the staff recommendation or to reject all bids and reinstate the process.

**City Manager-** It is what the city attorney said. If you look at the current rates that we are paying which are public record. You say the rates they are offering is higher, and yes, they are. However, they are higher on both ends, the rates will not be the same.

**Mr. Geeter-** The way procurement is now we lucky to get anything we order. The prices of everything have gone up. This contract was getting ready to end. So, we must decide because I guarantee you the existing contract was going to give us an increase. If it was just on fuel along, we were going to get an increase. So, do not think we were going to keep the same prices from the last three years. So, we are still in the negotiation phase of the process, but we will do whatever the body tells us to do. The number that was giving was a number based on the scope of service, they knew they were going to go into negotiation. All opponents knew we were going into negotiation it was made clear in the RFP. I suggest you all review the scope to make sure

it addressed everything you all had concerns about. We felt that we captured all the concerns in the scope of service.

**City Attorney-** One of the things that was brought to you the first time was a contract that does not do recycling. So, you all sent us back to the drawing board on that. To the extent that recycling is a bigger component that you want to emphasize that along would be a reason you all would send it back and restart the RFP process. When it was first bid out, it was bid out with recycling as an option not as a requirement. That along would be sufficient justification if that is the will of council.

**Councilmember James-** Mike, you mentioned if we decided to not go with the offer that staff is proposing then we would have to go through the RFP process again?

**City Attorney-** That is my recommendation. You do not have to but I recommend it.

**Councilmember James-** So we have a bit of history why we are here. I think that according to the negotiation process, according to the email Dr. Copper sent all of us. The reason we went to the RFP process had to do with the liquidated damages. For failing to do something, that is why we went with the RFP in the first place. If I understand correctly according to the email Waste Management did not want to go into the liquidation fees, without renegotiating the contract, correct?

**City Manager-** No, that was part of the reason we went in, but that was along with the complaints that I received from council and from residence, when we went to Waste Management first.

**Councilmember James - I understand that part.** The point that I am trying to drive is that. The reason we went into the RFP process is one of the reasons was because of the liquidated fees that they were not happy with imposing. So, my question at the last council meeting when this came before us was, did we talk about those liquidated damages with waste management since that was one of the main reasons. I heard you say what we did it pre RFP, which I understood. My question was post RFP, and I understand Waste pro was the top ranked. I had the opportunities for transparency's sake, I had the opportunity to look at how the ranking was done, and it do not sit well with me. Was the negotiation done with Waste Management about the liquidation which is why we are here if the first place.

**City Manager-** Yes, mam. We spoke with Waste Management prior to any of this happening. We gave them a letter asking them this is what we want to do. They sent us a letter and I sent it to council. In the email they said at this time we will not be looking to discuss this, and we welcome going through the RFP process.

**Mayor-** So your question is during the RFP Process.

**Council Member James-Yes**

**Mayor-** No, can you speak to that. We are not supposed to so that when the process has begun because that is a crime.

**Mr. Getter-** It is against procurement code.

**Mayor-** Which could be a crime.

**City Attorney-** You negotiate with the first until you get an agreement or reach an impasse. The position we took is that it would be inappropriate to be negotiating with multiple at the same time.

**Councilmember James-** So if we are not in an agreement with Waste Pro, being the first top getter; then we go to the second person. Is that what I am hearing you say that is legally able to do. That was my thing because, at the last council meeting if I am reading my meetings correctly. We said we wanted to see what Waste Management had to offer. So, for us to be back on Waste Pro, let us me know that what the will of the council in this moment was to see if we can negotiate with Waste Management, was not done. We just eliminated trying to eliminate Waste Pro, from the process and go to the next person that is what I am saying.

**City Attorney-** To understand clearly what that would have done would be to interrupt the RFP process because we are still in the negotiation phase process were the highest rank at least from the staff recommendation highest rank.

**Councilmember James-** Is that because we tabled it or is that because we did not vote.

**City Attorney-** You did not vote it down.

**Councilmember James-** So if we vote it down then we will be on the second process.

**City Attorney-** In theory.

**Councilmember Mears-** We had people there on our behalf during the entire process and we should take their recommendations instead going back and forth about it.

**Councilmember Akins-Wells-** Yes, so Mr. Geeter you stated that you took into consideration what the residents wanted, and I would like to know what that was if they were taken into consideration? Then I want to say, the staff makes a recommendation, but the council is responsible for making the decision and I think some people may forget that. So, I do not see how that would be illegal to change our mind, or not to go with who the staff had chosen. I do not think it is against the law to do because we are the decision makers. I just wanted to know the issues the residents had that you put into this process, because their issue is the transfer station. So, bring more trucks to work out of that transfer station would not be helping the residents.

**Mr. Getter-** I would have to get Mr. Jinks to address that question. I would like to say that this contract is for 3 years, so the contract is getting ready to end regardless. It was up to us to send a notice 60 days prior to the contract ending to let them know if we were going to reestablish the contract with them or go out for an RFP.

**Councilmember Akins-Wells-** I think when we discussed them last time up it had been like 15 years since the price had gone up. So, like you stated everything is going up and I am about being fair. I do not have anything against Alan, I just have something against the transfer station being in the middle of Ward 4, so we must look at those things as well. So, because we get a few complaints or they did not notice this day, we too need to look at the things they have done. They bring the city 10,000-dollar checks and not going up for the last 15 years. If we want to be fair it is time for it to go up. We cannot expect everything to stay the same, but for the last 15 years it has, and we must be appreciative of that. I am not in favor of changing.

**City Manager-** I would just like to say Councilwoman Wells and Councilwoman James, myself and staff did not go against what council wanted. We took the direction of tabling it with the understanding that you had concerns over recycling, recycling education and over the commercial rates. We went back to the drawing board which is what we were supposed to do. Technically, all we are is this evening is council give us that direction. Whether we vote up or down and we know which other direction to take after that. We did not go against council the reason it is back is, because we did exactly what council asked. We renegotiated all of that and came back to the table with a different contract. That is why it is back in front of council.

**Mayor-** It is not that council cannot change their mind; it is that we are in the middle of negotiations with one company and so to try to negotiate with two different ones, I do not know any other way to say it.

**City Attorney** - There is an element of bad faith if we negotiate with two people at the same time.

**2. Discussion and Direction regarding Veto Message (Line-Item Veto – Police Services – Chief Executive Offices**

**Background/History:**

Pursuant to Section 2.32(c) of the Charter the Mayor exercised her veto authority and apply said authority to specific portions of the Fiscal Year 2022-2023 budget approved at the June 6, 2022, meeting of the City Council of Forest Park. The specific portions are detailed below.

**Police Services**

The following line items are **reduced** by the corresponding amounts:

|                                      |                |
|--------------------------------------|----------------|
| 100-31-3210-51-1101 (Salaries)       | (\$208,132.01) |
| 100-31-3210-54-2502 (Capital Outlay) | (\$111,867.99) |

The amounts above correspond to the additional appropriations requested for the Gang and Narcotics Task force. Let me be clear, in principle, I do not oppose the task force. I do, however, oppose funding five additional positions within the Police Department when as of June 6th, 2022, there are thirty-five vacant positions: ten civilian and twenty-five belonging to sworn officers. The Gang and Narcotics Task force is an assignment. The persons chosen to fill the Gang and Narcotics Task force will include one civilian Public Education Specialist and four sworn, (three officers and 1 Sergeant). Therefore, these five positions can be taken from the current ten vacant civilian and twenty-five vacant positions and assigned to work the Gang and Narcotics Task force.

If there is a special preference needed for this assignment, then Chief Clark has full autonomy to indicate such on the current job descriptions for the current vacant positions. As such, there is nothing that prevents the Police Department from first forming the task force out of existing approved positions. Going forward, once Chief Clark fills his vacant positions, I would be amenable to revisiting amending the budget to provide for additional positions, but only after the existing vacancies are filled and only after due and adequate consideration is paid to the funds that the Police Department already has that could be used for this purpose. More so, at the leisure of the Council, our organizational chart can be amended to clearly delineate the Gang and Narcotic Task force designation.

Attached as Exhibit A is a chart showing the balance, as of June 1, 2022, in the asset forfeiture accounts the Police Department maintains. These funds may be used for the task force, police equipment and training. It is imperative to note and understand, these funds have remained unused for years. While it is true the Police Chief may use these funds at his/her discretion, there is no plausible or legal reason these funds are not being utilized.

See Exhibit A -

By removing these items from the budget, it would be my desire to have the Council consider redirecting the savings resulting from this veto to other critical public safety-related purposes such as: a

critically needed upgrade to the City-wide camera and surveillance systems, Omnilert, a gun detection system and a gun buy-back program to aid in removing weapons of war from our city streets. As well as to care for City maintained Cemeteries, and an environmental study of a cleaners, which is a catalyst site within our Downtown Entertainment District.

The City Manager is seeking City Council direction on how they would like for the administration to proceed.

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

**Mayor-** I want to reinstate the purpose of my veto as it pertains to the additional positions. We had this discussion at the retreat in which the fire department asked for more positions. They had a lot of vacant positions, and I could not agree to give them more positions when they have not filled what was currently vacant. So, that is my stance here. I still do not understand giving five new positions when we have so many vacant ones.

The way I understood everything is there is nothing that prevents those existing positions from being utilized to fill for this gang and narcotic unit. So, unless told otherwise that is why I issued this veto on that. Then the capital outlay there are several accounts that the police department has. It was set to be on the agenda for tonight, but then we found out that Chief Clark was going to be out, so it was removed. We are going to go into more detail about some of those accounts at the next meeting. Again, there is no reason these funds cannot be utilized to offset some of the request made for this budget year. So, I would like for you to address those items and then we will go down the line if there are other points to address.

**Deputy Chief Brunson-**As you stated there are currently vacant positions currently on the agency. Looking at it there are about thirty-seven sworn vacancies and four civilian vacancies. Right now, we could technically create that unit if we had more personnel. What you stated previously regarding utilizing those vacant positions once they get filled to create that task force. Something that is a possibility.

**Mayor-** Is there anything that is preventing Chief Clark, if there is a specific preference (ex: 10 years in narcotics). You too Mike, is there anything that is preventing Chief Clark, from amending those current vacant job descriptions to specify a preference for this specific unit. You are not just hiring specifically for this unit. You are hiring sworn officers to fulfill and assignment, correct?

**Deputy Chief Brunson-** Yes.

**City Attorney-** That is correct. They can amend those to specifically to look for candidates that could fill those positions, which have experience in those areas.

**Councilmember James-** This is the democracy at work. I do not know if I will have the support of the council, but I know to overturn a veto, you need four votes to do so. I do not know how many have spoken with chief. I know chief is in Israel doing great work and will be back to give us an update on that. In speaking with chief prior to leaving. Speaking on the narcotic side opposed to the gang side. As far as the narcotic side, I have spoken many years about having a drug unit in Forest Park. I know one of our officers left because we did not have a drug unit. Officer Cash, his father was one of the one and only officers killed in the City of Forest Park and went on to work in another unit because he wanted to specialize in that.

I know that currently, chief has some officers in training now that is going through narcotics and gang training. So, I know we will be able to house some people in that unit. However, with the vacancies that we have, they are simply that; vacancies that we have had. With my conversation with chief, because of the increases in salary, because of the incentives that we have, we have more people applying for positions.



So, I have no doubt that we are working toward those positions getting filled. Since Chief Clark is not here, I am not going to speak for him, and no disrespect to you. Deputy Chief, and because of how the veto process overturn works, we must vote the veto process in. The first or second council meeting after the veto. So, we have this council meeting and next council meeting to work through it and I know chief will be out today.

If we are seeking for a specialized position that is someone that is going to come with experience already. They will be able to look in see that this is a position if I want to work on narcotic or want to work on a drug unit, whether it is an assignment or whatever you want to call it. It is the chief's discretion to put it out there. I am hoping I get enough support to overturn the veto, so that we can go ahead and move forward with these five positions.

Again, it is democracy and whether we do it or not it is the chief's call. I know this is something we talked about during our retreat about having a narcotic and gang unit. I understand that there is a gang problem, I did not realize it at the time. I did not know that we had a major one, but it was told to us during our retreat that we do have a major gang problem. So, these are things we need. I do not think we should take it out of the budget as far as the asset forfeiture accounts, I am going to defer to talking about that until chief is back. This has been a conversation we have had many times even with Chief Hobbes when he was chief about this account. If it is his discretion to deal with those funds, then I do not want to deal with it until he is here in our presence. That is my position, and I am hoping we can vote to over urn the veto.

**Councilmember Antoine-** We are talking about physically responsibility and being responsible. A significant amount of my residents felt empowered by this decision. What we have here are positions not being filled, so we are talking about being physically responsible. Positions are not being filled so you cannot be creating more positions when the prior positions are not being filled.

They major is saying, it is not that we cannot go back and revisit it, but as of now there is not enough positions being filled. So, why are we creating more positions when the current ones are not being filled? I am in support with the chief but at the same time I am also being physically responsible. So, we can revisit it but right now it is a no brainer. So, let us not do it until we see positions being filled. We want that we want everyone to come to Forest Park and be a police officer. Like in every other department we want every position to be filled. But if they are not being filled, why are we creating more positions. I am with the City Manager on this.

**Councilmember Gutierrez-** So we have vacancies right now right, deputy chief, but each vacancy serves a specific role, right? So, if we were to go ahead and revisit what we currently have now and make this task force we would be losing from another position right? You would be taking a role away from something to put it into something else.

**Deputy Chief Brunson-** Yes, right now

**Councilmember Gutierrez-** So, I understand the vacancies but, realistically when are we going to have 100 percent in the department. With the level of our country and how nationally everyone is struggling, there are vacancies everywhere. I can understand the mayor and I know that she is not against it totally. To me it is like especially as an educator and knowing gangs are just an extended family that at times may not do the right thing, but they are families away from home that our children are getting into.

If we do not have anything specifically advocating for that, I am not talking about Stockbridge PD of Clinton County or the sheriff coming in here and visiting and leaving. With the partnerships that we develop which I am thankful for because we do not have some of these services and I know you all have interrelationships

with other departments. To me if something specializes in like Bruce's department but let us just move into bobby's that is the logic that I am getting.

You say a police officer, but he is not a narcotic specialist, or a gang specialist or a person that can counsel youth.

**Mayor-** Can you address that?

**Deputy Chief Brunson-** When creating a specialized unit there are a couple of ways to do it. There are officers that are patrol men, patrol officers, patrol women, which have worked in the city for quite some period. During that time through their experience, they gain knowledge on drug dealers and gang members and so on.

So, if we put a poster out saying we are creating this unit then we would look to those individuals. Then there are other individuals that are interested who can go through training and working with those individuals that are already have the knowledge and that is how you build upon that. Through training and through experience both of those things are how you create a unit from within a department.

**Councilmember Gutierrez –** So the narcotics unit that we allocated money for is not a specialized unit where we would hire people from the outside, it is a unit within?

**Deputy Chief Brunson -** It would be people that we have theoretically, but we can hire people. We could do a posting and depending on their experience if we got someone that fit perfectly then of it could come that way too. A lot of times it happens organically from within from individuals who already have the knowledge because there are officers that have been on the job for 5 or 10 years.

Well in 5 to 10 years you are going to get to know people you are going to get to know hotspot areas and that type of thing. If you bring someone without then they may have the knowledge but not necessarily the organic knowledge of working in Forest Park for 4 or 5 years where they know people and have relationships. So, what I am saying is that it could happen both ways.

**Councilmember Gutierrez-** So, by creating this unit we might lose street officers, because we are already low on that.

**Deputy Chief Brunson-** So, if we get officers in to join the agency which we are continuously recruiting and there are others interested in joining. So, as we get more personnel to come then that assist us in doing those additional things, those specialized things.

**Councilmember Gutierrez-** It is created within that is what I did not know I had a misconception. I thought we were bringing specialized people in for the narcotics and gangs, but we would be using our own officers and putting them into this unit.

**Deputy Chief Brunson-** Yes, but like I said it can come from both ways. If we recruit for example, we have our sheet where we have incentives for individuals who already have certification and so many years of experience. It can be a combination of those things, but in many cases, it is an organic process where it is individuals that have that institutional knowledge of Forest Park, who would hit the ground running. They already know, they already have the relationships that they built throughout their time working in the City of Forest Park.

**Councilmember Gutierrez-** Do you personally think we need this?

**Mayor-** Need the unit or the additional five positions. I do not think anyone is against the unit itself. We are talking about the additional, and right now the numbers changed. So, in my veto it was twenty-five vacant sworn positions, now you are saying it is thirty-seven vacant sworn and ten vacant civilian and now you are saying four vacant civilians that is forty-two vacant positions. Then we are going to give them five more. So, are you asking if he agrees with the unit or the additional five positions?

**Councilmember Gutierrez-** The unit.

**Deputy Chief Brunson-** Yes, it is a positive thing. When looking at some of the crime that we have experienced and some of the things that we look at. Violent crime is driven by crews, gangs, or drugs. I have been in law enforcement for 26 years and you see over and over that those things are precursors to violent crimes. That is what we are trying to combat by creating a unit like this. It is a great idea.

**Councilmember Atkins-Wells-** I am on the fence about this one. It does not make sense to keep giving positions when the others are not being filled. Parts of it I am okay with, it will be whatever the majority chooses. When it comes to the capital outlay, I do not agree with you taking the capital outlay money. You vetoed our capital outlay to so other things with because certain people were misusing it. So, I do not think the capital outlay money away from the police department, I do not think it should have been taken away from us. It was to do things to benefit the community.

Yes, I am going back again to our community we keep taking things away from them. The capital outlay money I do not think that it should have been vetoed. Let the police department use it however, they see fit. We are not a cemetery business and the things listed here like gun detection system, and the buyback program. To me and no disrespect to anyone just seems like things you want to do. Again, we are removing the community from it.

I would like to know if we need a drug task force, can someone tell me what type of drugs are being dealt around here. What is going on in Forest Park, that we need a drug task force. I think that if we had the officers that are needed, we could control some of the crime that is going on in Forest Park. Again, I am on the fence about it. I do not say take away capital out from the police department of the council members, which has been vetoed and taken away as well to do these things. These things can be done anyone so leave the departments capital outlay money along.

Let us turn over the veto of our capital outlay, so that we can do some of the things in our wards and communities that benefit the people. I would like that information. I would like to know how many drug cases are being investigated right now and why we are so adamant about creating this drug force team and if we need it, we will do what is needed to protect our community.

Taking the capital outlay money from us and the police department with which I do not agree. I would like to get more information from Chief Clark. I agree with Councilwoman James as far as waiting on him to get back so that we can get more clarification on which way to go. We keep saying we want the department heads to do this, and we want to go the direction of the staff, give him the opportunity to come up here and explain himself; on what his department needs and what the city needs.

**Councilmember Mears-** I understand that we already have some officers getting training for this type of situation. I feel since there are so many positions, we should try to fill the positions on the inside first. We have enough qualified people, or we may can hire other people from other police departments that want to come here and join that team. I am for leaving it just like this.

**Councilmember Gutierrez-** I have a question. So, this is the second meeting after the veto so we could not table this until chief comes back to explain it. Is this the second veto after the meeting.

**Mayor-**It is the first meeting, so if you all want to come back it could come back at the next meeting in July.

**Councilmember Gutierrez-** Then chief would be here Dr. Cooper?

**City Manager-** Yes, he should be.

**Mayor-** It is 7:00 and we will be entering into executive session tonight and so I am going to ask that we adjourn the work session. Is there a motion to adjourn the work session?

Motion made by Councilmember James, Seconded by Councilmember Antione

**Mayor-** Any discussion?

**Councilmember Gutierrez-** Yes, I wanted to know, to amend the agenda to add something, do I have to wait till we start the meeting.

**Mayor-** We can add it to the regular session unless Councilwoman James withdraws her motion, there is a current motion to close the work session. So, are you willing to withdraw your motion?

**Councilmember James-** Are we adding it to the regular meeting or the work session?

**Councilmember Gutierrez-** The work session, so we can talk about it right. I think it would be a good discussion to have.

**Councilmember James-**I withdraw my motion.

**Mayor-** That motion is withdrawn. Councilmember Gutierrez is making a motion to amend the work session to discuss the capital outlay.

**Councilmember Gutierrez-** Yes, I was under the impression that I was going to be here too.

**Mayor-**To discuss the veto on the capital outlay. So is there a motion to approve his amendment.

It was moved to amend the Work Session to add discussion on the Line-Item Veto of Capital Outlay.

Motion made by Councilwomen Wells, seconded by Councilwoman James

Voting Yea: Mayor Butler, Councilmember James, Councilmember Antione, Councilmember Gutierrez, Councilmember Akin-Wells, Councilmember Mears

**Mayor Butler -** With this budget I also vetoed from the legislative body our capital lay line item. My veto is a follow: after careful consideration u hereby exercise my veto authority **pursuant to section 2-32-c** of the charter and apply said authority to specific portions of the fiscal year 2022 and 2023 budget approved at the June 6, 2022, meeting of the City of Forest Park, of the city council of Forest Park. The specific portions are detailed below, capital outlays legislative office. The following line items are disapproved: **line item 25-03, 25-04, 25-05, 25-06, 25-07 and 25-08.**

Lastly, as the council will recall a few years I introduced the concept of a legislative capital outlay line item to the budget. These funds were intended to provide each ward with funds for smaller capital outlays that might be overlooked in the normal budgeting process, or if a recipient wanted to use said funds for a larger capital outlay project; he or she would have to spread the cost of said project over the source of multiple years. (ex. If a project cost 80,000 and you get 40,000 each year the project would take two years to complete.) However, that has not been the case.

Our experience with these funds has not met our original expectations. Until we establish a clear policy and process for use of these funds, these respected line items are hereby vetoed. Such a policy and process must include but not necessarily be limited to the following features: clear limitations on what the funds will be used for, prudent planning for implementation of any project, i.e., establishment of a budget, effective project management and clear fiscal management and strict adherence to the city's procurement policy.

By removing these items from the budget, it would be my desire to have the council reconsider directing these savings resulting from this veto to other critical public safety related purposes, such as a critically needed upgrade to our citywide camera and surveillance systems, omni alert, a gun detection system and a gun buyback program to aid in removing weapons from our city streets.

The capital outlay funds, each elected official gets about 47,000 dollars a year. As the veto spelled out, the capital outlay means any project that is to withstand a year or longer. Not like a party or something it is an actual intangible improvement to the city. But what has been happening is that we have projects in mind that, ridiculously exceeds what has been allotted per year.

So, we have staff trying to figure out how to make the project work instead of just saying, I do not know what is being said I just know what the result is. We have people trying to get the project done out of the budgets and line items when that is not the intended purpose.

Again, it is not eliminating this, it is establishing a clear process of how these funds will be utilized, so that it will not put staff in jeopardy. We acquired land for a park and the entire project is going to cost almost 300,000 dollars. You do the math.

**Councilmember Akins-James-** That is something the city should want to put money into.

**Mayor-** But what I am saying is that it has not been budgeted for. To use the capital outlay and knowing this may take a couple of years, but you know you have these funds coming in. So, let us use it accordingly. I thought that this was being communicated but there was never a clear process. So, my thing is until we do, unless it is overturned this is where I stood on it.

**Councilmember Gutierrez-** First thank you for bringing something like this to the table because as councilmembers we are the line of bridging and communication within our ward and in the city. I thought it was a great idea. At first, I did not understand it much, just to specify some of the things I have done; the first year I had to pay for an architect to plan of theater park which I wanted to remodel. My ideal for even initiating something like this was the hope of getting some of the major corporations that we have in Fort Gillum to get along and get them to sponsor portions of this park and improve it. We also had some extra money, I do not know if it was SPLOST, I was led to believe, and I do not want to throw any directors under the bus. But it said we can find funding for it; it is a good thing. That is why I went that route into doing that. I have also put benches around the little libraries, and I had some ideas of putting some art around the city, until this happened. I agree with you we need to have something set in place, but I do not want to get rid of it and it gets lost in the wind and then later we must agree on it.

If we could set a limitation until we set these regulations and we just want to use them. Our staff is more than capable of putting some limitations on what we can do and just put it in black in white and then we can continue to do projects. I know Council member Mears fixed his part, Council woman James put some planters around I borrowed that idea and put planters around my ward.

I just have all these identified spaces and would love to bring art to our community and if I did not have this capital outlay money I might not. I might have to go and seek funding, which is another added task, which is not a bad that, but if I had our own city money, we could put our own logo on it and take ownership of beautifying these spaces. So, if we can set these limitations and not get rid of it and then allocate the money to something else. I agree with you and would love to set up some type of buyback gun program and set up cameras too, but like Councilmember Antoine, said we only have enough for some things and that is understandable. I do not want to get rid of something that we already have and besides some hiccups it has been successful overall.

I also bought some soccer equipment for Babb Middle School and Forest Park Middle School and our Kiwanis stadium, where we will start hosting matches. Atlanta is now a World Cup host, which is huge and with the type of talent we have here in our community we could easily have some players in there representing for us, That is my take on that and I would like to garner you all support of the council or even you mayor on setting those limitations, before we completely get rid of it and allocate that money somewhere else.

**Mayor-** Well, you do have my agreement and we can direct staff to produce a process and bring it back. The sooner they bring it back then the sooner we can get it back.

**Councilmember Akins-Wells-** Yes, I agree with Councilman Gutierrez said. Some of us were using the money the right way. Again, I say things because I am transparent, and I let the people know what is going on. I do not think just because one person used funds in a way they should not have, look at the park on West Street it looks terrible after capital outlay money was utilized too so whatever. So, some of us do things I purchased a property in Ward 4 to have a park because every ward has a park except Ward 4.

Like Councilman Gutierrez, said as far as these big companies in Forest Park, they may want to sponsor something like that. So, instead of taking it away, I feel like everything the councilmembers can do is being taken away because of people wanting to be empowered and make these decisions themselves. Well, we are elected officials and we can do things. I do not think everything that is given to us should be taken away. It is not taken away from us personally it is taken away from our community.

So yes, a park on Pine Ridge, the people have been talking about, they loved the idea and then boom you veto some of the funds that was going to be used to help bring that park. So, are we really for the community, do we really want to see the community grow or do we just want to put our personal ideas that we personally have that benefit us personally? These are things that bring our community together.

Mr. James Shelby, we discussed somethings and I know Lashawn was supposed to be finding money that would help get these projects initiated. It seems like we are taking more from the community than given back and that is a problem for me. With the capital outlay with the police department let them do what they want to do with the money.

It was a great idea and I appreciate you for doing it like the signs in Ward 4, I think Councilwoman did it in her ward as well, us capital outlay money to put the Welcome to Ward 4 signs, Welcome to Ward 1 sign with plants trying to beautify the city. This is what the money can be used for. We are in the taking away

mood not in the giving back mood and we need to get in the giving back mood to our community. These things and this money help impact our community.

I know you have the authority to veto but taking away from the community to clean up cemeteries, we are not in the cemetery business we are in the serving the people business. So, we need to do things to serve the citizens that we work for, the people that put us here. I am all about the gun protection program, that money can come from somewhere else. Let us do the things for the community these are the people that put us here then we get in office and take everything away from them and turn our backs on the because we can. That is not how it should be, you vetoed it and I agree we should have had something in place and maybe when you first bought it should have been done then. Not when people are in the middle of having projects done then oh let me snatch this away, you are not doing this part, you not upgrading this part. It does not make sense to me and going back and forth is not worth it. If you had the better ness of the people and the goodness of the people in mind, then we would not even be going back and forth about a lot of mess.

**Councilmember Mears-** I agree with your veto, you need to have a plan or budget to go on so you can see how much you are going to have every year. From volunteers and sponsors and budget your parks and things according to your budget. I am getting my park redone, but I am not spending a whole lot on it. You can spruce it up and when more money comes in you can do more for the park.

**Mayor-** A lot of things do not come up until we are in the movement of it all. A lot of the feedback has been a result and we should have done something moving forward and we did not. Now that we know we are going to do better and doing that is establishing a process now there is no time like the present to put these things into place so moving forward we are not having these hiccups.

I can say we are in the cemetery business and Mike; you can tell us where we are with that cemetery, that the city recently acquired. It would be 730, 732 and 734 Connelly, which was considered the colored cemetery. The council voted to go through that process for it to become ours. In that, there is a lot of work that needs to be done with it. We always say that there is money out there, but the pot of money is not getting any bigger. Our needs and desires are increasing, and we are working on making sure the city is collecting its share of fees. Starting with sanitation we have found over hundreds of thousands of dollars that had not been collected, we collected hundreds of thousands of dollars in back taxes that the city had not collected before.

Until we can grow our pot of money, we are going to have to scale back our desires, our needs, and our wants. That is pure mathematics. We cannot make money appear and spending it continuously do not help anything at all. There is no other way to put it and unless there are four votes to overturn this veto stands.

**Councilmember James-** For clarity, the veto was to remove these items until there is a policy of the process in place? Is that Correct

**Mayor-** Correct

**Councilmember James-** Council Gutierrez, you were saying that you want to have the policies and processes in place, but you want to keep it in. My question is are we able to overturn the veto with the exception that a policy and process be put into place.

**City Attorney-** If you override the veto the funds go back into the budget. Then it would be a second directive to staff not to spend those funds until you have those policies in place. The cleanest thing to do

would be to override the veto if that was the will. Then it would be second directive to the city manager to get a policy in place to bring back before council to get approval before any funds are spent.

**Councilmember Antoine-** So we are talking about the capital outlay.

**Mayor-Yes**

**Councilmember Gutierrez-** So, mayor if we do not override the veto it disappears like later. The city would not make a policy because it is no longer there.

**City Attorney-** You could always direct the staff to establish a policy then come back and amend the budget to put the funds back in.

**Councilmember Gutierrez-** So it is just a process that the mayor wants.

**City Attorney-** If it is the will of the council to have these with the policies that the mayor has recommended then you can do the policies first amend the budget or do it the other way around. But it would take four votes the other way around.

**Councilmember Akins-Wells-** When I saw the veto this was the first, I heard it. Do not you think if you communicated better with some elected officials, you would get a better outcome. Instead of just using your veto power, which you have the right too, so I respect it. Instead of using it communicate with people because all of this could have been handled.

If you just vetoed because you want to have a policy in place just state that you want to have a policy in place. We could have had something in place before now and we would not have to have the conversations that we have if people just new how to communicate.

**Mayor-Councilwoman,** none of this is new to anybody. We have had these discussions since the first budget retreat.

**Councilmember Akins-Wells-** Why do not we have something in place.

**Mayor-Ask staff** nothing came up.

**Councilmember Akins-Wells-**You are here every day, Angelyne, you could not direct staff to put some type of process in place instead of saying let me veto it. That way it is taken away and we would not have to have these useless conversations that we are having. It could have been communicated. Let us put a process in place, so we can keep this capital outlay money going. We can continue to do the things in our community what the people elected us to do and then we would not be here.

So instead of overriding it could you just remove your veto and say I or we direct staff to put something in place. Then we want have to worry about people taking money from capital outlay saying they are redoing parks. Put something in place can you just remove your veto. That is my question?

**Mayor-** No! I cannot

**Councilmember Akins-Wells-** So you do not want it period.

**Mayor-**No, no, no procedurally I cannot that is why we are here.



**Councilmember Akins-Wells-** Okay, so we must override it for anything to happen.

**City Attorney-** Override it or come back later with the policy to amend the budget.

**Councilmember Akins-Wells-** Can we direct staff now to produce a policy. So that the capital outlay money can be put back into the funds.

**Mayor-** When we get back into the regular agenda amend it and make that request.

**Councilmember Akins-Wells-** Thank you.

**Councilmember Mears-** I think you did the right thing, there must be policies.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

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

**ADJOURNMENT:**

The Council Work Session was adjourned at 7:22 pm

Motion made by Councilwomen James, seconded by Councilman Antione  
Voting Yea: Mayor Butler, Councilmember James, Councilmember Antione, Councilmember Gutierrez,  
Councilmember Akin-Wells, Councilmember Mears