



**CITY OF FOREST PARK MAYOR & COUNCIL**  
**City Council Regular Session**

Monday, June 07, 2021, at 7:00 PM  
Council Chambers, Virtual Meeting Via Zoom and YouTube Livestream

**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

**DRAFT Regular Meeting Minutes**

The Honorable Mayor Angelyne Butler, MPA

The Honorable Kimberly James      The Honorable Dabouze Antoine  
The Honorable Hector Gutierrez      The Honorable Latresa Akins-Wells  
The Honorable Allan Mears

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

**CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME:** The meeting was called to order by Mayor Butler at 7:04pm.

**INVOCATION/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** The invocation and pledge of allegiance was led by Rev. Wanda Miller-Curry.

**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, Mayor Pro-Tem		✓
Hector Gutierrez	Council Member, Ward 3		✓
Latresa Akins-Wells	Council Member, Ward 4	✓	
Allan Mears	Council Member, Ward 5		✓

**DIRECTORS PRESENT:** Nathaniel Clark, Police Chief, Latosha Clemons, Deputy Fire Chief, Darquita Williams, Interim Finance Director; Shalonda Brown, HR Director, James Shelby, Director of Planning & Zoning, Bruce Abraham, Director Economic Development, Bobby Jinks, Director Public Works, Tarik Maxwell, Director of Parks and Recreation and A. Girard Geeter, Procurement Manager.

## PRESENTATIONS:

1. Councilmember Hector Gutierrez would like to present a Proclamation in honor of Immigrant Heritage Month

Councilmember Gutierrez read the proclamation of the City of Forest Park recognizing June 2021 at Immigrant Heritage Month.

2. Councilmember Latresa Akins-Wells would like to present a Proclamation to Willie and Annie Finch in celebration of the 67th Wedding Anniversary – *Item was removed from Agenda at the request of CM Akins-Wells*

**Councilmember James** – stated that an email was sent to all regarding the proclamation and wants to make sure that everyone is clear about presenting proclamations, it is something that represents the entire city, and it represents the governing body and the will of the governing body. So, I am in opposition of presenting the proclamation with just one councilmember's name. I do want to proceed with presenting the proclamation to the Finch's and want to see what the council's consensus on proclamations; want to ensure that we are clear moving forward. Dr. Cooper has educated me on some things that we have done in the past that were misaligned, so, I think we need to ensure that we get it right moving forward.

**Councilmember Antoine** – Point of order, I think this should discussed in Executive Session.

**Mayor Butler and Attorney Williams** – It is not an Executive Session item and should be discussed now.

**Councilmember Mears** – Proclamations are good for the people that get them and should be given by the whole council, the mayor, the city. It is something that the city is wanting to award or give to somebody that has done something outstanding and it should be done as a body and not done as an individual. Everybody should be involved, because it takes the sting out of it if it not complete and everyone is on board and Dr. Cooper is on top of it and I think that is the way we need to go to make sure the whole council and mayor is involved.

**Councilmember James** – Attorney Williams, since this item is tabled can it be reinstated for the next council meeting if the entire council decides we want to move forward with the proclamation?

**Attorney Williams** – You can always add it back to your council meeting.

**Councilmember Gutierrez** – Dr. Cooper you are going to work on something if an individual councilmember wants to give something like a recognition from their Ward.

**Dr. Cooper** – Yes, the City Attorney and I discussed this earlier and one of the things that we stated was because a proclamation should come from the entire governing body, that we would bring forth a policy and procedure to council to basically that. And any recognitions with a letter of congratulations or commenting anything else that would be something we would like at.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS: (3 MINUTE LIMIT)**

**Diane Lunsford** – Chief Clark presented the mayor and council with a free award four-year advancement, saying this is historic time and then it is the first award we have achieved at this caliber, well I am sorry to tell you, Mr. Clark that we have been receiving awards now for a good long time, so he is just trying to take all the kudos for that. Do you realize that there were five police officers that left in the month of May, five, do you know that Councilmember Antoine; (Mayor stated, to please direct all comments to the chair, please). There are 3 police officers on the streets today, just three. I been told that we have a toxic environment here at the police department. We going to lose, I understand a captain of the CID, who is going to feel that position? Also, I would like to know he get off getting to keep his vehicle our other important officer of fire and those that are on call (inaudible). We do not need a public safety director, nor do we need a public safety department or building. Leave our building over there at Gillem to (inaudible) get rid of that position completely and on the use of purchasing card, these guidelines and policies should have already been done under no circumstances as a card holder permitted to use the p-card for personal purchases that defined as personal goods or services, if a violation is determined be (inaudible).

**Zack Parker** – I am coming to these meeting out of fear for my safety, I have withdrawn from the community to the lies and mistreatment of the community and its leaders, I will no longer withdraw. I will meet with the head on, and I will speak out against them, I was shocked to see the rental inspection program tonight, when I brought this idea to the previous mayor, the current mayor, and this council years ago along with providing live feed of the meetings. I have never wanted anything more in this community than to be listened to and for community leaders to address my concerns. In all the years that I have lived here that is the opposite of what I have experienced. I have expressed my concerns and have been ignored, when officials are pressed, I have been harassed, intimidated, and stalled from accessing truth. When trying to get answers from previous officials regarding code enforcement tickets, I showed up to a public meeting which no officers were present and I was the only citizen there, but when a police officer was called to this meeting to intimidate me, when I had done nothing at all wrong, even the members of the board were left wondering why this was occurring. When an officer you have had words with, to show up for no official business to your house at 9:45pm at night, spotlights the entire street in front of your home, sits in the police vehicle for 10 minutes and then gets out of his police vehicle, goes directly in front of your home, and then uses his flashlight again to spotlight your home, it goes beyond harassment and that is intimidation. The officer had no business being there for doing that, it would have been within my rights to go out and walk directly in front of him and ask him what he was doing. But I did not further escalate the situation as I already feared for my safety, these are bad people that we have as leaders in this community, they think that the police force and badge is their own source of intimidation and justice do dole out to those that question them or share different opinions from them to that I say I will not back down. Code enforcement ignores tickets on certain properties, and I proof, proof that the city attempted to delay and deny me, there is much more to this that I will share. If you would like to see video of the encounter, I mentioned above with documents prove the city has ignored certain properties, email [30297ga@gmail.com](mailto:30297ga@gmail.com). You will get immediate response with the video and documents, [30297ga@gmail.com](mailto:30297ga@gmail.com), I will no longer hide, but I fully expect the police force to even further intimidate me now that I have publicly spoken out against them, I would like to note that I have never been previously called upon or been accused of doing anything here in Forest Park, but I am no longer safe in my own home. Congratulation's mayor, I hope you are happy and it indeed a day in Forest Park.

**Maria Garcia** – I am an owner of a business in Forest Park for 20 years and I spoke to someone in Planning about the opening of so many hair salons in the same spot and I am concerned because they are less than one mile from my business. Within the international mall on Jonesboro, they can open any salon they want, even though the building is near all the salons. I have a list of salons in the area, and they are affecting me as a business owner. We were affected last with COVID and with opening new salons in the same vicinity is affecting my business. What can be done about this?

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

It was motioned to adopt the Council Agenda as printed by Councilmember Mears, Seconded by Councilmember James.

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

#### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

It was motioned to approve the Council Work Session and Regular Meeting Minutes of May 17, 2021.

Motion made by Councilmember James, Seconded by Councilmember Gutierrez.

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

2. **Council Approval of Council Work Session and Regular Meeting Minutes from May 17, 2021** - S. Diane White, Interim City Clerk

It was motioned to approve the Council Work Session and Regular Meeting Minutes of May 17, 2021.

Motion made by Councilmember James, Seconded by Councilmember Gutierrez.

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

#### **NEW BUSINESS:**

3. **Council Approval to Scrap Fire Equipment** - Deputy Fire Chief Clemons

It was motioned to approved to scrap the Fire Department Equipment as listed.

Motion made by Councilmember Antoine, Seconded by Councilmember James.

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

5. **Council Approval on Donating Decommission Fire Equipment to Sister Cities** - Deputy Fire Chief Clemons

It was motioned to donate the listed decommissioned Fire Equipment.

Motion made by Councilmember Antoine, Seconded by Councilmember James.

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

**Councilmembers Mears** – I would like to get information on shipping the equipment before we jump right into it.

**City Manager** – We will bring it back before council to get approval for the shipping.

**6. Council Approval to Enter into a Contract with Intact Consulting and Dominion Voting to Conduct the 2021 Municipal Elections - City Manager, Dr. Cooper**

It was motioned to enter to a contract with Intact Consulting and Dominion Voting to Conduct the 2021 Municipal Elections.

Motion made by Councilmember James, Seconded by Councilmember Mears.

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

**7. Council Approval to Adopt a Credit Card Use Policy - Darquita Williams, Interim Finance Director**

It was motion to approve the City's Credit Card Use Policy.

Motion made by Councilmember James, Seconded by Councilmember Mears

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

**Councilmember James** – I apologize for not mentioning this during the Work Session, but I would like to know some of the highlights of the policy.

**Darquita Williams, Interim Finance Director** – Some of the main highlights are who is responsible, accountable, following of the procurement policy by ensuring that no one is using the credit card policy to bypass the procurement policy; reconciliation and a section on violations. A starting point in establishing rules and controls over the credit cards to make sure that everyone is abiding by the rules and there are set guidelines for the credit cards.

**Councilmember James** – Will each department head be given a credit card?

**Ms. Williams** – Yes

**City Manager** – Every department head will have to sign-off that they have read the policy and that they understand that they will be held responsible for each purchase. And each department will have a set limit.

**CLOSING COMMENTS BY GOVERNING BODY:**

**Councilmember James** - Please note the May's Neighborhood Meeting that I host once a month on the 3rd Thursday is now available online and will soon be available on the City's website under Ward1. The information shared includes...

- City Manager, Dr. Cooper, give highlights and updating public on Tax assessment issues,
- Director of Public Works, Director Jinks gives update on Grass and beautification of City and information on Misuse of Recycling Center,
- Fire Department, Captain Baker, gives update on EMT school,
- Police Department, Sgt Zachery, gives update on crime and cadets academy
- Economic Development, Ms. Bundridge gives update on ground-breaking,
- Recreation and Leisure, Director Maxwell give updates on events happening in the park,
- Marta's Government Affairs Manager, Ms. Holloman give update on new fleet of rail cars

I invite you to join us live for June's neighborhood meeting to hear from our professional experts. I will continue to host these meetings virtually because it is more convenient for our leaders. I may have a hybrid version of the meeting in July for those that want to meet in person. I want to again congratulate the Class of 2021 and thanks to Mr. Rashmir for his donation to the PTSA which allowed us to have an Ice Cream Truck at rehearsal and we also were able to give out several hundreds of dollars in gift cards to graduating seniors. Congratulations to Mr. & Mrs. Finch on your 67 years of marriage. Thank you for being a valuable member of the Forest Park Community for over 65 years. It was an honor to participate in your drive by celebration along with members of the governing body, police and fire and a host of family and friends. I also want to acknowledge the life of service of Parent Liaison & Commissioner Sonna Gregory, I was able to attend the viewing which was a powerful service. Congratulations to CM Gutierrez on the Food Truck Friday event which truly shows our diversity and intergenerational city. Thanks for coming out.

**Councilmember Antoine** – I want to give a major shout out to the City of Forest Park, Mayor and Council, Ms. Williams, city manager and Ms. Steed. For those not aware the city sent me to Haiti to do a mission technology trip, it was amazing, and I have pictures. We chose two schools, one in the bushes, schools were awful. We gave out tablets and the children were so amazed they passed out. These are the kids who will be our doctors, mayors, counselors, nurses, firefighter, and policemen, because now they can google and see the world of those not living in the bush. I thank everyone for the opportunity for me to pass out these technical supplies rather than money, because they have no where to spend the money. I also visited the Catholic Church that was burnt down, where it took two hours for another country to put out the fire, because of lack of firefighters, fire equipment and training the church burned down and lives were lost. This is why it is so important for us not to think of how money it is to ship things, I know we have to be wise, but there are lives are being saved with the equipment that we do not need or use any longer; I will even go as far as saying I will match whatever the city does, so we send these items and I will go look for other donations, so we could get send there, again I will match the cost. Shout out to David Rasmir for the book bags that was donated, and I hope we can go again, and more people can go, like firefighters, mayor, so they can see firsthand and when you change other people's world your life is also changed. On next Sunday, the 13<sup>th</sup> I am having a drive-in movie where families can come to Starr Park pool and watch the "Tom & Jerry" movie. CM Antoine presented the Mayor and Council a certificate from the city of Mirebalais from the school to recognize us for the work that we did. Sister Cities is a partnership, like a church partnering with another church. Thank you and God Bless.

**Councilmember Gutierrez** – Thank you for coming out tonight. It is hard for me to celebrate Memorial Day and to talk about, but I would like to shout out to the Veterans and to those who paid the ultimate sacrifice of losing their lives; as a veteran that goes to war and loses someone and then come home, there is always some guilt of why not me or whatever. We had two events since our last meeting, Food Truck Friday at the Fountain where we celebrated our father's and had a lot of giveaways. Thanks to all the businesses that donated items for the giveaways, I will be going out with Ms. Dixon and saying a personal thank you to you. Our next Food Truck Friday will be July 2<sup>nd</sup> and will be celebrating the 4<sup>th</sup> of July and maybe we can get some fireworks for the event. We had our cleanup the next day, thanks to the Boy Scouts Troop 919 from Morrow. Remember we do have "Adopt A Road" program, where your group can clean up once a month. Good meeting today, and I was getting all the videos from Haiti, there were beautiful, and I agree with you when you said, changing someone's life changes you. I am excited about a potential game night with Parks and Recreation on July 1<sup>st</sup>, more information to come.

**Councilmember Mears** – Thanks to everyone for attending the meeting tonight, I am fortunate to have wonderful men and women in Ward 5 who walk the streets and collecting trash and care about their community, and I say thank you for your service. Dr. Cooper, I do not know what the problem is with the police department, but I would like for you to follow-up. I know that studies have shown that the wages are in line for a city our size, we gave the police department a decent wage increase last year. Dr. Cooper please come back to us with some suggestions or ideas on what we need to do; because we need to retain the seasoned employees that are leaving the best we can. Again, I appreciate everyone coming out.

**Mayor Butler** – I do want to echo a lot of the comments my colleagues shared today, and I do want to make one distinction about the CALEA award, I think the difference is that this was an actual four-year advancement which is different from what was received in the past. This is no way taking anything away from what was done with Chief Hobbs, but it is just acknowledging what is done currently under Chief Clark. This weekend, it truly was a celebration of love and life, literally all in one day, from the services for Commissioner Gregory, to the parade for Deacon Finch and wife, it was an amazing day, and I was honored to be a part of both. Councilmember Antoine, I know you said that this certificate was for me, but as mayor you take the praises and criticisms that come along with this role and even though my name may be etched on an award or a certificate be given to me, it really is indicative, and it is for all of us. I will read the certificate –

Certificate of Thanks – Mirebalais Communal Eben Ezer School thanks the City of Forest Park, Georgia for the distribution of the technological equipments done to our children/pupils in that school, according the agreement of the Sister City Relationship and cooperation between the City of Forest Park, Georgia and the City of Mirebalais Haiti for Supporting the latter in various fields. Thanks!

This should be hung in the front office of City Hall, and I look forward to more Sister City relationships in the future. Thank you.

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

It was motioned to recess from the Regular meeting into Executive Session at 7:37pm.

Motion made by Councilmember James, Seconded by Councilmember Mears.

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

It was motioned to reconvene to Regular Meeting at 8:34pm.

Motion made by Councilmember James, Seconded by Councilmember Mears.

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

#### **ADJOURNMENT:**

It was motioned to adjourn the Council Regular Meeting of June 7, 2021, at 8:34pm.

Motion made by Councilmember James, Seconded by Councilmember Mears.

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