



**CITY OF FOREST PARK MAYOR & COUNCIL
CITY COUNCIL REGULAR SESSION**

Monday, August 02, 2021, at 7:00 PM
Council Chambers and YouTube Livestream

Website: 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, City Clerk
Mike Williams, City Attorney

CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME: The meeting was called to order by Mayor Butler at 7:00pm.

INVOCATION/PLEDGE: The invocation and pledge of allegiance was led by Councilmember Antoine.

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: Darquita Williams, Interim Finance Director; Bruce Abraham, Director Economic Development, Bobby Jinks, Director Public Works, Tarik Maxwell, Director of Parks and Recreation, Diane Lewis, Deputy Director of HR, Major Sandra Johnson, Police Department and Latosha Clemons, Deputy Fire Chief

PUBLIC COMMENTS: (All Speakers will have 3 Minutes)

There were two (2) speakers:

Dianne Lunsford – I was not aware of the American Rescue Fund survey until Saturday, when Trudy introduced me to it while we were talking about Ft. Gillem. I did not go to the survey, and I saw it tonight, but I was wondering if city council would consider possibly putting up a privacy fence, once you come into Gillem, if you go straight you go to Kroger, this is residential behind us and their property pitiful. Can we spruce up Ft. Gillem, by putting up a privacy fence, so we do not have to see their backyards all the way to Technique? Would be a good idea and make it less that an eyesore for that particular property.

Lawanda Folami - I am here on behalf of myself; I am so disturbed in my spirit, my spiritual woman is disturbed to feel that I must get permission to meet with anyone in the city and I am being stalked, I do not like being stalked. I am almost 65 years old and learned a long time ago about a man name Baylor who rode a donkey. I understand by pictures, Madam Chair directed to you only, that one or two of these councilmembers are stalking me, I do not do that well, I have never brought any harm to either of you and what I will not do is sleep with one eye open and one eye closed, I am going to rest. So, if you choose your fight, listen very closely, make sure you know the door that you are going to knock on. I am going to do the chain of command; you will see me again.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA WITH ANY ADDITIONS / DELETIONS:

It was motioned to amend the Council Agenda by moving Item No. 7 Confirmation of Fire Chief to the first item under New Business.

Motion made by Councilmember James, Seconded by Councilmember Gutierrez.

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

1. **Council Approval of Council Regular Meeting Minutes from July 6, 2021, and July 19, 2021 - S.**
Diane White, City Clerk

It was motioned to approve the Council Regular Meeting Minutes from July 6th and 19th as presented.

Motion made by Councilmember Mears, Seconded by Councilmember Gutierrez.

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

Voting Abstaining: Councilmember James

OLD BUSINESS:

2. **Council Approval of Sister Cities Program Budget - Legislative**

It was motioned to approve the Sister Cities budget request of \$15,000 with the condition that budgeted amount expensed be itemized and brought back to the city.

There was discussion on the motion

Councilmember Gutierrez – I just want to make sure because it says three (3) countries here if we are just picking one country to take that out, so it is official. I just want for the record that we are committing funds to other places if we are not going to give them money.

Mayor Butler – Or if we are just doing this for Haiti, you want it not to say the other three countries.

Councilmember Akins-Wells – the agreement is for the three cities?

City Manager – That is in the original agreement and would have to go back and change that if I am not mistaken.

Attorney Williams – The motion as stated would allow you to later determine exactly (inaudible)

Councilmember Gutierrez – So it is okay like this, we just choose one of them?

Attorney Williams – When you go to spend the money (inaudible)

Councilmember Gutierrez – Okay, I just want to make sure we are doing what we say we are going to do.

Councilmember Akins-Wells – So, the previous \$15,000 went to just one country? Well, nobody knows where it went, because nobody can say. What about the other countries?

Mayor Butler – It went to Haiti and this item here is also for Haiti.

Councilmember Antoine – Yes

Councilmember James – Point of clarity, I thought the item was to approve the budget for Sister Cities for all three countries, not just Haiti?

City Manager – The original that was done in 2020, stated the three countries; the issue here is that you are approving the budget for Sister Cities International, which includes all three of those countries, however, with the amendment that was asked about the line item purchase, then that would come back to the council to say that we spending \$5k in Haiti, if we go \$6k, the council does have the option to say “no” we are going to spend \$5k in Haiti, because we need \$5k for the other two countries to split it evenly, if that make sense.

Mayor Butler – I need clarification, because I thought that this item was just for Haiti, is that how you intended Councilmember Antoine?

Councilmember Antoine – No, it is for all three, but we are just choosing Haiti, because that is the country that we help. But it is for all three countries.

Councilmember Gutierrez – I want to say, just because we are approving this item, doe not mean that we are not supporting our people here, I know that our council is more than willing to help our community if you propose a program or one of us start supporting a program, like Councilmember Mears said earlier, this is an established partnership within cities, we are not giving to something to take away from something else, just us giving back.

Mayor Butler – So the motion on the floor, if I am correct, is to approve this item with the condition of a line-item budget being submitted to the governing body prior to any purchases are made.

Councilmember James – Responded yes.

Motion made by Councilmember James, Seconded by Councilmember Antoine.

Voting Yea: Councilmember James, Councilmember Antoine, Councilmember Gutierrez

Voting Nay: Councilmember Akins-Wells, Councilmember Mears

NEW BUSINESS:

3. Council Approval of the Planning Commission Rezoning - PB&Z

It was motion to open the Public Hearing for the rezoning of 4914 West Street from Commercial to Residential.

Motion made by Councilmember James, Seconded by Councilmember Mears.

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

There were no comments for or against the Rezoning.

It was motion to close the Public Hearing

Motion made by Councilmember James, Seconded by Councilmember Akins-Wells.

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

It was motioned to approve the rezoning of 4914 West Street from Commercial to Residential

Motion made by Councilmember Akins-Wells, Seconded by Councilmember James.

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

4. Council Approval of PB&Z Organizational Chart Change - PB&Z

It was motioned to approve the Planning Zoning & Building Organizational Chart Change

Motion made by Councilmember James, Seconded by Councilmember Akins-Wells.

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

5. Council Approval for Noah's Ark and Forest Avenue Tank Reconditioning - Public Works Department

It was motioned to approve the reconditioning of the tank at Noah's Ark and Forest Avenue

Motion made by Councilmember Mears, Seconded by Councilmember James.

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

6. Council Approval of Downtown Development Authority and Urban Redevelopment Authority Board Appointments - Economic Development

It was motioned to table this item until Executive Session

Motion made by Councilmember James, Seconded by Councilmember Gutierrez.

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

7. Council Approval to Confirm the Fire Chief - Executive Offices

It was motioned to confirm the appoint of Latosha Clemons as the new Fire Chief.

Motion by Councilmember Akins-Wells, Seconded by Councilmember James.

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

The mayor administers the Oath of Office to Latosha Clemons as Fire Chief.

City Manager – Thank you mayor and council, we just made history the first female Fire Chief for the City of Forest Park.

Chief Clemons – Thank God, have been on this road and in this business for 26 years and have had her share of ups and downs, but through it all stayed steadfast and upheld her moral and values as a person and will continue to do that here. Thank the council and city manager for giving me the opportunity.

8. Council Approval of Resolution 2021-26 Approving a Little Free Library - Legislative

It was motioned to approve Resolution 2021-28 for the Little Free Library

Motion made by Councilmember James, Seconded by Councilmember Antoine.

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

9. Council Approval to Abandoned the Northern Portion of JG Glover Court - Legislative Offices

It was motioned to approve the abandonment of the northern portion of JG Glover Court

Motion made by Councilmember James, Seconded by Councilmember Mears.

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

10. Council Approval to Adopt Ordinance 2021-10 Budget Amendment to Authorize Employee Premium Pay - Executive Offices

It was motioned to adopt the Ordinance 2021-10 Budget Amendment to authorize Employee Premium Pay

Motion made by Councilmember Akins-Wells, Seconded by Councilmember James.

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

CLOSING COMMENTS BY GOVERNING BODY:

Councilmember James – Thank you all for showing up this evening. Congratulations to Fire Chief Clemons. I wanted to make a note about the COVID-19 and spoke about her son getting COVID and doing better now. It is very important that we are taking care of one another, doing what we can to be safe, and to get the information for ourselves, if you chose not, it is still your own personal decision, just make sure that you are doing whatever you can to stay protected and keep others protected as well. Remind everyone that we have the upcoming Neighborhood meeting for the month on third Thursday, make sure you come out, we will be at 696 Main Street, and we will also be virtual, it will be a hybrid meeting; mark your calendars for October 9th, we will be having the homecoming parade, it is going to be an awesome time.

Councilmember Antoine – To the new recruits that came in, welcome to the best city in this country and I have the best Ward, so welcome. Kudos to our new Fire Chief Clemons, thank you, and I know you are grateful and that you will do a great job. Ask that everyone please mask up, because the Delta virus is getting worse and school started today and we are hoping that this virus does not get worse, because the kids are all in one classroom, so continue to wear your face masks, washing your hands and staying safe. Thank you, mayor, and council, for approving the Sister City budget, this is a huge success because Sister Cities is a partnership that was founded by President Eisenhower back in the 1950s, many cities are throughout this whole country partner up with this organization, they are based in Washington and a lot of countries are in this program and I am glad that we could think outside the box. We all here love you and making sure we have the best city, we have the best city manager that is providing services, we have our director Maxwell that provides services to our community, we know when it comes to our streets our public works they are doing great, you see signs, brand new signs throughout the city, roads are being paved; we are giving back, this is that we do without thinking. So, for anyone to say we are not giving back; we help, we might not do as much as we can. We all know that the community center is giving out the energy assistance, \$800 towards your Georgia power bill, all you need is your license, your bill and social security card. One of my concerns with the relief money coming in, maybe we can do something about the trees behind homes being removed, that a big concern for the city. Day-by-day we will continue doing what is right, we welcome your advice, because no one here has it all, I need all your advice and together we can make a difference.

Councilmember Gutierrez – Thank everyone for coming out, I appreciate each and everyone of you devoting your time to come here and listening, this was a very productive meeting, I do not think we spent time on the stuff that does not deserve as much attention as we give it. I would like to welcome the new employees, we are here to serve you and any type of suggestions you may have that you might bring from other places and if you live here great, I am always willing to listen and just improving our city. Congratulation Chief Clemons, I happy that a person like you, is in a position of power. You are making history here with our city and I know you can work anywhere else, but you chose Forest Park and so happy that you are here with us. I will not be here this Friday for the Food Truck event, but we are still having it and will be giving away school supplies. My condolences to the family of Mr. David Rashmir, who was a contributor to the city. The cleanup for has been moved to Aug. 14th and make sure you fill out the survey about the monies the city is receiving and how best to use those funds. To our downtown businesses please be sure to take advantage of the Façade Grants. To the employees we appreciate you and it is an honor to be able to give you this small token of appreciation.

Councilmember Akins-Wells - I would also like to thank you for coming out. Congratulations to a great person, Chief Clemons, thank you for being willing to serve our community and I know you will do a great job. The back-to-

school drive, my ninth one, was started off in my ward and then I changed it city-wide event gave out 300+ book bags, so, I would like to give a huge shout out to the Fire Department, Chief Clemons in your absence, you sent a great group of guys who participated fully in the event. Social media has been talking about the energy and the great job that the firefighters did distributing the supplies; the public works department, my husband, and Mr. Wells, who did a phenomenal job and Ms. Tenisha Dixon who did an amazing job organizing it all. Thank you from myself and the community. We have an additional 200 bags which was given by David Rashmir, who has been giving back from day one since I have been in office, he has been giving, giving, to this community and I know the family and the community is having a hard time, because he made such a great impact on our city, so my deepest condolences to his family. We have Teshan Gwen's foundation, Mr. Gwen was an army vet and killed several years away, but grew up in the City of Forest Park, gives back to the community each year, and this year they gave out tennis shoes, book bags, school supplies the day after the Forest Park School Drive, I would just like to thank them for thinking about their community. Thanks to Mr. Maxwell for securing the DJ for the event and Brittany Sparks from the Police Department. With everything so positive, I do not want to forget to answer the concerns of the people, so Dr. Folami, who has gone, but I want to address her concerns, because I do not throw rocks and hide my hand. But one thing I do, is work for the citizens of Forest Park, so when they have an issue their issue becomes my issue, because that is who I work for. Yes, I did receive pictures wondering, I am not sure if you have notice, but our Police Chief has not been to a council meeting in a long time and so, the residents were complaining and saying he had time to sit and meet with people that is involved in politics, but he does not have time to address our concerns and why so many police officers are leaving, he does not even attend the meetings. So, I sent that to the mayor, and that is probably who put it out, but that is okay because it was not a secret. But the residents' concerns are my concerns and if our police chief is not visible in our community and they send me pictures, then yes, I am going to send pictures and ask questions and tell someone to investigate it why our police chief is so political. That is my response to her, and I am not stalking you. Have a good night and do not forget Fun Friday, August 20th and Forest Park Day, August 21st.

Councilmember Mears – I would like to congratulate Ms. Clemons, the Fire Chief. I know we have new fire equipment coming, that has always been one of my concerns, gotten new turnout gear and ambulances. We are trying to get with the police department to get what they need, because I feel you need a strong infrastructure of fire and police to keep a safe community here in the City of Forest Park. Mr. Rashmir was a great fellow and did a lot for the city and we want to hold his family in prayer and thank everyone for coming out.

Mayor Butler - Brittany Sparks is also a chaplain, who is a sergeant, so, we need to recognize her on becoming a chaplain. I too, want to congratulate our new fire chief, Ms. Clemons and I expect nothing but greatness from you and your department. To the new employees, welcome aboard.

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 into Executive Session at 7:37pm.

Motion made by Councilmember James, Seconded by Councilmember Mears.

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

It was motioned to reconvene back into the Regular Meeting at 7:55pm

Motion made by Councilmember Mears, Seconded by Councilmember James.

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

It was motioned to approve the appointments of Jacklyn Faith and Nancy Howard to the Downtown Development and Urban Redevelopment Authority Boards.

Motion made by Councilmember Akins-Wells, Seconded by Councilmember James.

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

It was motioned to extend the moratorium on applications for group homes in the city until such time the new Zoning Ordinance is adopted by council.

Motion made by Councilmember Akins-Wells, Seconded by Councilmember Mears.

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

Voting Nay: Councilmember James

It was motioned to authorize payment of six months severance pay for former City Manager Albert Baker as set forth in his contract.

Councilmember James – For the record, I think this is ridiculous to extend six monthly of salary to someone that we dismissed for a lot of valid reasons and cause; and to now come with this is ridiculous and I hope that the motion fails.

Councilmember Gutierrez – I respectfully disagree Councilmember James, I personally did not vote to fire this individual, because I did not think we had the causes, I think they were things that could have been fixed. I did not bring it up before because I felt it was very wrong to fire him and hope that we can give him what he deserves and that was in his contract.

Motion made by Councilmember Akins-Wells, Seconded by Councilmember Gutierrez.

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

Voting Nay: Councilmember James, Councilmember Mears

ADJOURNMENT:

It was motioned to adjourn the Council Regular meeting at 8:03pm.

Motion made by Councilmember James, Seconded by Councilmember Mears.

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