

**March 10, 2025**

The Eastman City Council met in a regularly scheduled meeting on the above date at 6:00 p.m. The following members were present: Sebrina Williams, Graham Snyder, Mark Peacock, Dwayne Burney, and Debra Sheffield. Others present were City Attorney Rita Llop, City Manager Spencer Barron, Police Chief Billy Cooper, Fire Chief Derl Maxwell, City Clerk April Sheffield, City Inspector Jack White, and Assistant City Manager Dayna Winslette. Department Heads Wynnon Pittman, Matt McDaniel, Rodney Harrell, Gerald Fordham, and Brandon Brisco were also in attendance. Those present from the community were EM Harrington III, Susan and Mitchell Coffee, Steve Harrison, Mark Studstill, Lillie Pitts, Marlan Eller, and Dameon and Brittany Harris.

The meeting was called to order by Councilor Snyder.

The invocation was given by Councilor Burney.

Pledge of Allegiance.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**

It was requested to **make additions to the agenda for a home occupation license request from Jolley Boyz Trucking and for a building permit at Kencoa Aerospace. This was approved on a motion from Councilor Williams and seconded by Councilor Sheffield. The amended agenda was unanimously approved on a motion from Councilor Sheffield and seconded by Councilor Burney.**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

**On a motion from Councilor Peacock and seconded by Councilor Sheffield, the minutes from the February 24, 2025, regular meeting were unanimously approved.**

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

**SECOND READING OF THE CONGO LANE ANNEXATION:**

The county has previously agreed to give the city Congo Lane and its Connector. This is the last step to making it officially within the city limits. **On a motion from Councilor Williams and seconded by Councilor Burney, Congo Lane and its extension were annexed into the city.**

**SECOND READING OF THE AIRPORT GUIDELINES ORDINANCE:**

This ordinance addresses building and construction within 3 to 5 miles of the Airport. It stipulates the height requirements and requires a submission to and a response from the FAA before beginning construction in the area. This ordinance is also in line with what Dodge County has already passed. **On a motion from Councilor Sheffield and seconded by Councilor Peacock, the Airport Guidelines Ordinance has been unanimously approved and is now in effect.**

**PLANNING & ZONING:**

**5404 MAIN STREET, LLC:**

This is a request for the property located at 5404 Main Street to be re-zoned from an Industrial to a B-1 and also have the addition of a Special Use Permit to allow for housing. The Council thinks that it needs to be rescheduled for the April 14<sup>th</sup> meeting in order to give all of them time to review all materials in reference to this application and the previous Planning & Zoning meetings. Mr. Eller, one of the owners, is agreeable to this postponement.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**APPROVE BILLS:**

**On a motion from Councilor Sheffield and seconded by Councilor Peacock, the bills for February 25 – March 10, 2025, were unanimously approved.**

**MONTHLY FIRE DEPT REPORT:**

Chief Maxwell came forth to deliver the fire report for the month of February 2025. There was a total of 151 calls for the month. One non-working structure fire in the city and 0 in the county. One working structure fire in the city. Seven other fire related calls, with 1 in the city and 6 in the county. They worked 120 medical-related calls with 95 in the city and 25 in the county. There were 5 motor vehicle accidents with 4 in the city and 1 in the county. Sixteen public service calls (alarms, smoke, trees) with 8 in the city and 8 in the county. They only worked one air evac call in the city and it was then decided that they would no longer need to be of assistance when it landed at the hospital. Upon being questioned by Councilor Snyder about approved sites for landing, Derl stated that they had not had the chance to sit down and look at all of the previously approved landing sites in order to approve them on the city's end.

**MONTHLY POLICE DEPT REPORT:**

Chief Cooper presented the monthly report for the police department. They used 871 gallons of fuel in the month of February 2025 to patrol 10,725 miles. They answered 675 calls, worked 17 traffic accidents, and made 157 arrests/citations. A total of \$25,811.00 was collected in bonds and fines. Also notated was the total number of jail days being 29. This would be how many days the county would charge the city for using the jail if the Service Delivery Strategy was not in place.

Councilor Snyder inquired about the cameras that were being installed. The police department was able to get a grant in the amount of \$57,400 to help purchase cameras for the town. They chose to go local with Holder Maximum Security. Twelve pan-tilt zoom cameras will be installed across the city. They have already started with phase 1, which is the downtown area. The cameras will be used for multiple things, but the primary purpose is for investigations. Councilor Peacock brought up the fact that these cameras are in plain view areas otherwise known as public spots.

**MONTHLY DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS:**

Jack White came forward to give a report on Permitting for the month of February 2025. There were 3 electrical inspections issued for a total of \$150 last month. When asked about the blight initiative, Jack responded that letters were still being issued. He was waiting to see which ones he would be able to move forward with the lien process after getting all of the background information.

Matt McDaniel came forward for the treatment plant report. The amount of treated water that was released into Sugar Creek was 17,300,000 gallons. The lab provided service to 7 towns this month and charged \$5,804 for the testing. They spent 572 hours this past month with a breakdown as follows: cleaning clarifiers and filters 32, lab and sampling 105, lift station and well repair 128, lawn maintenance 18, plant maintenance 72, routine rounds 82, education and training 10, management duties 52, and plant operation 105. They recently invested in an Oda-logger that will be able to detect any hydrogen sulfide coming into the plant. They will then use that information to start treating it with a chemical to help with the smell. If that doesn't work, they will move on to something else. The Oda-logger was a very economical option to start with. It will give them a lot of information such as when it is happening, the temperature, and what the environment is like when it is happening. A salesman put one up and 16-20 days went by without a smell. Then there was a smell for two days and it was gone again. They are working to try and figure that out.

Rodney Harrell then came forward to update about the wells. For the month of February, the wells pumped 30,760,000 gallons of water. That averaged out to be 13.099 million gallons per day. 543,000 gallons of water

was used at the treatment plant. The Industrial Park lift station project is finally finished and they should be closing out of it this week. As far as the Chas Mar lift station is concerned, the contractor is still trying to get all of the materials up to begin the work on it. Rodney doesn't have a time frame for the completion of that project yet.

Wynnon Pittman came forward to give the water distribution information for the month of February. The water department had 312 work orders last month. The breakdown was as follows: 89 water cut-ons, 83 water cut-offs, 13 water leak checks, 16 water leaks, 2 water main breaks, 50 locates, set 4 new meters, 1 valve installed, 1 valve inspected, 20 meters were pulled because of non-use, 2 meters were repaired because of damage to the Neptune portion, 8 more valves were located around town with help from Royce Williams, maintenance performed on 2 hydrants, 3 meter inspections, 11 sewer lines were cleaned out because of grease clogging them, and they helped Brandon get 2 stormwater ditches cleaned out. 598 gallons of fuel were used last month. Wynnon gave a big thank you to former Distribution Supervisor, Royce Williams, for coming out of retirement and sharing his knowledge to help map the whole town. Popco is still working on the I&I project. They are currently headed up Forest Lake Road towards 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue and about to get to a mess where water, sewer, gas, phone, and cable lines are all together. Congo Lane will have to be shut down for a while. It is about to become a tedious project right through there. They do have a second crew that is about to go up Jenkins Drive tomorrow. Wynnon has also been at the treatment plant helping Matt fix a valve in one of the pits. It was about 22 feet deep.

Brandon Brisco came forward to deliver the street department report. His department spent 24 hours on animal calls, 312 on curbs and gutters, 184 on potholes, 12 on trash pick-up, 217.5 on limb truck pick-up, and 316 hours on various other projects. Brandon explains his Community Garden Project. The goal is to keep the neighborhoods up. He bought seeds for flowers that should grow back every year. It will take a community effort to keep them up. There should be about 18 flower beds when he gets through. Another goal was for this to help reduce the amount of grass cutting that would need to be done. Some can be found in the Sunset area, on MLK, Dodge Avenue, etc. Councilor Williams stated that she hopes the neighborhoods will work with the city in keeping the beds up. Councilor Snyder suggests having clean up days. Also, Councilor Peacock mentioned that the street department had two full-time positions open.

#### **SKINNERTOWN WALK:**

Ms. Lillie Ann Pitts came forward to request permission to hold the 12<sup>th</sup> annual Skinnertown Community Memory Walk on Saturday, May 10, 2025. The festivities will start around 7:30 AM. It will start and end at Mt. Moriah Baptist Church parking lot. They will be walking down Mt. Moriah towards Dodge Avenue, turn right and go towards Main Street, make a right there and continue down Main Street. Depending upon walking 1/3, 2/3, or the entire way will determine if they turn right on Smith Street, Clay Street, or all the way to 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue before getting back on Mt. Moriah. The purpose of the walk is in remembrance of their loved ones who have passed away and childhood memories of growing up in the Dodge County Communities. Ms. Pitts invites everyone to come and participate and also requests for the Eastman Police Department's help with escorting the walk. Chief Cooper is in agreement. **Councilor Peacock makes a motion for Councilor Burney to second and all members approve the request.**

#### **TORI SIMMONS, 6<sup>TH</sup> AVENUE SIDEWALKS:**

Ms. Simmons came to City Hall last week requesting some sidewalk repairs be done in front of her property on 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Manager Barron presents some pictures of the area that she is talking about. It is obvious that the sidewalks need to be fixed, and they are on our list. The question is actually what to do with the trees. They are on the city's right-of-way. Councilor Peacock stated that there is no sense in fixing the

sidewalk if you plan on leaving the trees there because they will just continue to tear it up. Barron suggests getting quotes on all of it. Inspector White suggests building the sidewalks up at a little higher grade to allow for the tree root system. Taking the trees down is going to incur a big expense. Councilor Snyder asks if there was a way to give the trees an avenue to keep growing. Those trees are in fairly good shape and make that street one of the most beautiful areas in the city. Susan Coffee suggests rock. That is what they decided to use in their driveway. Ms. Simmons was supposed to be here tonight to discuss with the council any ideas, but she is not in attendance. Manager Barron suggested waiting but Councilor Peacock says to go ahead and get prices on different options. The overgrown property pictured belongs to Ms. Simmons. Mr. White says that a neighbor down the road, Ms. Evans, showed him where her husband had paid to put the sidewalk in front of her homes many years ago. The property owners used to be responsible for putting in the sidewalks, but it is now considered the city's right of way and the city's responsibility. There is a fire hydrant between two of those trees. Wynnon says that it is already being compromised by the trees. Chief Maxwell says they are unable to hook to it and utilize it as it sits currently. He asks that the council take that into consideration when making their final decision. Mitchell Coffee asks if the property owner would be willing to give up a little of their property to be able to move the sidewalk over some. Jack says that he will check into it. **Councilor Snyder asks for a motion for Mr. White to seek quotes and options available to remedy the broken sidewalk. Councilor Peacock makes the motion with a second from Councilor Williams. All approved.**

**RYLAND RATE INCREASE:**

Ryland has invoked that section of their contract that allows them to annually increase their fees. It is an \$0.87 increase per can. In March of 2024, the Council added \$3.69 for a limb and leaf fee. The last actual increase to the can price was in December of 2018 from \$18.75 to \$20.00. Mr. Barron asks if the council would like to increase our price to keep the fund balanced or make any other changes. **Councilor Peacock prefers to make a motion to stay as it is currently. Councilor Sheffield seconded the motion. Councilor Snyder suggests going up \$0.87 on the can fee and decreasing the limb/leaf fee \$0.87 so it will still be a wash. Councilor Peacock and Sheffield agree to withdraw their motion to take Councilor Snyder's suggestion. Councilor Williams makes a motion to approve the Councilor Snyder's suggestion. Councilor Peacock seconds her motion and all approve.**

**2025 WATER CONSERVATION PLAN RESOLUTION:**

This resolution will bring us into compliance because the City of Eastman operates a municipal water system and has a need to keep the Plan updated to protect its natural resources and comply with EPD's groundwater permitting guidelines. The resolution was the final step in renewing the city's groundwater permit. **The resolution is unanimously approved on a motion from Councilor Peacock and seconded by Councilor Sheffield.**

**WORK SESSION:**

**On a motion from Councilor Peacock and seconded by Councilor Williams, it was unanimously approved to schedule a work session for next Tuesday, March 18, 2025, at 5:00 PM, to discuss any ongoing projects.**

**HOME OCCUPATION LICENSE:**

**JOLLY BOYZ TRUCKING LLC @ 62 MARY ALEXANDER DRIVE, OWNER IS FRANK JOLLEY JR:**

Mr. Jolley has requested a home occupation business license at his residence at 62 Mary Alexander Drive. He is required to have an address for this business. Inspector White has spoken to Mr. Jolley about having trucks in that neighborhood. He has guaranteed that he will not be parking in the Morgan Creek Subdivision. **On a motion from Councilor Peacock and seconded by councilor Sheffield, the license was unanimously approved.**

**BUILDING PERMIT:****KENCOA AEROSPACE @ 345 AIRPORT ROAD:**

Mark Studstill has come and applied for a building permit for a 5700 sq ft addition to the Kencoa building on the Airport Road. He has supplied a copy of the deed, the plat, and blueprint of the addition. Councilor Snyder asks for a copy of the letter of approval from the FAA to add to the file. **The permit was unanimously approved on a motion from Councilor Sheffield and seconded by Councilor Williams.**

**ROBINS FINANCIAL CREDIT UNION @ INDIAN DRIVE:**

The contractor, Warren Associates Inc., has applied for a building permit to build a Robins Financial Credit Union over between the Wal-Mart and Tractor Supply on Indian Drive. Everything is as it should be. A copy of the deed, plat, and blueprint of building have all been submitted. Next, he will need to purchase a water meter and sewer tap so he can begin by the first of April. There is a ground-breaking ceremony planned for tomorrow morning. The Robins permit was unanimously approved on a motion from Councilor Peacock and seconded by Councilor Burney.

**BEER/WINE LICENSE:****THE GARAGE BAR AND GRILL @ 225 MAIN STREET:**

Brittany Harris has bought the old Hot Diggity Dogs business and is rebranding it. She has submitted an application to serve beer and wine at the establishment. Everything is in order and the background check is clear. Councilor Peacock asks what she is planning on serving. Ms. Harris states that it will be more than hot dogs. They will have Philly's, wings, hamburgers, and also some appetizers. **The beer/wine license was unanimously approved on a motion from Councilor Peacock and seconded by Councilor Sheffield.**

**EXECUTIVE SESSION – PROPERTY MATTERS:**

**On a motion from Councilor Peacock and seconded by Councilor Williams, it was unanimously voted to enter into Executive Session for Property Matters.**

**On a motion Councilor Peacock and seconded by Councilor Sheffield, the Council unanimously voted to enter back into regular session.** No further action was taken.

**CITY MANAGER REPORT:**

Reminder of the ribbon cutting at Robins Credit Union tomorrow at 11. It's a good sign of growth with all of the annexations and building permits that we have had lately.

**OTHER BUSINESS FROM COUNCIL:**

Councilor Snyder announced that a notice was received from Terry Coleman with the intention of introducing into legislature to the General Assembly about the recreation of a mayor. No other information is known except the notification of intent. That is not a decision that was made by the council. Nor has it been discussed or decided on by state legislation. Snyder states he is not aware of any legislature that has been signed by or brought forward by our local representative, Mr. Danny Mathis. Questions will be welcomed by the council or reach out to Mr. Coleman. Attorney Llop states that notice will be ran in the Dodge County News that he plans to introduce to the General Assembly a local act of legislature to revise the office of mayor and the city manager. It is her understanding that the Eastman Council has not voted on it, nor has Mr. Mathis taken any action on it. Snyder says business will continue as usual. The council has made tremendous progress in putting the city back where it needs to be, and he has enjoyed working with the other council members in getting this accomplished. He also commends Mr. Barron for keeping them informed and working with them.

Councilor Peacock speaks up to say that he is vehemently against what Mr. Coleman is trying to do to the community to separate it.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

On a motion from Councilor Peacock and a second from Councilor Sheffield, the meeting was adjourned.

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CHAIRMAN

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CITY CLERK