

February 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, and Brandon Brisco were also in attendance, along with employees Robert Lee, Firefighters Johnathan Grayer, Tyler Smith, and Jacoree Wilcox. Those present from the community were Mario Matos, Sharon Cobb Flanagan, EM Harrington III, Susan and Mitchell Coffee, Dwayne Conley, Charlotte Hopkins, Shelba Grantham, Silver Entrekin, Martin Kehayes, and John Battle.

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 **add a #10 to the agenda for a presentation from Eastman Commons. 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 Peacock and seconded by Councilor Burney.**

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

On a motion from Councilor Sheffield and seconded by Councilor Peacock, the minutes from the January 27, 2025, regular meeting and the minutes from the January 28, 2025, called meeting were unanimously approved.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

SECOND READING OF ZONING ORDINANCE AMENDMENT FOR INDUSTRIAL DISTRICTS:

Attorney Llop says this is the ordinance that will allow residential structures that existed before September 2024 to be of conforming use in the Industrial Zones. It has been published. It has been considered by P&Z and is now before the Council by recommendation. This is the second and final reading. Susan Coffee asked for a repeat of the before date. No other comments were made. **On a motion from Councilman Burney and seconded by Councilor Williams, the Industrial zoning ordinance was unanimously amended.**

SECOND READING OF ZONING ORDINANCE AMENDMENT FOR R-3:

Attorney Llop says this is for the creation of a new zoning district, R-3, as a high-density residential district. It has also been before P&Z and is now before the Council by recommendation. This is the second and final reading of this amendment. **On a motion from Councilman Peacock and seconded by Councilor Sheffield, the addition of an R-3 zone has been unanimously approved and is now in effect.**

NEW BUSINESS:

APPROVE BILLS:

On a motion from Councilor Sheffield and seconded by Councilor Burney, the bills for January 28 – February 10, 2025, were unanimously approved.

MONTHLY FIRE DEPT REPORT:

Chief Maxwell came forth to deliver the fire report. There was a total of 141 calls for the month of January 2025, which is double the number of calls from the previous month. Three non-working structure fires in the city and 0 in the county. Two working structure fires in the city. Nine other fire related calls, with 5 in the city and 4 in the county. They worked 101 medical-related calls with 77 in the city and 24 in the county. There was a total of 10 motor vehicle accidents with 5 in the city and 5 in the county. Ten public service calls (alarms, smoke, trees) with 9 in the city and 1 in the county. Cancelled in route twice in the city and once in the county with no mutual aid calls. They worked three air evac calls in the city.

MONTHLY POLICE DEPT REPORT:

Chief Cooper presented the report for the police department. They used 1,045 gallons of gas in the month of January 2025 to patrol 12,135 miles. They answered 666 calls, worked on 22 traffic accidents, and made 160 arrests/citations. A total of \$24,027.70 was collected in bonds and fines.

MONTHLY DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS:

Jack White came forward to give a report on Permitting, the Club Project, and Business Licenses. The Club project is \$104,258.48 into the allotted budget. They are about 90% complete and should be through by the end of March. As far as permitting, he had one building permit, three electrical inspections, and one zoning application for a total of \$350. He diligently spent time last week running unpaid business licenses down. At the end of February, he plans to start issuing citations to those that are still unpaid. Manager Barron urges everyone to come in person and not depend on the mail to get the payment here on time. Councilors Peacock, Snyder, and Sheffield decide to take postmark if done before the due date.

Matt McDaniel came forward for the treatment plant report for January 2025. The water pumped from the wells was 36,428,000 gallons. Water used was 1,003,000 gallons. Water treated and released into Sugar Creek was 16,200,000 gallons. Most of their hours worked were focused on 127 on the lab and sampling, 131 on lift station and repair, 113 on plant operations, and 93 on routine rounds. Total hours for the month were 585. The Industrial Lift Station is about 85% complete. There are still a lot of cosmetic things to take care of. Hopefully they will be done in another month. Councilor Snyder asks about the Chas Mar Lift Station. The electrician, Danny Dees, is coming back to look at and see what additional stuff he will need before he can get started on it. A bypass pump will be required once he gets started. Snyder asks what the time frame is once he starts the project. Matt said it shouldn't take more than a day or two.

Wynnon Pittman came forward to give the water distribution information for the month of January 2025. They had a total of 86 cut-ons and 108 cutoffs. Checked 20 places for a leak and fixed 15 water leaks. They only had 3 water main breaks during the cold weather and snow which was a surprising blessing. They were requested to do 188 locates. That means that people are doing things. Nine meters were GPS located, and 7 meters were pulled. Two meters were repaired and maintenance done on another by replacing a washer. Three meter inspections were completed. They investigated 2 sewers, installed 2 sewer taps, and cleaned out 30 sewer lines. Once again, an announcement was made that all of the clogs are coming from grease and wipes. A reminder was made for all restaurants to make sure their grease traps are regularly cleaned out. They also had to repair a manhole. There were 478 work orders in the system, and they used 490 gallons of gas.

Popco is 70-75% complete with the Jessup Heights project. They should be finishing up with Congo Lane this week. The 2nd crew just crossed over Forest Lake. They are anticipated being through by the middle of April or the first of May by the latest. Wynnon asks Graham to walk the neighborhood with him to visit the potential residences that will be affected in the coming weeks. They replaced 100 ft of service line with their new line puller at Victor Cruz's restaurant's future location. This cable allows them to pull the line under the

road without having to dig the road up. Tomorrow is cutoff day, the second Tuesday of the month, and they have decided to post on Facebook the day before to help cut down on the list. It seems to be working.

Brandon Brisco came forward to deliver the street department report. They had six hours on animal calls, 92 on curb and gutter, 325 on ditches. One of their main projects was redoing the area on Main Street right before the old Massingill building. They replaced the pipe and the road. They have not started mowing grass yet nor trimming tree limbs. They started on curbs and gutters last week. They are currently in the Sunset area and will continue moving across town. They spent 22 hours on potholes, 77 on trash pick-up, and 204 on limb pickup. 266.5 hours were spent doing other things around the town as needed and used 645 gallons of gas.

Councilor Snyder asked Manager Barron to elaborate on the current status of the paving project, especially at Morgan Creek Subdivision. Barron states the crew came a while back and completed Pearl Bates and had started preparing in Greenwood Heights. They couldn't find a milling machine and had to stop. Then they had to colder weather and snow to deal with. Jack speaks up and says that he spoke to the supervisor over the project, and he says they were going to try to be back either this week or next week. Keep in mind that paving is weather dependent. They want to get Morgan Creek and Industrial done first and then move on to Greenwood Heights and 14th Avenue.

CROSSWALKS:

Last week there was a student that was hit by a vehicle on Pearl Bates. Manager Barron and the Chief Cooper have met to come up with some ideas. There are no sidewalks going down Pearl Bates. That would be another project goal. In the meantime, they would like to put up two crosswalks. Chief Cooper has also met with the Sheriff to let him know the plans. Cooper and Jack White have met and are trying to come up with some quotes in order to install a crosswalk with push buttons that will activate flashing lights. Councilor Peacock is in total agreement and began this initiative. Councilor Peacock would also like to see a way to go ahead and get some sidewalks put in also. Barron says the city has been focusing on repairing sidewalks right now but if needed, they can stop that and focus on getting some sidewalks put in at the schools. Barron suggests a deeper discussion about this at tomorrow night's work session. Councilor Snyder asks about a proposed cost. White says he is still meeting with contractors but hopes to have a tentative total by the first of next week. Councilor Peacock asks Ms. Winslette if there are any grants available to help with the costs. She says she has found some for both the flashing lights and for the sidewalks. Councilor Snyder suggests maybe go ahead and move forward with the project even if we don't have some grant money available. When asked, Attorney Llop says a motion is not needed if the council just wants the City Manager to proceed forward with everything that is under his spending limit. All council are in agreement to move forward. **On a motion from Councilor Peacock and seconded by Councilor Burney, it was unanimously approved to go ahead and get the crosswalk striping taken care of.** Councilor Peacock asks if the Board of Education has been involved with where to put these crosswalks, etc. Cooper says no, but the preliminary spots to put them at were where Creighton Street meets Pearl Bates and where Deputy Sheffield stands at the Middle School back entrance. Councilor Snyder asks about where the students are crossing from the back High School parking lot over to the Rosewood Apartments. Keeping in mind that Rosewood is private property and parents should not be parking there waiting on their kids. They should be in the designated pickup areas. Parents parking on the side of the road is part of the problem and kids are darting out trying to get to them. Please be patient and work with the system.

LIMB/LEAF BID:

Councilor Snyder opens up the only bid received for the limb/leaf disposal. It was submitted by Dwayne Conley in the amount of \$80,000, broken down by quarterly payments of \$20,000 each. Manager Barron and

Attorney Llop agrees to look everything over. Barron reminds the council that Mr. Conley is really the only show in town with an EPD approved site. There was a cost increase of approximately \$10,000 over last year. Manager Barron states that it is probably cheaper than the city hauling it to Warner Robins one load at a time. He currently has no other solution. Attorney Llop agrees to compose a written agreement for signature. Barron asks to put in a clause to be able to cancel if the city finds another option in the meantime. **Councilor Peacock makes a motion to accept Conley's bid contingent on a written agreement between he and the city. Councilor Burney seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.**

MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT OF GOODY'S LOT:

The Goody's building and lot has been sold. However, the city did request to leave the donated flagpole in the lot for the Christmas tree and to be able to put Firetrucks and other Christmas décor there in the coming years. The new owner, 109 Eastman LLC, has agreed along with signing a Memorandum of Agreement stating the terms, etc. **This MOA was unanimously approved on a motion from Councilor Williams and seconded by Councilor Sheffield.**

ORDINANCE FOR HEIGHT REQUIREMENTS @ AIRPORT:

Manager Barron asks permission for Attorney Llop to draft an ordinance that matches what the county did, requiring flight studies that deal with the height of things built surrounding the runway. We don't want things to interfere with flight plans, paths, etc. Councilor Peacock asks if this is a requirement or because we have had some issues. Barron states he is not aware of any requirement, nor have we had any issues thus far. He just wants to prevent it considering that area is expanding more and more with industry. Attorney Llop says she will mirror what the county has, which controls a 3-mile and 5-mile radius and requires an FAA submission and response. Everyone is in agreement with moving Rita moving forward on drafting the ordinance. No motion needs to be made at the time.

DAYNA, GRANT UPDATE:

Dayna came forward to give updates on some of the grants that she has submitted. The first being the Land and Water Conservation Grant. It was the \$500,000 project at the Club that was submitted last October. It is a 50/50 match and a 2-year project. We have been selected to move to the next round and submit the formal application. She will be working with DNR over the next few months to get that in line. We will not know until this summer if we are chosen. Also, Hurricane Helene reimbursement. We are at the last step person to obligate the reimbursement funding for all of the emergency protective measures that we had during the hurricane, debris removal, and her management costs for the application process. She should have a final number in the next week or so. She is also waiting for some responses to the AFG applications with FEMA. She is not sure what will happen with that. Also waiting on this quarters T-Mobile grant and GEMA's Cybersecurity Grant. She is actively working on four main grants right now. A couple of those have multiple opportunities within them. The Fireworks Tax grant is the only one that requires a match (10%) and the maximum request is \$25,000. This grant would be for some equipment for the new fire truck that is coming soon. There were about seven other opportunities, but DOJ has withdrawn about four of them in the last 24 hours.

EASTMAN COMMONS PRESENTATION:

Mario Matos and Sharon Cobb Flanagan came forward to give a report for Eastman Commons concerning the proposed clock tower. Sharon says his project has been in the works for about 5 years. An LLC has been established in order to receive donations and funding. The mission of the LLC is doing beautification projects where there is a need for it. They are not in conflict at all with the Leave it Better organization and its work. They have a website established to help answer any questions that someone might have about the project. www.chameleonusa.net/pages/eastman-commons-fundraiser. Step 1 was to get GDOT's approval because

they own the traffic island where the site is proposed. The plan to clean up this traffic island and not impede any traffic views in the process. The project was bigger and has been downsized to a pole clock with specific base dimensions to satisfy GDOT. This is a \$70,000 project and they already have commitments totalling close to \$40,000. This is a community driven project. They are not asking for any funding from the city or county government. Mario is very happy with the response from the public. People are asking how they can help. They have printed shirts to sell, and every cent will go towards the project. The website will have a link to purchase the shirts, look at the design of the clock, donate funds, and even look at the budget. Mario says that this is a community driven project. It is not tax based. Every donation is important. Not just money, but labor, etc. Justin Lowery will be in charge of sales. Jerry Bland is the driving force behind the construction with equipment, personnel, and supplies. Manager Barron offers to post this information on the city's Facebook page.

HOME OCCUPATION LICENSE:

ADORNED BY SILVER, SILVER LANDIN ENTREKIN, 810 5TH AVENUE:

Ms. Entekin came forward to explain what kinds of products that she is offering. The residence will hold at least 10 cars without impeding any traffic. They will also be using just the back of the house as she has remodeled her garage. She hopes to be ready around the first of March. She has been making handmade soaps, etc. since 2015. She will also be selling vintage and designer goods. Once she is established, she hopes to get a storefront somewhere downtown. She is getting her website ready, www.adornedshop.com.

On a motion from Councilor Peacock and seconded by Councilor Williams, the home occupation license for Adorned by Silver at 810 5th Avenue was unanimously approved.

CITY MANAGER REPORT:

Barron states that a good meeting was held this past Friday concerning the helicopter landing situation and potential solutions. Himself, Chief Cooper, Chief Maxwell, and Councilor Snyder met with a representative from the hospital and the doctor over EMS. They are in the process of scheduling another meeting. As of right now, the hospital is still considered the primary landing site.

Bidding has started for our 2023 CDBG in Bacon Heights with over a mile gravity sewer and 26 manholes. It is over a million-dollar project. Our match is around \$300,000, which we have available in SPLOST. Barron suggests holding off on applying for another CDBG until this one is complete. If the project goes over budget, the city is liable for the difference.

Chief Maxwell comes back up. He lets everyone know that the new firetruck is ready for inspection. He will be going down to Ocala, FL later this week to look at it. They will be converting everything from Engine 7 to this new truck. Hopefully, they will receive the grant and be able to completely finish equipping with new equipment and not used. The equipment that was approved at the last meeting has been ordered and they are waiting for it to come in. Derl recently tried to hire 3 new people. Only one made the cut, Tyler Smith. He will be going off to school in March.

NO OTHER BUSINESS FROM COUNCIL:

ADJOURNMENT:

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