

**May 23, 2022**

The Eastman City Council met in a regular scheduled meeting on the above date at 6:00 p.m. Members present were Buddy Pittman, Raymond Mullis, Sebrina Williams, Jermayne Hamilton, and Ronnie Woodard. Others present were City Manager Spencer Barron, City Clerk April Sheffield, Police Chief Becky Sheffield, Attorney Rita Llop, and City Inspector Jack White. Present from the community were John Battle, Mitchell and Susan Coffee, County Commissioner Sharon Cobb Flanagan, Emory Tuff, Opera Jordan, Gail Smith-Carr, Paul McCranie, and Mark Studstill.

The meeting was streamed live via Facebook.

The meeting was called to order by Council Member Pittman.

Invocation was given by Council Member Hamilton.

Pledge of Allegiance.

**APPROVE AGENDA:**

**COUNCIL MEMBER PITTMAN:** The first item of business would be to approve the agenda unless Mr. Spence has anything to add to it.

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** We can delete #7, the Main Street water line project. We are going to put that off if possible.

**COUNCIL MEMBER PITTMAN:** Any other deletions or additions?

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** The monthly reports. Vicki was working on those, and I don't see them up here. We will get them just as quick as we can to you.

**COUNCIL MEMBER PITTMAN:** Ok. We are deleting 7 and 9. Any other deletions? Council, is there anything you need to add? If not, then I need a motion to amend the agenda by removing #7, Main Street water line project, and #9, March monthly reports. Along with the motion to delete those two, we will approve the agenda as it now stands with the amendments.

**COUNCIL MEMBER MULLIS:** So moved.

**COUNCIL MEMBER PITTMAN:** Have a motion from Councilman Mullis. I need a second.

**COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS:** Second.

**COUNCIL MEMBER PITTMAN:** Got a second from Councilwoman Williams. All in favor show of hands? Motion carried unanimous.

**APPROVE MINUTES:**

**COUNCIL MEMBER PITTMAN:** Next is to approve the minutes of the May 9, 2022, regular meeting. Council, y'all got those in your packets last week. Any questions or comments about them? If not, I need a motion to approve the minutes of the May 9, 2022, meeting.

**COUNCIL MEMBER MULLIS:** So moved.

**COUNCIL MEMBER PITTMAN:** Have a motion from Councilman Mullis. I need a second.

**COUNCIL MEMBER WOODARD:** Second.

**COUNCIL MEMBER PITTMAN:** Have a second from Councilman Woodard. All in favor show of hands? Motion carried unanimous.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

**SUNSET PARK:**

**COUNCIL MEMBER PITTMAN:** Under unfinished business is Sunset Park.

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** Yes, the Ministerial Alliance has submitted a written report explaining how they would like to try to manage the park. I believe it was requested at a previous city council meeting. Do we have anybody from the Alliance here that wants to address it? No?

**COUNCIL MEMBER PITTMAN:** Did y'all get a cost of moving the fence and the basketball goals?

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** Not, yet. When y'all approve the plan, we will start. Or you tell me that is what you want me to go ahead and do it. The we'll get the cost.

**COUNCIL MEMBER PITTMAN:** Nobody is here, Jermayne?

**COUNCIL MEMBER HAMILTON:** No, I don't see anybody.

**COUNCIL MEMBER PITTMAN:** Do you want to discuss it? Do you know about how who is going to keep a watch on the place and be there and this and that?

**COUNCIL MEMBER HAMILTON:** As far as keeping a watch on the place, we have got special people. Volunteer Watchmen. So, what we will have to do is there will be a different person each time. We don't have any designated person for like who will come Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday. But we can guarantee that there will be somebody watching the place while the park is open.

**OPERA JORDAN:** Hello. I am here to find out is it going to be possible for the cameras to be put up there. I know they were saying that at the last meeting that you can't put cameras up because that is an invasion of people's privacy. But they have cameras on the buses at school. So, I don't see why one cannot be put up there.

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** Ultimately it is a decision for the council, but I am not aware of anything. I spoke with Milton. We did a little bit of legal research too and the city attorney may want to address it, but I am not aware of anything that will prevent the cameras from being there. They are requirements for the camera to be reviewed, monitored, and maintained if the council chooses to put them there. If that answers your question?

**OPERA JORDAN:** I think that would help with the police department, where they can't be there. It would help them solve anything if anything come about. I hope it don't. But it would be as to solve a lot of unnecessary things that may take place up there. God forbid that it don't.

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** Has anyone from the Ministerial Alliance reached out to you about this plan, or met with you or talked to you about it?

**OPERA JORDAN:** No. And if it means that somebody is going to be there on watch, I would like for them to stay there at all times, while the park is open. Not be there and leave and ride by every 15 – 20 minutes.

**COUNCIL MEMBER HAMILTON:** I totally agree with what she is saying as well. Can we, from the last meeting, we was under review about any legal, you know, matters that will stop us from putting the cameras up. Because you initially wanted the voice activated as well. You said picture and audio?

**OPERA JORDAN:** Well, if it can't be audio, I am fine with it. As long as it can be picture, where it can be seen. If y'all choose not to do audio..

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** I don't know about audio.

**CITY ATTORNEY LLOP:** Yeah, I don't think you ought to do it.

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** Ultimately, I guess that is a decision for the council.

**CITY ATTORNEY LLOP:** Although, one side can agree to it.

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** Yeah, in Georgia, it is a one-party consent and it's our property. I don't know Rita, audio just kinda feels like a risky proposition to me.

**CITY ATTORNEY LLOP:** But if you have visual, that's the main thing.

**COUNCIL MEMBER HAMILTON:** That's the main concern.

**OPERA JORDAN:** Could it be that whoever is up there that day, like Mr. Battle had suggested, they have on a vest that says security also. And I think with the cameras and somebody that is going to be up

there and be dedicated to be up there and have on a security vest, I think that'll hold down a lot from taking place also. Unnecessary activity.

**COUNCIL MEMBER MULLIS:** These cameras. If they can tear down the goal posts, they can tear down these cameras. We are going to have to figure out some way because they will tear them cameras down. Am I right or wrong?

**JOHN BATTLE:** Prosecute them.

**SUSAN COFFEE:** What if they don't know who they are?

**OPERA JORDAN:** Yeah, if the camera be up there and they try to tear the camera down, it's going to show them before they get to that camera.

**COUNCIL MEMBER MULLIS:** Yeah, if you have got on a black mask. I have been watching Channel 13 news and I see how they go around robbing places, and you can't tell who they are because they have got on masks.

**OPERA JORDAN:** But Sir, let me tell you something. They can wear these masks all they want to, but it can't change they body shape or how they walk.

**COUNCIL MEMBER MULLIS:** But, if they tear it down, they are going to have the camera.

**CITY MANGER BARRON:** There are some options in terms of broadcasting remotely from those cameras too. There's tens of thousands of dollars that you can put into them, or you can go cheaper. Again, depending on what the council does or does not want to proceed with, this is an experiment.

Ultimately, they make take the cameras, they may not. We just don't know. There are ways to have cameras that they may not see. There are ways to have cameras that they do see. Those are the factors that we need to really consider. And I say that, obviously you can see a big camera in the corner of the room, but some cameras are surreptitious, or concealed, for a better word..

**OPERA JORDAN:** And they also say, I know you say that they can take down the camera and take it with them but there is a way that you can have a camera connected to somebody's cell phone.

**COUNCIL MEMBER MULLIS:** That's the reason I mentioned this. So, something can be done like that.

**OPERA JORDAN:** Right, because if they take that camera then, let them have it because it's going to show who got it. And they can bring it to court with them too. One more thing. The houses up there. I still would like to get that taken care of. The 2 houses up there on the corner, and the ditch across from where I live. It needs to be maintained. It hasn't been maintained in a while. They used to have the prisoners to come out and clean it, but it hasn't been cleaned in a while.

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** We have had the city inspector go up and look at it and try to put it together.

**INSPECTOR WHITE:** I talked to you and your sister or cousin. I have talked to both of y'all about it and we are addressing it. If you will wait, we will address it in a minute. Okay, I am going to step down. I don't know if she will want to speak, but that is all that I have to say.

**EMORY TUFF:** I just want to talk about the ditch. I know that this was done many years ago. Probably about 80 years ago when it was done. Now, during the time it has corroded, and it has taken my land. I spoke with this gentleman here. He explained to me that the ditch could be cleaned, but I have got to be responsible for running pipes and covering them up. If that is the plan, how do I go about doing that when I stay in the right system with the city?

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** I'm sorry, I didn't understand. How do you do it correctly? Is that what you are saying?

**EMORY TUFF:** Yes. It has to be done correctly from what I understand, because you all are saying that it is my responsibility.

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** Right, so this is something that we are fixing to get into with both feet. Somewhere along the city's development, we never created a master stormwater management plan. We have had this collection and it's kind of patchwork. Some ditches here and some ditches there. Some belong to the landowner. Some of them have an actual city easement on them. Honestly, the city

attorney is going to have to research that one to figure out if we do have an easement on it. The second question is, is it part of the stormwater system for the city? I think it is from what I've seen and from what Jack has seen. It's crucial to Eastman to keep water moving through that ditch. One option, like you say, would be to pipe it and cover it up. That might be a benefit to both of us. I don't know. But it also might be out of our legal authority within the city to do if the city's interest in that point that we just get it cleared out on water main's. And to tell you the truth, we haven't done that since I have been here. So, I am kind of learning as we go. I don't think that we have touched that ditch in more than 10 or 20 years. Probably longer than that.

**EMORY TUFF:** Yeah, because the trees have extended into that ditch, and it used to not be trees there.

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** We have several like that. And for the engineers, we walked last week with our consultant engineers and with EPD looking at ditches all over Eastman and the council has allowed me to retain Stillwaters. They are doing a buffer variance that is good for 5 years and it will give us permission to get in there and do that. We have just got to do a little bit thinking and studying to figure out what the right thing to do is honestly.

**EMORY TUFF:** Okay, so there will be a time frame of getting back to the legal aspect of it and letting them contact me.

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** That is the best information I can give you right now. And the process of getting that buffer variance was 4 months if I remember what the man told us. And we've never had one in the history of Eastman. So, this may be even longer. But in the meanwhile, we'll see if we can get up there and try to do something with that ditch. I just can't promise that it will be something substantial like putting in pipe or digging or anything like that. Maybe we can just cut the grass in it if it is to the city's benefit to do that.

**CITY ATTORNEY LLOP:** What is your address?

**EMORY TUFF:** The address is 5532 Norman Avenue.

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** That is the best information that we have got so far.

**EMORY TUFF:** Okay, that helps. Thanks.

**CITY ATTORNEY LLOP:** I will look to see if there is anything in the record.

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** If you will. See if there is an easement that we've got on that land, and she may be willing to give us an easement if we need it to get in there and do something. And I am going to tell you that that is going to be a controversial issue. Every ditch in Eastman is not going to be a city stormwater ditch. It's got to be evaluated and be looked at by an engineer. Then we have got to make sure it is covered by this buffer variance that allows us to do something. And that may be why we stopped digging ditches many years ago. Because it was too complicated and too much confusion. But we are really doing to have to work through it somehow or another. Other cities are doing it, Eastman is going to have to do it too.

**COUNCIL MEMBER PITTMAN:** Alright, back to Sunset Park. I wish they would have been here. I know that we've got this plan here, do we have a plan B as if we move forward and did this. This is why I want to talk to them. It's like, if y'all have a Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday night, Sunday and all, and people have things to do, and nobody didn't want to offer. I'm busy today, well I'm busy today, and I can't go today and this and that. What is the plan here?

**COUNCIL MEMBER HAMILTON:** The park is only going to be open if it's supervised.

**COUNCIL MEMBER PITTMAN:** When I ask that question, if somebody can open the gate and then be there 10 minutes and say I've got to run and do something.

**COUNCIL MEMBER HAMILTON:** Oh no. We are not going to do that. If it is not supervised, then it is not open. And plan B is to shut it down if it don't go the way we planned. I mean, I feel as though, you know, in life, you know you have, people deserve a second chance. Especially when you talk about structure, doing something structured, and doing something with control. Now, if things go south and

we can't act, when we got authority in position, then therefore, something need to change and that and therefore, when and if that happens. Hopefully it don't happen. Then we will come back and say, hey look, we gave that chance and obviously it didn't work. But to not give it a try, will be robbery of many kids' lives in my opinion, that could benefit from having Sunset Park open. And I can assure the city, I mean, I've been a law enforcement officer for 11 years. I have been doing this for 11 years, since I was 19 years old. I can assure you, if we don't have structured discipline, then we can't do it. I mean, that's just how it goes. That's life. You ain't going to hear me saying, oh one more try, one more try. You ain't going to hear me saying that. I mean, life don't even give you that many tries. But it does give you a second.

**COUNCIL MEMBER PITTMAN:** I am going to be perfectly honest with you. That ain't no sense beating this horse for the next 6 months. I mean, we are either going to do it or we ain't going to do it. Assuming that if we vote to do it and then it don't work out and we keep having trouble or have a shooting or selling dope and everything else up there, then that's plan B. I reckon if we put cameras up there and they keep stealing the cameras.

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** That's the problem. We ran into that with the restrooms. We would repair them, and they would tear them up. We had to repair them again. I think now there are prison rest rooms in there. There're metal laboratories.

**COUNCIL MEMBER PITTMAN:** According to this, I reckon they want to start this June the 1<sup>st</sup>? Council, y'all got any questions? Ms. Sebrina? What's your thoughts?

**COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS:** I'm for it. I'm for trying it.

**COUNCIL MEMBER MULLIS:** Me too.

**COUNCIL MEMBER WOODARD:** Let's give it a try. But there will be no misunderstanding, that if a major incident occurs, that's it. I don't want to have to spend a week or month trying to convince people that it needs to be shut down or stopped.

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** Any incident out there, we will report immediately to the council. At the point that you deem it unsalvageable, we padlock it again and we shut it down.

**OPERA JORDAN:** One more thing that I want to ask. When y'all have security out there, can it be somebody of age and not nobody in the range of 23 or 30. You know, somebody that's going to be responsible.

**JOHN BATTLE:** Good evening, I just want to say too. Here in Dodge County, we seem to get on a certain issue, and we can't resolve it. We talk about downtown development and all of this development that makes Eastman up with intrigue and an inviting city a place to come. We going to have to start working together and hold people accountable. Cause, when the park was reopened, there were people who stood and said the same thing. That they were going to be held accountable for the activities that were going on in that park. When the NAACP was over the park, we didn't have any problems. We had a meeting. We relieved it to the Ministerial Alliance. They took over. Pastor Mack was here. The park was run pretty well. Somewhat under that time frame to the present. It became a hazard to young people. Because the larger people and the older people wasn't coming to the park to participate in basketball and other activities. And I ain't going to say any more about that. You know what it was. So, the park got out of hand. And I ain't pointing no fingers at anybody. But the security and the people who at that point and time was supposed to be over the park, they wasn't holding themselves accountable. And as city council was happened to say, when you take on the responsibilities, you cannot say I had a meeting to come up, I had to go to church, I had to do this. You have to hold yourself accountable. And I agree with you. The people that going to be up there and if they don't hold theyself accountable and the Ministerial Alliance don't hold themselves accountable, then, when you come back to the city council, you asking people all of these questions and you deceive certain citizens in the community. Now, they are not serving the county or the city in a good manner or way. So, I agree.

Some walks of life, you do get second or third chances. But you don't get 9 like they say a cat gets. That's a myth anyway. So, if the people that's in charge of the park, if it's my brother, or me, or whoever it is, can't be held be accountable. Then they need to set out at the table and go to plan B. And plan B will be just like you said. Close it up and get a new administration. 10 years from now, you want to try to open it up, maybe some of them peoples be done gone. God will have called them on home, and you have a better environment.

**COUNCIL MEMBER PITTMAN:** Now Jermayne, this phone number here that is on top of this. Whose number is this?

**COUNCIL MEMBER HAMILTON:** That will be Pastor Lewis, Lonnie Lewis phone number.

**COUNCIL MEMBER PITTMAN:** Is there a way to get Spence and some of them down here, some of these others' phone numbers that signed this thing and all?

**COUNCIL MEMBER HAMILTON:** Yes Sir, we can make that happen.

**COUNCIL MEMBER PITTMAN:** Alright, so with that being said, I will entertain a motion to move forward with opening the park.

**COUNCIL MEMBER MULLIS:** So moved.

**COUNCIL MEMBER PITTMAN:** Have a motion from Councilman Mullis to let us open Sunset Park and let the Ministerial Alliance do everything that they claim they are going to do here on this form. I need a second.

**COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS:** Second.

**COUNCIL MEMBER PITTMAN:** Got a second from Councilman Woodard. All in favor, show of hands. Motion carried unanimous. Next, I will entertain a motion for getting a price to move that fence back 30 feet and check on the cost of a camera system and different kinds that maybe won't be so expensive, and basketball goals and rims and stuff.

**COUNCIL MEMBER MULLIS:** So moved.

**COUNCIL MEMBER PITTMAN:** Have a motion from Councilman Mullis. Council, do y'all have any more questions or anything? That is moving the fence back 30 ft, backboards, rims and goals, and camera system. Got a motion from Councilman Mullis. I need a second.

**COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS:** Second.

**COUNCIL MEMBER PITTMAN:** Have a second from Councilwoman Williams. All in favor, show of hands. Motion carried unanimous. Anything else that we need a motion for?

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** Fingers crossed. I think we have a good plan and the Ministerial Alliance is going to move forward with and we are going to do our best to support them.

### **NEW BUSINESS:**

#### **THE CLUB - RURAL DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT GRANT:**

**COUNCIL MEMBER PITTMAN:** Next on the agenda is The Club and the Rural Downtown Development Grant.

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** As many of you know, we are applying for a million-dollar grant through the Georgia Department of Community Affairs. One of the requirements is a resolution pledging up to a \$100,000 match for that grant. We would need a vote to do that. The money is available in SPLOST and also in our COVID ARPA Relief Funds.

**COUNCIL MEMBER PITTMAN:** A million-dollar grant for a hundred grand?

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** Sounds like a good deal to me. Again, we are just applying but we have got to commit on paper with a vote and a resolution, that we will step up to the plate and put \$100,000 up.

**COUNCIL MEMBER PITTMAN:** Council, do y'all have any questions about that? Alright, I need a motion then to commit to a \$100,000 to go towards a Rural Downtown Development grant for a million dollars for the Club.

**COUNCIL MEMBER MULLIS: So moved.**

**COUNCIL MEMBER PITTMAN:** Have a motion from Councilman Mullis. I need a second.

**COUNCIL MEMBER HAMILTON: Second.**

**COUNCIL MEMBER PITTMAN:** Have a second from Councilman Hamilton. All in favor show of hands. Motion carried unanimous.

**TRUCKS:**

**COUNCIL MEMBER PITTMAN:** Next on the agenda is trucks.

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** Several months back, the Council approved us buying 3 work trucks. Y'all know the condition of our fleet. Unfortunately, we were only able to take delivery of one of those vehicles. I have not been able to get the other 2. I have been told that it is going to be 6-12 months before we get those other 2. Likewise, we found out after talking to the police department and some near misses, that our water department riding around on the golf cart, is not considered street legal. We have got to get them off of that golf cart. The best plan that we have come up with at this point, if the Council will approve it, is to purchase a used truck. Jack, you have found a decent one over at Goodman's. And then we would pass that little white truck down to the meter readers that ride the golf cart. The truck is a 2013. This is the truck over at Goodman's. A 2013 Ford F-150. It has got 44,000 miles on it. But he is only asking \$21,506 for it. We would put Jack in that and turn around with Jack's truck and give it to the meter readers. It is a V6, 2WD. It is nothing flashy or fancy. It is just a good solid truck. If and when the other 2 become available, we will come back and seek authorization to deal with that. Jack, anything else you want to add to that?

**INSPECTOR WHITE:** No Sir. We had options. There were other trucks that were more than that. But with everything going on right now, we need to stick to small plans. We are fixing to have to spend a lot of money on other stuff.

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** We ask the council for a motion to approve the purchase of that used truck.

**COUNCIL MEMBER PITTMAN:** Alright, any questions from the Council? If not, then I need a motion to approve the purchase of a 2013 F-150 from Goodman Auto Sales for \$21,506.

**COUNCIL MEMBER MULLIS: So moved.**

**COUNCIL MEMBER PITTMAN:** Got a motion from Councilman Mullis. I need a second.

**COUNCIL MEMBER HAMILTON: Second.**

**COUNCIL MEMBER PITTMAN:** Got a second from Councilman Hamilton. All in favor show of hands. Motion carried unanimous.

**MULCHER AND TRAILER:**

**COUNCIL MEMBER PITTMAN:** Next on the agenda is a mulcher and trailer.

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** I have talked to some of the council and made them aware. Last week me, Jack, the water department, street department, our consulting engineers, Jesse, and Tom Fowler from EPD spent many hours walking many ditches and streets looking at sewer lines. Learning what we could do and what we couldn't do, what the correct path is to seek approval to clean some of these ditches out. One of the things that we came to realize really quickly, and I will let Jack elaborate on it, is that a great deal of our sewer lines have completely grown up. They are in forests and so we can't get to them. We have been trying to do it by hand. We looked at trying to do it by renting equipment to do it. Jack, I think, has come up with a pretty good plan.

**INSPECTOR WHITE:** Yes, what we are looking at buying is a mulcher. It is on a skid steer head or machine. The thing about it is that we can use it multiple ways. We can use after we are done with this project. We can use it as a forklift. There is all kinds of attachments for a skid steer. The thing that we are up against right now is that we can't disturb any of the sub surface. We have got to be able to walk

right on top of the ground. You can't dig up any roots, you can't dig up anything. You have got to just cut it down. That is all that they are going to allow us to do. Cut it down. We have got lines out here between 117 and 46 that are fallen. They are elevated lines. We have got to be able to get equipment back in there to fix those. The only way to get in there is to cut all of the trees out. They are not big enough for a logger, so the only way we can go in there is to mulch them down and actually mulch them small enough to be able to drive in there.

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** Again, to rent the equipment, some of the estimates that we come up with were \$300,000. Where to buy a piece of equipment is less than \$150,000.

**INSPECTOR WHITE:** It is \$250 an hour or \$2500 a day.

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** That is \$2500 per day for one of those machines to rent. Or hire them.

**COUNCIL MEMBER MULLIS:** Those things are being used more and more this year than I have ever seen. I know going up towards Cochran, it went in and mulched all of that. It took care of all that.

**INSPECTOR WHITE:** We can get a lot of work done with it. We can get other equipment. As long as you are not disturbing the actual root system. That is what EPD said we cannot do.

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** One option here is a John Deere 33G Compact Track Loader. Just a second ago, I was talking to Mark Studstill. He had mentioned that an excavator also could do that. Maybe we need to look at that.

**INSPECTOR WHITE:** You can get an excavator with a mulcher head on it.

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** And I know that we are going to have to get one of those after talking with Blake, talking with Paul, and talking with Wynnon, as we start to grow our capacities. Did you find one? Tell us about that.

**INSPECTOR WHITE:** The only thing we are up against right now is just like everything else. It's the supply chain and the supply is real low. Trying to find them, I mean you can find pieces here and there and then maybe you can't find the mulch head. So, you have got a battle either way you go. We've been fortunate enough to find this one. The guy said that he would hold it until tomorrow and then after that, it may be 6 months before we get our hands on one.

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** Mark, what are your thoughts on it?

**MARK STUDSTILL:** We have used them both and we get more versatility out of the mini excavator, than the mulching head and the skid steer. The skid steer is kind of limited sometimes on mobility. It has got to be on some kind of or somewhat flat surface. Whereas with the boom lift, you can reach out on the banks, the ditches, the pond dams. Junior Howell just bought a skid steer with a mulching head about 2 months ago. You may want to entertain quotes on both and then make your mind up on which one.

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** Then we risk losing this one that we have locked down until tomorrow.

**INSPECTOR WHITE:** It's going to be hard to find something to work with right now. That is what we are up against and what we are talking about. The thing that I was up against was that if we have a leak on any of these lines, we are going to be facing \$100,000 in just a few days on fines.

**MARK STUDSTILL:** I think the last time y'all did a right-of-way clearing, Mac Harrington was here working. That has been 20+ years ago.

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** There are pine trees that big around. (Forms a circle with his arms) I don't know how we would get equipment in there to fix that.

**INSPECTOR WHITE:** Cut the trees out of the way, grind the stumps and go on. It is one of those things that we are going to have to make a gut check on.

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** And the money is available in SPLOST.

**INSPECTOR WHITE:** Can we stand the fines plus paying the expense or can we just go ahead and buy the equipment? That is why we have to gut check. Because something neglected long enough is going to break.

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** Alright, so I am not a heavy equipment operator, the \$35,000 is the actual head that goes on?

**INSPECTOR WHITE:** Yes, that's the actual head that goes on the track loader.

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** The actual device is \$85,000. I don't know if they snap on or connect.

**COUNCIL MEMBER PITTMAN:** I am going to ask this question to Mark again. I hate to spend \$120,000 just because we can't get it after tomorrow. Would the excavator thing be better?

**MARK STUDSTILL:** We hired a guy that came from McDonough last year to clean around a bunch of pond dams. He spent about a month down here. He worked a full-time job up there and he would come here on Saturday and Sunday. And when he got done with those pond dams, they looked like a yard. They were just so smooth. He could reach out in the water and grind them. Just keep grinding. Everything was pretty much mulch size. It's just like the councilman mentioned, you see them everywhere nowadays. We just get more use out of it. We can't afford to have a whole lot of inventory. So, we have to purchase what we get the most use out of. We get more use out of a mini excavator than a skid steer. When we get through mulching with it, we dig with it. Water, sewer, everybody can use it. Street department.

**COUNCIL MEMBER PITTMAN:** Council, what do y'all think?

**COUNCIL MEMBER MULLIS:** Well, if it is going to be versatile and use it for anything, I think that is the way to go. And the price of that was what?

**COUNCIL MEMBER PITTMAN:** We don't have a price on that. This is the mulcher. The smaller version.

**INSPECTOR WHITE:** Track loader is what it is.

**COUNCIL MEMBER WOODARD:** Are we going to have to get bids on this?

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** That is a good question for Ms. City Attorney.

**ATTORNEY LLOP:** I understood that this excavator wasn't just the deal that it's gone tomorrow because we got this price. But there isn't another one in the state. And that if you don't clear these ditches, you are going to be facing a potential fine from EPD because of the problems associated with the water. So, availability, the necessity to clear the water, is it a situation that you need to act today? I understand that it is. But I don't know everything about the situation but y'all walked it last week. There are backups. We have had issues with water damage to personal property.

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** To the tune of over \$50,000.

**ATTORNEY LLOP:** So, is that going to continue?

**COUNCIL MEMBER PITTMAN:** It won't get down there on the side of the creek, will it?

**INSPECTOR WHITE:** You can't put a machine in the creek.

**COUNCIL MEMBER MULLIS:** Just the sides.

**COUNCIL MEMBER PITTMAN:** That's what the question is.

**INSPECTOR WHITE:** Without the special variances and all, you can't get within 25 feet of the creek. But we are trying to get access into them.

**ATTORNEY LLOP:** That's the buffer variance.

**COUNCIL MEMBER PITTMAN:** That's the question right now. Right now, without the buffer..

**INSPECTOR WHITE:** I understand what you are saying about reaching in and getting right on the edge and all. It can be a little challenging but that is the only thing that we can find at this moment because of the supply chain that we are working with. If y'all want to wait and let's get a quote on one and find a time frame, that is y'all's call. I am bringing to you what we could access at the moment.

**COUNCIL MEMBER PITTMAN:** I mean if we are going to spend a \$100,000,

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** And it not do what we want it to do.

**COUNCIL MEMBER PITTMAN:** If all we are going to do is get the edge of it, we are still going to have to get it.

**INSPECTOR WHITE:** I get it. That's fine.

**ATTORNEY LLOP:** Well, Mark, what is the cost of an excavator?

**MARK STUDSTILL:** Everything cost a lot now.

**ATTORNEY LLOP:** Maybe that would be something to look at.

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** Well, they have gone this long, haven't they?

**COUNCIL MEMBER PITTMAN:** And that's buffer is going to take what, 4 months.

**ATTORNEY LLOP:** Is he drawing a map? Is he doing the mapping of all of the buffer areas that he is going to create?

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** He sent us a map of what he can do and our roads crossing the creeks. And we walked in and out. And he explained it. What he is doing is seeking permission from EPD for us to get down in all of these channels and Legion Drive. To get over here behind the Boys and Girls Club and that is where the term, I think, general area buffer variance comes in. The city of Albany did it. You apply for it, spelling out your plan and how you are going to tackle the problem. And it is good for 5 years. There are going to be all kind of rules attached to them. I am sure we are going to have to use mats to crawl out on it with certain parts of it and certain parts of it may not be touchable. Again, we are dealing with EPD. For something that we have never done before and it is worth some time and good thoughts, and some serious efforts.

**COUNCIL MEMBER PITTMAN:** That is my thought with it. That's going to take a little bit of time anyway. Like Mark said about that other, this we are limited to what we can do, this is going to be more of a flatter surface because you can't reach down. Mini excavator? Why don't we...

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** Delay it and get a quote on a mini excavator? Would that be?

**COUNCIL MEMBER PITTMAN:** With the head and all of that stuff.

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** And whatever else we need for the water department. Paul, what else do we need for that thing? A bucket, a jackhammer?

**PAUL MCCRANIE:** Yeah, a bucket, a jackhammer. Yeah.

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** And a trailer to haul it on because you can't really drive it can you?

**PAUL MCCRANIE:** Yeah, a trailer too.

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** Is there not enough trucks to pull it? They haven't got the power?

**PAUL MCCRANIE:** Yeah, the dump truck will pull it.

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** I just don't want to buy something and put it on a trailer, and we don't have a truck to pull the durn thang.

**INSPECTOR WHITE:** The dump truck will pull it.

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** Alright, is that what the council wants to do? Jack, are you okay with that.

**INSPECTOR WHITE:** That's fine. I was just looking for what is accessible to what we have.

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** And we appreciate your efforts.

**COUNCIL MEMBER PITTMAN:** Yes, thank you. If you will get us that, we will know and we will go from there.

**INSPECTOR WHITE:** That's fine.

**APPROVE MONTHLY BILLS:**

**COUNCIL MEMBER PITTMAN:** Next on the agenda is to approve the monthly bills from May 10 - 23, 2022. Y'all got them in your packet. Any questions on them, Council? If not, I need a motion to approve the monthly bills.

**COUNCIL MEMBER MULLIS:** So moved.

**COUNCIL MEMBER PITTMAN:** Have a motion from Councilman Mullis. I need a second.

**COUNCIL MEMBER WOODARD:** Second.

**COUNCIL MEMBER PITTMAN:** Have a second from Councilman Woodard. All in favor show of hands? Motion carried unanimous.

**GMA VOTING DELEGATE:**

**COUNCIL MEMBER PITTMAN:** Next on the agenda is the GMA Voting Delegate. The GMA convention is coming up at the end of June. The legislative policies and business meeting and all that we go to, we have to have a delegate and we have to appoint one of those. So, I will entertain a motion for a voting delegate for that.

**COUNCIL MEMBER MULLIS:** I vote you. I make a motion to approve Buddy to be the GMA voting delegate.

**COUNCIL MEMBER PITTMAN:** Council, do y'all have any questions? If not, I need a second.

**COUNCIL MEMBER WILLAMS:** Second.

**COUNCIL MEMBER PITTMAN:** Have a second from Ms. Sebrina. All in favor show of hands. Motion carried unanimous.

**FIRE HYDRANT PROJECT BID:**

**COUNCIL MEMBER PITTMAN:** Next on the agenda is the fire hydrant project bid. I think that we brought this up at the last meeting. It was a whole list of them.

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** 6 fire hydrants. 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Oak, 13<sup>th</sup> and Main, 1<sup>st</sup> and Bethel, 4<sup>th</sup> and Bethel, 3<sup>rd</sup> and Foster, and Hwy 117 and Sheldon Street. We had one submission.

**COUNCIL MEMBER PITTMAN:** And that was from Graham and Studstill in the amount of, I think you all have the bid sheet there, of \$72,790. They are providing the hydrants, the cut off valves, and everything needed to complete every one of these. Mark is here if y'all have any questions if y'all want to ask him.

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** And the city does not have the capability to do this ourselves. We met this morning with the street and water departments and discussed it again. It is just not possible for us with what we have.

**COUNCIL MEMBER PITTMAN:** If there is no questions, I will entertain a motion to approve Graham & Studstill to replace and add the cutoff valves for each one of them, at a cost of \$72,790.

**COUNCIL MEMBER MULLIS:** So moved.

**COUNCIL MEMBER PITTMAN:** I have a motion from Councilman Mullis. I need a second.

**COUNCIL MEMBER HAMILTON:** Second.

**COUNCIL MEMBER PITTMAN:** Have a second from Councilman Hamilton. All in favor show of hands. Motion approved unanimous.

**RESCHEDULE JUNE 27, 2022, COUNCIL MEETING:**

**COUNCIL MEMBER PITTMAN:** #8 is reschedule the June 27, 2022, council meeting, as we were talking about earlier, due to the GMA convention in Savannah. I know normally in the past we normally do it that Thursday, which would be the 30<sup>th</sup>.

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** April, can you think of anything that might conflict with that like court or anything? Becky?

**CITY CLERK SHEFFIELD:** Not that I am aware of.

**COUNCIL MEMBER PITTMAN:** Are y'all all good with that? Same time and same place? Then I will entertain a motion to move the council meeting from June 27 to Thursday, June 30, at 6:00 PM.

**COUNCIL MEMBER MULLIS:** So moved.

**COUNCIL MEMBER PITTMAN:** Have a motion from Councilman Mullis. I need a second.

**COUNCIL MEMBER WOODARD:** Second.

**COUNCIL MEMBER PITTMAN:** Have a second from Councilman Woodard. All in favor show of hands. Motion carried unanimous.

**CITY MANAGER REPORT:**

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** I just would like to encourage everyone to get out and vote. Tomorrow is election day.

**COUNCIL MEMBER PITTMAN:** You’ve got to go vote here. Then you’ve got to go vote at the Terry Coleman Center.

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** Or wherever your polling place is tomorrow.

**OTHER BUSINESS FROM COUNCIL:**

**COUNCIL MEMBER HAMILTON:** I would just like to thank everyone for coming out today. I appreciate your time and dedication. And I think that we are moving in the right direction. Thank you.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS VIA FACEBOOK:**

**CITY CLERK SHEFFIELD:** Looks like there was a lot of discussion during the Sunset conversation.

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** Could you tell if there were any direct comments or questions for the City Council?

**KRYSTAL MARIE EVANS:** *I feel like cameras and police presence is a good idea at Sunset Park. There also needs to be more police presence in Cottondale.*

**MILTON JOHNSON:** *Sunset Park. Remove the basketball courts. Make the park for Middle School and Elementary school age playground equipment. Then let the Club recreation center the city is planning be the place for the basketball courts for the older age groups. Everything is sustainable. The issue is the mix of age groups. That is the catalyst that has to be solved.*

**On a motion from Councilman Mullis and a second from Councilwoman Williams, the meeting was adjourned.**

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**CHAIRMAN**

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**CITY CLERK**