

**February 27, 2023**

The Eastman City Council met in a regular scheduled meeting on the above date at 6:00 p.m. The following members were present: Raymond Mullis, Buddy Pittman, Sebrina Williams, and Ronnie Woodard. Others present were Police Chief Billy Cooper, City Manager Spencer Barron, City Clerk April Sheffield, City Attorney Rita Llop, City Inspector Jack White, and City Engineer Jesse Bearden. Present from the community were Susan and Mitchell Coffee, Sharon Cobb Flanagan, and Brittany Lowery.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Pittman.

Invocation was given by Vice-Chairman Mullis.

Pledge of Allegiance.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** First item on the agenda it to approve the agenda unless there is anything.

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** No changes.

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** Alright, I need a motion then to approve the agenda as it stands.

**COUNCILOR MULLIS:** **So moved.**

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

**COUNCILOR WILLIAMS:** **Second.**

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** Have a second from Councilwoman Williams. All in favor, show of hands. Motion carried unanimous.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** Next is approve the minutes of the February 13, 2023, regular meeting. Everybody got that in your packets. Any questions concerning that? If not, then I need a motion to approve the minutes.

**COUNCILOR MULLIS:** **So moved.**

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

**COUNCILOR WOODARD:** **Second.**

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** I have a second from Councilman Woodard. All in favor, show of hands. Motion carried unanimous.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

**FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH ROADWORK:**

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** We do have an item under unfinished business and that is the First Baptist Church roadwork for the new school.

**INSPECTOR WHITE:** Yes. A while back, First Baptist Church came to us wanting to put the school in and they wanted to get signage and some road markings, speedhumps, and so forth. And some parking spaces changed around. One of them had come to see us and ask if we could help them with it. All of the road signage and striping and speed humps come to \$5622. I went ahead and took the liberty to look. 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue between Oak and Pine Street is in terrible shape. When they open the school up, it is going to be a minute time before we will be able to get in there and pave or do anything in the future. I went ahead and got a couple of quotes from private contracting companies to bring to y'all so y'all would have it if y'all wanted to make a decision if you wanted to go ahead and pave that street now or not. The total on APEX paving was \$57,420 and the Houston Asphalt & Paving was \$45,051.

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** Alright, thank you Jack. With that in mind, I think at the time when the church came and they were interested in signage, hardware, striping and painting, and speed bumps and all. And I think with that, that comes to \$5622. What is y'all's thoughts? I know that at the time they came,

and there wasn't anything about paving the street and all of that. Jack, I appreciate you getting that but I know that we are waiting on some streets that are in dire need right now that we are waiting on bids to come through.

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** They are going out in March. The LMIG.

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** With that being said, what are y'all's thoughts?

**COUNCILOR MULLIS:** We have already skipped one of my subdivisions, down in Morgan Creek. Morgan Creek is worse than any subdivision. Worse than this up here. And there is no way that I want to vote to go ahead and do First Baptist Church when I got a subdivision that is in worse shape than it is. That's my feelings.

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** Any other comments?

**COUNCILOR WILLIAMS:** I will piggyback off of what y'all said. Basically, we also have 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue that was skipped. And Congo Lane from MLK to the connection. There are potholes. There are some other streets that we need to consider in my opinion.

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** With that being said, do y'all want to move forward with the signage and hardware, and the painting and speedbumps?

**COUNCILOR MULLIS:** How much did you say?

**COUNCILOR WOODARD:** What did that come out to?

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** \$5,622.

**COUNCILOR MULLIS:** I would go with that myself. As far as paving, I can't.

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** I know that is what they came and asked for the first time.

**COUNCILOR MULLIS:** Yeah. And that is something that they do need up there.

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** And we have got another LMIG list. Maybe we can put that on there or add that on to it. I know so many are thinking that I am lying to them with this 10 year, TIA plan. Seems like for 9 ½ years I have been lying to them about this street because it just ain't happened yet.

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** We have put them off.

**INSPECTOR WHITE:** First Baptist did not ask for that. I added it in because of the street. Where we were spending money at having it all restriped. I didn't want it to come up a year from now and having to spend money to redo it.

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** Oh no, we understand it. Thank you for that.

**COUNCILOR WILLIAMS:** When does school begin for them? Will it be in August?

**INSPECTOR WHITE:** The same time that it does for regular school. Yes mam. It is too small a project to fit in under the LMIG and the bigger companies just don't want to do it.

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** Alright, with all of that, I will entertain a motion to move forward with the signage and hardware, striping and painting, and the speed bumps for \$5,622.

**COUNCILOR MULLIS:** So moved.

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

**COUNCILOR WOODARD:** Second.

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** Have a second. All in favor show of hands. Now the next question is which one because either or is the same exact price.

**INSPECTOR WHITE:** There isn't. The painting and signage and all is the same exact price either way.

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** Is there any of these or well, can we just get these by ourselves?

**INSPECTOR WHITE:** Yes, we are taking care of these with local people that are already doing signage and striping for us.

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** Okay. Alright, motion has been approved.

### **NEW BUSINESS:**

#### **ALCOHOL ORDINANCE:**

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** Next on the agenda with the first item under new business is the Alcohol Ordinance for the City of Eastman. I think you all have that. It is currently now up to 35 pages. With

that being said, tonight will be the first reading of the ordinance. Now, I'm not going to read all 35 pages of this. I think there will be copies available.

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** Yes, copies for anybody who wants a copy. And we can post it on the website too tomorrow.

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** With that being said, this is the first reading of 2 readings.

**ATTORNEY LLOP:** It can be adopted at the second meeting.

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** And then adopted at the next meeting and then we will be ready to move forward for the first time in 150 years or something. So I need a motion to approve the first reading of the Alcohol Ordinance for the City of Eastman.

**COUNCILOR MULLIS:** **So moved.**

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** I've got a motion from Councilman Mullis. I need a second.

**COUNCILOR WILLIAMS:** **Second.**

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** I have a second from Councilwoman Williams. All in favor, show of hands. Motion carried unanimous. That is the first reading. We have the ball rolling with that.

**FENCE AT JAMES AVENUE PLANT:**

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** Next on the agenda is a fence at the James Avenue plant.

**INSPECTOR WHITE:** Yes, we had some repair work to be done behind the James Avenue old treatment plant. We had to cut the fence to get access to it. For future use and to be able to get in there for other repairs and what have you, we want to put gates up. I reached out to several fencing companies and Garrett Industries is the only one that replied back to us with a price. It is for \$2,625.

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** 14 X 6, and 9-gauge gate and all?

**INSPECTOR WHITE:** Yes. It is double gates where you can access it with the excavators and such. Where it will be big enough for us to be able to get in there and be able to repair the sewage line or whatever in the future. Then we can access it without having to cut through fencing again.

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** Council, do you y'all have any questions for Jack? If not, I will entertain a motion to approve a bid with Garrett Industries Fencing Company for \$2,625 for putting up double gates and all up at the James Avenue plant.

**COUNCILOR MULLIS:** **So moved.**

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

**COUNCILOR WOODARD:** **Second.**

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

**APPROVE MONTHLY BILLS:**

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** Next item on the agenda, and y'all got a copy of these in your packets, is the monthly bills from February 14 –27. Y'all have any questions for Ms. April or Spence? If not, I need a motion to approve the monthly bills for February 14-27.

**COUNCILOR MULLIS:** **So moved.**

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

**COUNCILOR WILLIAMS:** **Second.**

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** I have a second from Councilman Woodard. All in favor, show of hands. Motion approved.

**RESOLUTION-MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WITH EPD & DEPT OF CORRECTIONS:**

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** Next on the agenda is a resolution for the Eastman Police Dept to aid in emergency situations at Dodge State Prison with the GA Dept of Corrections.

**POLICE CHIEF COOPER:** So we received a request from them to sign the resolution, where if they have any type of emergency, whether it be escapes, or weather related, or whatever, that we may be able to

come and help. The main job that we would have would be maybe a perimeter, not necessarily going into the prison. But being outside the prison and maintaining the perimeter, dealing with crowds and such. We do utilize their services by using their K-9 dogs and tracking dogs.

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** So, this is a good thing for you?

**CHIEF COOPER:** Yes Sir. I believe that we ought to scratch their back because they scratch ours.

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** Council, do y'all have any other questions? If not, then I need a motion to approve the resolution between the Eastman Police Department to aid in emergencies to Dodge State Prison.

**ATTORNEY LLOP:** And the memorandum of understanding that Chief Cooper will sign is attached to it.

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** Alright, I need a motion to approve this resolution.

**COUNCILOR MULLIS:** **So moved.**

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

**COUNCILOR WOODARD:** **Second.**

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

**RESOLUTION FOR APPOINTMENT OF PUBLIC DEFENDER:**

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** Next on the agenda is a resolution for the City of Eastman Police Dept to employ a public defender in the municipal court.

**CHIEF COOPER:** This basically goes back to the meeting we had I think 2 meetings ago. It was about employing a solicitor and a public defender. We have gotten with Rita about how to go about this. We just have to do this resolution, so it gives us the authority to go ahead and hire both of those positions.

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** And I know that you know who you are hiring as far as the best candidates for the positions. Council, do y'all have any questions concerning this? Alright, I need a motion then to approve the resolution for the City of Eastman Police Department to employ a public defender in the municipal court.

**COUNCILOR MULLIS:** **So moved.**

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

**COUNCILOR WILLIAMS:** **Second.**

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** Have a second from Councilwoman Williams. All in favor show of hands. Motion carried unanimous.

**RESOLUTION FOR APPOINTMENT OF SOLICITOR:**

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** Next is the resolution for the appointment of a solicitor.

**CHIEF COOPER:** This is basically the same thing. The first one was for a public defender and this one is for a prosecutor/solicitor. It would give us the authority to go ahead and hire somebody to assume that position.

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** Council, do y'all have any questions about the solicitor? If not, then I need a motion to approve a resolution for the City of Eastman Police Department to employ a prosecuting attorney in the municipal court.

**COUNCILOR MULLIS:** **So moved.**

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

**COUNCILOR WILLIAMS:** **Second.**

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** Have a second from Councilwoman Williams. All in favor show of hands. Motion carried unanimous. Now, I see one new face in here. Would it be one of them?

**CHIEF COOPER:** Yes Sir. That would be my pick for solicitor. This is Brittany Lowery. She is with the ADA's office. She works with Tim Vaughn up there. She is already a member of the pack. She is already, well that is basically what she does with her job. She prosecutes. So, she would be my recommendation for the solicitor.

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** Alright. Well, I think we just gave you the authority to hire her. Nice to meet you, mam.

**ATTORNEY BRITTANY LOWERY:** Nice to meet y'all. And I will be happy to answer any questions that anyone has. I started with the DA's office as an intern back in 2016, when I was sure what I wanted to do. And I told Tim Vaughn that I wasn't sure if I wanted to be a lawyer. And then about 3 months later, I was signing up for law school. Now, I have been an attorney for the DA's office for a little over 2 years. And that means that I have been with the DA's office for over 7 years now. And I do prosecute the cases that the city makes in Superior Court. And I feel that I would be a good fit to be the solicitor here in city court.

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** Welcome aboard. Do y'all have any questions?

**COUNCILOR WILLIAMS:** I do have one. I just want to know the difference, does a solicitor have to be an attorney?

**ATTORNEY LOWERY:** It is my understanding, yes mam, that in city court or municipal court that the solicitor would need to be a bar licensed attorney.

**CHIEF COOPER:** She is our go-to anyway for any type of legal questions that we have or have had. Are we okay to arrest this person for this or what do you think the charge should be for this person? Especially for cases that we don't handle very often. She has been our go-to for that for a while.

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** Good job. Thank you and welcome. Do you have anybody else with you?

**CHIEF COOPER:** That is all for right now.

**CITY MANAGER HAS NOTHING TO REPORT**

**NO OTHER BUSINESS FROM COUNCIL:**

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

**SHARON COBB FLANAGAN:** I just want to thank y'all for supporting the cleanup activities at the Rec Department and at the Club this past Saturday. It was very helpful. I don't know if you were there, but it was pretty exciting to feel the excitement that they were having doing the work. Even though there was some grumbling. There was a lot of changes done at the Rec Department. They put out some wood chips or mulch that was donated. Y'all were very instrumental in that happening, so thank you.

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

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**CHAIRMAN**

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**CITY CLERK**