

**November 27, 2023**

The Eastman City Council met in a regularly scheduled meeting on the above date at 6:00 p.m. The following members were present: Buddy Pittman, Sebrina Williams, Raymond Mullis, Jermayne Hamilton, and Ronnie Woodard. Others present were City Attorney Rita Llop, City Manager Spencer Barron, Police Chief Billy Cooper, City Clerk April Sheffield, City Inspector Jack White, and Department Head Paul McCranie. Present from the community were Graham Snyder, Mark Peacock, John Battle, Susan and Mitchell Coffee, Jesse Bearden, Paula McCain, Phil Bearden, Sharon Cobb Flanagan, and EM Harrington III.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Pittman.

The invocation was given by Councilor Hamilton.

Pledge of Allegiance.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** First item on the agenda is to approve the agenda and I think we've got one addition.

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** Yes Sir. We would like to add the Dodge County Historical Society as item number seven.

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** Alright. Dodge County Historical Society. Council, y'all good with that? Anything else that y'all want to add or take away or not? If not, **I need a motion to amend the agenda and add the Dodge County Historical Society to it, and along with that motion to approve the amended agenda as it stands.**

**COUNCILOR MULLIS:** So moved.

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** I have 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.**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** Next on the agenda is to approve the minutes of the November 13, 2023, regular meeting. Council, do y'all have any questions or anything you saw while reading them or anything? If not, **I'll need a motion to approve the minutes of the November 13, 2023, regular meeting.**

**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 READING OF THE STATE ROAD ANNEXATION:**

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** The only item under unfinished business is the first reading of the State Road Annexation Ordinance.

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** Yes, Sir. And we have copies of it up here if anybody wants to examine it or do y'all want to read the whole thing? I am hoping that is not the case.

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** I think we talked about this at the last meeting and all. And I think it's been running in the paper. All right.

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** It is just state highways to make that clear.

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** Council, y'all have any questions or anything about it? If not, **I will entertain a motion for this to be the first reading of the State Road Annexation Ordinance.**

**COUNCILOR MULLIS:** So moved.

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

**COUNCILOR HAMILTON:** Second.

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** I have a second from Councilman Hamilton. All in favor show of hands. **Motion carried unanimous.** That was the first reading. We'll have the second reading and adopt it at the next meeting.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**APPROVE DR MARTIN LUTHER KING PARADE:**

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** First item under new business is approve the Dr Martin Luther King Jr Parade. **CITY**

**MANAGER BARRON:** The annual MLK parade and application has been submitted. I believe GDOT has already approved the application. Or no, that was a different one. Alright, so if y'all approve it, we'll submit it to GDOT and go from there.

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** Is this the normal?

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** They're going backwards this year.

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** Oh. So they are going backwards this year. It looks like they're going to end at the old Peabody School.

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** It begins at the old courthouse and then ends at the old Peabody School.

There's also an alternate route in yellow, but rather than going all that.

**CITY CLERK SHEFFIELD:** That is the detour route required by DOT.

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** All right. So we're going on the red route?

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** That's the initial plan. If GDOT denies that, then we'll go on the yellow and to make it clear, it will be held Monday, January 15. Lineup will start at 12:00 PM and the parade will start at 1:00 PM.

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** And the only state highway they are going to just cross over is Oak Street, isn't it?

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** Yes, Sir. Their rule is if we touch it, we have to have a permit. It's my understanding.

**CITY CLERK SHEFFIELD:** They will be on SR 117.

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** Yes, they will be going down 117 down to College Street and turning on it. Council y'all have any questions or anything. If not, **I need a motion then to approve the Dr Martin Luther King Jr parade on Monday, January 15.**

**COUNCILOR MULLIS:** I'll make a motion to approve it.

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** I have 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.**

**APPROVE WORKER'S COMPENSATION BID FOR 2024:**

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** Next on the agenda is to approve the worker's compensation bid for 2024.

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** Yes, Sir. We only had one submission and it was from the Georgia Municipal Association Worker's Compensation Self Insurance Fund in the amount of \$81,397. Last year it was \$85,612, so we're actually saving a little money this year.

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** All right, Council, do y'all have any questions? If not, **I need a motion then to approve the workers compensation insurance for the city.**

**COUNCILOR MULLIS:** So moved.

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** I've got 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.

**CORNERSTONE ACADEMY SPEED BUMP REQUEST:**

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** Next on the agenda is Cornerstone Academy speed bump request. I think y'all have that in your pack.

**INSPECTOR WHITE:** Yes, Cornerstone Academy requested that a speed bump be put on Pine Street between 6th and 7th. After sitting and viewing the traffic, I propose that we put two to slow it down before it gets to the kids crosswalk. What they're doing is leaving 7th Avenue and coming down Pine Street at a high rate of speed and coming off of 5th Avenue going back the opposite way. I just feel that we need to slow traffic before they get to the crosswalks.

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** Well, they won't hit it but one time at a high rate of speed. Might leave a motor and the front end lay beside the road.

**INSPECTOR WHITE:** It was brought to my attention that we would have a little opposition on the 5th Avenue end as far as the placement of that one. We may need to move it a little closer to the crosswalk. But that would be the only problem we would have.

**COUNCILOR MULLIS:** Is there one already there?

**INSPECTOR WHITE:** No Sir. Not on Pine Street.

**COUNCILOR MULLIS:** Oh, OK. You just want to move them closer?

**INSPECTOR WHITE:** If y'all allow us to put them there, we will need to move that one closer to the crosswalk.

**COUNCILOR MULLIS:** OK.

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** All right, Council, you have any other questions? **I need a motion then to approve the two speed bump requests for Cornerstone Academy on Pine Street.**

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

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

**COUNCILOR HAMILTON:** **Second.**

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

**RESCHEDULE COUNCIL MEETING:**

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** Next on the agenda is to reschedule the Council meeting.

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** We have a meeting that would actually put us December 25. What do y'all want to do? Wednesday, the 27th maybe?

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** No, that's church night. I think we'll always go to the Thursday. Which is the 28th. Are y'all good with that?

**COUNCILOR MULLIS:** Sound good to me.

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** I need at least three of you.

**COUNCILOR HAMILTON:** Thursday the 28th?

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** Thursday the 28th at 6 PM. Y

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** All right, y'all good with that? **I need a motion then to reschedule the last meeting in December to December 28th at 6:00 PM.**

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

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

**COUNCILOR HAMILTON:** **Second.**

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

**APPROVE MONTHLY BILLS:**

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** Next on the agenda is to approve the monthly bills for November 13th through the 27th. Y'all got those in your packet. Do y'all have any questions about them? If not, **I'll need a motion then to approve the monthly bills for November 13th through the 27th.**

**COUNCILOR MULLIS:** So moved.

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

**COUNCILOR WILLIAMS:** Second.

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

**APPROVE NOTICE OF AWARD AND CHANGE ORDER FOR GEFA SEWER REHAB PROJECT:**

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** Next on the agenda is to approve the change order for the sewer rehab project over in Jessup Heights.

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** Yes, we got Mr. Jesse Bearden here to explain those changes and what it's going to entail.

**JESSE BEARDEN:** Back in 2021, the City Council put in for the Georgia Environmental Finance Authority. And we got approved for \$2,070,000. At \$900,000 debt forgiveness and that's 43% off of the two million that just went away and the little over one million that we're going to have to pay back is at 0.13% interest. So, getting people to bid on jobs, especially in smaller municipalities, it's just gotten tougher and tougher and tougher. So back when we got this project bid, it was \$800,000 over the budget.

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** Yes, Sir. We had to cut it by. Well, we went from 2.6 million to 1.8 million.

**JESSE BEARDEN:** The original bid was 2.6 million. Stillwater Engineers went back to Popco. They're the contractors that showed up and gave a bid. They were also the contractors that helped us with the sewer line that was on the ground between the Soperton Highway and Dublin Highway. A very good company. But anyway, it's hard to know on beds for what you put in for until the survey and the design is done. Mr. Royce knew a lot of this. I knew some of it, but you know, in Jessup Heights, the sewer is just as convoluted as it could be. Sewer line runs behind Dan McCranie's house, goes across by your pond. There's a manhole out there at the pond. It goes to Congo. There's no sewer on 7th from Jessup between 7th and Forest Lake. There's no sewer on Delacy. It's behind. Seaborn Hardin's wife, the sewer is back there goes by Dr Tyson's house and ties into 5th right there where Dr Lee used to live.

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** Ours goes behind the house.

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** In your backyard, right? The Chief of Police has got it in his backyard.

**JESSE BEARDEN:** The Sheriff's mama, on Greenhill, there is no sewer on 5th. The manholes in front of her yard, goes behind Mike Knight's son's house, and then the next house and then behind where Mike Law used to live. And on Greenhill, it only goes up to Coach Adler's widow's house. With that being said, the pipe to move those pipes to put it in the road at 5th Ave. Some of that was going to require it to be 14 to 18 foot deep. You know, just think about the sewer that runs across right there at the creek that feeds your pond. If we've got to move it up the hill to Ms. Sebrina's house. And it's still got the gravity flow. Just I think how high that hill is. So that's where the expense was. And so anyway, I'm talking too much. Still Water has gone back and kind of hemmed it up some, and so they're just taking out. Because this also is on Pine, and around the Boys and Girls club, 11th, and Pine Drive. So that's still in. Lakeview, Forest Avenue, Congo Lane, a little bit up 5th is still in it. But the section between Greenhill, all the way up to Delacy, and a little bit past Delacy, all of that has been taken out to get it into something that the city can afford so. But the bid dropped from 2,686,924, to 1,826,389.35.

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** \$860,000. And we hope this will improve the situation. But like everything, there's no guarantees.

**JESSE BEARDEN:** So, the sewer Jessup Heights, I know that's one of the premier subdivisions in town. But the sewer was put in in the 60s. There was no such thing as PVC pipe back then. It's clay pipe, 4-foot sections, gasketed put together. We had a lot of the sewer run with the camera. The pipe has come apart. Tree roots has grown through it. Some of the joints are just completely fell apart. So basically groundwater is getting into the sewer system in Jessup Heights terribly. And of course, when we're treating rainwater instead of what goes out the toilet or the washing machine, the expenses just tremendously go up. So at the treatment plant right now, they're probably running somewhere 4 to 600,000 gallons a day. When we get a three-to-five-inch rain, it jumps up over 1,000,000 gallons. We got to treat that million just like we do the two, the four, the six. I hate to say that it's a necessity, but it's a necessity.

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** Thank you, Sir. Council, you all have any more questions for Jesse? So, I'll move this to approve this change order and approve for them to move on. All right, **I'll entertain a motion then to approve the change order for the Still Waters, for the sewer contract and?**

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** Get it done. The amendments to the GEFA loan, should we?

**ATTORNEY LLOP:** It's a notice of award and a change order.

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** **So with this motion, approve the amendments to the GEFA award, approve the change order for the contract and approve for them to move forward and notice of award and start tearing up.**

**COUNCILOR MULLIS:** I approve.

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** I have a motion on the floor to approve the getting started of it. I need a second.

**COUNCILOR HAMILTON:** Second.

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** Have a second from Councilman Hamilton. All in favor show of hands. **Motion carried unanimous.** There was another three years to get it all started.

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** Well, it's been a 30-year problem in the making. If it takes three years to fix it, we're still doing better than we were.

**DODGE HISTORICAL SOCIETY:**

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** All right, next on the agenda is the Dodge Historical Society.

**PHIL BEARDEN:** While I've got the pulpit for a minute, I'd like to take just a minute to publicly thank Buddy Pittman, Raymond, Ronnie, thank you for your service here in this city and this community and the work that you've done and some of you have been doing this a long time. Matter of fact, all y'all have but I want to thank you for your work. I want to welcome Mark and Graham and Deborah Sheffield. They should do a good job. They all got good level heads and business minds and that's what it needs. But it basically needs people who are really concerned, and you guys have shown concern and they've shown concern by taking this opportunity and I want to thank you for the work. Our economic development circumstance and situation in Eastman and Dodge County now is as good as it has been in many, many years and I look forward to the new faces, you know, stepping in there and helping that to continue to head in the right direction so that our community can grow and prosper, and we can bring jobs and people in an organized way and have them a good septic tank system when they get here. Thank you all. Thank you all. I'm here today on behalf of Dodge Historical Society, to do my annual ask. Y'all have been wonderful supporting us since 1991 I know. To be able to have the Eastman House and to keep Eastman house up again. I say this every year. Our primary purpose and goal in life is to keep the Eastman House preserved and functional. The folks before us did a wonderful job of restoring that thing and we have over the years kept it up and put furniture and this and that and kept it up. And it's a wonderful historical piece of property for this community. I'd like to let you know that you are more than welcome at any time to come and visit to come and bring a group. Bring tours, bring whatever you want. We will stop, open the doors, and welcome and

serve and do what we need to do. And we do that fairly regularly, several, several times a year. We have people to come through that their grandparents, great grandparents or whatever are from Eastman, and they remember this place. This past year we had one of the grandchildren of the Bullock family from Texas came, and it was it was heartwarming to watch. That guy walked through the house where his grandmother lived and where he spend every Christmas there. And they actually slept in the attic. There was about 7-8 of the grand-youngins that slept in the attic when they came. There's enough bedrooms in there for the parents to all sleep but the kids slept in the attic. It was, you know, heartwarming to see that guy. He had not been there since, like in the 90s, he's 40 something years old now, but anyway. It's a jewel. And our historical society is to promote education about our city and our county and our community and the things that have transpired here since we were formed. That's what we're about. Our primary goal and purpose is to keep the Eastman house up and healthy for many more years for future generations to be able to see it. And we would request that y'all continue to fund us at the level you have. You know, we will trudge on. Everything is going up except the amount of money that that we get. So we're being stingy with what we get and doing the best we can to keep that that place healthy. Do y'all have any questions about the Historical Society, about the Eastman House or anything that I can answer for you this evening?

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** Do y'all have any questions about it? In the past, we normally do what, \$3500?

**PHIL BEARDEN:** That's right. And we would be very open to taking more if you would allow it.

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** All right, Council, y'all have no questions. Well, **I'll ask for a motion to approve to continue our help to the Eastman house for the amount of \$3500 like we have done in the past.**

**COUNCILOR MULLIS:** **OK, I'll make a motion that we give them \$3500.**

**COUNCILOR PITTMAN:** I have a motion from Councilman Mullis, and I'll need a second.

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

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

**PHIL BEARDEN:** Thank you all and Merry Christmas.

**CITY MANAGER'S REPORT:**

**CITY MANAGER BARRON:** Just real briefly, I want to remind everyone that the meter replacement project is in full swing, so you'll see the contractors out and about. It is bringing Eastman into the digital age. If you have any problems or any questions about who's working on it, please call us and we'll come out and check. If you have any concerns about what they do, let us know.

**NO OTHER BUSINESS FROM COUNCIL:**

**NO PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

**ADJOURNMENT:**

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

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CHAIRMAN

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CITY CLERK