

October 15, 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, Dwayne Burney, Debra Sheffield, and Mark Peacock. Others present were City Manager Spencer Barron, Attorney Rita Llop, Police Chief Billy Cooper, City Clerk April Sheffield, Assistant City Manager Dayna Winslette, Fire Chief Derl Maxwell, Water Supply Operator Rodney Harrell, Water Distribution Director Evan Harrell, Wastewater Operator Matt McDaniel, Street Supervisor Brandon Brisco, and Public Works Director Wynnon Pittman. Those present from the community were Susan and Mitchell Coffee, Mark Studstill, Derek Hutcheson, Lynn Brown, Loraine Aguayo, Pam McCranie, and Alecia Manning.

The meeting was called to order by Councilor Snyder.

The invocation was given by Councilor Burney.

Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

On a motion from Councilor Peacock and seconded by Councilor Sheffield, the agenda was unanimously amended to add a #8: James Avenue Pump and to change the Executive Session to Personnel, Property, and Legal Matters. The newly amended agenda was then unanimously approved on a motion from Councilor Peacock and seconded by Councilor Sheffield.

APPROVE MINUTES:

A motion was made by Councilor Burney and seconded by Councilor Williams to approve the minutes of the September 22, 2025, regular meeting and the minutes of the September 29, 2025, special called meeting. The motion was approved unanimously.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Councilor Peacock made a motion, and Councilor Sheffield seconded the motion for the council to adjourn into executive session to discuss personnel, property, and legal matters. Motion was approved. Councilor Williams made a motion with a second from Councilor Sheffield to exit the executive session and enter back into regular session. Motion carried.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY APPLICATIONS:

There are four positions open on the DDA Board. Nine applications were received. It became eight when Ms. Susan Coffee withdrew her application. Councilor Peacock nominated Sue Peacock. Councilor Sheffield nominated Michelle Butler. Councilor Burney nominated Derek Hutcheson. Councilor Williams nominated Wynnon Pittman. Those nominations were unanimously approved on a motion from Councilor Peacock and seconded by Councilor Williams.

NEW BUSINESS:

MONTHLY FIRE AND POLICE REPORTS:

Chief Cooper came forward to give the report for the police department. For the month of September, they used 1,162 gallons of gas, answered 622 calls, worked 29 traffic accidents, and rode 11,606 miles. They collected \$35,114.90 in cash bonds/fines and they wrote a total of 77 tickets and 93 warnings. Chief Maxwell presented the September fire report. They had 2 nonworking structure fires in the city and 3 working structure fires with 2 in the city and 1 in the county. There were 9 other fire calls with 6 in the city and 3 in the county. There were 139 medical related calls with 106 in the city and 33 in the county. The department had 14 public service calls (alarms, smoke, trees) with 11 in the city and 3 in the county. There

were 3 calls cancelled in route. The entire department spent 183 hours on training for the month of September. Councilor Snyder thanks the fire department for going to the primary school and kindergarten for education purposes. This week they are working on daycares and the school at the First Baptist Church. Derl says that this weekend they will be at the redlight raising money for fire education and for the upcoming toy drive in December. The department plans on assisting the Christian Life Center with the Toys for Tots this year. As far as the toy drop off, they haven't finalized the plans yet. They are just collecting money right now. The Red Cross has supplied them with a few smoke detectors for right now. John Walker has been installing them for the department. He and his wife have provided the pink ribbon for all of the trucks in order to recognize breast cancer awareness. Firefighter Walker has also managed to secure the department a grant through Home Depot. Home Depot donated 50 5-gallon buckets. Inside of those buckets are smoke detectors, a fire extinguisher, 5 bottles of water, trash bags, flashlights, and gloves. They plan on having a couple of fire extinguisher classes soon. Those that participate in the class will receive a bucket. Another plan to raise money for fire education is they have coordinated with their volunteers to cook and sell 100 boston butts. Alcoa has already bought the first 100, so they will cook another 100 to go along with those. The department has also been involved in preplanning these past few weeks as well as Derl attending Chief classes this week. Thanks to Dayna, they have received a Conex trailer for training. He is working with the 911 center and trying to reevaluate the way they receive and run calls. They are trying to shorten the time frame with the more critical calls. Lastly, Derl also thanked Derek Hutcheson for supplying the department with some fire extrication equipment.

MONTHLY DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS:

Wynnon Pittman came forward to give the report for the water department, code enforcement, and building inspection departments. Wynnon has been working on bringing those departments together and helping one another. The water department has helped with parades and such and the street department has even helped with some water leaks. They have all been down at the park trying to get the pickleball area up and running. There will be a grand opening there, Wednesday, October 22, 2025, at 10 AM. Beginning with the water department report for the month of September, they had 99 water cut-ons, 131 water cut-offs, 17 checks for water leaks, fixed 26 water leaks, replaced one lead and copper line, performed 86 locates, set 2 water meters, did one valve inspection, GPS on one meter, repaired 6 meters, performed maintenance on 11 meters, inspected a meter, performed maintenance on 4 vehicles, and performed maintenance on one hydrant. As far as sewer is concerned, they investigated a line, cleaned out 18 lines (wipes and grease every time), and repaired one line. For stormwater, one catch basin was cleaned, and 6 ditches were cleaned. Lane Fountain has been monitoring the Neptune app closely in order to keep all meters reading continuously. There are currently only 6 out of 2800 that are not reading correctly. Sometimes it is just as simple as a car parked on top of the meter, sometimes an antenna is cut. In a few instances, the meter went bad, but the warranty took care of it. Evan Harrell is stepping in and taking over the water department and doing a great job.

As far as what Wynnon has been working on, he has been pulling everyone together to concentrate on getting the Park ready. The grand opening of the outdoor pickleball courts will take place week after next. He has been back and forth with Popco in Jessup Heights with the I&I project. All lines have been tested and now they are going back and checking the manholes to make sure there is no leakage.

After that, they will start tying in the houses. He did get the sewer line in the alleyway also taking care of. Gerald is out so Wynnon gives his report also. There were 46 grease trap inspections done. Matt at the treatment plant helped with those this month. One limb and leaf violation was issued. There were six planning and zoning cases and three other code enforcement issues. He issued four code violations and performed maintenance at the shop. There was one building demolition and 7 inspections. A building permit was issued as well as an electrical permit. Gerald has met with some ladies from north Georgia and gotten some of the blighted areas taken care of on North Street and 14th Avenue.

Matt McDaniel gave the September update for the Wastewater Facility. 762,000 gallons of water were used. The amount released into Sugar Creek from the plant was 11,200,000 gallons which averaged out to be 0.373 MGD. Hours spent on different jobs were 61 hours on cleaning clarifiers and filters, 109 hours on lab and sampling, 12 on belt press and sludge, 44 hours on lift station and well repair, 8 on lawn maintenance, 52 hours on plant maintenance, 25 hours on routine rounds, 10 on management duties, and 83 on plant operations. The grand total was 343 hours. They were having a lot of trouble at the lift station near Walmart. They put in a bar screen, which has helped a lot, and they don't have to pull the pumps there anymore. Matt reiterates to everyone that there is no such thing as flushable wipes. Please don't flush them! Even though they may flush, they are not dissolvable.

Rodney Harrell came to give the information concerning the wells. For September, there were 33,406,000 gallons of water pumped through the wells. That averages to 1.114 MGD. The Industrial Park well has a motor that is burnt up. Sam Martin came and pulled it so they could tear it down and see what could be done about it. When asked about the forecasted cost to fix it, Rodney had looked back to the repair that was done to the Legion well in 2023. The cost of that repair was around \$12,000. Industrial well is down for right now. If the motor can be rewound and nothing else needs to be done, it is about a 2-week turnaround. When the motor was pulled, they found out that it was not the original motor from 1974, but it had also never been worked on. Normally this motor runs on average 5-6 hours a day, one hour at a time. During the summer months, it pumped around 325,000 gallons a day. It had slowed down to around 225,000 a day. Pressure is still good around town as long as another well doesn't go down.

Brandon Brisco comes forward for the Street department. They spent 12 hours on animal calls, 120 hours on curbs and gutters, 52.5 hours on tree limb cutting, 39 on potholes, and 10 on trash pick-up. They spent 172 hours on ditches with the main one being behind Shorty's going towards Sheldon Street. 319 hours were spent on mowing grass around town. They are about 90% complete for the year. 251 hours were spent on other duties which included a lot of time spent at the new city park getting it ready for a grand opening. A total of 758 gallons of gas were used last month. The department started creating the decorations for Christmas. They plan on focusing a lot on the City Park instead of the triangle at College/Oak and the old Goody's parking lot. Hopefully the citizens will be able to drive around and look or get out and walk and look.

ANNIE'S ALLEY:

Manager Barron brought up the alley that runs from 2nd to 3rd Avenue between the City Hall and the Police Department. Much discussion has been had about making it a one-way alley. The majority of the business owners have been approached and are okay with it. The Police Chief is on board with it. Years ago, it was treated as a one-way street but in more recent years with the business in that area growing and a lot of extra parking is being done there, it is getting more difficult for traffic to move through. Barron proposes to officially **make it one-way with no parking**. If the council approves, it will be **one-way entering from 2nd and exiting onto 3rd**. **This change was unanimously approved on a motion from Councilor Peacock and seconded by Councilor Burney.** Ms. Aguayo voices concern over the ability of the delivery drivers to get in and out of the alley. She is assured that it will be taken care of.

APPROVE BILLS:

On a motion from Councilor Sheffield and seconded by Councilor Williams, the bills for September 23 – October 15, 2025, were unanimously approved.

HEART OF GA REGIONAL AIRPORT AUTHORITY:

Derek Hutcheson comes forward with a request. The Airport Authority appreciates the support that the city has given them over the years. Often the Authority receives matching grants that the city has helped with. The largest being the \$8 million runway resurfacing project. They have come up with a plan to attract executive planes to the airport. This will hopefully help the city and county from having to help meet the

matches and having the airport as a line item in their budgets. They are currently in the middle of an \$800,000 lighting project that was FAA mandated. The Authority has a 10-year plan and is working on 5-year increments. The school is planning on doubling in size in the next few years. The Authority has already approached the county and received a nod of approval. They are now asking the city. Currently, the planes that are out there are taxed as personal property and there are only \$70,000 in planes being taxed right now. This gives an approximate tax total of \$7,000 to be split between the county, city, and school board. They plan on marketing in the Southeast United States to bring more expensive planes to be housed here and therefore getting taxed here also. A line item would be created in the budget for only the taxes received off the planes to go back to the airport. This would take the place of requesting matching funds. This would hopefully help the Airport Authority be more self-sustaining. Currently, the only income they have is from fuel sales. This requires them to be competitive with other airports in the area. Councilor Snyder asks about the 10-year plan agreement that the county has agreed to. He would like to be able to assess the agreement at certain times. Attorney Llop understands that the county agreed to make an intergovernmental agreement with the city concerning this proposal. She suggests a motion be made to explore the possibility of entering into an agreement based on the terms previously stated. Normally included in most agreements is the ability to terminate the agreement based on the availability of funding. Llop states that if the city votes to move forward, she will get with the county attorneys to finalize a written agreement that will be brought back before the council to give a final vote on. Derek understands that bringing in more and bigger plans means a bigger investment, more hanger space, etc. but it will pay off in the long run. Manager Barron states that he is in favor of the suggestion. **Councilor Snyder asks for a motion to enter into an intergovernmental agreement with the county in order to help provide for the Airport Authority through ad valorem taxes paid on the planes. Councilor Peacock offered a motion and was seconded by Councilor Williams. The motion was unanimously passed.**

LEAVE IT BETTER ALLEY PROJECT:

Pam McCranie comes forward to speak about her proposed alley project. Leave it Better received a \$15,000 grant from Community Foundations of Ga. This will start the walking alleyway project with the brick pavers. They will take up the center section of the alley that is directly behind their park and runs between 3rd and 4th Avenues. Councilor Snyder asks about a survey of the land. Manager Barron responds that BJ Hartley has done the survey, and Rita has done the research to assure that the city does indeed own that alleyway. They have also applied for a grant to cover the lighting, the benches, and flowerpots for that area. She distributed a proposed drawing of her vision of the area. They are also wanting to install some pea gravel in the area that the bricks do not cover. Grants have also been applied for to help handle that cost as well. The initial phase would be directly behind the park and then maybe the whole alley can be redesigned. Councilor Snyder asks for Wynnon to come forward to give his opinion. Wynnon states that he has seen the plan and hopes that the city can support it in some kind of way. The sewer infrastructure has already been redone in that area, but the waterlines are still needing to be addressed. With pavers being put down, they can be removed if the water lines need to be worked on. The question is that if the pavers are damaged, who is responsible for fixing them? That is one of his major concerns. **Wynnon suggests that the city, the DDA, who is also interested in improving the alley space, and Leave it Better get together in a group work session to come up with a plan for the entire alley.** Councilor Snyder agrees. Manager Barron agrees that a partnership would be a great idea. **Barron suggests sending out a mass email/poll to schedule the session.** All council members seem to be in favor of supporting the project once a final decision and plan is made. Wynnon said that the city and code enforcement has already started trying to get these alleyways cleaned up this would work well with that and the DDA's ideas of cleaning up the downtown area and making it a safer and more enjoyable environment.

JOINT RESOLUTION WITH DDA:

Attorney Llop proposes a joint resolution with the DDA concerning the property swap between the DDA and the City. The City would be signing over the old Bus Station property along with the AA building property by warranty deed in exchange for the Wholesale Property that the DDA currently owns. The Downtown Development Authority passed the resolution at their meeting the previous week. **The motion to approve the resolution was made by Councilor Peacock and seconded by Councilor Burney. Motion carried unanimously.** Ms. Aguayo asks when the closing date will be. Attorney Llop does not have the official date yet. Lynn Brown asks what will be done with the properties. Councilor Snyder defers to the DDA to answer what their aspirations are for the two properties that they are acquiring. The city currently has plans to move a lot of its equipment and city resources to a more central and fenced in location at the Wholesale property and off of Main Street.

JAMES AVENUE PUMP:

Rodney Harrell comes forward again to discuss a problem at one of the lift stations. There are three pumps at the James Avenue lift station. Two pumps have been updated with new volutes and inserts. The other pump that was pulled has problems. The seal has failed, and the motor must be rebuilt. It will be a whole rebuilt motor, with a new impeller kit, and a whole new volute system. Approving this last pump to be fixed and updated will make all three pumps just alike. None of the pumps have been worked on since 2008 until now. They did give us a \$5800 discount on this quote. The cost for the first two pumps to be repaired and reinstalled was \$29,000. This last pump will cost us \$39,153.84 but that also includes rebuilding the pump itself and installation. Councilor Snyder asks what the ramifications are if they don't approve this. If they don't, the city will be stuck with about \$11,000 worth of parts that can't be used. Snyder just wants to assure the citizens that this purchase is a vital necessity. Rodney says that James Avenue and Legion Drive are the two most important pump stations in town. When asked about the time frame, Rodney feels that it will be available by the end of the month. The lift station is currently running on just the two pumps but that will not sustain any growth that needs to take place out at the airport. Mark Studstill asks what a new pump would cost. The best guesstimate was \$85-90,000. Legion Drive has the same size pumps and will need to be addressed in the near future. The question becomes do they fix the pump or order a whole new one. Ordering a whole new one will cause the city to lose money already spent on pulling and inspecting the current one. When asked, Rodney feels that Legion Drive should be able to continue working once the I&I project is completed and takes some of the pressure off. The biggest problem that he is facing is that no routine maintenance has ever been done in the past and it is slowly catching up. Rodney stands behind the decision to repair the third pump and not spend the extra money on buying a whole new pump. Councilor Snyder recommends that Rodney come up with a plan going forward to get repairs and maintenance done to keep from having to spend so much money as often as they are having to right now. Barron points out that the city had been slowly replacing or upgrading the lift stations over the last several years. Chester Road has been done as well as Industrial and 9th Avenue. Unfortunately, the costs have run between \$300 – 600,000. Currently, the city does not have the equipment to perform any routine maintenance on the lift stations. This would be something to add to the future plans. Councilor Snyder asks Barron where exactly the funds to pay for this project would come from. Barron requests to be able to use his own discretion. Once he gets the up-to-date numbers, he may want to pull a little out of each account or just hit one account whether it be ARPA, SPLOST, Short-lived, or water. The money is there, just juggling which account is best to use. **On a motion from Councilor Peacock and seconded by Councilor Burney, it is unanimously approved to move forward with Rodney's recommendation of rebuilding a pump with a new impeller and volute kit to be installed for \$39,153.84 at the James Avenue Lift Station.**

BUILDING PERMIT:

DWOZAN COMMERCIAL AFFILIATED PROPERTIES:

Graham & Studstill has been contracted to remodel the IV Care Options building at 724 Medical Center Drive into an Infusion Clinic. The building permit application has been submitted, and Gerald has approved

the submission. **The Council unanimously voted to approve the permit request on a motion from Councilor Burney and seconded by Councilor Sheffield.**

CITY MANAGERS REPORT:

Manager Barron states that there are a number of events happening in the next few weeks. Please go to the city's Facebook page, the website, and the DDA's Facebook page to stay informed. The Library has a number of events, Music on Main, and even a ribbon cutting at the Park. He also commends the partnership with the Dodge County High School and even Bridges of Hope in helping to provide part-time workers for the city. Some are even staying with the city after high school. The blight issue is running in full force. There are several calls and complaints from neighbors and others about some of the properties. Barron asks the citizens to please take care of their property.

OTHER BUSINESS FROM COUNCIL:

Councilor Peacock thanks Mr. Brisco and his crew for dealing with some of the feral cats and animals in town. Peacock stresses that if anyone has an outdoor cat or dog, they meet the city's ordinance requirements. Animals need tags and if they are spayed or neutered. The city doesn't need feral animals running around. Please be a responsible pet owner.

Councilor Snyder thanks the Dodge County Primary School for allowing him to come and read to the Pre-K students. It was a joy to be a part of that. He encourages others to contact Darla Faulk at the school to get more involved in that initiative to foster that enthusiasm to get these students to read. As far as side-by-side and golf carts within the city, there is no ordinance currently in place to allow them to be on the city streets. They are looking into it to find a way to make it a legal possibility.

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

CHAIRMAN

CITY CLERK