

February 9, 2026

The Eastman City Council met in a regularly scheduled meeting on the above date at 6:00 p.m. The following members were present: Graham Snyder, John Battle II, Dwayne Burney, and Mark Peacock. Others present were City Attorney Chris Gordon, City Manager Spencer Barron, Police Chief Billy Cooper, Fire Chief Derl Maxwell, City Clerk April Sheffield, Assistant City Manager Dayna Winslette, Code Enforcer Gerald Fordham, and Public Works Director Wynnon Pittman. Other department heads present were Water Operator Rodney Harrell, Street Department head Brandon Brisco, Wastewater Operator Matt McDaniel, and Firefighters Quantavious Rozier and Terry Widener. Present from the community were Susan and Mitchell Coffee, Gil Harrington, and Kenny Powell.

The meeting was called to order by Councilor Snyder.

Invocation was given by Councilor Burney.

Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

On a motion from Councilor Peacock and seconded by Councilor Burney, the agenda was unanimously approved with no changes.

APPROVE MINUTES:

A motion was made by Councilor Burney and seconded by Councilor Peacock to approve the minutes of the January 26, 2026, regular meeting. Motion was approved unanimously.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

On a motion from Councilor Peacock and a second from Councilor Battle, the council entered into executive session for Legal, Personnel, and Property Matters. They were accompanied by City Manager Barron and Attorney Gordon.

The council entered back into regular session on a motion from Councilor Peacock and seconded by Councilor Battle. No other action was taken.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

FIRST READING OF ANNEXATION ORDINANCE FOR 048A 028:

This is the next step into annexing in 414 Congo Lane after receiving the request by petition. When asked, Clerk Sheffield confirmed that she had received confirmation that the County Commissioners had no objection to this annexation. After the next council meeting, when the second reading of the ordinance will be presented, the annexation will be confirmed if passed. **The first reading of the ordinance to annex in the property described as Parcel 048A 028 on Congo Lane was unanimously passed on a motion from Councilor Burney and seconded by Councilor Peacock.**

PICKLEBALL LIGHTING:

A few weeks back, the council approved to request bids for park lighting at the pickleball courts. The bid proposal asked for the demo of 20 existing pole light fixtures, install 16 new LED light fixtures at 4 per pole on existing poles, and to install a new time clock and timer control system. Councilor Snyder asks Manager Barron where the money to pay for this would come from. Barron stated that SPLOST could definitely cover the expenses. He would have to investigate the remaining ARPA funds. **Wynnon stated that the only bid received for the lighting at the pickleball courts at the park was from Moye Electric for \$22,750.** Councilor Peacock confirmed that this was the only bid received. Councilor Battle asked if

there was any way to do this cheaper. Councilor Snyder stated that he didn't want to postpone this project any longer due to the need for lights. Wynnon confirmed that he had reached out to several others, but no one came and submitted a bid. **Council unanimously voted to proceed with Moyer Electric for the Pickleball lighting on a motion from Councilor Peacock and seconded by Councilor Battle.**

NEW BUSINESS:

MONTHLY DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS:

Interim Chief Maxwell presented the fire report for the month of January 2026. The department answered a grand total of 220 calls. That included 3 non-working structure fires with 2 in the city and 1 in the county, 2 working structure fires in the city, 11 other fire related calls with 5 in the city and 6 in the county. The EMS portion included 115 medical related calls with 90 in the city and 25 in the county and 13 MVC's with 9 in the city and 4 in the county. There were 55 public service calls such as fire alarms, smoke scares, and trees down with 52 in the city and 3 in the county. The department was cancelled in route 10 times with 6 in the city and 4 in the county. There were 9 Air Evac calls in the city and 2 mutual aid calls in the county. There was a total of 234 training hours for the department. The fire department calendars are ready and available. They have started on the Industrial Pre-planning for the factories around town. Recently, Derl and Q attended an ISO class in Forsyth and were able to learn a good deal of information. The next audit is not until 2028 which gives them plenty of time to learn and improve. He also has smoke detector applications for those that may need a smoke detector.

Chief Cooper presented the January report for the police department. The department answered a total of 557 calls, worked 29 traffic accidents, wrote a total of 45 tickets and had 9 written warnings. They collected a total of \$16,912.10 in cash bonds and fines. There was a total of 41 jail days, and 822 gallons of gas were used while patrolling 10,579 miles.

Wynnon presented the water distribution report. There were a total of 355 work orders to be broken down as follows: 102 water cut-ons, 94 water cut-offs, 2 holes filled in, 17 possible water leaks were checked, 11 actual water leaks, 80 water locates, 1 meter set, another meter was found by GPS, 2 meters were repaired, 4 required maintenance, an unknown valve was uncovered, there were 5 meter inspections, and maintenance was performed on 2 vehicles. The sewer work orders included 2 investigations, installed 1 sewer tap, 28 lines required cleaning, and 2 repairs.

Wynnon stated that during December and January, the department managed to finish laying 360 feet of 2" line in the alley between Main Street and the Leave it Better Park and then hauled in 146 tons of rock to cover and protect the line. He met with POPCO, GEFA, and Still Waters Engineering to do a walk-through of the Jessup Heights I&I project and created a punch list. Wynnon also made a point to thank Brandon and his crew for stepping in and helping finish the remodel project of the council room.

Brandon presented the street department report. For the month of January, a total of 943 hours were tracked with a breakdown of 31 hours on animal calls, 53 on curbs and gutters, 92 on potholes, 113 on trash pick-up, and 117 on limb pick-ups. The bulk of the hours, 537, were spent on a variety of projects such as working on the chamber room, cleaning out the bus station and moving items to the karate building, cleaning up some of the Wholesale property, along with taking down the Christmas decorations and storing them. A total of 436.5 gallons of gas were used for the month.

Rodney came forward to give an update on the wells. A total of 30,458,000 gallons of water were pumped during the month of January. That is an average of 0.983 MGD. The increase in gallons seemed to coincide with the increase in broken lines and leaks due to the cold weather. The cold weather took a

toll on the lines and wells. One well was down, but only for a day. He thanks Brandon, Wynnon, Evan and their guys that helped get these leaks fixed quickly.

Matt presented the wastewater information for January. A total of 600 hours were spent with 54 hours on cleaning clarifiers and filters, 113 on lab and sampling, 35 on the belt press and sludge, 124 on lift station and well repair, 96 on plant maintenance, 23 on routine rounds, 5 on education and training, 17 on management duties, and 133 on plant operations. The amount of water released from the treatment plant into Sugar Creek was 12,280,000 gallons. There were 633,782 gallons of water used at the plant. When asked, Matt stated that currently there were no bid issues at the plant, only routine maintenance that they were able to get taken care of.

Gerald gave an update for the code and permitting departments. There were a total of 65 work orders this month. He handled 49 grease trap inspections, issued 1 code violation, 6 building permits, and approved 4 electrical and 5 building inspections. He has taken the initiative to restructure the business license application to include an inspection by the inspector and the fire chief before issuing the license. Councilor Peacock noted that work had begun again on the car wash and asked about the hotel being finished. Gerald confirmed that the hotel was not quite ready. Councilor Snyder asked about the grease trap situation. Gerald responded that they are still working on getting the ordinance updated but he has been making his rounds.

2026 WATERSHED ASSESSMENT:

Matt came forward to explain that the city is required to perform an assessment to keep their permit up to date. Unfortunately, he is unable to do these tests in-house. This testing includes the fish community assessment, the macro invertebrate assessment, and the habitat assessment at four monitoring locations. A guy comes in every year to do this. It requires 10-12 trips to get all of the testing done. Matt has gotten other quotes in the past and this particular company is still the lowest price. The type of loan for the treatment plant is what requires this every year. This cost is accounted for in the budget every year. **On a motion from Councilor Peacock and seconded by Councilor Burney, it was unanimously approved to proceed with PSI performing the annual watershed assessment for \$26,668.**

PURCHASE OF GENERATOR FOR WELLS:

Barron states that there is roughly \$236K in the ARPA budget still appropriated for infrastructure that can be used to purchase this generator. Rodney presents the quote he has received. J&T Services quoted 2 different models. His first quote was for a Kohler brand for roughly \$149K. J&T mentioned that Kohler was not standing behind their prices and products as they had been known for in the past. The other quote was for a Blue Star generator. It is a 350kw generator with a 5-year warranty. That price was \$106,120. Standard timeline for delivery is running 30-35 weeks for all companies. Rodney also met with another gentleman on the items not covered such as installation, transfer switch, concrete pad, etc. The price was around \$27K. He has been trying to get another quote from another company. There are not a lot of people around that handles all of this. Manager Barron suggests putting it out on the GA Procurement Registry for another week or two. The plan is to place this generator not at the tallest well but at the biggest capacity well, which is the Legion Drive location and is the well that supplies the hospital and nursing home and the EMA building. After some discussion, the council agreed to have Rodney reach out for another bid or two before deciding.

PURCHASE OF SCBA EQUIPMENT FOR FIRE DEPARTMENT:

Chief Maxwell came forward to explain his need for equipment. SCBA stands for Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus. These are the tanks and equipment that firefighters wear on their backs when

they go into a fire. 80% of the packs that Eastman currently has are from 2003, which makes them 23 years old. 19% are from 2007, making them 19 years old. And 1 pack is from 2011, making it 15 years old. It is recommended to replace every 10 years. At the most, 15 years. These are not cheap. Approximately 5-6 years ago, the cylinders were replaced so that is a saving cost for right now. After 15 years, they must be replaced. They are due for hydrotesting now. This testing is mandatory every 5 years. Maxwell received quotes from ThermoFisher Scientific and American Safety & Firehouse. ThermoFisher has a state contract, so they come in \$12,036 lower. They quoted 24 SCBA packs, 20 masks, and 4 sight masks for a total of \$176,663.95. Everything does come with lifetime warranties. The only thing not shown on this particular quote is the cost of hydrotesting the cylinders. That cost is around \$902 for 48 cylinders at approximately \$17 each. The cylinders will have to be taken to Forsyth to be tested. The rubber on the masks that are currently being used are breaking when pulled on and off. There is no legality about keeping the packs in service. The problem right now is that they no longer make replacement parts for them. The department is down several packs already due to the salvaging and piecing together of parts to have a working pack. There was discussion about the possibility of not buying all at once but breaking it down to over 2-3 years. How many are truly needed? A minimum of 10 to be able to operate 3 in and 3 out. What is the number of total firemen? 22 including full-time and volunteers. Maxwell stated that the biggest problem would be if there was a design change over that time, which would make it a little more challenging. Barron spoke on where the funds could come from to pay for the packs. He believes ARPA can supply a portion of the total cost. The other portion would have to come out of SPLOST or the fire budget. Maxwell would also like to set aside funds to build up and be able to replace them when the next time comes. They have been putting in for grants but have yet to receive one to cover the cost. Derl asks that if they plan on splitting the number of packs to be bought, could all of the masks be bought together to use with the older packs. There is no repairing a mask once it breaks. Council proposes to buy 12 packs now, all 20 masks, and 2 of the sight masks now. At the end of the year, if the money is available, they will approve buying the other 12 packs and 2 masks. This will cut the costs down to about \$92,000. A question from the public asked about the ability to fill the cylinders. The department currently has their own cascade system at the station to fill them and also a system in a portable trailer that can go to scenes. Attorney Gordon pointed out that Sect 2-69 of the city ordinance does allow to waive the bid process in a case of emergency or in the best interests of the city. Gordon feels that this purchase would qualify. **Councilor Snyder asks for a motion to waive the bid process in cases of emergency according to Sec 2-69 of the city ordinance. Councilor Burney made the motion with Councilor Peacock seconding and all members approving. Snyder then asks for a motion to approve purchasing 12 SCBAs, 20 masks, and 2 sight masks for the fire department. Councilor Burney made the motion with a second by Councilor Battle and a unanimous approval. Barron agrees to pay for this out of ARPA funds.**

IT VENDOR:

Councilor Snyder states that they will forgo this item to allow Attorney Gordon to review the existing IT contract and the newly proposed contract.

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT:

Barron informs the council that there is approximately \$32K in ARPA funds that are still earmarked for the park project and could be used on the pickleball lights. He also reminds everyone that the city no longer picks up furniture, appliances, etc. It is the responsibility of the property owner to dispose of them. There have been several calls about loose dogs and cats around town. He currently does not have a solution to the problem. There are some groups that want them captured and some that don't mind feeding them. Lastly, he states that the guys are diligently working on repairing all of the potholes around town.

OTHER BUSINESS FROM COUNCIL:

Councilor Snyder gave a reminder about the comedy show at the Magnolia Theatre on Saturday night featuring a local, Tom Jackson.

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

CHAIRMAN

CITY CLERK