

March 9, 2026

The Eastman City Council met in a regularly scheduled meeting on the above date at 6:00 p.m. The following council members were present: Graham Snyder, John Battle II, Debra Sheffield, and Mark Peacock. Dwayne Burney was out sick. Others present were City Attorney Rita Llop, 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 Wynnott Pittman. Other department heads present were Water Operator Rodney Harrell, Street Department head Brandon Brisco, Wastewater Operator Matt McDaniel, and Water Distribution Supervisor Evan Harrell. Employee Corey Fountain was also present. Present from the community were Susan and Mitchell Coffee, Gil Harrington, Kim Spencer, Cindy Greene, and Rayvon Nicely.

The meeting was called to order by Councilor Snyder.

Invocation was given by Councilor Peacock.

Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

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

APPROVE MINUTES:

A motion was made by Councilor Sheffield and seconded by Councilor Peacock to approve the minutes of the February 23, 2026, regular meeting. Motion was approved unanimously.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

2026 LIMB/LEAF BID:

Manager Barron stated that the RFP went out for pickup of the city's limb and leaf trimmings. No formal response was received. The city must have somewhere to dispose of this. Barron met with the current provider, Dwayne Conley, earlier in the day. Conley agreed to continue his present arrangement on a quarterly basis until the city could finish evaluating its options and make a more competent decision. His current arrangement is \$20,000 per quarter. Attorney Llop states that the agreement from last year can remain. She will update it for one more quarter. Mr. Conley is the only person that has an EPD approved site for the yard debris. Councilor Snyder asked if Mr. Conley would consider a monthly arrangement. **Councilor Peacock suggested approving for one more quarter and then possibly look into a monthly agreement. Councilor Peacock made the motion for approving one quarter with a second from Councilor Sheffield. All members present were in favor.**

2026 GRASS MAINTENANCE BID:

There were two responses to the RFQ for the 2026 Grass Maintenance project. **Our current provider, R & G Lawn Care, submitted for a total of \$2,365, which is an increase of \$290 over last year.** Mr. Rayvon Nicely submitted a bid for a total of \$3,130. Nicely's handwritten notes stated that he was willing to do all 8 areas for a grand total of \$3,550 but would also accept \$2,900 for all 8 bids. Clerk Sheffield did point out that there was a little discrepancy in what Nicely quoted vs what was transcribed in his notes. Manager Barron stated that he would recommend staying with R & G due to the number of fewer complaints received compared to the previous vendors used over his tenure as city manager. Mr. Nicely is slightly more than R & G and the city does have a sound relationship with R & G. Councilor Snyder asks about Mr. Nicely's number of staff. Nicely came forward to state that his crew consists

mainly of him and his dad. He has others that he could call on for help, but he knows that he can rely on he and his father to get the job done. Clerk Sheffield also reminded the council that the option was put in the RFQ that this contract could be slated for an annual renewal for up to 5 years if the council chooses. Councilor Battle asks Mr. Nicely if he could do it at the same price that R & G quoted? Nicely states that he could. **Councilor Peacock recommends staying with R & G Lawn Care. Councilor Sheffield seconds his motion. Three councilors voted for R & G while Battle voted against. Motion still passed for R & G.** Next was the decision to choose a 3- or 5-year time frame to stay with R & G contingent upon an agreed written contract with the city having the option to terminate at the end of each year. **A motion was made by Councilor Peacock to pursue a 5-year written agreement along with a second from Councilor Sheffield. Motion was carried unanimously.**

BACKUP GENERATOR:

Rodney comes forward to explain all the quotes that he has received for a backup generator to go at the Legion Drive well, which is our largest capacity well. He contacted our engineering firm, Hofstadter and Associates, to get a recommendation of what size generator would be needed to operate that particular well. They stated that a 150KW with a 300-amp breaker would work for what we need. Some of the quotes were bigger generators and really considered oversized for what would be needed. Quotes ranged from 200KW to 350KW. The engine brands included Cummins, Perkins, Caterpillar, Iveco, and John Deere. Their prices ranged from \$106,673 to \$179,236.43. Rodney recommends going with Cook Industrial Electric Company out of Cordele. It is a company that they are familiar with and have worked with in the past. It is a 200KW Caterpillar brand from Yancey Brothers. All lead times are close in range with 26-28 weeks. They have offered a full warranty for 5 years. Their service crews are out of Savannah and Atlanta. Councilor Snyder confirms that this generator is diesel fueled. He also confirms the calculations from Hofstadter recommended a minimum of 150KW. At 200KW, it will not overload the generator but keep it at 70-80% capacity as preferred. Lastly, Snyder confirms the quoted price of \$106,673 is the total cost for everything including the concrete pad, setup, etc. Manager Barron reports that there is enough money in the ARPA fund to finance this purchase. This will be the first backup generator for the City of Eastman. If power goes out in the city, water can still be pumped to the hospital and nursing home, along with enough pressure to keep some water flowing throughout town. **On a motion from Councilor Peacock and seconded by Councilor Battle, the council unanimously approved releasing ARPA funds to purchase a generator from Cook Industrial at the price of \$106,673.**

IT VENDOR:

Assistant Manager Winslette came forward to discuss the quotes she received for IT services throughout the city. At the last meeting, council voted to reach out for more bids than the one that was presented by AsystYOU. An RFP was posted with a deadline of this past Friday, and she was contacted by 22 companies. Ten submitted proposals on time and 3 submitted after the deadline. She has summarized the ten received in reference to cost, turn around time on tickets, ability to do on-site tech issues, location, conversion and transition time frame, whether they are certified to access the police department data, and updating and leasing new devices. After the comparison, Dayna recommends going with AsystYOU out of Fitzgerald. There were some proposals that came in at a lower cost, but she has listed specific reasons for not choosing those. Some did not price out the full requested proposal, only parts of it. Others are not as local, and the turnaround times would be much longer because of the distance of a technician being able to come onsite. These are some of the issues that we are dealing with currently with both vendors being used at present. Councilor Snyder asks about the current provider, VC3, and what their cost would be if chosen to stay with them. Dayna says the upfront costs would be around \$95,000, which is more than any of the other quoted (\$8,000 - \$30,000). The estimated annual cost would be right at \$123,000. That price is not as high as some of the others, but

they do not have techs that come out regularly. A lot of things are handled by our employees being on the phone with them and taking away from our regular responsibilities. Councilor Snyder thanks Dayna for her hard work and time put into research, creating the proposal, and vetting all the entries received. Manager Barron supports Dayna with terminating the relationship with VC3 and moving in a different direction. Susan Coffee asks about the internet issues. Unfortunately, this decision is for the IT of City Hall and other owned buildings. The matter of internet for the entire town is different. Barron says they are encouraging Connexion to move into town, but it just hasn't happened yet. **Councilor Peacock makes a motion to choose AsystYOU with an onboarding cost of \$26,000 – 30,000 and an annual maintenance cost of \$141,780.** Dayna states that the annual cost is eligible for SPLOST funds because of the agreement to lease equipment. The onboarding cost was already budgeted in general and water for this year. **Councilor Sheffield seconded Peacock's motion and the council approved it unanimously.**

NEW BUSINESS:

MONTHLY DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS:

Interim Chief Maxwell presented the fire report for the month of February 2026. The department answered a grand total of 206 calls. That included 1 non-working structure fire in the city, 16 other fire related calls with 7 in the city and 9 in the county. The EMS portion included 104 medical related calls with 80 in the city and 24 in the county and 8 MVC's with 6 in the city and 2 in the county. There were 55 public service calls such as fire alarms, smoke scares, and trees down with 49 in the city and 4 in the county. The department was cancelled in route 5 times with 2 in the city and 3 in the county. There were 16 Air Evac calls and 1 mutual aid call in the county. There was a total of 200 training hours for the department. Maxwell states that his department is still working on preplanning for all the industrial facilities around the town.

Chief Cooper presented the February report for the police department. The department answered a total of 499 calls, worked 22 traffic accidents, wrote a total of 76 tickets and had 22 written warnings. They collected a total of \$16,820.11 in cash bonds and fines. There was a total of 37 jail days, and 864 gallons of gas were used while patrolling 9,812 miles.

Evan presented the water distribution report. There were a total of 493 work orders to be broken down as follows: 143 water cut-ons, 198 water cut-offs, 20 possible water leaks were checked, 17 actual water leaks, 73 water locates, 4 meters set, another meter was found by GPS, 1 valve was inspected, 2 meters were repaired, 4 required maintenance, an unknown valve was uncovered, and there were 4 meter inspections. The sewer work orders included 1 manhole inspection, 2 investigations, 18 lines required cleaning, and 3 repairs. The department performed an inspection on one catch basin.

Wynnon stated that Popco is finishing up the I&I project in Jessup Heights. The final walk-through was done to make the punch list. They will hopefully be done in the next 3 weeks. There will still be some infiltration until the old lines are filled with concrete. Wynnon also attended the code enforcement class with Gerald and learned that the city needs to create an appeal committee for the tickets issued for code violations. Lane is on the limb and leaf truck now. The busiest time of the year is now starting, and he is planning on working up weekly routes and being able to stick to them. Wynnon also complimented Evan for boring under Hwy 46 on his own while Wynnon was out of town. They had previously killed a ¾" line that has been leaking off and on for years. A new line had to be added back out there, and Evan managed to get it done. He also thanked Charles for jumping in and helping with the dump truck and getting cold patch.

Brandon presented the street department report. For the month of February, a total of 826 hours were tracked with a breakdown of 17 hours on animal calls, 303 on curbs and gutters with concentration in the Sunset area, 18 on ditches, 2 on tree limb cutting, 189.5 on potholes, 28 on trash pick-up, and 106 on limb pick-ups. 163 hours were spent on a variety of other projects. They will probably start cutting grass next week. A total of 628 gallons of gas were used for the month. Total of 49 work orders with 10 animal calls, 1 hole filled in, 2 tree trimming orders, 6 for limb pickup, 1 to mow a particular street, 1 sign damaged, 2 signs replaced, and 26 potholes. This week his department will be focusing on getting trash picked up and making the city look good for all of the visitors coming to town for Peaches to Beaches.

Rodney came forward to give an update on the wells. A total of 29,194,000 gallons of water were pumped during the month of February. That is an average of 1.043 MGD.

Matt presented the wastewater information for February. A total of 549 hours were spent with 57 hours on cleaning clarifiers and filters, 109 on lab and sampling, 47 on the belt press and sludge, 71 on lift station and well repair, 93 on plant maintenance, 30 on routine rounds, 5 on education and training, 25 on management duties, and 112 on plant operations. The amount of treated water released from the plant into Sugar Creek was 17,740,000 gallons with an average of 0.634 MGD. There were 570,682 gallons of water used at the plant. The total rain for this month was 5.1 inches. Councilor Snyder asks about spills at the Legion lift station and if anyone has noticed an improvement with the I&I project almost complete. Matt states that there hasn't been a significant rain since being fully converted over to the new system.

Gerald gave an update for the code and permitting departments. He used 69.26 gallons of fuel in the month of February. There were a total of 77 work orders this month. He handled 47 grease trap inspections, 1 planning & zoning project, issued 4 code violations, 1 sign permit, 8 building inspections, 3 building permits for brand new residences (already tied with last year), and approved 7 electrical and 6 building license inspections. Gerald went to training last week and learned some other ways to fast track the code violations for the blighted areas.

EASTER SEALS PROCLAMATION:

Easter Seals of Middle Georgia are celebrating their 50th anniversary and has asked the city to pass a proclamation for them. They request a formal signing and photo op at a later date. Councilor Snyder proceeds to read the proclamation out loud and it will be included in the final minutes of the meeting. **The proclamation was unanimously approved on a motion from Councilor Peacock and seconded by Councilor Battle.**

2026 LIBRARY WEEK PROCLAMATION:

Kim Spencer, the library director, came forward to explain. This year's theme is "Find Your Joy". The kids doing projects, adults taking classes, citizens looking into genealogy, others checking out the latest copy of a new book or using the digital tools available to the public. Councilor Snyder proceeds to read the proclamation out loud and it will be included in the final minutes of the meeting. **The proclamation was unanimously approved on a motion from Councilor Sheffield and seconded by Councilor Battle. The week of April 19-25, 2026, has officially been declared "National Library Week".**

GOLF COURSE DEANNEXATION:

Manager Barron states that he has received a request for de-annexation from the Dodge County Golf Course. The city does not provide any water, sewer, or trash pickup at the golf course. We currently

only provide fire and police coverage and trash pickup in ditches in the summertime. Their tax bill is currently only about \$1,527. Councilor Snyder inquires about the reasoning for the request. Barron says they have been looking and talking about this for several months and have even come in to meet with him. They said that they don't feel like they get that much service from the City of Eastman, and it would be cheaper for them to de-annex. If they did de-annex, according to the map, it would not create an island. However, under the Service Delivery Strategy, the city would still be required to provide them with fire protection. **Councilor Peacock makes a motion to table or postpone the discussion until they can schedule a work session to meet and talk with the members of the Golf Course.** He would also like to bring in counsel as well. Attorney Llop suggests a postponement. She also states that the city will need written documentation from the county that they are in agreement with the de-annexation. Councilor Snyder asks Peacock if there is a certain length of time that he would like to postpone it. Peacock answers that it could be after their next scheduled work session. **Councilor Battle seconded Peacock's motion to postpone making a decision and the rest of the council unanimously agreed.**

HOME OCCUPATION LICENSE:

RAYVON LAWN CARE SERVICE:

Rayvon Nicely with Technique Nicely Enterprise, LLC has come forward requesting a home occupation for his business, Rayvon Lawn Care Service. He plans on technically operating his lawn care service and maintenance business out of his home at 6022 Leitch Street. Everything is in order and there will not be a lot of people coming and going. **On a motion made by Councilor Sheffield and seconded by Councilor Peacock, council unanimously voted to approve the license.**

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT:

Manager Barron thanks Brandon and his crews for fixing potholes all throughout town. If anyone is riding around and notices one, please call City Hall and put in a work order. The street department has a big job of cutting grass and picking up trash on 54 miles of roads along with fixing potholes and other duties. He also thanks them for their work on the curbs and gutters. He has explored the purchase for a street sweeper, but it is a long-term expense that the city is not quite financially ready to take on. The quote the city received was around \$300,000. Clogged gutters not only affect the roadways but causes erosion and problems at the treatment plant and lift stations. Growth is expensive. The city has investigated trying to get broadband in the city limits but for City Hall alone, it was over \$100,000. Susan Coffee asks what the holdup is for Connexion to not be able to come into the city. The city is not trying to stop them; they are just not wanting to come into the city. The last thing Barron states is reminding everyone of cut-off day on March 10.

OTHER BUSINESS FROM COUNCIL:

Councilor Snyder thanks Alex Barnhardt at the Park for organizing the first City Worker Pickleball Tournament. A lot of fun was had. He is happy to see others for taking advantage of the pickleball courts and the open field to play soccer on.

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