

March 23, 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, Mark Peacock, Dwayne Burney, and Debra Sheffield. Others present were City Attorney Chris Gordon, City Manager Spencer Barron, Police Chief Billy Cooper, City Clerk April Sheffield, Assistant City Manager Dayna Winslette, Code Enforcer Gerald Fordham, Public Works Director Wynnon Pittman, Street Supervisor Brandon Brisco, and Fire Chief Derl Maxwell. Other employees present were Cory Fountain and Assistant Fire Chief Quantavious Rozier. Present from the community were Susan and Mitchell Coffee, Gil Harrington, and Lynn Brown.

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 Sheffield and seconded by Councilor Battle, the agenda was unanimously amended to add #5, Schedule a Work Session. The amended agenda was then unanimously approved on a motion from Councilor Sheffield and seconded by Councilor Peacock.

APPROVE MINUTES:

A motion was made by Councilor Sheffield and seconded by Councilor Battle to approve the minutes of the March 9, 2026, regular meeting. Motion was approved unanimously.

NO UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

NEW BUSINESS:

REVOLVING FUND RESOLUTION:

Chairman of the Downtown Development Authority, Wynnon Pittman, came forward to explain the resolution. The DDA has joined Dr. Sharma, owner of Jefferson's Restaurant opening downtown, to apply for a revolving loan. It is the DDA's first time ever trying this. Sharma was approved by the state and now the state has sent this resolution to be approved by both the DDA and the City. Both parties must agree for the state to accept it. Manager Barron has stated that he is in support of this agreement. Ms. Coffee asks what it is exactly. Pittman states that it is a low interest loan that Sharma has applied for from the state. He also states that it is available to any public business and the DDA would be happy to work with others. Councilor Burney asks for a little more detail. Pittman states that Sharma has already spent about \$850,000 on the restaurant and this loan would help to finish up the work and be ready to open. Barron also points out that the DDA also has Façade Grants that are available to business owners. Councilor Peacock asked for a list of things that the DDA offers as he was unaware of what was available. Councilor Snyder also asks for confirmation that this is not tying the city to be a financial backer on a pass-through agency. Pittman responded with an absolutely. **On a motion from Councilor Peacock and a second from Councilor Burney, the resolution was unanimously approved.**

MOSQUITO SPRAYER:

Public Works Director, Wynnon Pittman, shared the need for a mosquito sprayer. Brandon Brisco works diligently every year before mosquito season to get the sprayer up and running and ready. It is a 2013 model, and they are looking to get some quotes to see if upgrading to a newer model is a possibility. Barron suggests running a 2-week ad. **On a motion from Councilor Peacock and seconded by Councilor**

Sheffield, the council unanimously voted to give permission for Mr. Pittman to send out an RFQ for a mosquito sprayer.

NATURAL GAS AT FIRE STATION 1:

Chief Maxwell came forward to discuss the natural gas situation at Fire Station 1. He first starts by explaining that in the past the fire department was using a paging system through 911 when they would receive a call. Costs increased over time until they were paying per every call received and it was no longer financially feasible to continue. There is a new app called *I am Responding*. The county currently uses it for Fire and EMS and speak highly of it. The price of it breaks down to \$849 for the first 375 calls. It would be \$.20 per call afterwards. Based on last year's numbers, 2,470 calls, it would figure to be \$12,068 a year. That would fluctuate depending on our number of calls. The benefit of having that is when our volunteers or whoever is in an area that doesn't get reception, they are able to monitor our calls. They could even play the calls back and hear the radio traffic. The amount of money that we would need to supplement the app would come from what they are currently spending on natural gas. The gas bill is currently \$388/month whether it is used or not. Chief Maxwell is asking for permission to take/seek proposals or bids to convert the station to propane instead. He is looking to save money and offset the budget to be able to afford the paging system. A cost estimate from about 8 months ago was around \$15,000. This would include purchasing a stove and other items to go electric. Maxwell thinks the cost may be covered out of SPLOST. Councilor Burney asks if he has reached out to other natural gas companies for pricing. Barron says if approved they will make a spreadsheet to present all factors and ideas. Susan Coffee agrees with Burney that there are less costly alternatives out there. **On a motion from Councilor Peacock and a second from Councilor Sheffield, all members approved Chief Maxwell to move forward on his request to price the transition to propane gas at Station 1.**

FIRST READING OF BUILDING ORDINANCE AMENDMENT:

Gerald Fordham has been in contact with the ICC official and was reviewing the city's code. In Section 8:1a:1-11, the code refers to the adopted 2012 version of standards and codes. It also states that the city would recognize the most recent version. Fordham was advised to take the portion referring to a specific year out of the ordinance so it would automatically apply to each update. This amendment covers that change. Attorney Gordon agrees that this is just minor cleanup of a section of the ordinance. **The first reading of the Building Ordinance Amendment is unanimously approved on a motion from Councilor Peacock and seconded by Councilor Battle.**

SCHEDULING A WORK SESSION:

On a motion from Councilor Peacock and a second from Councilor Battle, it was unanimously decided to schedule a work session on Monday, March 30, 2026, at 6:00 PM.

SECOND AMENDMENT TO AGENDA:

Attorney Gordon requested an executive session for legal matters. **Councilor Snyder asked for a motion to amend the agenda again. Councilor Sheffield made the motion and was seconded by Councilor Burney. Then Councilor Peacock made a motion to adopt the newly amended agenda and Councilor Battle seconded the motion. All approved.**

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Councilor Snyder called for a motion to adjourn into executive session to discuss legal, personnel, and property matters. Councilor Peacock made the motion and Councilor Burney seconded. Motion carried. Council then exited into executive session.

Council later returned. **Councilor Peacock then made a motion to reenter into regular session. Councilor Battle seconded and all approved.** No other action was taken.

ALCOHOL LICENSE:

EASTMAN 369 INC.: PIYUSHBHAI V CHAUDHARI:

Mr. Chaudhari has applied for a license to sell beer and wine at his vape store located at 538 Oak Street, Suite B. Code Enforcement Officer Fordham states that everything complies with the codes. Clerk Sheffield states that all other requirements have been met. **On a motion from Councilor Peacock and a second from Councilor Battle, a vote was taken with four members in favor and one, Councilor Burney, against. Motion carried.**

CITY MANAGER HAD NOTHING TO REPORT

OTHER BUSINESS FROM COUNCIL:

Councilor Battle asks what will be done with the old mosquito sprayer. Manager Barron is hoping to repair it. If not, the spraying apparatus will be removed from the current truck and sold at the next auction.

Councilor Snyder mentions that he and some of the other council members have been reached out to about the current situation with the old courthouse. Snyder says that it is not a discussion that he nor the council have any input in. Any questions or comments concerning any county property should be directed to the County Manager and the County Commissioners.

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

CHAIRMAN

CITY CLERK