

January 22, 2024

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, Jermayne Hamilton, Debra Sheffield, and Mark Peacock. Others present were City Attorney Rita Llop, City Manager Spencer Barron, Police Chief Billy Cooper, Fire Chief Scotty Whitten, City Clerk April Sheffield, Administrative Assistant Dayna Winslette, City Inspector Jack White, and Department Head Wynnon Pittman. Present from the community were Sharon Cobb Flanagan, EM Harrington III, Susan and Mitchell Coffee, Paula McCain, Raymond Mullis, John Battle, Mark and Jill Studstill, Engineer Carl Hofstadter, Willie Mae Nash, Derek Hutcheson, Lacey Eason, and Justin and Nicole Barnett. The meeting was called to order by Councilor Snyder.

Invocation was given by Councilor Hamilton.

Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

The agenda was amended to add Carl Hofstadter to the agenda to give him opportunity to speak to the council. **A motion was made by Councilor Williams and seconded by Councilor Hamilton. Approved unanimously.**

APPROVE MINUTES:

A motion was made by Councilor Peacock and seconded by Councilor Hamilton to approve the minutes of the January 8, 2024, regular meeting, and the January 12, 2024, called meeting. Approved unanimously.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

DODGE ARTS GUILD BIDS:

Bids were taken to replace the awning, signage, and add lighting at the Magnolia Theater. After some previous discussion with Ken Rogers of the Arts Guild, **the Council voted unanimously to approve the lowest bidder in each category. The motion was made by Councilor Hamilton and seconded by Councilor Sheffield.** The bids chosen were the Dublin Sign Company for the main sign at \$3,039.52 and the announcement sign at \$1,646. The Sign Store Online was chosen to do the LED outdoor lights at \$1,725. Graham & Studstill was granted the awning for \$3,796.

NEW BUSINESS:

CITY ENGINEER CARL HOFSTADTER:

Carl and his company have been the city's engineer and consultants since about 1985. Carl is the president of the company even though his son Hayes is handling most of the business with the city now. He reminds the council if there is ever any questions do not hesitate to contact him.

APPROVE MONTHLY BILLS:

The monthly bills for January 9 – January 22, 2024, were approved unanimously on a motion from Councilor Williams and a second by Councilor Hamilton.

APPROVE DRUG TASK FORCE AGREEMENT:

Chief Cooper speaks on the agreement and asks to stay with them. We have had an agreement with the Drug Task Force for 20+ years. The Eastman Police Department does not currently have a drug officer, so they lean on the task force quite a bit. The amount requested has stayed the same, \$8,083, and is already allocated in the budget. Councilor Hamilton requested that someone from the task force come next year and speak on what they do and enlighten the city. **On a motion from Councilor Hamilton and a second by Councilor Peacock, the agreement was passed unanimously.**

APPROVE TO BID LIMB/LEAF CONTRACT:

It is time to bid out the limb and leaf disposal that we pick up around the city. The city has an EPD permit to pick it up. The council needs to make sure as a condition of the bid packet and whoever is awarded the contract must be an EPD disposal facility. Councilor Hamilton reminds everyone that the contract will also need to be approved by the city attorney. **On a motion by Councilor Sheffield and a second by Councilor Hamilton, permission to bid out the contract was granted unanimously.**

APPROVE LEAD/COPPER PROJECT BID:

Mr. Pittman spoke to the council and reminded them that by October 16, 2024, the city has to give a lead and copper inventory on what is on each side of our water meters. The city has gotten numerous bids. Wynnon has reached out to the engineering firm and others. He has been advised that the GEFA money that the city was awarded, approximately \$209,000, will pay for getting this project accomplished. He was advised by GEFA personnel that it could also be used to pay 50% of any equipment bought to help with this project. Wynnon recommends going with 120Water. They will lead, guide, and direct us as the city personnel take on doing the actual inventory themselves. And that would free up some of the money for equipment.

Councilor Snyder asked about the original bid of \$21K going down to \$13,400. The difference is from city office personnel taking on handling a lot of the mailouts, etc. that is required in notifying the public. Attorney Llop has reviewed the contract and requested some changes be made by 120Water. **The council voted unanimously to approve the contract with 120Water pending that the changes requested are made. The vote was taken on a motion from Councilor Peacock and a second by Councilor Hamilton.**

APPROVE VACUUM TRUCK BID:

Mr. Pittman spoke on behalf of this. With the lead and copper inventory project, pot-holing each side of the meter is a requirement. Other towns use a vacuum truck/excavator to help accomplish this while dealing with root systems, etc. It can also be used after this project to help clean up storm drains and other things around town. GEFA money will pay for half of the truck. Wynnon recommends the lowest eligible bid of \$71,324.11, for a Vermeer SGT 800-gallon vacuum excavator. He also talked to others who have used this particular piece of equipment and were well pleased. Reaching out to GDOT, it looks like TSPLOST money may be able to pay for the other half since it will be managing stormwater issues. Councilors Snyder and Peacock were able to witness a demonstration and were well pleased with the results.

Councilor Hamilton asks about the warranty. There was a 2-year bumper to bumper warranty included in the price. Councilor Snyder questions if there will be a designated person to operate and be responsible for this piece of equipment. Manager Barron and Mr. Pittman say yes. Councilor Snyder also asked about training on the equipment. The salesman will come and conduct the training upon delivery of the machine. **On a motion from Councilor Williams and a second from Councilor Peacock, the Vermeer was approved unanimously.**

APPROVE WATER TANK MAINTENANCE CONTRACT:

After several months of discussion and reviews at work sessions and studies by council, it was decided to proceed with Leary Construction. They have given us many years of good service. Their bid was for \$555,004.30 for a 10-year contract. Attorney Llop requested some language changes in the contract and Leary has complied. There was a clause added in order to terminate the contract with a 60-day notice if necessary. The city has had a relationship with Leary for over 20 years and never had a problem with them. When recent problems were had with a tower, they came down on a weekend and got it repaired. Leary was the second lowest bid with a few thousand-dollar difference. Because of the long-term relationship and value to the community, Councilor Snyder feels that they are still the most qualified. Councilor Peacock reminded them of the repair for the water tower would be just part of the

contract if signed instead of a separate \$8,500 bill. Leary was voted for unanimously with a motion from Councilor Hamilton and a second from Councilor Peacock.

APPROVE TO BID OUT PEST CONTROL:

It was requested to bid out the termite and pest control for the city properties. **On a motion from Councilor Williams and a second from Councilor Peacock, the council agreed unanimously.**

MAKE BOARD APPOINTMENTS:

It is necessary to replace the former council members on their respective boards. Buddy Pittman on the Dodge County/Eastman Economic Development Authority, Ramond Mullis on the Regional Commission, and Ronnie Woodard on the Heart of Georgia Regional Airport Authority.

On a motion from Councilor Hamilton and a second from Councilor Peacock, it was unanimously approved to appoint Councilor Hamilton to the Airport Authority. On a motion from Councilor Williams and a second from Councilor Sheffield, they unanimously approved to appoint Councilor Peacock to the Regional Commission Board. Councilor Synder was unanimously approved to be appointed to the Economic Development Authority on a motion from Councilor Peacock and a second from Councilor Hamilton.

SPEED HUMPS:

The community has requested several more speed humps. One on Leitch Street in between 9th and 14th where the children are playing in that area. Also on 9th Avenue in the vicinity of Pine Drive where people are running the stop sign. Councilor Hamilton commented that they would try the speed humps and then go from there. The speed humps are removable. The cost of the humps are around \$2,800 a piece along with signage and poles. Three are normally ordered and can often be stretched into four, as they are sent in sections, depending upon the size of the highway. Manager Barron stated that this purchase is both eligible under SPLOST and TSPLOST funds, and there is enough in the accounts to make the purchase. **On a motion from Councilor Peacock and a second from Councilor Hamilton, it was unanimously approved to purchase the humps.**

ACCEPT POLICE DEPT GRANT:

The police department put in for a first responder grant through the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council. They were approved for \$17,300. With a match of \$200, that allows the PD to purchase 5 AED's and 4 ballistic shields. **The council unanimously voted to match and approve the grant on a motion from Councilor Hamilton and a second from Councilor Sheffield.**

APPROVE USE OF 2024 LMIG:

The discussion is about combining the 2023 and 2024 LMIG money. The previous council had voted to pave Morgan Creek in its entirety. The quote came back \$74,121.60 over the 2023 budget amount. Using the 2024 budget amount also would allow us to proceed with paving and have about \$25K left to use toward a few smaller projects.

Raymond Mullis spoke and thanked the council if they vote for this project because of how bad the subdivision is.

The use of 2024 LMIG was unanimously approved on a motion from Councilor Williams and a second from Councilor Sheffield.

APPROVE GRASS MAINTENANCE CONTRACT:

Quotes were received for the 2024 grass maintenance contract. All Cutt Lawn Service @ \$3,475, D&C W Farms @ \$5,262.51, R & G @ \$2,075, Dixie Landscaping @ \$2,190, and Goodman Landscaping for Woodlawn only @ \$1,950. Council members have been very pleased with R & G's work for the last year.

They were also the lowest qualified bidder. **R & G was unanimously approved on a motion from Councilor Hamilton and a second by Councilor Sheffield.**

DISPOSAL OF OLD WATER METERS:

There are approximately 2,684 old water meters sitting on the ground at James Avenue. There are several options to take but because of their worth being more than \$500, city ordinance states that we need to bid them out. The City of Chauncey had reached out about buying some from us, but the decision was made that we really don't have any worth selling to him. There are some meters dated from 1910 in the pile. The biggest portion of them are from the 1960s to 1980s. Some are a little newer. The life expectancy of a meter is usually not more than 20 years. **On a motion from Councilor Peacock and a second from Councilor Hamilton, the council voted unanimously to seek bids for the disposal of the meters.**

FIREWORKS:

With the question of how to fund the fireworks this year, it has been suggested to bid out the fireworks. According to Chief Whitten, the fire department use to shoot the fireworks themselves up until around 2005. The company we use is Santore. We buy the fireworks from them, and they shoot them off for us. The Florida based company has the monopoly in North Georgia and South Florida. Probably anyone in Georgia shooting fireworks is using Santore's license.

Previous shows have run about 25 minutes and have taken place on July 4th. **Those bid parameters were passed unanimously by council on a motion from Councilor Hamilton and a second from Councilor Peacock.**

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT:

Manager Barron thanks Paul McCranie and his water department, Wynnon Pittman, and the street department for coming out this past Sunday in the freezing weather to fix a huge water leak.

OTHER BUSINESS FROM COUNCIL:

Councilor Snyder wants to thank the fire department for their help with the hydrants, Brandon Brisco and his street department team, and Assistant Dayna Winslette for keeping the media posts up and current to let everyone know what was going on. He appreciates everyone's hard work, contributions, diligence, and hard work to get out there and fix the issues. Most people only see the leaks and the potholes. Not everyone sees the men and women behind the scenes getting the work done. It is not an easy task.

NO PUBLIC COMMENTS

ADJOURNMENT:

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

CHAIRMAN

CITY CLERK