

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING
OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF CLARKSTON, GEORGIA
HELD IN-PERSON AND BY TELECONFERENCE, ZOOM AUDIO/VIDEO
IN SAID CITY ON TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 2025

On the 4th day of February 2025, at 7:00 p.m., the City Council of Clarkston, Georgia met in regular session in-person and by teleconference, Zoom Audio/Video in said City. Mayor Beverly Burks called the meeting to order. The following members of the City Council were present: Vice Mayor Debra Johnson and Councilmembers Sharifa Adde, Yterenickia Bell; Jamie Carroll; Susan Hood; and Mark Perkins. Absent: None. The following City staff were present: Tammi Saddler Jones (Interim City Manager); Christine Hudson (Police Chief); Dr. Dwight Baker (Director of Human Resources & Risk Management); Tomika R. Mitchell (City Clerk); and Stephen Quinn (City Attorney).

NOTE: Items appearing in these minutes are in the order they were discussed, not necessarily in the order they appeared on the agenda.

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

All Councilmembers were present.

Vice Mayor Johnson made a motion to add Executive Session to the agenda. Councilmember Perkins duly seconded the motion. Mayor Burks called for the vote and declared the motion approved (6-0).

3. ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS/ PRESENTATION

A. Employee of the Month Recognition – February 2025

Dr. Dwight Baker, the Director of Human Resources and Risk Management, presented an update to the Mayor and Council regarding the successful implementation of two new recognition programs: the Employee of the Month and Employee of the Year programs. He provided a brief overview of both initiatives, highlighting their purpose in acknowledging exceptional performance and contributions by city employees.

Dr. Baker took the opportunity to recognize the Employee of the Month for January 2025, offering a brief explanation of the employee's outstanding contributions to the City. The recognition was given to a member of the Police Department, acknowledging their dedication and hard work in serving the community.

B. To approve the following meeting minutes:

- 1/7/2025 – City Council Work Session
- 1/14/2025 – City Council Meeting
- 1/28/2025 – City Council Work Session

Councilmember Carroll made a motion to approve the following sets of minutes: 1/7/2025, 1/14/2025, and 1/28/2025. Vice Mayor Johnson duly seconded the motion. Mayor Burks called for the vote and declared the motion approved (6-0).

4. REPORTS

A. Police Department Report.

- Chief Hudson and Assistant Chief Todd provided a brief report on the recent inclement weather events and a recent homicide.

B. City Manager's Report

Interim City Manager Tammi Saddler Jones provided a brief report covering the following updates: A Doodle Poll will be sent to the Mayor and Council to determine dates for the Mayor, Council, and Staff Retreat; City offices will be closed on February 17th in observance of Presidents' Day; The deadline for citizens to apply for the Clarkston C.A.R.E.S Grant was announced; Two public hearings on House Bill 581 were held on February 3rd, with a third scheduled for February 11th; Citizens were encouraged to visit the City's website for current job openings; Free legal assistance is available for residents facing financial hardship; and A Call for Artists RFP was announced.

C. City Attorney's Report

- Stephen Quinn did not have a report.

D. Council Remarks

- The Councilmembers briefly gave an overview of meetings and events they attended, and projects they are currently working on.

E. Mayor's Report

- Mayor Burks gave a brief overview of meetings and events she attended and other news of the city.

5. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Debbie Gathmann and Ashton Walker presented public comments.

6. OLD BUSINESS

A. To consider adopting an ordinance to create the Community Redevelopment Tax Incentive Program.

Councilmember Bell provided a brief overview of this item, stating it was reintroduced to the agenda to give the City Attorney more time for further research and to allow staff to send additional information to the Council. The memo from staff to the City Council addressed many questions regarding the blight ordinance. Councilmember Bell mentioned the City Attorney agreed to the City enforcing the ordinance to its fullest extent.

The Council discussed this matter.

Councilmember Perkins made a motion to an ordinance to adopt New Article VIII of Chapter 5 of the City Code to create a Community Redevelopment Tax Incentive Program; to levy an increased ad valorem tax on blighted property; and to provide for a decreased rate of taxation for property where blight conditions are remediated. Councilmember Carroll duly seconded the motion. Mayor Burks called for the vote and declared the motion approved (4-1-1). Vice Mayor Johnson voted “no” and Councilmember Adde abstained.

7. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. To approve a Proclamation designating February as “Black History Month”.
- B. To approve a Proclamation designating March as “Women’s History Month”.
- C. To approve a resolution authorizing a contract renewal for the Use of Meeting Space Agreement with the Clarkston Community Center (Venue Rentals) in the amount of \$15,000 to be funded out of the General Fund.
- D. To approve the fabrication and installation of ten (10) decorative mailboxes on the North side of Norman Road from Rogers Street to the Norman Road dam; including repairs/replacement of mailboxes on East Ponce de Leon for an estimated amount of \$30,000 to be funded out of SPLOST I.
- E. To approve the fabrication and installation of four (4) pergolas and corresponding benches and trash containers to enhance the pedestrian environment on Market Street between Vaughan Street and North Indian Creek for an estimated amount of \$60,000 to be funded out of SPLOST I.
- F. To approve the replacement of approximately 100 trees and 600 bushes/grasses that were planted by city landscape contractors over the past 5 years that have not survived or are diseased not to exceed \$125,000 to be funded out of the Tree Bank Fund and General Fund.
- G. To adopt an ordinance to define and prohibit nuisances, to define and prohibit highly hazardous conditions and to provide emergency powers for the building official.
- H. To approve a resolution appointing Dekalb County Board of Registrations and Elections to conduct the City of Clarkston 2025 General Municipal Election.

Councilmember Carroll made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda Items 7A through H. Councilmember Bell duly seconded the motion. Mayor Burks called for the vote and declared the motion approved (6-0).

8. NEW BUSINESS

- A. To consider approving a proposal from DeKalb County to fund the installation of the Beautification/Landscaping at the Church Street and I-285 Interchange on-ramp and contributes to the installation of new plants at the Church Street off-ramp.

Larry Kaiser with Collaborative Infrastructure Services, LLC provided a brief overview stating this proposal is a two-phase approach. Phase I is a donation from Commissioner Terry to the City of \$30,000 to install plantings that have died or diseased, provided the city agrees to continue maintenance of the off-ramp. The second phase will occur later this year in the third or fourth quarter, which will consist of Commissioner Terry hopefully finding funds in their budget to plant landscaping on the Church Street on-ramp at I-285 Interchange at a cost of about \$125,000 and it will be their responsibility to install and fund the plants.

Mr. Kaiser stated if this occurs based upon the budget, property taxes flowing in and if the County believes there may be a slight increase on those property taxes, some additional revenue, then it will be expressed to the City of Clarkston and the City will evaluate their budget and if there are sufficient funds to maintain the on-ramp of about \$30,000 additional dollars a year, forever, then we will proceed provided City Council agrees to the additional maintenance on the off-ramp.

The Council discussed this matter.

Councilmember Hood made a motion to approve a proposal from DeKalb County to fund the installation of the Beautification/Landscaping at the Church Street and I-285 Interchange on-ramp and contributes to the installation of new plants at the Church Street off-ramp. Councilmember Carroll duly seconded the motion. Mayor Burks called for the vote and declared the motion approved (6-0).

- B. To consider adopting an ordinance to require inspection certificates for 100% of multi-family residential units in connection with the annual business license renewal for such developments when the multi-family residential business fails to comply with applicable inspection and licensing requirements during the prior year.

Interim Planning and Economic Development Director, Richard Edwards stated staff is recommending is to add Section 11-99 called "Additional code compliance certificate requirement for non-compliant owners" to the Code of Ordinances. If the owner fails to provide a completed application, within a timely manner as established by the City Code Section 11-4 or you fail more than 50% of the unit inspection as required by City Code Section 11-97, then the City Clerk's Office would notify that property owner by June 1st that the following year they would be required to submit 100% of all units in connection with the owners next annual business license renewal.

The Council discussed this matter.

Councilmember Perkins made a motion to approve an ordinance to amend Chapter 11, Article V of the City Code regarding multi-family rental dwellings to require code compliance certificates for all units within multi-family rental dwellings at the time of business license renewal for those owners that do not comply with applicable business license requirements during the prior year. Councilmember Carroll duly seconded the motion. Mayor Burks called for the vote and declared the motion approved (6-0).

- C. To consider approving a resolution to re-designate a Downtown Development Area for the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) of Clarkston, as recommended by the DDA.

Richard Edwards, Interim Planning and Economic Development Director, presented the recommended adjustments from the Economic Development Consultant hired by the City. The consultant advised including the larger and older apartment complexes, as well as the industrial areas, in the city's plans.

The Council discussed this matter.

Councilmember Perkins made a motion to approve the resolution to re-designate a Downtown Development Area for the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) of Clarkston, as recommended by the DDA. Councilmember Carroll duly seconded the motion. Mayor Burks called for the vote and declared the motion approved (5-1). Vice Mayor Johnson voted “no”.

Vice Mayor Johnson made a motion to enter Executive Session. Councilmember Hood duly seconded the motion. Mayor Burks called for the vote and declared the motion approved. Mayor Burks called for the vote and declared the motion approved (6-0).

9. ADJOURNMENT

Vice Mayor Johnson made a motion to adjourn. Councilmember Perkins duly seconded the motion. Mayor Burks called for the vote and declared the meeting adjourned (6-0).

The meeting adjourned at 8:38 p.m.

ATTEST:



Tomika R. Mitchell
City Clerk



Beverly H. Burks
Mayor

