

**MINUTES OF CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION MEETING
CITY OF KENNESAW
Council Chambers
January 29, 2024
6:30 PM**

Present	Mayor Derek Easterling Mayor Pro Tem Antonio Jones Councilmember Madelyn Orochena Councilmember Tracey Viars Councilmember Pat Ferris Councilmember Trey Sinclair Deputy City Clerk Christie Burgner City Manager Jeff Drobney City Attorney Randall Bentley, Sr.
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1. Invocation

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Call to Order

Mayor Easterling called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. and introduced Allie Hicks who is a senior at Kennesaw State University. Ms. Hicks shadowed Mayor Easterling as “Mayor for the Day” for most of the day.

4. Announcements

- A. This public meeting is being conducted via the use of real-time telephonic technology allowing the public simultaneous access to the public meeting. You may also attend in person with limited seating available at both the Council Chambers and the Ben Robertson Community Center, if needed. Mayor and Council will be conducting their meeting via real-time telephonic technology using Zoom Meeting and Facebook Live. You can access the meeting via the following link: <https://www.facebook.com/CityofKennesaw/>
- B. If you are not able to attend a meeting in-person and would like to provide public comment on a specific agenda item, you can email kennesawcouncil@kennesaw-ga.gov no later than 6:00 PM the night of the regular meeting. Your comments on a specific agenda item will be read aloud or grouped into categories for the record. **Facebook Live is not monitored for public comment.**

5. Presentations

- A. Presentation of CALEA Awards to the Kennesaw Police Department and Kennesaw/Acworth 911.

Mayor Easterling will present CALEA awards to the Kennesaw Police Department and Kennesaw/Acworth 911 on Monday February 5, 2024.

- B. Presentation of the Kennesaw Police Department's Georgia Association of Chiefs of Police State Certification.

Mayor Easterling will present the Kennesaw Police Department's Georgia Association of Chiefs of Police State Certification on Monday, February 5, 2024.

- C. Promotion of Kennesaw Police Department Officer Chris Johnson to Sergeant.

Officer Chris Johnson will be promoted to Sergeant on Monday, February 5, 2024.

6. Public Comment/Business from the Floor

7. Old Business

8. New Business

9. Committee and Board Reports

10. Public Hearing(s)

- A. Approval of ORDINANCE to adopt an oath as prescribed by the Code of Ordinances of the City of Kennesaw, Georgia, Section 2-71(f).

After discussions between the Clerk's office and legal department, the amendments to the Ordinance regarding oaths have been administratively withdrawn.

11. Consent Agenda

- A. Approval of the January 16, 2024, City Council regular meeting minutes.

12. General and Administrative

13. Public Safety

- A. Receipt of the December 2023 Crime Statistics.

Kennesaw Police Chief Bill Westenberger presented the September 2023 crimestatistics.

14. Information Technology

15. Public Works & Facility Maintenance

- A. Approval of RESOLUTION for Bid and Award of Contract to Creative Landscape Group for Landscaping of Medians on Watts Drive.

Building & Facilities Director Robbie Balenger presented a resolution to approve a contract with Creative Landscape Group for landscaping the medians on Watts Drive. The landscaping was damaged by cold weather in 2022 and did not recover. A bid was advertised with Creative Landscape Group as the lowest bidder. There were no

questions or discussion from Council. After receiving confirmation, Mayor Easterling advised the item should move to the Consent Agenda.

- B. Approval of RESOLUTION authorizing the Mayor to sign a proposal from Osprey Management, LLC for the replacement of porch soffits at the Ben Robertson Community Center.

Building & Facilities Director Robbie Balenger presented a resolution to approve a proposal from Osprey Management for the replacement of porch soffits at the Ben Robertson Community Center. When originally placed the soffits were sheetrock, and the replacements would be waterproofed. This project was not bid, and the vendor was found via a state contract. There were no questions or discussion from Council. After receiving confirmation, Mayor Easterling advised the item should move to the Consent Agenda.

- C. UPDATE: Smith-Gilbert Garden pavilion, restroom facility, and paved pathways

Building & Facilities Director Robbie Balenger along with Smith-Gilbert Gardens Executive Director Dave Simpson updated Council on Smith-Gilbert Gardens. City officials have been working with Croy Engineering to give greater access to the Gardens, including upgrading the walking paths, parking lot and restrooms, and creating ADA compliant pathways. There is also a need for more inside space to enhance the Gardens' teachings/learning, which would include a new pavilion. There is no action needed from the Council at this time, this was an update only. There were no questions or discussion from Council.

16. Recreation and Culture

17. Community Development

18. Public Comment/Business from the Floor

19. City Manager's Report

- A. Reports, Discussions, and Updates

- B. UPDATE: Chalker Park

Assistant City Manager Marty Hughes updated the Council on Chalker Park and what staff is doing to make this a park that residents will be excited to visit. Key elements of the park are to include: an accessible playground, handicap parking, green space, and a half-mile walking track with fitness stations covered in turf. Mayor Pro-Tem Antonio Jones asked if the turf was artificial, and Mr. Hughes advised that it was.

- C. UPDATE: Public Safety Facility Renderings

Assistant City Manager Marty Hughes presented public safety facility updates. This has been a long process with many different departments working together as a team to get to this point. The City owns the land around the Public Works building where the new public safety facility will be located. Staff has scheduled interviews on January 30 with four of the engineering firms who submitted a RFQ to review those firms' presentations.

Councilmember Ferris asked about the ease of parking for the community and how many secured parking spots are planned. Mr. Hughes advised that about 160-170 spots are planned, however, there has been no determination yet as to how many spaces are to be secured versus open to the public. Mr. Ferris asked about the life of the building. Mr. Hughes advised that 30-40 years is usual, but they were using City Manager Jeff Drobney's mandate of "building for the future" and hoped to get 50 years from the building. Councilmember Viars asked about the square footage of the new building. Mr. Hughes advised they are trying to get to 30,000, however, cost is the main factor. Councilmember Ferris reminded that the rule of thumb is space will be full within one to two years. Mr. Hughes advised staff is working with Chief Westenberger on the space needs of the Police Department. Councilmember Jones asked about the surrounding yards. Mr. Hughes advised they would be about the same.

D. DISCUSSION ONLY: Use of small parking lot (PD side)

Assistant City Manager Marty Hughes presented options for Council to consider regarding the small parking lot on J.O. Stephenson Avenue on the Police side of City Hall. The slope of this parking area is currently not compliant with ADA standards. The council was given a handout with pros and cons of four options: ADA parking, standard parking, green space, and a loading area only. Councilmember Orochena verified that the trees only remained with the greenspace option. City Manager Jeff Drobney asked the Council to decide on which option they preferred tonight. Dr. Drobney advised of some of the issues that come with the oak trees at the front of City Hall, including the mess they make in the fall, streetlights being covered by foliage, the bricks get moldy and slippery due to the shade of the trees, and the massive root structure of oaks destroy sidewalks, bricks, and roadways. Councilmember Viars advised she did not believe there was enough space for delivery trucks to turn around, that greenspace was not needed in this exact area, and asked if there could be a combination of ADA and regular parking spots. There can only be ADA or regular, not both. Upon further discussion of parking lot location, Mayor Pro-Tem Antonio Jones advised he would prefer the greenspace. Councilmember Ferris advised he preferred to remove the oak trees and keep the spots handicap accessible. Mayor Easterling advised he is in support of removing the trees and making the lot ADA compliant. Mayor Pro-Tem Antonio Jones inquired about the larger lot at City Hall and if it would be brought into compliance. Dr. Drobney advised that currently there is no plan to remodel the larger lot due to cost, however staff are still looking at the possibility during the remodel of the front of City Hall. Consensus of Council was to move forward with ADA compliant lot.

E. DISCUSSION ONLY: Truck Signage - Convert monument sign to non-mirrored operation

City Manager Jeff Drobney advised the Council of the history of the mirrored truck signage on Cherokee Street and Jiles Road. Councilmember Ferris asked staff how much the cost would be to change one of the messages, which could give the City another marque for events. If funding was approved, the new product would be ordered. After receiving confirmation, Mayor Easterling advised the item was approved.

F. Consideration to approve up to \$53,000 from the Court Services Improvement Fund to purchase new security equipment.

Assistant City Manager Marty Hughes advised of the need for new Court equipment to include an x-ray machine and metal detector. There were no bids for these items as State contracts were utilized. Court Services Improvement Funds will be used for these items. After receiving confirmation, Mayor Easterling advised the item should move to the Consent Agenda.

20. Mayor's Report

- A. Mayor and Council (re)appointments to Boards and Commissions. This item is for (re)appointments made by the Mayor to any Board, Committee, Authority, or Commission requiring an appointment to fill any vacancies, resignations, and to create or dissolve boards and commissions, as deemed necessary.

21. Council Reports & Discussions

Mayor Pro-Tem Antonio Jones advised he was sad to have missed Trains, Trains, Trains, however he was attending an event at Kennesaw First Baptist Church.

Councilmember Sinclair advised his lease was up at the end of January, which will have him residing outside the city limits. Mr. Sinclair officially resigned from the Council as of January 29. He advised it was an honor and great privilege to serve in Kennesaw with Mayor Easterling, the Council, and staff. Mr. Sinclair thanked all that make the City great and advised he believed the City was set up to succeed moving forward.

Councilmember Ferris offered the best of luck to Councilmember Sinclair. He stated that Trains, Trains, Trains brings out the kid in people, and he still has some of the toy trains from when he was a child.

Councilmember Orochena thanked Councilmember Sinclair for his public service. Ms. Orochena advised she assisted with the Black History Bowl the previous weekend and they were down to eight teams. Mayor Easterling added that his students from Awtrey Middle School were still in the race.

Councilmember Viars advised she would miss Councilmember Sinclair. Ms. Viars stated she had met with some Kennesaw Downtown Merchants and believe there are a lot of exciting things to look forward to.

22. Executive Session

Pursuant to the provisions of O.C.G.A 50-14-3, the City Council could, at any time during the meeting, vote to close the public meeting and move to executive session to discuss matters relating to litigation, legal actions and/or communications from the City Attorney; and/or personnel matters; and/or real estate matters.

23. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 7:10 p.m.