

**MINUTES OF CITY COUNCIL MEETING
CITY OF KENNESAW
Council Chambers
(2529 J.O. Stephenson Avenue, Kennesaw, GA 30144)
February 5, 2024
6:30 PM**

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

1. Invocation

City Attorney Randall Bentley, Sr. led the invocation.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

City resident Andrew Bramlett led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Call to Order

Mayor Derek Easterling called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m.

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 PROCLAMATION declaring February 16, 2024, as Arbor Day in the City of Kennesaw.

Mayor Easterling presented the Georgia Arbor Day Proclamation to Smith-Gilbert Gardens Executive Director Dave Simpson. Mr. Simpson invited all to celebrate Georgia's Arbor Day by participating in a tree and shrub planting around the Gardens on Monday, February 12.

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

Mayor Easterling and Chief Bill Westenberger presented the CALEA award to members of the Kennesaw Police Department and Kennesaw/Acworth 911. Accreditation Manager Chelsea Charnock was presented a plaque for her efforts in the recertification of the police department.

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

Mayor Easterling presented the Georgia Association of Chiefs of Police State Certification to members of the Kennesaw Police Department.

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

Chief Westenberger introduced Sergeant Chris Johnson to Mayor, Council and the public. Sergeant Johnson has been with the Kennesaw Police Department for over five years and was promoted in November 2023. Sergeant Johnson thanked Chief Westenberger, Mayor, and Council and advised he looks forward to continuing to serve the City of Kennesaw.

6. Public Comment/Business from the Floor

6:41 p.m. Floor Open for Public Comments

There was no public comment.

6:42 p.m. Floor Closed for Public Comments

7. Old Business

8. New Business

- A. Approval of RESOLUTION to set a qualifying fee for a Special Election on May 21, 2024, to fill a vacancy on Council Post 5 and authorization to advertise said notice and fee.

City Clerk Lea Alvarez provided information regarding the Resolution to set qualifying fees for a Special Election in May for the vacancy of Post 5. There were no questions from Council. Mayor Easterling called for a motion. Councilmember Viars moved to approve the resolution. Councilmember Ferris seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The motion was approved unanimously 4:0.

- B. Approval of RESOLUTION authorizing the 2024 Special Election qualifying dates and authorization of the Mayor to execute the contract with Cobb County Board of Elections and Registration to conduct the City's Special Election to be held May 21, 2024.

City Clerk Lea Alvarez provided information for the Resolution to authorize the 2024

Special election qualifying dates and to execute a contract with Cobb Elections to conduct the Special Elections in May. There were no questions from Council. Mayor Easterling called for a motion. Councilmember Ferris moved to approve the resolution. Councilmember Viars seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The motion was approved unanimously (4:0).

9. Committee and Board Reports

10. Public Hearing(s)

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

Mayor Easterling advised the Public Hearing was advertised and would take place, however, the ordinance was not ready and would be advertised again when it was complete. Mayor Easterling opened the floor for public comment. There was none.

11. Consent Agenda

Mayor Easterling called for a motion for the Consent Agenda. Councilmember Viars moved to approve the Consent Agenda engross. Councilmember Jones seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The motion was approved unanimously (4:0).

- A. Approval of the January 16, 2024, City Council regular meeting minutes.
- B. Approval of RESOLUTION for Bid and Award of Contract to Creative Landscape Group for Landscaping of Medians on Watts Drive.
- C. 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.
- D. Approval of up to \$53,000 from the Court Services Improvement Fund to purchase new security equipment.

12. General and Administrative

13. Public Safety

- A. Receipt of the December 2023 Crime Statistics.

Chief Westenberg presented crime statistics from the Kennesaw Police Department for December 2023. Mayor Easterling called for a motion. Councilmember Jones moved to accept the crime statistics as presented. Councilmember Orochena seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The motion was approved unanimously (4:0).

14. Information Technology

15. Public Works

16. Recreation and Culture

17. Community Development

18. Public Comment/Business from the Floor

6:46 p.m. Floor Open for Public Comments

ANDREW BRAMLETT (City Resident): Mr. Bramlett shared a local history story about World War II veteran Alfred Jackson.

ANTHONY GUTIERREZ (City Resident): Mr. Gutierrez stated he was tired of games being played, of some businesses receiving special treatment while others receive targeted attacks, and mostly tired of losing the affordability and calm of the city he loves. Developers are given free range to do whatever they want, make promises, lie, and face no consequences or repercussions. Mr. Gutierrez advised that now more than ever the City needs a council with foresight who understands that the direction the city is headed caters more to wealthy outsiders than the families that built the city; a council that understands the heart of Kennesaw, not one that wants a cookie cutter concrete jungle that destroys the charms of small cities throughout Georgia. Mr. Gutierrez officially announced his run for the upcoming Special Election as he cannot sit back and watch this continue. Mr. Gutierrez looks forward to speaking during upcoming Council meetings and bringing to light other things that need to change.

6:49 p.m. Floor Closed for Public Comments.

19. City Manager's Report

A. Reports, Discussions, and Updates

Dr. Drobney had no comments.

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.

Mayor Easterling announced two boards/commission appointments. Rachel Mangum to the Arts and Culture Commission, and Rebecca Carlson to the Cemetery Preservation Commission. Mayor Easterling called for a motion. Councilmember Jones moved to accept the appointments by Mayor Easterling. Councilmember Viars seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The motion was approved unanimously (4:0).

21. Council Reports & Discussions

Councilmember Orochena advised she is excited for the Arbor Day celebrations at Smith-Gilbert Gardens, and stated that the Alfred Jackson interview on YouTube is interesting to watch.

Mayor Pro Tem Jones congratulated Lisa Skaggs on her recent retirement from Smith-Gilbert Gardens and thanked her for her years of service. Mr. Jones commented on the

great weather.

Councilmember Ferris had no comments.

Councilmember Viars stated the Kennesaw Police Department and 911 does a tremendous job for the city. Ms. Viars advised of a meeting with three couples of which two had not been to the city in a long time and the other couple has a daughter who attends Kennesaw State University. Ms. Viars advised of the positive feedback she gets, how others view the city and how they would like to invest in the future of the city.

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

Mayor Easterling adjourned the meeting at 6:51 p.m. The next regularly scheduled council meeting will be held on Monday, February 19, 2024, at 6:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers. The public is encouraged to attend or view via Facebook Live.