

**MINUTES OF CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION MEETING
CITY OF KENNESAW
Council Chambers
(2529 J.O. Stephenson Avenue, Kennesaw, GA 30144)
March 25, 2024
6:30 PM**

Present	Mayor Derek Easterling Mayor Pro Tem Antonio Jones Councilmember Madelyn Orochena Councilmember Tracey Viars Councilmember Pat Ferris City Clerk Lea Alvarez 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.

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

6. Public Comment/Business from the Floor

7. Old Business

8. New Business

9. Committee and Board Reports

A. **Resolution: Amended Kennesaw Sister Cities Commission Bylaws**

Consideration for approval of a Resolution to amend the Kennesaw Sister Cities Commission bylaws Sections .01, .04, and .06.

Assistant to the City Manager James Friedrich presented a resolution to amend the bylaws for the Kennesaw Sister Cities Commissions. Proposed amendments include the following: 1) Section. 01 to correct an administrative error; 2) Section .04 to change the qualifications of the commissioners regarding Art and Culture and Economic Development; and Section .06 to align the attendance and removal policy with the requirements as written in the Kennesaw Code of Ordinances. The Kennesaw Sister Cities Commission met on Wednesday, March 20, 2024, and reviewed the proposed changes.

Councilmember Ferris was surprised there was not a member of the Art and Culture Commission that was qualified to be on the Sister Cities Commission. Mr. Friedrich stated there are plenty of qualified members on the Art and Culture Commission, but there hasn't been anyone that can commit to both boards. He explained the proposed changes to the qualifications were to allow for a greater scope of individuals to qualify in the event a current member has to resign.

Mayor Pro Tem Jones asked the City Attorney if the Council had to have cause to remove a commissioner. He would like for Legal to review if the Council can remove a member without cause.

Mayor Easterling stated the item will remain where it is on the agenda.

B. **Update: Kennesaw Sister Cities Commission's potential partnership with Montepulciano, Italy.**

Mr. Friedrich gave an update on the status of the Kennesaw Sister Cities Commission. In October 2023, the Commission decided to reach out to Montepulciano, Italy, because of our proximity to Kennesaw State University and its relationship with the Italian municipality. On February 27, 2024, Commissioners met with the Mayor's staff of Montepulciano and discussed shared goals and program ideas, including pen pals or virtual classroom meetings, swapping festivals and celebrations, etc. Mr. Friedrich also stated a mutual goal is to connect community organizations such as sports teams, rotary clubs, and Chambers of Commerce. There are a lot of great opportunities for exchange with this partnership.

Montepulciano suggested pursuing an initial "Friendship Path," which would be an informal six to 12 months where they engage in simple programming to get a feel for each other's cities.

Mayor Pro Tem Jones asked if there was a way to partner Dobbins Air Force Base with

a base near Montepulciano. Assistant City Manager Marty Hughes stated there were not any bases near that area.

Councilmember Ferris asked what the population was for Montepulciano. Mr. Frierich responded that the population was 14,000 as of 2017. Councilmember Ferris asked if the city had its own school system or university. Mr. Friedrich said yes, Montepulciano had its own school system as well as Kennesaw State's satellite campus. Ken Hill, Manager of the Montepulciano Educational Site at Kennesaw State University, chimed in and shared that the University of Siena was about 45 minutes away from Montepulciano.

10. Public Hearing(s)

- A. **Resolution: 2024-2028 Capital Improvement Short Term Work Program**
Consideration for approval of a Resolution to adopt the transmittal of updates to the Capital Improvement Element and the Short Term Work Program (CIE/STWP) covering the five-year period of 2024-2028.

Zoning Administrator Darryl Simmons presented a resolution to adopt the transmittal of updates to the Capital Improvement Element Short Term Work Program (CIE/STWP) covering the five-year period of 2024-2028. Mr. Simmons mentioned the City of Kennesaw is a Qualified Local Government (QLG) and because we collect impact fees, we are required by the Department of Community Affairs and the Atlanta Regional Commission to provide a five-year update on our capital improvement projects as well as a financial statement on how many fees have been collected and how they are being used. To maintain our status, the city must submit this report.

Councilmember Ferris asked if there could be a session set up with Dr. Drobney or Mr. Simmons to go over the details of the report before the regular meeting on Monday night. The City Manager and City Clerk will coordinate and advertise the meeting.

11. Consent Agenda

- A. **Minutes: March 11, 2024, Work Session**
Approval of the March 11, 2024, City Council work session minutes.
- B. **Minutes: March 11, 2024, Executive Session**
Approval of the March 11, 2024, City Council executive session minutes.
- C. **Minutes: March 18, 2024, Regular Meeting**
Approval of the March 18, 2024, City Council regular meeting minutes.

12. General and Administrative

13. Public Safety

14. Information Technology

15. Public Works

16. Recreation and Culture

17. Community Development

18. Public Comment/Business from the Floor

19. City Manager's Report

A. Reports, Discussions, and Updates

20. Mayor's Report

A. **Discussion Only: MSPLOST Update**

Discussion item as requested by Mayor Derek Easterling.

Dr. Drobney shared Cobb County is looking at a 30-year Mobility SPLOST to place in a referendum in November. Cobb County emailed the Council an invitation to attend a meeting on April 8, 2024. It is an effort by the County to provide an update on what they plan to do.

Councilmember Ferris stated the Council needs to strategize. He is against it as there is not much benefit for North Cobb. He asked if the municipal authorities would be able to give any feedback during the meeting. Mayor Easterling shared he believed it was going to be a one-way conversation, more like a sales pitch. Councilmember Ferris stated at some point, he would like to see our Council take a position. Mayor Easterling shared he does not want SPLOST as we know it to be interfered with by throwing a 30-year MSPLOST in. It is money for transit that will not help us. Mayor Pro Tem Jones said he would like to go to the meeting on April 8th before the Council makes a decision.

B. **Discussion Only: Cherokee Street Silent Crossing - Double Gate**

Discussion item as requested by Mayor Derek Easterling.

Mayor Easterling discussed a silent crossing at Cherokee Street, which would require a double gate. He had Dr. Drobney to pull the figures from the last time the silent crossing was discussed. Dr. Drobney stated the most recent silent crossing that was installed in Cobb County was last year in Smyrna for \$435,000. The crossing was funded by SPLOST dollars. The work for the crossing was started five years prior to it being implemented. The County issued a notice of intent in 2018, and the crossing was finished in 2023.

Councilmember Ferris asked for the current estimate of when the Sardis Street Overpass would be completed. Dr. Drobney stated this project is partially funded by SPLOST, which doesn't end until 2028. Mayor Easterling asked if the Council wanted to spend upwards of \$500,000 on a silent crossing with the Sardis Street Overpass project on the horizon.

Councilmember Viars asked if we are going to allow pedestrian crossing once Cherokee Street closes. Public Works Director Ricky Stewart stated the initial plans for

a pedestrian crossing include the existing underpass and a walkway within the width of the bridge. There would not be pedestrians crossing the tracks.

Councilmember Ferris requested the city to reach out to CSX to get feedback from them. Dr. Drobney stated he would reach out and get more information.

21. Council Reports & Discussions

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 7:15 p.m. The next regularly scheduled meeting will be held on Monday, April 1, 2024, at 6:30 P.M. in the Council Chambers. The public is encouraged to attend or view via Facebook Live.

Lea Alvarez, City Clerk