



Georgetown City Council

2222 Highmarket Street
Georgetown, SC 29440

Regular Meeting

~ Minutes ~

Thursday, October 19, 2023

5:30 PM

Municipal Courtroom

1. Call to Order

Notice of this meeting has been made in accordance with the South Carolina Code of Laws as amended.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Mayor Carol Jayroe
Mayor Pro Tempore Jim Clements
Council Member Hobson H. Milton
Council Member Jimmy Morris
Council Member Tamika Williams-Obeng
Council Member Clarence C. Smalls

MEMBERS ABSENT

Council Member Jonathan Angner

ALSO PRESENT

Mrs. Elise Crosby, City Attorney
Dr. Sandra E. Yúdice, City Administrator
Ms. Stephanie Buccione, City Clerk
Mrs. Cindy Thompson, Public Information Officer
Ms. Eliza Jagger, Assistant Finance Director
Mr. Nick Ard, IT Technician
Mr. Ryan Call, Building Official
Chief Charlie Cribb, Georgetown Fire Department
Chief William Pierce, Georgetown Police Department
Mr. Al Joseph, Main Street Coordinator
Mr. Chris Mullis, Water Utilities Manager
Mr. Scott Whittier, Deputy City Administrator
Mr. Isaac Williams, Fleet Superintendent

MEDIA

Mr. Scott Harper, GAB News

2. ANNOUNCEMENT CONCERNING ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Mayor Carol Jayroe called the Regular Meeting of City Council to order at 5:30pm and requested all cell phones or electronic devices be turned off or placed on mute, with the exception of first responders, so as to not interrupt the meeting.

3. INVOCATION & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Jayroe recognized Council Member Obeng to render the invocation and Council Member Morris to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

4. PUBLIC COMMENTS ON CURRENT AGENDA ITEMS

Mayor Jayroe recognized Mr. Wesley Gibson. Mr. Gibson stated he wanted to talk about agenda item 6.A regarding the city's application to the South Carolina Arts Commission to become a State of South Carolina Cultural District. Mr. Gibson asked how council can approve a draft that is not complete and when the public hearing was held to get citizen input. He also questioned when the Arts Commission meets and where are the meetings held. Mr. Gibson stated more studies are needed before this is approved because a lot of history from the West End is missing from the map.

Mayor Jayroe recognized Ms. Marilyn Hemmingway. Ms. Hemmingway stated she believes a lot of black history is missing from the strategic plan and the Gullah-Geechee culture heritage is not even mentioned. She said Georgetown is the heart of this culture because of the rice production. Ms. Hemmingway stated the Gullah Geechee Chamber is going to send a letter into the state and request the application from the Arts Commission be denied.

Mayor Jayroe recognized Mr. Sheldon Butts. Mr. Butts said he was happy to see the city finally formed an Arts Commission since Georgetown has more history than Charleston. Mr. Butts stated there is a lot of missing historical information in the strategic plan. He stated he is disappointed that the Gullah-Geechee culture was not included in the plan.

5. INTRODUCTION OF NEW EMPLOYEES

Mr. Mullis introduced Mr. William Small for the Water department.

6. PLANNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**A. Motion to approve prior to the 2nd application, this Council hold a public meeting to specifically address the African American heritage of this city, which is tremendously important.**

Mayor Pro Tempore Clements moved to amend the motion to "prior to the 2nd application, this Council hold a public meeting to specifically address the African-American heritage of this city, which is tremendously important." He stated subject to a satisfactory review and revision to that document, then we can consider a 2nd reading to keep the process moving since the commission has been working on this for the past 7 months. Mayor Jayroe seconded.

Mrs. Crosby pointed out the Resolution states there was a notice published and a public hearing held on this matter on June 15, 2023.

RESULT:	DEFEATED [3 TO 3]
MOVER:	Jim Clements, Mayor Pro Tempore
SECONDER:	Carol R. Jayroe, Mayor
AYES:	Jim Clements, Jimmy Morris, Carol R. Jayroe
NAYS:	Tamika Williams Obeng, Hobson H. Milton, Clarence C. Smalls
ABSENT:	Jonathan Angner

B. Motion to approve a Resolution approving the draft Strategic and Marketing plans of the Arts and Cultural Commission as part of the City of Georgetown's application to the South Carolina Arts Commission to become a State of South Carolina Cultural District.

Mayor Jayroe requested Myrtle Grove Cemetery be added to the map. Mr. Joseph confirmed it will be added. Council Member Obeng requested the vote be postponed until the public has a chance to attend an Arts Commission meeting and be able to give input after reviewing the strategic plan.

RESULT:	DEFEATED [3 TO 3]
MOVER:	Jim Clements, Mayor Pro Tempore
SECONDER:	Carol R. Jayroe, Mayor
AYES:	Jim Clements, Jimmy Morris, Carol R. Jayroe
NAYS:	Tamika Williams Obeng, Hobson H. Milton, Clarence C. Smalls
ABSENT:	Jonathan Angner

C. Motion to Approve Complaint Petition and Notice of Hearing on a Dwelling Unfit for Habitation for 216 Wood Street.

Mayor Pro Tempore Clements moved, seconded by Council Member Morris.

Mayor Jayroe called for the vote.

RESULT:	DEFEATED [3 TO 3]
MOVER:	Jim Clements, Mayor Pro Tempore
SECONDER:	Jimmy Morris, Council Member
AYES:	Jim Clements, Jimmy Morris, Carol R. Jayroe
NAYS:	Tamika Williams Obeng, Hobson H. Milton, Clarence C. Smalls
ABSENT:	Jonathan Angner

D. Motion to approve Complaint Petition and Notice of Hearing on a Dwelling Unfit for Habitation for 212 Wood Street.

Mayor Pro Tempore Clements moved, seconded by Council Member Morris.

Mayor Jayroe called for the vote.

RESULT:	DEFEATED [3 TO 3]
MOVER:	Jim Clements, Mayor Pro Tempore
SECONDER:	Jimmy Morris, Council Member
AYES:	Jim Clements, Jimmy Morris, Carol R. Jayroe
NAYS:	Tamika Williams Obeng, Hobson H. Milton, Clarence C. Smalls
ABSENT:	Jonathan Angner

E. Motion to approve Complaint Petition and Notice of Hearing on a Dwelling Unfit for Habitation for 208 Wood Street.

Mayor Pro Tempore Clements moved, seconded by Council Member Morris.

Mayor Jayroe called for the vote.

Mr. Call stated for the record "This was brought to my attention by a neighbor who just spent a tremendous amount of money to renovate a home so that is the reason this was pursued."

RESULT:	DEFEATED [3 TO 3]
MOVER:	Jim Clements, Mayor Pro Tempore
SECONDER:	Jimmy Morris, Council Member
AYES:	Jim Clements, Jimmy Morris, Carol R. Jayroe
NAYS:	Tamika Williams Obeng, Hobson H. Milton, Clarence C. Smalls
ABSENT:	Jonathan Angner

7. FINANCE

A. Motion to approve first reading of an ordinance to amend Article I of Chapter 22 by adding Section 22-4 titled Equalized Monthly Utility Payment and ratify previous actions the City of Georgetown took regarding the Budget Billing program.

Council Member Obeng moved, seconded by Mayor Pro Tempore Clements.

Mayor Jayroe called for the vote.

RESULT:	APPROVED [5 TO 1]	Next: 11/16/2023 5:30 PM
MOVER:	Tamika Williams Obeng, Council Member	
SECONDER:	Jim Clements, Mayor Pro Tempore	
AYES:	Clements, Morris, Obeng, Jayroe, Milton	
NAYS:	Clarence C. Smalls	
ABSENT:	Jonathan Angner	

B. Motion to approve first reading of an ordinance to amend the fiscal year 2023/2024 [FY 2024] budget for the city of Georgetown, South Carolina, to increase the General Fund budget by \$163,365.84 and prescribe purposes for which certain earmarked funds supplemental appropriation shall be expended.

Mayor Pro Tempore Clements moved, seconded by Council Member Morris.

Mayor Jayroe called for the vote.

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]	Next: 11/16/2023 5:30 PM
MOVER:	Jim Clements, Mayor Pro Tempore	
SECONDER:	Jimmy Morris, Council Member	
AYES:	Clements, Morris, Obeng, Jayroe, Milton, Smalls	
ABSENT:	Jonathan Angner	

8. ENGINEERING

- A. Motion to approve a contract in the amount of \$454,500 and to award contract to North American Construction Company for the Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) Grit Removal System Replacement Project #1822.**

Council Member Smalls moved, seconded by Council Member Morris.

Mayor Jayroe called for the vote.

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Clarence C. Smalls, Council Member
SECONDER:	Jimmy Morris, Council Member
AYES:	Clements, Morris, Obeng, Jayroe, Milton, Smalls
ABSENT:	Jonathan Angner

- B. Motion to approve a contract in the amount of \$1,223,000 for two projects: 1) Sewer Force Main Replacement (#1820) and Sewer Pump Station #11 Replacement (#1821) and to award an engineering contract to WK Dickson & Co. Inc. under the South Carolina Infrastructure Investment Program (SCIIP) grant.**

Mayor Pro Tempore Clements moved, seconded by Council Member Obeng. Mayor Pro Tempore Clements requested to add to the contract that WK Dickson hold a couple public meetings at no additional cost.

Mayor Jayroe called for the vote.

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Jim Clements, Mayor Pro Tempore
SECONDER:	Tamika Williams Obeng, Council Member
AYES:	Clements, Morris, Obeng, Jayroe, Milton, Smalls
ABSENT:	Jonathan Angner

9. ELECTRIC UTILITIES

- A. Motion to approve the first amendment to the service agreement between City of Georgetown and the South Carolina Public Service Authority for Wholesale Power Supply and authorize the city administrator to execute the amendment.**

Council Member Smalls moved, seconded by Mayor Pro Tempore Clements.

Mayor Jayroe called for the vote.

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Clarence C. Smalls, Council Member
SECONDER:	Jim Clements, Mayor Pro Tempore
AYES:	Clements, Morris, Obeng, Jayroe, Milton, Smalls
ABSENT:	Jonathan Angner

B. Motion to approve a contract in the amount of \$688,931.22 for the Front Street Underground Electric System Upgrade project and award contract to Sumter Utilities Inc.

Mayor Pro Tempore Clements moved, seconded by Council Member Morris.

Mayor Jayroe called for the vote.

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Jim Clements, Mayor Pro Tempore
SECONDER:	Jimmy Morris, Council Member
AYES:	Clements, Morris, Obeng, Jayroe, Milton, Smalls
ABSENT:	Jonathan Angner

10. ADMINISTRATION

A. Motion to approve an Opioid Settlement Resolution prescribing the expenditures of the Opioid Settlement Funds awarded to the city under the Guaranteed Political Subdivision SubFund of the South Carolina Opioid Recovery Fund Board and authorize the city administrator to execute a memorandum of understanding with the Georgetown County Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission to implement the State's approved programs and strategies to address opioid issues in the City of Georgetown.

Council Member Obeng moved, seconded by Council Member Morris. Mayor Jayroe requested updated information be provided in monthly reports.

Mayor Jayroe called for the vote.

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Tamika Williams Obeng, Council Member
SECONDER:	Jimmy Morris, Council Member
AYES:	Clements, Morris, Obeng, Jayroe, Milton, Smalls
ABSENT:	Jonathan Angner

B. Motion to ratify employment agreement between the City of Georgetown and Scott Whittier who was appointed city administrator by motion of City Council on September 28, 2023, and authorize the mayor to execute the agreement.

Council Member Milton moved, seconded by Council Member Morris.

Mayor Jayroe called for the vote.

RESULT:	APPROVED [5 TO 1]
MOVER:	Hobson H. Milton, Council Member
SECONDER:	Jimmy Morris, Council Member
AYES:	Clements, Morris, Obeng, Jayroe, Milton
NAYS:	Clarence C. Smalls
ABSENT:	Jonathan Angner

11. CITY ADMINISTRATOR REPORT

Mayor Jayroe stated this is the last City Administrator Report for Dr. Yúdice. She stated she appreciated everything Dr. Yúdice has done for the city in the last couple of years and commended her for her hard work on moving the city forward.

Dr. Yúdice stated if county council approves a resolution to have a capital sales tax commission at their October 24th meeting, City Council will need to appoint 2 members that are city residents for that commission. Dr. Yúdice thanked the Mayor and City Council for giving her the opportunity to be the City Administrator.

12. MINUTES

A. Motion to approve minutes of September 14, 21, and 28, 2023 Council Meetings.

Mayor Pro Tempore Clements moved, seconded Council Member Morris seconded. Council Member Obeng requested a revision be added to the minutes of the September 28 Special Meeting/Workshop. She requested that public community workshops be held to inform residents and to add the time frame of 18 months that the program will be implemented based on the ERP program to the presentation for the pay-as-you-go program.

Mayor Jayroe called for the vote.

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Jim Clements, Mayor Pro Tempore
SECONDER:	Jimmy Morris, Council Member
AYES:	Clements, Morris, Obeng, Jayroe, Milton, Smalls
ABSENT:	Jonathan Angner

13. OLD BUSINESS

Council Member Milton questioned why the Juneteenth parade wasn't on this month's meeting agenda since there was a workshop last month to discuss the topic. Dr. Yúdice stated if Council wants to include it in the FY2025 budget for the city to co-sponsor the parade, it will need to be included in the budget planning meetings for next year's budget.

Mayor Pro Tempore Clements requested an update on the dilapidated houses on the West End that are to be completed by the end of the year. Dr. Yúdice stated the state is reviewing the paperwork we submitted and once we receive it back from the state the contracts will be awarded. He stated he looks forward to working with staff on the list compiled of 98 dilapidated houses throughout the city moving forward.

14. NEW BUSINESS

none

15. DEPARTMENT MONTHLY REPORTS

- A. Electric Department Monthly Report**
- B. Engineering Department Monthly Report**
- C. Fire Department Monthly Report**
- D. Fleet Service Monthly Report**
- E. Human Resources Department Monthly Report**
- F. Municipal Court Monthly Report**
- G. Planning & Community Development Monthly Report**
- H. Police Department Monthly Report**
- I. Public Works Monthly Report**
- J. Risk Management Monthly Report**
- K. Water Utilities Monthly Report**
- L. Finance and IT Department Monthly Report**

16. PUBLIC COMMENTS ON CITY SERVICES, BUSINESS, OR OTHER CITY MATTERS NOT ON THE AGENDA

Mayor Jayroe recognized Mr. Willie Singleton. Mr. Singleton stated that the City Administrator previously said that utility rates would increase 34% because of operation expenses. He said that is illegal.

Mayor Jayroe recognized Ms. Victoria Porcher. Ms. Porcher stated she cannot afford a 17% increase in utility rates. She said something needs to happen so residents can afford medication, groceries, and household expenses in addition to the rate increases.

Mayor Jayroe recognized Mr. Fred Williams. Mr. Williams handed Mayor and Council a copy of his utility bill. He stated most residents are on a fixed income and do not have resources to afford the utility rate increases.

Mayor Jayroe recognized Ms. Violet Lucas. Ms. Lucas stated her concern with the utility rate increases. She asked if there has been an independent outside study and if so does the public has access to the study. Ms. Lucas stated the entire city is affected by the rate increases including business owners. She said business owners can offset the increase to their customers but residents do not have that option. She stated she would like to work together with city administration to come up with a solution on this matter.

Mayor Jayroe recognized Mr. Wesley Gibson. Mr. Gibson said he hears from black, white, and hispanic people that they cannot pay their utility bill. Mr. Gibson said the city says they don't have money but they paid \$2.2 million for Georgetown Auto and sold the electric

building for \$850,000. He stated you can't spend your way out of trouble and that is what this council is doing. He stated if you want change make sure you vote on November 7th.

Mayor Jayroe recognized Ms. Janette Graham. Ms. Graham stated we cannot afford the utility rate increases. She said senior residents need to decide if they can pay for their medications or their utility bill. She said the Howard High School building's utility bill has doubled from when the Alumni bought the building a few years ago from the county.

Mayor Jayroe recognized Mr. Jim Clements. Mr. Clements stated he has sat through many public comments during council meetings that have presented false information and council is not able to respond. He stated it was former administration that planned on spending \$5M on Front Street to build a new city hall. He said it is this administration who committed to the West End and show fiscal responsibility on selecting a new city hall in the West End. He said the expenditure for the new city hall is intended to be equivalent to the insurance payment received and will have a \$0 balance to our taxpayers. Mr. Clements stated this administration will consider selling the old city hall property for private future redevelopment and gain valuable tax dollars in the process. He stated the former administration sold the electric building and the current administration was left with fulfilling the commitment to relocate the electric department. He stated the current administration took the opportunity to fulfill relocating Public Works and the Electric department into one building. He said this will leave the current Public Works building in the West End available for potential redevelopment opportunities. Mr. Clements stated this administration did not neglect city business that resulted in catastrophic losses to the utility business. He said it is documented in the 2021 independent financial auditor review that the failure for the utilities to meet their financial obligation posed the biggest financial risk to the city. He stated the auditor was appointed by the previous administration.

17. EXECUTIVE SESSION

- A. Motion to adjourn Regular Meeting and enter into Executive Session pursuant to Section 30-4-70(a)(1) (2) to receive quarterly legal update from the city attorney on pending cases and cases adjudicated since last update and to discuss appointments/reappointments to the City Boards/Commissions and Georgetown Housing Authority.**

Council Member Obeng moved, seconded by Council Member Milton.

Mayor Jayroe called for the vote.

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Tamika Williams Obeng, Council Member
SECONDER:	Hobson H. Milton, Council Member
AYES:	Clements, Morris, Obeng, Jayroe, Milton, Smalls
ABSENT:	Jonathan Angner

The Regular meeting adjourned at 7:00pm.

- B. Motion to adjourn Executive Session and reconvene Regular Meeting.**

Mayor Pro Tempore Clements moved, seconded by Council Member Obeng.

Mayor Jayroe called for the vote.

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Jim Clements, Mayor Pro Tempore
SECONDER:	Tamika Williams Obeng, Council Member
AYES:	Clements, Morris, Obeng, Jayroe, Milton, Smalls
ABSENT:	Jonathan Angner

Executive Session adjourned and Regular Meeting reconvened at 7:30pm.

C. NO FORMAL ACTION WAS TAKEN IN EXECUTIVE SESSION.

D. City Council may take action on items discussed in Executive Session.

18. APPOINTMENTS

A. Motion to reappoint Gwendolyn Huesel to the Keep Georgetown Beautiful Board.

Council Member Obeng moved, seconded by Mayor Pro Tempore Clements.

Mayor Jayroe called for the vote.

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Tamika Williams Obeng, Council Member
SECONDER:	Jim Clements, Mayor Pro Tempore
AYES:	Clements, Morris, Obeng, Jayroe, Milton, Smalls
ABSENT:	Jonathan Angner

B. Motion to reappoint Jonathan "Blake" Badger to the Board of Zoning Appeals.

Mayor Pro Tempore Clements moved, seconded by Council Member Obeng.

Mayor Jayroe called for the vote.

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Jim Clements, Mayor Pro Tempore
SECONDER:	Tamika Williams Obeng, Council Member
AYES:	Clements, Morris, Obeng, Jayroe, Milton, Smalls
ABSENT:	Jonathan Angner

C. Motion to appoint Jessica Hylton to the Arts & Cultural Commission.

Mayor Pro Tempore Clements moved, seconded by Council Member Milton.

Mayor Jayroe called for the vote.

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Jim Clements, Mayor Pro Tempore
SECONDER:	Hobson H. Milton, Council Member
AYES:	Clements, Morris, Obeng, Jayroe, Milton, Smalls
ABSENT:	Jonathan Angner

19. ADJOURNMENT

A. Motion to adjourn the Regular Meeting of City Council.

Council Member Milton moved, seconded by Mayor Pro Tempore Clements.

Mayor Jayroe called for the vote.

The Regular Meeting adjourned at 7:30pm.

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Hobson H. Milton, Council Member
SECONDER:	Jim Clements, Mayor Pro Tempore
AYES:	Clements, Morris, Obeng, Jayroe, Milton, Smalls
ABSENT:	Jonathan Angner