



OCTOBER 26, 2023, 6:30 p.m. - CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING
CITY GOVERNMENT
OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS
OF THE MAYOR AND ALDERMEN
SAVANNAH, GEORGIA

The regular meeting of the City Council was held at 6:31 p.m. Mayor Johnson recognized **Rabbi Robert Haas, spiritual leader of Congregation Mickve Israel**, to offer the invocation. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited in unison.

Mayor Johnson requested a moment of silence to honor victims of the tragedy in Maine. Numerous families were effected by the senseless shooting and authorities are still looking for the gunman.

PRESENT:

Mayor Van R. Johnson, II, Presiding
Alderwoman Keshia Gibson-Carter, At-Large, Post 1
Alderwoman Alicia Miller Blakely, At-Large, Post 2
Alderwoman Bernetta B. Lanier, District 1
Alderman Detric Leggett, District 2
Alderwoman Linda Wilder-Bryan, District 3
Alderman Nick Palumbo, District 4, Vice-Chairman
Alderwoman Dr. Estella Edwards Shabazz, District 5, Mayor Pro-Tem
Alderman Kurtis Purtee, District 6

ALSO, PRESENT:

City Manager Joseph A. Melder
Chief of Staff Daphanie Williams
City Attorney Bates Lovett
Clerk of Council Mark Massey
Deputy Clerk of Council Margaret Fox

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

[1. Adoption of the Regular Meeting Agenda for October 26, 2023.](#)

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to adopt/approve the agenda for October 26, 2023, seconded by Alderwoman Lanier and Alderman Palumbo. The motion passed unanimously, 9-0-0.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

[2. Approval of the Minutes for the Regular Meeting Held on October 12, 2023, at 2:00 p.m.](#)

[Exhibit 1: DRAFT MINUTES_October 12, 2023 City Council Regular Meeting.pdf](#)

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to approve Item #2, seconded by Alderwoman Lanier and Alderman Palumbo. The motion passed unanimously, 9-0-0.

PRESENTATIONS

[3. An Appearance by Survivors, Supporters and Advocates, in Observance of National Breast Cancer Awareness Month](#)

READ and PRESENTED by Mayor Johnson to WSAV Anchor Tina Tyus-Shaw in recognition of her efforts with Buddy Check 3 during Breast Cancer Awareness Month. In attendance were Olivia Hamilton, Gwendolyn Green, Vera Lawrence, Sharon Wanda Aikens, LaTeia Lott Parker, a former Clerk of Council's office city employee, and baby Jynesis Parker. Each attendee relayed a brief account of their experience with breast cancer. Ms. Tyus-Shaw encouraged everyone to donate to the Telfair Mammography Fund in support of assisted or free mammograms for those who do not have insurance.

PURCHASING ITEMS - (CITY MANAGER RECOMMENDS APPROVAL OF ALL ITEMS IN THIS SECTION UNLESS NOTED OTHERWISE)

[4. Authorize the City Manager to Execute Contract Modification No. 1 for Knuckle Boom Truck Rentals with Environmental Products Group, in an Amount not to Exceed \\$85,000. This modification will ensure continuity of operations for the City of Savannah's Residential Refuse Division at the existing equipment level until the newly ordered equipment, which is scheduled for delivery in December 2023, arrives. \(Flee Services\)](#)

[Exhibit 1: Funding Verification - Knuckle Boom Rental.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2: Purchasing Notes - Knuckle Boom Rental.pdf](#)

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to approve Items #4, #5, #6 and #7, seconded by Alderwoman Miller Blakely and Alderman Purtee. The motion passed unanimously, 9-0-0.

[5. Authorize the City Manager to Execute Contract Modification No. 1 for the Final Project Closeout for the Entrepreneurial Center Renovations with RL Construction, in the Amount of \\$36,528. The modification is needed to cover the additional costs incurred for wood blocking and repair of the wood cornice. Both items exceeded the estimated quantity in the contract due to the discovery of additional deterioration after the wood decking was exposed under the roof and the historic internal gutter was opened. This project came in under the allocated budget. \(Capital Projects\)](#)

[Exhibit 1: Funding Verification - Entrepreneurial Ctr Reno.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2: Purchasing Notes - Entrepreneurial Ctr Reno.pdf](#)

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to approve Items #4, #5, #6 and #7, seconded by Alderwoman Miller Blakely and Alderman Purtee. The motion passed unanimously, 9-0-0.

[6. Authorize the City Manager to Execute a Contract Modification No. 1 for Bilbo Canal Widening with SJ Hamill Construction in the Amount of \\$81,086. In an effort to acquire additional geotechnical data, City staff required the contractor to perform pile data analysis \(PDA\) which requires a diesel hammer and was not originally part of the original scope. This modification will be reimbursed per the cost share development agreement executed March 23, 2022. \(Stormwater\)](#)

[Exhibit 1: Funding Verification - Bilbo Canal.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2: Purchasing Notes - Bilbo Canal.pdf](#)

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to approve Items #4, #5, #6 and #7, seconded by Alderwoman Miller Blakely and Alderman Purtee. The motion passed unanimously, 9-0-0.

[7. Authorize the City Manager to Execute a contract for structural engineering services with GEL Engineering in an amount not to exceed \\$400,000. The City of Savannah has an ongoing need for structural engineering services, with a particular focus on the Condition and Capacity Assessment of its existing facilities. This contract will also provide structural safety evaluations after disaster events. \(Capital Projects\)](#)

[Exhibit 1: Funding Verification - Structural Eng.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2: Purchasing Notes - Structural Eng.pdf](#)

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to approve Items #4, #5, #6 and #7, seconded by Alderwoman Miller Blakely and Alderman Purtee. The motion passed unanimously, 9-0-0.

AGREEMENTS

[8. Authorize the City Manager to Accept a Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Youth Grant Award in the Amount of \\$1,056,019. The award will be used to provide youth programs from April 1, 2023 to June 30, 2025 to low-income youth between the ages of 16 and 24. The City serves as the fiduciary agent for the 10-county region.](#)

[LWDA PY23 Allocation Announcement.pdf](#)

Alderwoman Lanier asked City Manager Melder for a listing of the supported programs. City Manager Melder will resend the list to Council Members.

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to approve Items #8 and #9, seconded by Alderwoman Miller Blakely and Alderman Palumbo. The motion passed unanimously, 9-0-0.

[9. Authorize the City Manager to Accept the Initial PY23 Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Grant Awards for Adult \(\\$155,788\) and Dislocated Worker \(\\$303,973\) Programs. The awards will be used to provide programs from July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2025 to adults who are unemployed or underemployed, and adults who have lost their jobs. The City serves as the fiduciary agent for the 10-county region.](#)

[LWDA PY23 Allocation Announcement.pdf](#)

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to approve Items #8 and #9, seconded by Alderwoman Miller Blakely and Alderman Palumbo. The motion passed unanimously, 9-0-0.

[10. Approval of a Water and Sewer Agreement with Cobblestone AC LLC for Cobblestone Subdivision. This is for a development consisting of 142 single family homes and clubhouse in Aldermanic District 5.](#)

[Exhibit 1: Water & Sewer Agreement - Cobblestone Subdivision.pdf](#)

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to approve Item #10, seconded by Alderwoman Lanier and Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan. The motion passed unanimously, 9-0-0.

CITY ATTORNEY ITEMS

[11. Settlement #1.](#)

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to approve Item #11, to authorize the City Attorney's office to resolve the claim of Gregory Robertson (worker's compensation matter) in the amount of \$60,030.00, seconded by Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan and Alderman Palumbo. The motion passed unanimously, 9-0-0.

[12. Settlement #2.](#)

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to approve Item #12, to authorize the City Attorney's office to resolve the claim of Berry Rice (car accident claim) in the amount of \$40,000.00, seconded by Alderman Palumbo. The motion passed unanimously, 9-0-0.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Alderman Purtee announced there will be numerous trunk-or-treats out this weekend and on Tuesday, October 31, 2023. He asked citizens to be careful.

Alderwoman Miller Blakely dispelled the rumor that she does not support the Savannah Police Department. She explained her reasoning for voting against the budget agenda item. She supports the police wholeheartedly, but was against the property value and water bill increases.

Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan thanked the Homeless Authority for securing funds for evenings, Tuesday through Saturday, 3:00pm-11:00pm. The phone number will be announced at a later date. She announced on Sunday there will be 'soul to the polls' by some of the local churches. Transportation to the polls will be provided by participating churches.

Mayor Johnson announced early voting is currently taking place in Savannah. He encouraged citizens to take advantage of the early voting opportunity.

Alderman Leggett announced that Chatham Area Transit (CAT) will provide free bus service from local bus stops on election day, November 7, 2023, from 5:30 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. to voting precincts for all citizens.

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz announced Tatemville will hold a trick-or-treat party on Monday, October 30, 2023, at 6:30pm at the community center.

Alderwoman Gibson-Carter stated this is the third Council Meeting without a workshop. She asked City Manager Melder why workshops were canceled given the fact all Council stated issues have not been addressed during this administration. City Manager Melder indicated the workshop items list is completed; he will send Council the items list. Moving into budget season and the budget workshop, Mr. Melder indicated there will be workshops. Alderwoman Gibson-Carter stated the workshop items list has not been completed and there are several community items Council needs to address and having no workshop and abbreviated meetings is a disservice to the citizens. She named a few items in particular.

Mayor Johnson indicated the items Alderwoman Gibson-Carter has mentioned are being addressed administratively through the City Attorney's office or the City Manager Office. City Manager Melder indicated a memo was sent to Council regarding the horse drawn carriage issue. The issue will be brought before the Tourism Advisory Committee to get feed back to bring before Council.

Alderwoman Gibson-Carter expressed concern for items discussed at the beginning of this administration that have not come before Council and recommended addressing some of those issues before the end of this administration. She presented an item to the City Manager and the City Attorney for a workshop discussion in relation to an ethics ordinance. The ordinance would prohibit Council Members from accepting campaign contributions from petitioners who have items on the agenda.

Mayor Johnson indicated Alderwoman Gibson-Carter's request for an ethics ordinance is not for staff, but a Council item. He stated Georgia Law as it relates to campaign contributions. Campaign filings are available for viewing on the City's web site on the Clerk of Council's page and the Mayor and Aldermen's page

Alderwoman Miller Blakely asked for the decision of the pool on Perry Street. City Manager Melder answered, he informed Council last week, the City issued a stop work order on the Perry Street pool. There is an on-going investigation about the legality of the work being done as it relates to the City's ordinance, the stop work order is still in effect. City Attorney Lovett stated the stop work order is currently in effect with no definite timeline for continuing the work.

Mayor Johnson announced the recent passing of, Dr. James Alphonso Dandy, the City's first African American eye doctor. Mayor and Council sent condolences to his wife, Dr. Evelyn Dandy, and the Dandy family.

City Manager Melder recommended residents adhere to the suggestions by the Savannah Police, Fire & Recreation & Leisure Departments for a safe and happy Halloween trick-or-treat season. The official Halloween trick-or-treat hours is early Tuesday, October 31, 2023.

Mayor Johnson announced the state of the city address will be held Wednesday, November 1, 2023, at 6:00 p.m. at the Savannah Cultural Arts Center. The public is invited to attend.

Mayor Johnson adjourned the Regular Meeting at 7:06 p.m.

The video recordings of the Regular Meeting can be found by copying and inserting the link below in your url:

<https://savannahgovtv.viebit.com/player.php?hash=ar854Sh7wEob0aU6>

Mark Massey, Clerk of Council

Date Minutes Approved: _____

Signature: _____

