

CITY OF ELBERTON
REGULAR MEETING OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL
Monday, January 9, 2023 – 5:30 p.m.

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof the meeting of the Mayor and Council convened at 5:30 p. m. on Monday, January 9, 2023 in the Council Chamber of the Municipal Building, 203 Elbert Street with Mayor Graves presiding.

Present were: Council Members Butler, Burton, Colquitt, Prince and Parham; City Attorney Jenkins, City Manager Dunn and City Clerk Churney.

Mayor Graves called the meeting to order and led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance. City Attorney Jenkins led the assembly in prayer.

Mayor Graves asked for nominations for the office of Mayor Pro Tempore for the calendar year 2023. Council Member Burton nominated Council Member Colquitt, which was seconded by Council Member Butler. There being no further nominations, Mayor Graves declared Council Member Colquitt as the Mayor Pro Tempore by acclamation. Mayor Graves administered the Oath of Office to Council Member Colquitt for Mayor Pro Tempore.

Mayor Graves asked for nominations for the office of City Attorney for the calendar year 2023. Council Member Butler nominated Steve Jenkins, which was seconded by Council Member Burton. There being no further nominations, Mayor Graves declared Steve Jenkins as the City Attorney by acclamation. Mayor Graves administered the Oath of Office to Mr. Jenkins for City Attorney.

Mayor Graves asked for nominations for the office of Municipal Court Judge for the calendar year 2023. Council Member Parham nominated Robert Johnson, which was seconded by Council Member Colquitt. There being no further nominations, Mayor Graves declared Robert Johnson as the Municipal Court Judge by acclamation. Mayor Graves administered the Oath of Office to Mr. Johnson for Municipal Court Judge.

Council Member Butler motioned to approve the minutes of the December meeting, seconded by Council Member Parham, and the motion passed unanimously (Butler, Burton, Colquitt, Prince, Parham).

There were no scheduled speakers from the floor.

Council Member Colquitt introduced a Resolution setting the qualifying fees and designating an Election Superintendent/Absentee Ballot Clerk for the November 7, 2023 Municipal General Election, as follows:

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS: There will be a Municipal General Election held on November 7, 2023 to elect a Council Member each from Ward Two and Three; and

WHEREAS: The Official Code of Georgia, annotated, requires the Mayor and Council to set qualifying fees that shall be three percent (3%) of the total compensation received by the officials in the preceding calendar year, which is \$419.59 for Council Member; and

WHEREAS: The Georgia State Election Board, Sections 21-2-380.1, instructs the governing authority of each municipality to appoint and certify the appointment of an Election Superintendent/Absentee Ballot Clerk to the Secretary of State's Office; and

WHEREAS: The governing authority shall designate the City Clerk as Election Superintendent/Absentee Ballot Clerk; and

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, and it is hereby resolved that the Mayor and Council of the City of Elberton do hereby issue a call for a Municipal General Election to be held on November 7, 2023, which will be conducted under the Georgia Code as amended.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED by the Mayor and Council of the City of Elberton do hereby adopt the qualifying fees and the appointment of the Elections Superintendent/Absentee Ballot Clerk as stated above as required by the Georgia State Election Board.

Adopted the 9th day of January, 2023.

City Manager Dunn read the Resolution in its entirety. Council Member Colquitt motioned to adopt the Resolution, seconded by Council Member Burton and the motion passed unanimously (Butler, Burton, Colquitt, Parham, Prince).

Council Member Butler introduced a Resolution amending the 2021 Comprehensive Plan, as follows:

RESOLUTION

A RESOLUTION AMENDING THE 2022 UPDATE OF THE CITY OF ELBERTON COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

WHEREAS, the 1989 Georgia General Assembly enacted House Bill 215, the Georgia Planning Act, requiring all local governments to prepare a comprehensive plan in accordance with the Minimum Planning Standards and Procedures promulgated by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs; that the local government determines when a plan amendment is necessary to address changing circumstances that may have detracted from the usefulness of the plan as a guide to local decision-making; and

WHEREAS, the City of Elberton has determined a need to amend its comprehensive plan to revise policy regarding the update of historic district guidelines;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the **City of Elberton** that the Comprehensive Plan amendment for the **City of Elberton**, Georgia, dated 2023, is to include an amendment in the following respect and is hereby adopted, and furthermore, that the Northeast Georgia Regional Commission shall be notified of said adoption within seven (7) days of the adoption of this resolution:

Section 5: Community Work Program

Activity "Historic District Design Guidelines Update" added to Short-Term Work Program as item 16, under "Natural and Cultural Resources."

City Manager Dunn read the Resolution in its entirety. Council Member Butler motioned to adopt the Resolution, seconded by Council Member Prince and the motion passed unanimously (Butler, Burton, Colquitt, Parham, Prince).

Council Member Parham motioned to adopt the Consent Agenda, seconded by Council Member Burton and the motion passed 4-1 with Council Members Burton, Colquitt, Parham and Prince voting for the motion and Council Member Butler voting against the motion.

1. Authorized the City Manager to execute a grant contract with Jim-Ree African American Museum, Inc. for the receipt and use of the American Rescue Plan Act funds.
2. Authorized the City Manager to execute a grant contract with Granite City Life Skills Foundation, Inc. for the receipt and use of the American Rescue Plan Act funds.
3. Authorized this issuance of a retail alcoholic beverage license for beer only to Keshav Group, LLC dba Kenny's Korner located at 971 Elbert Street for calendar year 2023.

City Manager Dunn presented the following reports:

1. Financial Report ending November 30, 2022.
2. Monthly reports on the activities of various departments.
3. Any other matters to be presented by the City Manager.

CITY CLERK:

The department issued the following licenses and permits over the past five years:

Classification	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018
----------------	------	------	------	------	------

Occupational Tax	304	287	250	231	208
Regulatory Permit	78	95	86	63	55
Professional	24	21	22	21	20
Financial	3	3	3	3	3
Insurance	275	285	298	286	266
Vending	13	8	12	10	9

A public hearing was held December 20th to amend the 2022 Comprehensive Plan to include a study to update the Historic Preservation Guidelines. The Georgia Department of Community Affairs will be assisting in this endeavor.

Pursuant to House Bill 879, the Georgia Department of Revenue updated its alcohol licensing to provide an option for alcohol license holders to renew their local and state license on their website. Eight out of twenty-eight renewals were completed through the state’s portal. The remaining twenty were completed separately.

At the January meeting, the Mayor and Council will consider adopting a Resolution to issue a call for the November 7, 2023 Municipal General Election. The Resolution will also set the qualifying fees as required by the Secretary of State’s Office. The fee must be published in the newspaper in February. The election will include a Council Member from Wards 2 and 3.

The annual illegal immigration reporting requirements for 2022 was submitted to the Georgia Department of Audits & Accounts. This is an extensive reporting required by the State of Georgia.

HUMAN RESOURCES:

The department will be participating in the Job Fair at the Elbert County Comprehensive High School next month along with a dozen other local businesses.

FIRE DEPARTMENT:

The Fire Department responded to 35 Alarm Calls for the month of December, 2022. These calls consisted of 26 Medical Emergencies, 2 False Alarms, 5 Aircraft Standbys, and 2 Vehicle Accidents. The department conducted 2 Fire Inspections, 1 Pre Plans, and issued no burn permits. The Fire Department conducted 366 hours of in-house training and 16 hours out of station training for the month.

BUILDING INSPECTIONS:

The building inspection department issued 13 permits for the month of December, 2022. Permits issued: 6 Electrical Permits, 2 Plumbing Permits, 1 Sign Permit, 3 Building Permits, and 1 Mechanical Permit. During this same period there were 6 Electrical Inspections, 2 Plumbing Inspections, 1 Sign Inspection, 1 Mechanical Inspection, and 3 Building Inspections.

POLICE DEPARTMENT:

The Elberton Police Department released their monthly activity for the month of November 2022. The department recorded:

- 921 Calls for Service
- 352 Vehicle Traffic Stops
- 88 Incident Reports were filed
- 341 City Court cases made
- 22 Traffic accidents were investigated
- 64 People were arrested for various charges
- 4 Person was arrested for Driving under the Influence
- 40 Department Training Hours

The Group A crimes of the (NIBRS) National Incident Based Reporting System are sent to the FBI on a monthly basis. The Group A crimes for November 2022 are as follows:

	<u>Nov</u>	<u>Oct</u>
--	-------------------	-------------------

Kidnapping:	0	0
Rape Offenses:	0	0
Robbery:	0	0
Assault:	19	12
Arson:	0	0
Burglary:	2	5
Larceny/Theft:	9	9
Motor Vehicle Theft:	0	0
Counterfeiting/Forgery	3	1
Fraud Offenses:	3	1
Stolen Property Offenses:	0	3
Destruction/ Damage/ Vandalism:	7	8
Drug Offenses:	10	12
Weapons Violations:	3	0
Animal Cruelty:	0	0
Sex Offenses:	0	0
Prostitution Offenses:	0	0

WATER & SEWER:

The crew repaired water leaks at Heard Drive, Elm Street, Hartwell Highway, Ruckersville Road, Whiteside Drive, Elbert Street, North McIntosh Street and Country Club Road. The crews installed a ¾ inch water tap and meter at 1132 Russell Ridge Drive. The crews ran cut-off and water leak calls throughout the Christmas Holidays due to the extreme cold weather conditions. The Filter Plant was operated from 12/24/22 to 12/27/22 without shut down to maintain water supplies in the system due to the enormous number of leaks caused by the cold weather conditions.

ELECTRIC:

The Electric Department installed power to the new fire station addition on Mahoney Drive. The crew changed out a broken pole on Freshfield Drive. The department re-wired two transformer banks, one at Regions Bank and the other at the Inferno Gym. The department built a new line on Lithia Springs Road for new residential construction. The department finished up the month by installing decorative lighting at the Elbert Theatre and changing out street lights to LED fixtures.

PUBLIC WORKS:

Along with monthly routine maintenance, the Street Department poured 50 feet of concrete curbing at the College Ave. Trailhead and also poured a sidewalk section on Edwards Street for the Gas Department. The construction crew continued work on 9 N. McIntosh Street to refurbish the first floor commercial space after a long-term tenant vacated, and to prepare the second floor for apartment construction.

MAIN STREET ELBERTON:

On December 13th Main Street hosted a downtown Cookie Crawl. This had the same concept as Candle Light Shop night, along with people being able to visit/shop with our downtown merchants and sample cookies that each business handed out. We had local craft vendors and showed The Grinch movie on the outdoor screen with popcorn and hot chocolate. The Grinch along with Cindy Lou Who were a big hit downtown for pictures and to judge our ugly Christmas sweater contest. We received positive feedback from the community and merchants.

ELBERT THEATRE:

There were 28 events at the Elbert Theatre & Elberton Arts Center from Nov 23-Dec 27 including COE's *Wakanda Forever* movies, Encore Productions' *White Christmas* rehearsals & performances, ETF's paint classes and Christmas Movie Field Trips and New Hope Campus' Christmas program. Approximately 3,870 patrons visited the Elbert Theatre & Elberton Arts Center between Nov 23-Dec 27.

ELBERT HOTEL:

The latest occupancy statistics are as follows:

FY18 FY19 FY20 FY21 FY22 FY 23

July	29.5%	38.8%	47.2%	31.4%	39.4%	23.8%
August	33.8%	33.3%	50.2%	33.9%	40.0%	37.2%
September	45.6%	36.3%	50.1%	31.5%	40.1%	48.0%
October	42.8%	48.9%	39.5%	34.0%	46.7%	53.9%
November	34.2%	29.9%	41.0%	31.5%	49.0%	53.6%
December	32.5%	40.9%	30.3%	20.8%	36.3%	38.0%
January	27.2%	35.5%	21.9%	28.9%	23.5%	
February	29.0%	26.6%	33.1%	32.7%	39.2%	
March	37.9%	35.0%	19.2%	32.7%	41.0%	
April	32.3%	40.5%	4.7%	38.5%	46.8%	
May	43.1%	52.7%	10.5%	43.7%	49.9%	
June	36.4%	50.4%	19.8%	38.5%	41.5%	
AVERAGE	35.4%	39.1%	30.6%	33.2%	41.1%	42.4%

Occupancy throughout the fall continued to be very strong. Year-to-date occupancy at 42.4% means the property is on track for a record setting year so long as spring reservations are strong.

Work to solicit bids and proposals to replace the HVAC system used by the guest rooms is ongoing.

City Attorney Jenkins gave a report on Dilapidated Housing.

Matters to be considered by Council.

- Council Member Colquitt inquired as to touring the Jim-Ree African Museum. He stated that it was his understanding that an appointment was needed. Mayor Graves recommended that Council Member Colquitt contact the organization to tour the museum. He also stated that he was not in favor of funding organizations based on race.
- Council Member Burton inquired as to the list of streets to be paved. City Manager Dunn stated that the original list had been completed and Council members could submit to him the names of streets for a new list.
- Council Member Butler thanked the city workers that worked during the Christmas weather.
- Council Member Prince inquired as to when the TSPLOST ends. City Manager Dunn stated that tentatively August or September, 2023, and he had communicated with County officials 4 over last year about that concern.
- Mayor Graves thanked Council Member Prince on the lighted E banner idea. He also commented that the organizations that were considered for American Rescue Plan Act funds was due to community pride not race.

There being no further business to come before Council, upon proper motion and second the meeting was adjourned.