

**CITY OF ELBERTON**  
**PUBLIC HEARING & REGULAR MEETING OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL**  
Monday, May 6, 2024 – 5:30 p.m.

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof the Public Hearing and Regular Meeting of the Mayor and Council convened at 5:30 p. m. on Monday, May 6, 2024 in the Council Chambers of the Municipal Building, 203 Elbert Street with Mayor Graves presiding.

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

Mayor Graves called the Public Hearing to order. The purpose of the Public Hearing was to receive comments from the businesses that are in violation of the City's Alcoholic Beverage Ordinance of March 28, 2024.

Investigatory Jeff Algood with the Elberton Police Department presented information on the undercover alcohol buys as follows:

- Elbertorium Gas, LLC dba Petro Food Mart, 310 Elbert Street, Kanaiyalal Patel was charged with selling alcohol to a minor.
- Quickfill Food Mart, 434 Elbert Street, Ansari Mohammed was charged with selling alcohol to a minor.
- Granite Nation, LLC dba Bill's Food Mart, 243 College Avenue, William Henson was charged with selling alcohol to a minor.
- AJ Food Mart, 3 Adams Street, did not sell alcohol to a minor.

Mayor Graves asked if there was anyone present to speak on behalf of the charges.

- Elbertorium Gas, LLC dba Petro Food Mart, 310 Elbert Street, no one was present at the meeting.
- Quickfill Food Mart, 434 Elbert Street, Shabana Lalani stated that they had made a mistake in selling to a minor.
- Granite Nation, LLC dba Bill's Food Mart, 243 College Avenue, Nazim stated that they had made a mistake in selling to a minor.

Mayor Graves stated that Council would consider the administrative penalties later in the meeting.

Mayor Graves adjourned the Public Hearing and called the Regular Meeting to order and led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance. City Attorney Jenkins led the assembly in prayer.

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

Mr. Timothy Aaron Styles, 93 College Avenue, explained that the U.S. Postal Service continues to pull up on the sidewalk to deliver mail and that over time it will damage the sidewalk and the grass area between the sidewalk and the street. He asked for direction in who is responsible for the maintenance since the street is owned by the GA Department of Transportation and the City maintains the right-of-way. Mayor Graves thanked him for bringing this to Council's attention and directed the City Manager to research the issue.

As privilege of the chair, Mayor Graves added Tyler Taylor, Chief Executive Officer of Elbert Memorial Hospital to speakers from the floor. Mr. Taylor gave an update on the financial condition of the Elbert Memorial Hospital for the quarter. Mayor Graves added that Elbert Memorial Hospital benefits from the Georgia Rural Tax Credit Program and urged citizens to consider it.

Council Member Parham motioned to adopt the Consent Agenda as presented, seconded by Council Member Burton and the motion passed unanimously (Butler, Burton, Colquitt, Prince, Parham).

1. Approved the expenditures that exceed the City Manager's purchasing authority.
- 2.

<b>Department: City Manager</b>		
<b>One new full size pickup with crew cab and short box/short bed for Executive.</b>		
Vendor:	Description	Bid Amount:
Ed Murdock Superstores      RECOMMENDED	2024 Ram 1500	\$43,044.00
Lake Hartwell Ford	2024 F150	\$46,400.00
Carl Black Fleet	2024 GMC 1500	\$50,009.50
<b>Department: Water/Sewer Department</b>		
<b>One new full size 4x4 pickup with extended cab and short box/short bed.</b>		
Vendor:	Description	Bid Amount:
Ed Murdock Superstores      RECOMMENDED	2024 F150	\$44,907.00
Lake Hartwell Ford	2024 F150	\$45,367.00
Carl Black Fleet	2024 GMC 1500	\$50,009.50
<b>Department: Police Department</b>		
<b>Two police Explorers</b>		
Vendor:	Description	Bid Amount:
Wade Ford      RECOMMENDED	2023 & 2024	\$88,948.62
Angela Krause Ford	2024	\$96,958.00
Allan Vigil Ford	2023	\$106,910.00
<b>Department: Police Department</b>		
<b>Up-fitting for two vehicles</b>		
Vendor:	Bid Amount:	
West Chatham Warning Devices      RECOMMENDED	\$33,599.38	
Fleet TEC	\$41,482.36	
OnPoint Upfitters	\$44,817.20	
<b>Department: Elbert Theatre</b>		
<b>Roof and gutter replacement</b>		
Vendor:	Bid Amount:	
Kellogg Roofing      RECOMMENDED	\$59,889.00	
Trademark Roofing	\$64,748.11	
Horizon Roofing	\$82,412.00	
<b>Department: Downtown Development Authority</b>		
<b>Custom Cabinets for two apartments – Bailey Building</b>		
Vendor:	Bid Amount:	
Robert Seymour      RECOMMENDED	\$23,800.00	
Classic Construction & Remodel	\$35,000.00	

3. Authorized the issuance of an alcoholic beverage license for retail of beer, wine and distilled spirits to Shailesh Amin, Reetixa, LLC 2, at 887 Elbert Street.
4. Authorized the issuance of a public assembly permit to close a portion of the square to vehicular traffic on Saturday, June 15 for the Juneteenth Celebration hosted by Jim Ree Museum.
5. Authorized the City Manager to accept a grant from the Riverview Foundation of \$43,780 for professional services for the Public Square Renovation Project.
6. Confirmed the selection of Peoples & Quigley, Inc. Consulting Engineers in response to the Request for Qualifications for services related to the Elberton Industrial Park Phase 2 Improvements application with the Appalachian Regional Commission.

City Manager Dunn presented the following reports:

1. Financial Report ending March 31, 2024.
2. Monthly departmental report, as follows:

**CITY CLERK:**

The department continues to collect delinquent Business License renewals for calendar 2024 which were due by March 31.

As a component of the Certified Local Government (CLG) Program, the National Park Service requires the Georgia Historic Preservation Division (HPD) to evaluate the performance of each Certified Local Government at least once every four years. This federal directive exists to evaluate Georgia’s Certified Local Government program against a national standard. Meeting these national standards ensures that CLGs in Georgia can receive funding from the Historic Preservation Fund Certified Local Government grants. The City of Elberton has submitted its reporting for this period, which is due by May 20, 2024.

**HUMAN RESOURCES:**

Open enrollment will be held in May for the group medical, vision and dental plans.

**FIRE DEPARTMENT:**

The Fire Department responded to 81 Alarm Calls for April 2024. These calls consisted of 1 Structure Fire, 1 Outside Trash Fire, 49 Medical Emergencies, 12 Vehicle Accidents, 1 Shorted Electrical Equipment, 7 Aircraft Standbys, 1 Bomb Scare, and 9 False Alarms. The Fire Department issued 2 Burn Permits. The department conducted 497.5 hours of in-house training.

**BUILDING INSPECTIONS:**

The Building Inspection Department issued 32 permits from March 25 to April 25 including 16 Electrical Permits, 2 Plumbing Permits, 3 Reroof Permits, 6 Building Permits, 2 Sign Permits and 3 Mechanical Permits.

During this same period 20 inspections were completed including 8 Electrical Inspections, 6 Plumbing Inspections, 1 Demo Inspection, 1 Building Inspection, 1 Roofing Inspection, 1 Driveway Inspection and 2 Mechanical Inspections.

**POLICE DEPARTMENT:**

The Elberton Police Department released their monthly activity for the month of March 2024. The department recorded:

- 906 Calls for Service
- 311 Vehicle Traffic Stops
- 95 Incident Reports were filed
- 209 City Court cases made
- 24 Traffic accidents were investigated
- 65 People were arrested for various charges
- 11 Person was arrested for Driving under the Influence
- 29 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 March 2024 are as follows:

	<u>March</u>	<u>February</u>
Kidnapping:	0	1
Rape Offenses:	0	0
Robbery:	0	0
Assault:	27	17
Arson:	0	0
Burglary:	2	0
Larceny/Theft:	10	6
Motor Vehicle Theft:	1	0
Counterfeiting/Forgery	0	0
Fraud Offenses:	3	1
Stolen Property Offenses:	1	0
Destruction/ Damage/ Vandalism:	7	1
Drug Offenses:	6	7
Weapons Violations:	0	2
Animal Cruelty:	0	0
Sex Offenses:	0	0
Prostitution Offenses:	0	0

### **WATER & SEWER:**

The crews replaced a water service at 322 West Tate Street. The crews moved the water service at 1039 Poplar Springs Road from a 1.5 inch galvanized main to an 8-inch main to improve pressure and to be able to abandon the galvanized main in the future. The crews drained and refilled Tower Lane Tank for washout and inspection. The crews continue to work on lead service line inventory. The crews made repairs to a damaged hydrant at Highland Avenue and West Railroad Street. The crews cleaned and inspected the sewer laterals at 40 Chestnut Street, 153 Lake Forest Avenue and 338 Ohio Street.

### **ELECTRIC:**

During the month of April the Electric Department finished wiring the Bailey Building downstairs. The department set a new pole and installed a transformer on Limo Road for a new farm. The department installed a new underground service and transformer on Ruckersville Road and another underground service on Fairfax Circle. The department built a new overhead line on Fairfax Circle and installed 5 new poles for a new customer. The department pulled in 8,000 feet of new wire on Campbell Street for the rehabilitation job. The department finished out the month by cleaning up logs from the right-of-way crew.

### **GAS:**

The department completed the annual Cathodic Protection Survey to remain in compliance with GA PSC regulations. Some issues were found and repaired. A potential outstanding issue on Wildwood Circle will be monitored over the next few months to see if low readings justify a repair.

The line relocation on the Hartwell Highway for the DOT bridge replacement is proceeding through the DOT's selected contractor.

The Department is also helping complete the two new storefronts at the Bailey Building. One store was completed on April 30 and turned over to the first tenant. The second store should be completed in May.

### **PUBLIC WORKS:**

Along with monthly routine maintenance, the Construction Crews continued work on the first and second floors of the Bailey Building on the Public Square.

### **ELBERT THEATRE & ELBERTON ARTS CENTER:**

There were 51 events at the Elbert Theatre & Elberton Arts Center from March 22 through April 25 including Encore Productions' *Pippin* performances, *Finding Nemo Kids* rehearsals & performance, *The Cemetery Club* rehearsals; ETF's paint classes; *Dune: Part Two*, *Ghostbusters: Frozen Empire*, *Kung Fu Panda 4* & *Arthur the King* movies, and America's Home Place business meeting.

Approximately 860 patrons visited the Elbert Theatre & Elberton Arts Center between March 22 and April 25.

### **MAIN STREET ELBERTON:**

The local Farmer's Market restarted for the spring season. One local vendor has made Elberton Farmer's Market bags and t-shirts that she is selling at the market to help promote it. There are several other vendors that will be joining later in the season.

Jucee Plus Smoothie & Wine Bar has now opened in their new location at 9 N. McIntosh St.

Main Street is partnering with the Elbert Memorial Hospital Foundation to kick off the First Friday events on Friday, May 3 on the downtown square. Music will be provided by Second String Allstars from 7:00 to 10:00 p.m. Food trucks, jumpies and vendors will participate in this event. This event will also be used to help promote the EMH Foundation's annual Duck Derby that will be held on Saturday, May 4. The Foundation will have duck related games set up at the First Friday event and will be handing out prizes.

### **ELBERT HOTEL:**

The latest occupancy statistics are as follows:

	<u>FY20</u>	<u>FY21</u>	<u>FY22</u>	<u>FY 23</u>	<u>FY24</u>
July	47.2%	31.4%	39.4%	23.8%	40.4%
August	50.2%	33.9%	40.0%	37.2%	47.0%
September	50.1%	31.5%	40.1%	48.0%	46.7%
October	39.5%	34.0%	46.7%	53.9%	55.3%
November	41.0%	31.5%	49.0%	53.6%	58.0%
December	30.3%	20.8%	36.3%	38.0%	32.7%
January	21.9%	28.9%	23.5%	40.6%	30.3%
February	33.1%	32.7%	39.2%	40.5%	46.0%
March	19.2%	32.7%	41.0%	51.9%	51.6%
April	4.7%	38.5%	46.8%	60.0%	53.8%
May	10.5%	43.7%	49.9%	59.7%	
June	19.8%	38.5%	41.5%	39.8%	
AVERAGE	30.6%	33.2%	41.1%	45.6%	46.2%

Spring occupancy rates are strong with the fiscal year-to-date rate on track to set a record for the property in FY24. Business travel remains the primary driver of occupancy. One large business group, America's Home Place, chose Elberton's for its spring retreat in April.

City Attorney Jenkins stated he continued to work on dilapidated housing properties list.

Council considered the administrative penalties to the businesses that were in violation of the City's Alcoholic Beverage Ordinance. Staff recommended the following action for first violations.

- Administrative penalty of \$300.00
- Bond forfeiture of \$250.00
- Total penalty of \$550.00

Council Member Butler motioned to accept the administrative penalties as recommended by staff, seconded by Council Member Prince and the motion passed unanimously (Butler, Burton, Colquitt, Prince, Parham).

Mayor Graves stated that Council would be going into Executive Session for the purpose of:

- discussing or deliberating upon the appointment, employment, compensation, hiring, disciplinary action or dismissal, or periodic evaluation or rating of a public officer or employee; and
- to consult with legal counsel pertaining to pending or potential litigation, settlement, claims, administrative proceedings, or other judicial actions.

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

Council Member Colquitt motioned to move out of executive session and reconvene the Regular Meeting, seconded by Council Member Parham, and the motion passed unanimously (Butler, Colquitt, Burton, Parham, Prince).

Mayor Graves stated that no action was taken during executive session. However, he thanked City Manager Dunn for his hard work and dedication to the City of Elberton and wished him well in his future endeavors.

Mayor Graves asked for a motion to appoint Chief Financial Officer, Kevin Eavenson, as Interim City Manager. Council Member Butler motioned to appoint Kevin Eavenson, seconded by Council Member Parham, and the motion passed unanimously (Butler, Colquitt, Burton, Parham, Prince).

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