

**CITY OF ELBERTON**  
**REGULAR MEETING OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL**  
Monday, October 7, 2024 – 5:30 p.m.

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof the Regular Meeting of the Mayor and Council convened at 5:30 p.m. on Monday, October 7, 2024 in the Council Chambers of the Municipal Building, 203 Elbert Street with Mayor Graves presiding.

Present were: Council Members Butler, Burton, Colquitt, and Parham; City Manager Eavenson, City Clerk Churney and City Attorney Jenkins. Council Member Prince arrived at the meeting at 5:35 p.m.

Mayor Graves called the 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 September meeting, seconded by Council Member Burton, and the motion passed unanimously (Butler, Burton, Colquitt, Parham).

Harrison Lane Sissel, 202 Highland Ave, spoke to Council with regard to the Police Department’s Barring Notices. A Barring Notice prohibits the person from entering the property of the filer. He stated that he had received several Barring Notices for local businesses; however, the issue was that the notices were for a “lifetime” period. He stated that he felt that was drastic and that he should be given a chance to redeem himself over a period of time. Mayor Graves thanked Mr. Sissel for his time and advised him to contact the filer by phone or by letter to discuss the regulations.

Council Member Prince placed Ordinance 2224 on Second Reading. The purpose of the Ordinance is to amend the zoning map to rezone certain properties on Hillside Way as well as Oak Lane Apartments and Spring Valley Nursing Home to bring them out of non-compliance.

**ORDINANCE 2224**

**AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE COMPREHENSIVE ZONING MAP  
OF THE CITY OF ELBERTON; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.**

The Ordinance was read in its entirety at the September meeting. Therefore, Council Member Prince motioned to waive the reading, seconded by Council Member Burton and the motion to waive passed unanimously. City Manager Eavenson read the heading of the Ordinance. Council Member Prince motioned to adopt the Ordinance, seconded by Council Member Burton and the motion passed unanimously.

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

1. Approved the expenditures that exceed the City Managers purchasing authority.

Department: The Samuel Elbert Hotel	
One Natural Gas Triton Water Heater with Expansion Tank. Price includes replacement tank and installation.	
Vendor:	Bid Amount:
Phillip Brady Plumbing      RECOMMENDED	\$19,952.00
Marc Lilly Plumbing	\$20,500.00
MCG Mechanical Services	\$25,600.00

2. Accepted the budget amendment for Fiscal Year 2024.

3. Authorized the issuance of a public assembly permit to close portions of the city streets to vehicular traffic on Saturday, October 19, for the ECCHS JROTC 5K Raiders Event.
4. Authorized the issuance of a public assembly permit to close portions of the city streets to vehicular traffic on Saturday, October 26, for the ECCHS JROTC 5K Zombie Race/Walk Event.
5. Authorized the issuance of a public assembly permit to close the fountain end of the square to vehicular traffic on Saturday, October 26, for the ECCHS Class of 1969.
6. Authorized the issuance of a public assembly permit to close a portion of the square to vehicular traffic on Saturday, November 2, for the SafeHouse Ministries, Inc. Annual 5K Walk-A-Thom.
7. Authorized the issuance of a public assembly permit to close portions of the city streets to vehicular traffic on Sunday, December 8, for the Elbert County Chamber of Commerce Annual Christmas Parade.

City Manager Eavenson presented the following reports:

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

**CITY CLERK:**

The Elbert Memorial Foundation honored Nancy Seymour for her 25 years of service to the hospital by placing a granite bench across from the bridge from the Rotary Pavilion at the Granite City Walking Trail. The bench was presented to Nancy on September 11.

The Tree City USA application has been submitted for calendar year 2024.

Alcoholic license renewal applications will be mailed by October 15. The deadline to submit the 2025 renewals is November 15.

The department participated in the DCA compliance webinar on Thursday, September 12. The webinar discussed various requirements of local governments in order to maintain its Qualified Local Government Status.

**FIRE DEPARTMENT:**

The Fire Department responded to 35 Alarm Calls for September, 2024. These calls consisted of one structure fire, 22 medical emergencies, three vehicle accidents, one power line down and eight false alarms. The department issued two burn permits for the month as well. The department conducted 833 hours of in-house training and 172 hours of out-of-station training for the month.

**BUILDING INSPECTIONS:**

The Building Inspections Department issued 16 permits from August 27 to September 24. Permits issued: five electrical permits, four plumbing permits, one re-roof permit, four building permits, one sign permit and one mechanical permit.

During this same period, 25 inspections were completed; six electrical inspections, six plumbing inspections, two demo inspections, five building inspections, four roofing inspections and two mechanical inspections.

**POLICE DEPARTMENT:**

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

852     Calls for Service

- 240 Vehicle Traffic Stops
- 109 Incident Reports were filed
- 224 City Court cases made
- 23 Traffic accidents were investigated
- 81 People were arrested for various charges
- 4 Person was arrested for Driving under the Influence
- 88 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 **August 2024** are as follows:

	<u>August</u>	<u>July</u>
Kidnapping:	2	0
Rape Offenses:	2	1
Robbery:	0	0
Assault:	17	14
Arson:	0	0
Burglary:	2	0
Larceny/Theft:	4	10
Motor Vehicle Theft:	1	1
Counterfeiting/Forgery	1	0
Fraud Offenses:	3	2
Stolen Property Offenses:	0	0
Destruction/ Damage/ Vandalism:	5	5
Drug Offenses:	11	4
Weapons Violations:	0	0
Animal Cruelty:	0	0
Sex Offenses:	0	0
Prostitution Offenses:	0	0

**WATER & SEWER:**

The crews repaired water leaks on Burke Street, East Railroad Street, Hillcrest Avenue, and Taggart Street. The crews installed new water taps and services at 2435 Jaudon Road, 1209 Russell Ridge Drive, 1370 Limo Road, 1237 Limo Road, and 1122 Lexington Highway. The crews continued on service line inventory. The crews conducted the annual hydrant flush on September 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup>.

The crews cleaned and inspected the sewer lateral at the Samuel Elbert Hotel. The crews made repairs to a sewer manhole behind the Salvation Army.

The crews prepared at the wastewater treatment plants for the tropical storm and expected heavy rainfall.

The crews ran conduit for the filter control panels and contractors upgraded the filter controls for all four filters at the Filter Plant. The crews repaired an air relief valve manhole on the raw water line located on Calhoun Falls Highway. Electrical contractors installed the new emergency power transfer switch, fused electrical disconnect, and new wiring at the Raw Water Pump Station.

RDJE Construction began the Fortson Creek Sewer Main Replacement Project on September 23. The contractors worked to clear and widen the sewer right of way to make room for the relocation of the new sewer main.

**ELECTRIC:**

The Electric Department replaced a bad transformer at 126 Lake Forest Drive and one at Elbert County Comprehensive High School. The department set a new pole on Mercer Drive. The

department replaced poles on Snyder Ave, College Ave, Fire Tower Lane, Lexington Hwy, Ruckersville Road and Calhoun Falls Hwy. The department installed power at a new house on the Lexington Hwy and installed underground power on Valley View Drive.

**GAS:**

Right of way crews continue working on the 8” gas main along Hartwell Hwy. The crew is currently working from the regulator station in Hart County going south. The crew continues to perform routine system maintenance.

**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.

The Street Department painted parking spaces at the walking trail and behind the court house.

**ELBERT THEATRE & ELBERTON ARTS CENTER:**

There have been 26 events at the Elbert Theatre & Arts Center from Aug 30-Sept 22 including *Harold and the Purple Crayon*, *The Forge*, *Reagan*, and *Beetlejuice* movies; ETF’s paint class; Encore Productions’ *The Play the Goes Wrong* rehearsals and *The Lion*, *The Witch and the Wardrobe* Family Story Time and T King’s *Narnia* Bible Study.

Approximately 940 patrons have visited the Elbert Theatre & Elberton Arts Center between Aug 30-Sept 22.

**MAIN STREET ELBERTON:**

Main Street/DDA held our monthly board meeting on Tuesday, September 17, 2024. We welcomed Christal Smith and Devon Davis as our two newest board members. Our 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Skelebration is Thursday, October 31<sup>st</sup> 4pm-6pm. We have received several calls, text and emails from people and businesses within the community wanting to sign up to participate in the trunk or treat event. We partner with the schools local BETA club for this event also.

We have registrations rolling in from the community and surrounding areas with people registering to be vendors in our upcoming 24<sup>th</sup> Annual Fall Festival to be held on Saturday, November 2.

Main Street participated in its monthly training held on Thursday, September 19, 2024. We will be attending in person training coming up the first week in October with Mobilize Main Street. We will be visiting the downtowns of Gainesville, Dahlonega and Hartwell.

**ELBERT HOTEL:**

The latest occupancy statistics are as follows:

	<u>FY21</u>	<u>FY22</u>	<u>FY 23</u>	<u>FY24</u>	<u>FY25</u>
July	31.4%	39.4%	23.8%	40.4%	62.8%
August	33.9%	40.0%	37.2%	47.0%	41.3%
September	31.5%	40.1%	48.0%	46.7%	55.3%
October	34.0%	46.7%	53.9%	55.3%	
November	31.5%	49.0%	53.6%	58.0%	
December	20.8%	36.3%	38.0%	32.7%	
January	28.9%	23.5%	40.6%	30.3%	
February	32.7%	39.2%	40.5%	46.0%	
March	32.7%	41.0%	51.9%	51.6%	

April	38.5%	46.8%	60.0%	53.8%
May	43.7%	49.9%	59.7%	44.8%
June	38.5%	41.5%	39.8%	50.8%
AVERAGE	33.2%	41.1%	45.6%	46.5%

The month of September has brought revitalization to the hotel. A new privacy fence was installed to properly serve as a dumpster enclosure. The back patio received a much needed facelift. The patio area was repainted and new cushions were added to the outdoor furniture. Additionally, new planters were added along with string lights, creating an inviting space we can promote and utilize.

The hotel has seen an increase in occupancy when compared to August. We have hosted many groups from Economic Development, wedding parties, the EGA and class reunions.

The restaurant continues to see incredible growth with an increase in hosting and catering different groups within the community.

City Manager Eavenson gave an update on the DDA's apartments downtown. He stated that the bids for the granite had been submitted after the agenda packets were delivered. He recommended approving the bid from D & A Granite Countertops for \$11,975.09, as listed below:

Department: Downtown Development Authority SPLOST Capital Projects Fund	
Building #23 Apartments: Granite countertops for the kitchen cabinets including island, vanities in all bathrooms, and window seals. Includes material and installation.	
Vendor:	Bid Amount:
D & a Granite Countertops      RECOMMENDED	\$11,975.09
Tri State Granite & Interiors, Inc.	\$13,603.89
Star Granite Interiors	\$13,631.87
Bond Interiors Granite	\$14,392.40

Council Member Butler motioned to approve the bid as recommended above, seconded by Council Member Parham and the motion passed unanimously (Butler, Colquitt, Burton, Parham, Prince).

City Manager Eavenson also introduced the Community Impact Grant Program. The program is an annual, application based, grant program which provides grants to non-profit organizations who operate within the City of Elberton and who work to improve the quality of life in the community.

City Manager Eavenson also commended the city staff on their hard work during and after hurricane Helene.

City Attorney Jenkins stated he continues to work on dilapidated housing properties list. He added that the property on Mill Street was given 6 months extension and the property on Locklin Street was given a 12 month extension.

Mayor Graves asked to move into executive session to discuss or deliberate upon the appointment, employment, compensation, hiring, disciplinary action or dismissal, or periodic evaluation or rating of a public officer or employee (O.C.G.A. 50-14-3).

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

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

Mayor Graves stated that no action was taken.

Mayor Graves asked Council for a motion to appoint Kevin Eavenson as the sole finalist for the City Manager position. Council Member Burton motioned to appoint Kevin Eavenson as City Manager, seconded by Council Member Butler and the motion passed unanimously (Butler, Colquitt, Burton, Parham, Prince). Mayor Graves stated that the City must wait a minimum of 14 days before the appointment takes effect and during the time contract details would be finalized. Mayor Graves commended Kevin on his leadership during the recent hurricane Helene crisis and over the past four months as Interim City Manager.

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