

CITY OF ELBERTON
REGULAR MEETING OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL
Monday, February 3, 2025 – 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, February 3, 2025 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 Eavenson, City Clerk Churney and City Attorney Jenkins.

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

Mr. Tyler Taylor, Chief Executive Officer, gave an update on the financial condition of the Elbert Memorial Hospital.

Ms. Pam Allgood with Keep Elbert County Beautiful gave an update on the activities of the organization as well as expressed concerns with regard to littering and the enforcement of violators.

Council Member Butler placed Ordinance 2225 on First Reading to amend Chapter 32, Article IV of the Code of Ordinances pertaining to Rights of Way:

ORDINANCE 2225

AN ORDINANCE OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ELBERTON TO AMEND THE CODE OF THE CITY; TO AMEND CHAPTER 32 OF THE CODE IN ORDER TO REPLACING ARTICLE IV RIGHT OF WAY OCCUPANCY WITH A NEW ARTICLE IV USE OF THE CITY’S RIGHTS-OF-WAY BY PUBLIC AND PRIVATE UTILITIES; TO REPEAL CONFLICTING ORDINANCES; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

City Manager Eavenson read the Ordinance in its entirety. He stated that due to a lot of changes in legislation and changes in the video and telecommunication industry, the Georgia Municipal Association (GMA) provided revisions to be adopted to reflect the changes.

Council Member Prince introduced a Resolution to amend the Intergovernmental Water Supply Agreement between the City of Elberton and Madison County:

RESOLUTION

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF ELBERTON AUTHORIZING THE FIRST AMENDMENT TO INTERGOVERNMENTAL WATER SUPPLY AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CITY OF ELBERTON AND THE MADISON COUNTY INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AND BUILDING AUTHORITY; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

WHEREAS, the city of Elberton hereto has operated a water utility system by and through its public utilities department as authorized in its Chapter under Section 16; and

WHEREAS, the City of Elberton and Madison County Industrial Development and Building Authority (“MCIDBA”) entered into an Intergovernmental Water Supply Agreement on September 18, 2016 (the “Agreement”), a true and correct copy of which is attached hereto as Exhibit “A”; and

WHEREAS, in 2024, MCIDBA and Madison County entered into an Intergovernmental Agreement (the “IGA”) pursuant to which, effective January 1, 2025, Madison County undertook the provision of water and sewage services to the users of such services in the unincorporated areas of Madison County, which services were prior thereto provided by MCIDBA.

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved by the Mayor and County of the City of Elberton in an open meeting duly assembled, and it is hereby resolved by the authority thereof, as follows:

Section 1. The Mayor, City Manager and the City Clerk are authorized to execute the First Amendment to the Intergovernmental Water Supply Agreement with Madison County for the long-term sale of finished water, such agreement being incorporated into this Resolution by reference as Attachment “A”, with such minor changes that may in the opinion of the City Attorney and City Manager need to be made to the agreement.

Section 2. All resolutions or parts of resolution in conflict herewith are hereby repealed

RESOLVED this 3rd day of February, 2025.

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

Council Member Colquitt motioned to remove item 1 for further discussion. Council Member Parham motioned to adopt the Consent Agenda as amended, seconded by Council Member Colquitt and the motion passed unanimously (Butler, Burton, Colquitt, Parham, Prince).

1. The Approval of expenditures that exceed the city manager’s purchasing authority was removed for further discussion.
2. Authorized the issuance of a public assembly permit to the Elbert County Emergency Services Dive Team on Saturday, March 15, 2025 for the Fin Drive Fundraiser at the intersection of Dr. Martin Luther King Drive and Elbert Street.
3. Authorized the issuance of a public assembly permit to close a portion of the square to vehicular traffic on Friday, March 14 for the Shamrock Shuffle hosted by Main Street Elberton.
4. Authorized the issuance of an alcoholic beverage license for Mr. Gopu Mitra of Elberton Shell Hop In dba J J & B Foodmart at 118 N. Oliver Street. Mr. Mitra to add wine to his license. He currently only has a beer/malt license.

Council began discussing item 1, which was an expenditure that exceeded the city manager’s purchasing authority. Council Member Colquitt expressed concerns with the increasing cost of the Splash Pad project. He stated that the city has been working on the project for years and it keeps getting bigger and bigger. He suggested that the city do away with the project since there would be a limited time it could be used. Council Member Butler agreed with Council Member Colquitt and stated that the project originally was priced at \$1.5 million and now it is approaching \$3 million. He added that council had not discussed the operating hours or age limits for the splash pad to-date. Mayor Graves stated that the price increased since the original intend of the project was to do something more simplified. He added that the \$2,033,339 cost will finish the project. Mayor Graves asked for a vote on item 1. Council Member Parham motioned to accept the expenditure as presented, seconded by Council Member Prince and the motion to accept passed with a vote of 3-2 (Yea – Prince, Parham and Burton; Nay – Colquitt and Butler).

City Manager Eavenson presented the following reports:

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

HUMAN RESOURCES:

Devan Seawright will be representing the City of Elberton at the Job Fair at the Elbert County Comprehensive High School on January 29.

Cindy Churney spoke with ninth grade students regarding the importance of properly completing an application and the importance of including a resume and cover letter.

CITY CLERK:

Georgia Arbor Day will be celebrated by a proclamation signing and tree planting on February 21. The City of Elberton has received its Tree City designation for the 19th year in a row.

The Elbert Theatre movies continue to be an asset for the community. Over the past five years, the facility has seen close to 20,000 patrons attend the movies:

Description	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020
No. of patrons	6211	6060	5601	762	1144
Concessions Sold	\$27,401.46	\$27,872.55	\$25,498.71	\$3,838.00	\$5,298.00
No. of movies shown	42	40	37	12	11
NOTE: 2021-2020 was during COVID shutdown.					

The Elberton Sister City program will be participating in the summer exchange with Mure-cho, Japan this year. Participants will be selected next month.

FIRE DEPARTMENT:

The Fire Department responded to 68 alarm calls for January, 2025. The Fire Department issued two burn permits for the month. The department conducted 350 hours of in-house training and 120 hours of out-of-station training for the month as well.

Call Type	Number
Building Fires	4
Cooking Fires	1
Grass Fires	2
Heat/Scorch: No Fire	1
Medical Assists	41
Vehicle Accidents	3
Flammable Liquid Spills	1
Natural Gas Leaks	2
Chemical Hazards	1
Arcing Electrical Equipment	1
Vehicle Accidents	2
Person in Distress	1
Animal Rescues	1
False Alarms	6
Citizen Complaints	1
Total	68

BUILDING INSPECTIONS:

	Permits Issued	Inspections
Electrical	3	10

Plumbing	1	4
Building	1	6
Land Disturbance	0	0
Sign	0	1
Demolition	0	0
Mechanical	2	3
Roof	0	0
Total	9	24

POLICE DEPARTMENT:

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

- 735 Calls for Service
- 290 Vehicle Traffic Stops
- 70 Incident Reports were filed
- 160 City Court cases made
- 28 Traffic accidents were investigated
- 43 People were arrested for various charges
- 9 Person was arrested for Driving under the Influence
- 56 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 **December 2024** are as follows:

	<u>December</u>	<u>November</u>
Kidnapping:	0	0
Rape Offenses:	0	0
Robbery:	0	0
Assault:	2	8
Arson:	0	0
Burglary:	2	1
Larceny/Theft:	8	10
Motor Vehicle Theft:	0	2
Counterfeiting/Forgery	0	4
Fraud Offenses:	1	3
Stolen Property Offenses:	0	0
Destruction/ Damage/ Vandalism:	5	5
Drug Offenses:	6	13
Weapons Violations:	0	2
Animal Cruelty:	0	0
Sex Offenses:	0	0
Prostitution Offenses:	0	0

WATER & SEWER:

The crews repaired water leaks on Elbert Street, Crestview Drive, South Oliver Street, Willie Black Road, Church Hill Road, and Atlantic Street. Crews installed a 2-inch water main to serve five new addresses on Oglesby Boulevard and water taps for 1068 and 1072 Oglesby Boulevard.

The crews cleaned and inspected sewer mains and laterals on Lake Forest Drive, Cole Street, Heard Street, Elm Street, Rhodes Drive, Parker Street, and Edwards Street. The crews pulled and cleaned pumps at the Hotel Lift Station.

The crews made repairs to RAS pump panel at Falling Creek Treatment Plant. The crews replaced the air valve for the digester at the Fortson Creek Treatment Plant and gaskets in the main airline.

The crews ran the Filter Plant belt press.

The Fortson Creek Sewer Main Replacement Project has been completed.

ELECTRIC:

The Electric Department installed a new pole right outside of the substation on Gordon Street. The crew finished the Matthews Granite expansion on Ruckersville Road. The crew removed all of the Christmas decorations on Elbert Street. The crew installed power at two new houses on Oglesby Blvd. The crew finished out the month by changing out two poles on Old Hartwell Road, one on the Washington Hwy and one on the Calhoun Falls Hwy.

GAS:

The gas department installed a service at 2023 Nickville Rd and completed a meter change out on Pressman Rd. Additionally, the department had to rebuild a regulator station on Lexington Hwy as a result of vehicle damage due to an accident. System pressures have been monitored closely over the last month due to the cold weather. A contractor completed 500 feet of directional boring of 4 inch line under Beaverdam Creek on Brewers Mill Rd. This is part of the ongoing project to serve the commercial poultry houses in the area.

PUBLIC WORKS:

The TSPLSOT paving project totaling 1.35 miles of City streets was put out to bid on Tuesday, January 7th. The bid closing date will be Tuesday, February 11 at 2pm.

The Project consists of the following major elements:

- Milling and asphalt paving on Rhodes Drive from Jones Street to Fleming Road (3,770 LF).
- Milling and asphalt paving on Mill Street from RR Tracks to Second Street (2,680 LF).
- Milling and asphalt paving on Fountain Street from Mill Street to Campbell Street (675
- Asphalt resurfacing of Arnold Street and Ohio Street (1,590 LF).
- Replace center line striping (5" double yellow paint) and stop bars (24" white thermoplastic) on all streets following asphalt placement.

ELBERT THEATRE & ELBERTON ARTS CENTER:

There have been 28 events at the Elbert Theatre & Arts Center from Dec 27-Jan 23 including *Mufasa*, *Sonic the Hedgehog 3* & *Gladiator II* movies and Utilities Department training; Encore Productions' *Spitfire Grill* rehearsals; ETF's paint class & volunteer dinner; Idemia's business meetings and Chamber of Commerce's Twilight Stroll.

Approximately 691 patrons have visited the Elbert Theatre & Elberton Arts Center between Dec 27-Jan 23.

MAIN STREET ELBERTON:

Main Streets membership invoices will be going out to members the end of this month. This invoice is for the businesses yearly dues and also for any sponsorship that they may want to participate in for the 2025 season.

Main Street along with several other key players has met with GMA and DCA about completing the application for 2026 Rural Zone Designation that is due August 2025.

Main Street will be partnering with Elbert Co. High School to possibly bring this year’s prom to the downtown area. This will also be in collaboration with our downtown businesses to hopefully keep our students local for all of their prom activities.

ELBERT HOTEL:

We launched our first Annual Winter “Staycation” as part of an effort to boost January occupancy. We set aside 12 rooms for this event, January 24th & 25th. Eight of those 12 rooms were booked, with the majority of guests being from Elbert County, but also including Commerce, and St. Simmons. The “Staycation” includes events such as a Paint & Sip class, opportunities to dine at the restaurant, an instructor lead yoga class, and movies at the Elbert Theatre.

The restaurant has remained steady through the winter month, though we were closed for several services due to inclement weather. We will be hosting brunch monthly going forward in 2025. Our first brunch service will be held Saturday, January 25th. We are already booking events into the spring to cater events such as baby showers, bridal showers and birthdays.

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%	65.8%
November	31.5%	49.0%	53.6%	58.0%	44.8%
December	20.8%	36.3%	38.0%	32.7%	28.0%
January	28.9%	23.5%	40.6%	30.3%	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 City Attorney gave an update on dilapidated housing.

Council Member Prince mentioned the Connected Resilient Communities designation. The program is facilitated by UGA Archway Partnership and will help communities tap into the resources and expertise at the University of Georgia to address local challenges and become more attractive to economic development.

Mayor Graves recognized Council Member Butler for achieving the Certificate of Dedication award. In order to receive the award elected official must complete a minimum 276 hours of training from the Harold F. Holtz Municipal Training Institute. He was one of seven officials to receive the award, which is the highest certificate level.

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