

CITY OF ELBERTON
REGULAR MEETING OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL
Monday, March 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, March 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 Clerk Churney and Assistant City Attorney Whetsel. Absent was: City Manager Eavenson who was out of town.

Mayor Graves called the meeting to order. He then led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance and in prayer.

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

Mrs. Caitlin Dye gave an update on the activities of the Development Authority of Elbert County, Elberton and Bowman during her eight months in the position.

Council Member Butler placed Ordinance 2225 on Second 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 CHAPTER 32 BY 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 at the January meeting. Council Member Butler motioned to adopt the Ordinance, seconded by Council Member Parham and the motion passed unanimously (Butler, Burton, Colquitt, Prince, Parham).

Council Member Parham introduced a Resolution authorizing a capital lease agreement with Caterpillar Financial Services Corporation:

RESOLUTION
to Lease, Purchase, and/or Finance Equipment

WHEREAS, the laws of the State of Georgia (the "State") authorize the City of Elberton (the "Governmental Entity"), a duly organized municipal corporation of the State, to purchase,

acquire and lease personal property for the benefit of the Governmental Entity and its inhabitants and to enter into any necessary contracts; and

WHEREAS, the Governmental Entity wants to lease, purchase and/or finance equipment ("Equipment") from **Caterpillar Financial Services Corporation** and/or an authorized Caterpillar dealer ("Caterpillar") by entering into that certain Governmental Equipment Lease-Purchase Agreement (the "Agreement") with Caterpillar; and

WHEREAS, the form of the Agreement has been presented to the governing body of the Governmental Entity at this meeting.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that:

(i) the Agreement, including all schedules and exhibits attached to the Agreement, is approved in substantially the form presented at the meeting, with any Approved Changes (as defined below),

(ii) the Governmental Entity enter into the Agreement with Caterpillar, and

(iii) the Agreement is adopted as a binding obligation of the Governmental Entity; and that changes may later be made to the Agreement if the changes are approved by the Governmental Entity's counsel or members of the governing body of the Governmental Entity signing the Agreement (the "Approved Changes") and that the signing of the Agreement and any related documents is conclusive evidence of the approval of the changes; and that the persons listed below, who are the incumbent officers of the Governmental Entity (the "Authorized Persons"):

Kevin Eavenson	City Manager
Cindy Churney	City Clerk

be, and each is, authorized, directed and empowered, on behalf of the Governmental Entity, to (i) sign and deliver to Caterpillar, and its successors and assigns, the Agreement and any related documents, and (ii) take or cause to be taken all actions he/she deems necessary or advisable to acquire the Equipment, including the signing and delivery of the Agreement and related documents; and that the Clerk of the Governmental Entity is authorized to attest to these resolutions and affix the seal of the Governmental Entity to the Agreement, these resolutions, and any related documents; and that nothing in these resolutions, the Agreement or any other document imposes a pecuniary liability or charge upon the general credit of the Governmental Entity or against its taxing power, except to the extent that the payments payable under the Agreement are special limited obligations of the Governmental Entity as provided in the Agreement; and that a breach of these resolutions, the Agreement or any related document will not impose any pecuniary liability upon the Governmental Entity or any charge upon its general credit or against its taxing power, except to the extent that the payments payable under the Agreement are special limited obligations of the Governmental Entity as provided in the

Agreement; and that the authority granted by these resolutions will apply equally and with the same effect to the successors in office of the Authorized Persons; and that the undersigned's certification of the Authorized Persons' signatures shall be binding on the Governmental Entity.

Resolved this the 3rd day of March, 2025.

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

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

1. Approved the expenditures that exceed the city manager's purchasing authority.
2. Authorized a waiver for open container prohibition for the Shamrock Shuffle on Friday, March 14 sponsored by Main Street Elberton. The public assembly permit was authorized on February 3, 2025.
3. Authorized the issuance of a public assembly permit for the Downtown Egg Hunt on Tuesday, April 15 hosted by Main Street Elberton.
4. Authorized the issuance of a public assembly permit for a 5K Run on Saturday, April 26 hosted by the Elberton Lions Club.
5. Authorized the issuance of a public assembly permit for the 10th Annual Duck Derby on Saturday, May 3 hosted by the Elbert Memorial Hospital Foundation.
6. Authorized the issuance of a temporary beer and wine license to Rebecca Long of the Elbert County Chamber of Commerce for the Chamber's banquet to be held Thursday, April 10 at the Rock Gym located at 45 Forest Avenue, Elberton.
7. Accepted the Mayor's appointment of Mr. Robert Wheeler to the Development Authority of Elbert County, Elberton and Bowman Board.

City Manager Eavenson provided the following reports in the packets:

1. Financial Report ending January 31, 2025.
2. Monthly departmental report, as follows:

HUMAN RESOURCES:

A defensive driver training was held this month by the Georgia Municipal Association's Risk Management Services. The primary goal of the training is to help minimize the likelihood of vehicle accidents by teaching drivers how to identify and avoid potential hazards. GMA provides the City's Property and Liability Insurance Coverage.

CITY CLERK:

Every two years, the Georgia Bureau of Investigations (GBI) audits alcohol fingerprinting in order to ensure the accuracy and integrity of the process of obtaining and submitting fingerprints to comply with state regulations and protect public safety. The GBI conducted their audit this month and City of Elberton passed.

Applications are being accepted through February 28 to participate in the Elberton Sister City summer exchange program. Participants will be selected March 16.

The department participated in the National Alliance of Preservation Commissions webinar. The webinar provided information on the foundation of historic resources surveys and strategies for preservation.

The department participated in the PlanFirst webinar provided by the Department of Community Affairs (DCA). A PlanFirst designation allows a community to unlock significant financial benefits through comprehensive planning.

Deputy City Clerk Devan Seawright attended the Clerks training this month. O.C.G.A. 36-1-24 – 36-45-20 requires clerks to complete 101 hours of training through the Georgia Clerks Education Institute in order to receive certification.

FIRE DEPARTMENT:

The Fire Department responded to 53 Alarm Calls for February, 2025. The Fire Department issued 3 Burn Permits for the month as well. The department also conducted 499.5 hours of in-house training and 160 hours of out-of-station training for the month as well.

Call Type	Number
Building Fires	1
Vehicle Fires	2
Brush or Outside Fires	3
Medical Assists	33
Vehicle Accidents	5
Aircraft Standbys	3
Smoke Removals	1
False Alarms	4
Citizen Complaints	1
Total	53

BUILDING INSPECTIONS:

	Permits Issued	Inspections
Electrical	8	4
Plumbing	3	3
Building	6	2
Land Disturbance	0	0
Sign	2	0
Demolition	2	0
Mechanical	1	2
Roof	2	2
Total	24	13

POLICE DEPARTMENT:

The Elberton Police Department released their monthly activity for the month of **January 2025**. The department recorded:

- 695 Calls for Service
- 202 Vehicle Traffic Stops
- 57 Incident Reports were filed
- 174 City Court cases made
- 27 Traffic accidents were investigated
- 41 People were arrested for various charges
- 3 Person was arrested for Driving under the Influence
- 111 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 **January 2025** are as follows:

	<u>January</u>	<u>December</u>
Kidnapping:	0	0
Rape Offenses:	0	0
Robbery:	0	0
Assault:	6	2
Arson:	0	0
Burglary:	2	2
Larceny/Theft:	12	8
Motor Vehicle Theft:	0	0
Counterfeiting/Forgery	0	0
Fraud Offenses:	1	1
Stolen Property Offenses:	0	0

Destruction/ Damage/ Vandalism:	5	5
Drug Offenses:	3	6
Weapons Violations:	1	0
Animal Cruelty:	0	0
Sex Offenses:	0	0
Prostitution Offenses:	0	0

WATER & SEWER:

The crews repaired water leaks on Petersburg Road, Elbert Street, North Oliver Street, and Mill Street. The crews installed water taps and services to 1025 Coggins Drive and 1179 Martin Grove Drive. The crews asphalted utility cuts on Elbert Street, Oglesby Boulevard, Ruckersville Road, and Elm Street. The crews drained the National Guard Tank for contractors to do an interior restoration. The crews installed new water lines to bathrooms at the Splash Pad construction site.

The crews cleaned and inspected sewer mains and laterals on Edwards Street, Harmony Plaza, Evergreen Drive, Elm Street, Reese Street, and Sunnyside Avenue. The crews repaired a 6-inch sewer main on East Church Street.

The crews pulled and replaced a RAS pump at the Falling Creek Treatment Plant. The crews made repairs to the helisieve at the Falling Creek Treatment Plant. The crews made repairs to the septic receiving station at the Fortson Creek Treatment Plant.

The crews made repairs to the caustic feed system at the Filter Plant. The crews pulled and cleaned the raw water chemical feed flow meter at the Filter Plant.

ELECTRIC:

The Electric Department installed conduit at Moller Tech for their upcoming expansion. The department replaced poles at King Glass Service and two others on the Calhoun Falls Highway. The department replaced a bad transformer at Wilson Electric and built a temporary pole and installed power to the bathrooms at the splash pad site on North McIntosh. The department replaced four old poles on Heard Street and finished up the month by setting two poles at the new 4-H building off Athens Tech Road.

GAS:

The Gas Department performed several compliance tasks in the field for locate notices, distribution patrolling and uncovering paved over in ground emergency valves. There were two gas leak incidents during February. The first was a leak caused by third party damage at 1547 William Smith Rd during demolition of a house. The second gas leak was due to a vehicle accident involving a regulator station located at 1305 Fairway Drive. The accident caused major damage which required a complete weld and rebuild of the high pressure regulator station. The

department worked on re-routing of a gas service at 148 South Thomas Street due to the service being shallow. Employees removed gas services at 127 Forest Avenue due to storm damage and 241 North Oliver for fire damage. A new service installation is planned for the new 4-H building on Athens Tech Road in the upcoming week.

PUBLIC WORKS:

- Completed the Fire Training facility.
- Completed the Bailey Building
- Cleaned out storm drains.
- Clean up downed tree on Brookside and Heard Dr.
- Clean up downed tree near playground in Sutton Park
- Completed repair work to bridges in the walking trail.
- Repaired various pot holes in City streets
- Cleaned Swift Parking lot, McIntosh Street, and the courthouse parking lot in the downtown area
- Trimmed all crepe myrtle trees in the downtown area and along Elbert Street.

ELBERT THEATRE & ELBERTON ARTS CENTER:

There have been 39 events at the Elbert Theatre & Arts Center from Jan 24-Feb 24 including *Homestead*, *Dog Man* & *Paddington in Peru* movies; H Brown's baby shower; Encore Productions' *Spitfire Grill* rehearsals & *Angel Street* auditions; EC Library's Black History Month performance; ECCHS' football awards; MLK Committee's movie field trip; ETF's paint class and Idemia's business meeting.

Approximately 1,045 patrons have visited the Elbert Theatre & Elberton Arts Center between Jan 24-Feb 24. There has been 1 rental quoted and 2 confirmed during this period.

MAIN STREET ELBERTON:

Main Street will host its 4th Annual Shamrock Shuffle on the downtown square on Friday, March 14th 6pm-9pm. We will have a DJ for music, dancing, and karaoke. Additionally we will also be handing out St. Patrick's Day swag while supplies last.

Main Street will be partnering with Elbert Co. High School to bring this year's prom to the downtown area. The merchants and restaurants are really excited to offer the students deals and discounts the week of prom. The event will be held on the one way street the evening of Saturday, April 12th.

The completion of the Bailey Building was celebrated on Friday, February 21st with a ribbon cutting and an open house event that was attended by many city officials and DDA board members, along with a lot of the individuals that worked on the project.

ELBERT HOTEL:

We are looking to improve/broaden our marketing efforts. I have reached out to ResNexus (our reservation service) and Lamar (billboard advertising) and Blue Cielo Farms (local Winery) to take advantage of advertising/marketing opportunities.

We are using this time to make repairs to the rooms during the "slower winter season" - Doors to the rooms repainted, hallways touched up, rooms, etc. We also had our 6 month inspection in all 27 rooms with Scout Pest control, inspecting each room thoroughly - removing mattresses, headboards, etc. to ensure we do not have any unwelcome "guests"!

The restaurant hosted a Valentine's Dinner on the 14th. These have been held in past, though this year was the most successful - revenue wise and service wise. We sold out of reservations and received many compliments throughout the night.

We have picked up another food supplier, Professional Food Group (PFG). Their prices, in general, are more competitive than our current supplier, Wood Fruitticher. We have received two shipments from PFG and have been pleased with the quality and service. We will continue to use both suppliers, but PFG will be our primary source. Our next effort will be adjusting/increasing menu pricing to reflect the current market - so we can operate more sustainably.

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%	37.0%
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 Assistant City Attorney stated that they have been working diligently on dilapidated housing and an easement for Church Street.

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