



City of West Point

Regular Council Meeting Minutes
Monday, January 8, 2024 @ 5:30 PM
West Point Council Chambers

The regular meeting of the Mayor and Council was held in the Council Chambers January 8, 2024, at 5:30 P.M. with Mayor Steven M. Tramell presiding.

Members Present:

Councilmember Joseph R. Downs III
Councilmember Joel B. Finlay
Councilmember Gerald W. Ledbetter
Councilmember Gloria R. Marshall
Councilmember Kevin Patrick
Councilmember Sandra Thornton

Members Absent:

Councilmember Gerald W. Ledbetter gave the opening prayer.

Mayor Tramell called the meeting of the Council to order.

MINUTES

Mayor Tramell asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the December 11, 2023, Regular Business Meeting. Councilmember Sandra Thornton made said motion, seconded by Councilmember Joseph R. Downs III; **passed unanimously.**

FINANCIAL REPORT

Mayor Tramell stated the financial report for approval is in the Council packet. Mayor Tramell asked for a motion to approve the December Financial report. Councilmember Gloria R. Marshall made said motion; seconded by Councilmember Joseph R. Downs III; **passed unanimously.**

AGENDA

Mayor Tramell reviewed the agenda and asked for a motion to approve the agenda. Councilmember Joseph R. Downs III made said motion; seconded by Councilmember Gloria R. Marshall and **passed unanimously.**

OATH OF OFFICE (ELECTED OFFICIALS)

City Attorney Alex Dixon administered the Oath of Office to Mayor Steve Tramell, Councilmember Sandra Thornton, Councilmember Gerald W. Ledbetter, and Councilmember Kevin Patrick. They are elected to a 4-year term.

2024 APPOINTMENT OF CITY OFFICERS

ELECTION MAYOR PRO-TEM

Councilmember Sandra Thornton made a motion to appoint Councilmember Joseph R. Downs III as Mayor Pro-Tempore to serve a one (1) year term and until a successor is elected and qualified. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Joel B. Finlay; **passed unanimously.**

MUNICIPAL COURT JUDGE

Councilmember Joseph R. Downs III made a motion to appoint Luther Jones as Municipal Court Judge. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Gloria R. Marshall; **passed unanimously.**

MUNICIPAL COURT RECORDER TEMPORE (JUDGE PRO-TEM)

Councilmember Gloria R. Marshall made a motion to appoint Benjamin F. Wilcox as Municipal Court Recorder Tempore Assistant Judge. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Joel B. Finlay; **passed unanimously.**

MUNICIPAL COURT PROSECUTING ATTORNEY

Councilmember Joseph R. Downs III made a motion to appoint Mark Carlton as Municipal Court Prosecuting Attorney. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Sandra Thornton; **passed unanimously.**

MUNICIPAL COURT ASSISTANT PROSECUTING ATTORNEY

Councilmember Joel B. Finlay made a motion to appoint Alex Dixon as Assistant Municipal Court Prosecuting Attorney. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Gerald W. Ledbetter; **passed unanimously.**

CITY ATTORNEY

Councilmember Joel B. Finlay made a motion to appoint Alex Dixon as City Attorney. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Sandra Thornton; **passed unanimously.**

MUNICIPAL COURT PUBLIC DEFENDER

Mayor Tramell asked for a motion to appointment Brian Joel Aplin to Municipal Court Public Defender. Councilmember Gloria R. Marshall made a motion to table the item. The motion to table was seconded by Councilmember Joseph R. Downs III; **passed unanimously.**

OATH OF OFFICE OF CITY ATTORNEY

Mayor Steven Tramell administered the oath of office to the City Attorney and Assistant prosecuting Attorney Alex Dixon.

IN REMEMBRANCE, WE HONOR GRIGGS ZACHRY, WEST POINT DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

Mayor Tramell stated in remembrance, we honor Griggs Zachry, former board member of the West Point Development Authority. Griggs was born March 2, 1940, in West Point and was a life-long 5th generation member of West Point First United Methodist Church. A graduate of West Point High School and Auburn University. Griggs was the owner/operator of Zachry Marine in West Point for 29 years. After closing Zachry Marine, he became owner/operator of Zachry Construction in West Point. Griggs served on the West Point Development Authority Board for 38 years, from 1985 until 2023. The City of West Point appreciates Griggs' dedication and contributions, and I would like to extend our deepest condolences to Helen, his sons Scott and David and their families.

RECOGNIZE GUS DARDEN, DOWNTOWN WEST POINT DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

Mayor Tramell stated on behalf of the City of West Mayor and Council, I want to extend our deepest appreciation to Gus Darden for 30 years of service and dedication to the Downtown West Point Development Authority. Gus joined the Downtown West Point Development Authority in the 90's and has since retired from the board. Gus co-owned Darden Brothers Shoe Store in Downtown West Point. The mayor presented a plaque to Gus Darden for his service to our community. Gus Darden stated it was an honor the served the citizens of our community. He thanked the Mayor and Council for the recognition.

2023 DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY BOARD APPOINTMENTS

Mayor Steve Tramell asked for a motion to appoint two members to serve on the West Point Development Authority Board. Councilmember Gloria R. Marshall made a motion to table the appointments to consider another applicant. The motion to table the item was seconded by Councilmember Joseph R. Downs III; **passed unanimously.**

SALE OF UNOPENED STREET

Mayor Steve Tramell asked for a motion to grant the request from Jason and Meghan Richardson to purchase an unopened street adjacent to their property located between East 4th Street and East 3rd Street Harris County parcel # 001A310. The two adjoining property owners, John and Sue Mattox and Lawrence Henry were contacted by letter to obtain interest in the unopened street property. John Mattox decided not to participate in having interest and Lawrence Henry did not respond to the letter. The total unopened street is 11,672 square feet. The city will maintain a utility easement for the existing

power line and any future utility needs. Mayor Tramell asked for a motion to sale the property to the Richardsons for \$846.30. Councilmember Gerald W. Ledbetter made said motion, seconded by Councilmember Sandra Thornton; **passed unanimously.**

**GEORGIA MUNICIPAL EMPLOYEES BENEFIT RETIREMENT PLAN
RESTATEMENT**

Mayor Tramell stated to ensure that the city and all Georgia Municipal Employees Benefit System members continue to receive tax-qualified status the city and all members must re-adopt their plan using the most recent IRS-approved document template. Mayor asked for a motion to approve the restated benefits plan for the employee benefit system. Councilmember Joseph R. Downs III made said motion, seconded by Councilmember Sandra Thornton; **passed unanimously.**

HIGHLAND DRIVE HEADWALL REHABILITATION

Mayor Tramell asked for a motion to award Larkin Enterprises the low bid of \$119,490.00 for the Highland Drive Headwall Rehabilitation. Councilmember Sandra Thornton made said motion, seconded by Gloria R. Marshall; **passed unanimously.**

NON-RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT PERMIT FEES

Mayor Tramell asked for a motion to adopt the Non-Residential Development permit fees per below:

The Non-Single Family/Commercial Building Permits fees

General Government

Building Permits

\$1- \$2000	\$75.00
\$2,0001 - \$25,000 thousand up to 25,000	\$69.25 for 1 st \$2000 Plus \$14.00 per each additional
\$25,001 - \$50,000 \$1,000	\$391.25 for first \$25,000, plus \$10.10 for each additional
\$50,001 - \$100,000 1000 up to \$100,000	\$643.75 for first \$50,000 plus \$7.00 for each additional
\$100,0001 - \$500,000 \$1,000 up to \$500,000	\$993.75 for first \$100,000, plus \$5.60 for each additional
\$500,001 - \$1,000,000 \$1,000 up to 1,000,000	\$3,233.75 for first \$500,000 plus\$4.75 for each additional
Over \$1,000,001 \$1,000	\$5,608.75for first 1000,000 plus \$3.75 for each additional

Councilmember Gerald W. Ledbetter made said motion, seconded by Councilmember Gloria R. Ledbetter; **passed unanimously.**

CHARLES ABBOTT ASSOCIATES, INC., BUILDING INSPECTION AND PLAN REVIEW SERVICE

Mayor Steve Tramell asked for a motion to sign a contract with Charles Abbott Associates, Inc. to assist the city with the expansion in the EV electric automobiles as well as the housing which includes single-family, multi-family, townhomes, condos, apartments, warehousing, distribution centers, and commercial outparcels. He stated with new technology and lack of training to deal with the new development, staff recommends contracting this service. Staff reached out to Mr. Will Hart, CBO and Tim Inglis, CBO, and VP of Charles Abbott Associates, Inc. for their assistance. CAA already has a contract with the Cities of Hogansville and LaGrange. The company also has a relationship with Kia Manufacturing and Hyundai. Councilmember Joseph R. Downs III made said motion, seconded by Councilmember Gerald W. Ledbetter; **passed unanimously.**

OTHER

Councilmember Sandra Thornton stated the Lambda Zeta Chapter AKA will have the annual MLK Breakfast on January 15, 2024, at Goodsell United Methodist Church. Mayor Rev. Willie T. Edmonson will be the guest speaker. She invited everyone to come to the event.

Councilmember Sandra Thornton asked everyone to join her in wishing Mrs. Minnie Clyde Murphy a happy Birthday. Mrs. Murphy recently turned Ninety-Nine years old.

ADJOURN

Mayor Tramell asked for a motion to adjourn. Councilmember Joseph R. Downs III made said motion and seconded by Councilmember Gloria R. Marshall; **passed unanimously.**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Richard McCoy

Steven M. Tramell