



# HARLEM NEWSLETTER

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August 2023

## DATES TO REMEMBER

**August 1**  
Planning Commission Meeting at 6:00 p.m.

**August 9**  
Urban Redevelopment Agency Board Meeting - City Hall at 9:00 a.m.

**August 10**  
Historic Preservation Commission Meeting at 6:30 p.m.

**August 21-23**  
2023 Qualifying-Elections 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. City Hall

**August 24**  
Council Work Session at 7:00 p.m.

**August 28**  
City Council Regular Meeting at 7:00 p.m.

**\* Meetings are held at the Public Safety Building unless otherwise noted. All meetings are subject to change.**

Welcome back to School! School will be back in full swing August 3rd. Please have some patience for the "First day" traffic jams around the school areas. We will have children waiting at bus pick-up areas and walking to and from school. Our Police will be monitoring the school zones closely to ensure everyone gets to where they are going safely. If you have not already completed the required Student Registration form, please do so as soon as possible. I hope the 2023-2024 school year is your student's and school employee's best year yet!

Affinis Hospice is looking for caring people to offer companionship to their patients. No experience is needed as the staff at Affinis will train you and offer you continued support during your volunteer journey. Maybe you have some special talents, such as art, music, pet therapy, that you would like to share with these special patients. Affinis is also accepting donations of new and gently loved baby dolls for some of their patients, as well as donations of fashion jewelry for their patients. If you can help in any way, please contact Jessica Hanson at [jhanson@affinishospice.org](mailto:jhanson@affinishospice.org)

On August 24th, at 6:00 p.m., at the Public Safety building, I will be hosting an informal meeting to hear from you on what upgrades you would like to see at the City Park. We will receive \$500,000 in SPLOST revenue that is earmarked for our City Park, and since our residents use our Park regularly, I feel it is important to see what you would like to see at our Park.

Speaking of Parks, you may have seen the news report that the City has purchased the old North Harlem Complex. I want to thank the Board of Education for working with us in making this Park a reality. This is a very exciting time in that we will be able to utilize this space for residents of all ages. Even though the final plan is not yet complete, this park will hopefully have green space areas and a pavilion for picnics, a Veterans' Memorial, playground, splash pad, Pickleball courts, disc golf course, fitness gazebo and so much more. We also purchased the old football field which we will leave as is for football and lacrosse practices as well as use by the elementary school. I hope everyone sees this as a positive move for our City. We will be able to provide some much-needed amenities to our community. I look forward to sharing the final plan in the near future and I hope you are as enthused as I am in seeing this Park grow.

Our favorite time of the year is quickly approaching! October 7 is the Oliver Hardy Festival. There is still a few vendor spots left and don't forget the parade. If you would like for your organization or yourself to be part of the parade or be a vendor, please call Meghan at the Museum. We are bringing back the "look-a-like" contest and having a special competition for the vendors.

Columbia County Senior Center is offering food for home bound residents. If you or someone you know are interested in receiving a "meals on wheels" package, please call 706-556-0308.

And last but not least, I want to welcome all the new folks who have moved into Harlem. Yes, we are unique, but we are the most friendly and supportive City I hope you'll ever live in. Beware - we do know how to throw a great Hardy Party and celebrate the accomplishments of our students. Welcome to Harlem!

God bless you all and God bless Harlem,

Roxanne Whitaker

Harlem's Mayor



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*"Whatever The Weather, Whatever the Season"*

Please remember to check the City of Harlem's website, [harlemga.org](http://harlemga.org), and the City's Facebook page, City of Harlem, [Georgia@harlemga](mailto:Georgia@harlemga), for updates on City office closures, essential services, etc.

### 2023 CITY ELECTIONS

The City of Harlem will be conducting a General Election Tuesday, November 7, 2023 to fill two seats for Councilmembers. Qualifying will start at 8:30 a.m. Monday, August 21, 2023 and end on Wednesday, August 23, 2023 at 4:30 p.m. The Qualifying Fee for the Office of Councilmember is \$108.00. A qualifying packet may be picked up at City Hall. No person shall be eligible to serve as Councilmember unless that person is at least 21 years of age and shall have been a resident within the city limits of Harlem for 12 months prior to the date of the election and shall continue to reside therein during their term and must be registered and qualified to vote in municipal elections for the City of Harlem, Georgia.

The following is a listing of important information and dates in regard to this election:

**Early/Advance/Saturday Voting** - Will be conducted at the former Euchee Creek Library located at 5907 Euchee Creek Drive, Grovetown. Early/Advance Voting will be available beginning Tuesday, October 16, 2023 thru November 3, 2023; M-F from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Saturday voting will be on October 21, 2023 and October 28, 2023 from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

**Absentee Ballots by Mail** - Absentee Applications will be accepted August 21, 2023 through October 27, 2023; an application must be submitted to receive a ballot by mail. Absentee ballots will be mailed out October 16 - October 27, 2023. Send a written request to the Columbia County Board of Elections, P.O. Box 919, Evans, GA 30809 to receive a ballot by mail. Please contact them at 706-868-3355 if you have any questions. Absentee ballots must be received prior to the close of the polls (7:00 p.m.) in the office of the Board of Elections on the day of the election, November 7, 2023, in order to be counted.

**Voter Registration Deadline** - October 10, 2023 is the registration deadline to be eligible to vote in the November 7, 2023 General Election.

**Eligibility to Vote** - To be eligible to vote in this election, you must be a resident within the city limits of Harlem and be registered to vote within the city limits of Harlem. If you need to verify your voter registration or polling place, please visit <https://www.mvp.sos.ga.gov>. If you are new to Harlem, please make sure to update your registration to reflect changes in your address. You can complete a change of address, register to vote (using your Georgia driver's license/state ID), view sample ballots, access absentee application forms, and print your precinct card thru this same website. Updates should be completed by October 10th.

There are three polling places/precincts for the City of Harlem: the Columbia County Library Harlem Branch, the Harlem Senior Center and 2nd Mt. Moriah Church. On Election Day, November 7, 2023, they shall be opened from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. and voters must go to their assigned precinct.

### FROM THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT:

#### FENCES:

The city is seeing an increase in fence installations. These are very helpful for containing pets, improving privacy, and increasing security. We would like to remind everyone that the city has a Fence Review Permit. There is no fee, but review before construction is required because:

1. If you are replacing an existing fence, the existing fence may be on your neighbor's property.
2. There may be utilities where you are planning to place your fence that you need to know about.
3. A fence over seven feet tall does require a building permit.
4. Stormwater easements may mean you need to install gates to keep the easement open.

The worst case encountered by the city was someone building over a stormwater easement. They had to move almost 200-feet of fence. The very worse case scenario is the need to access the easement and the fence being removed by chain saw. Being an encroachment, there would not be any reimbursement.



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