

The City Council of the City of Harlem, Georgia met for their monthly Work Session on Thursday, January 18, 2024, at the Public Safety Building at 7:00 p.m. with Mayor Roxanne Whitaker presiding.

Present: COUNCIL: Mayor Roxanne Whitaker, Mayor Pro tem Gregg Stokes, Councilmember Daniel Bellavance, Councilmember Al Reeves, and Councilmember John Thigpen; STAFF: City Manager Debra Moore, City Clerk Leona Holley, City Attorney Adam Nelson, and City Attorney Tom Watkins.

The Work Session was opened by Mayor Whitaker at 7:00 p.m.

The Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance was given and led by City Attorney Nelson.

Mayor Whitaker explained during the Regular Meeting on Monday, January 22, 2024, Columbia County Commissioner Alison Couch will give a quarterly update for District 4 and a special recognition will be given to City Attorney Barry Fleming from the City.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

None.

NEW BUSINESS:

**Consider Appointment of City Attorney:** City Attorney Barry Fleming has been appointed as Columbia County Judicial District Superior Court Judge; Council will need to appoint Attorney Adam Nelson as the City Attorney.

**Consider Appointment of URA Board of Directors:** Mayor Whitaker stated she is recommending Steven Pokrywka to be appointed to the URA Board of Directors to replace the vacant seat of Gary Holley.

**Consider Proclamation – STAR Student Teacher Recognition Day:** This year's STAR Student Teacher program is on Thursday, February 8, 2024 at 7:00 p.m. and will be held at the Harlem Baptist Church Fellowship Hall. This is the 63<sup>rd</sup> year of the program and is sponsored by the Harlem Women's Club. The Proclamation recognizes February 8, 2024 as "Student Teacher Achievement Recognition Day".

**Consider Adoption of the Americans with Disabilities Act Transition Plan:** City Manager Moore explained she received a letter from the Department of Transportation in December pertaining to the Americans With Disabilities Act Transition Plan and the availabilities for the City to receive federal funds. The City developed this plan after studying all of the City's programs, service, and activities. A self-evaluation of all the facilities was conducted to ensure the city is in compliance. Inspections of the city's facilities were conducted by Code Enforcement Officer Pam Nickles. The Action Plan for ADA Compliance includes Harlem's streets, roadways, sidewalk, signage, marking, signals and City of Harlem offices and buildings. City Attorney Nelson explained this plan is designating the City Manager to be responsible for the coordination, development, and the implementation of the Transition Plan.

NEW BUSINESS (cont'd):

**Consider Adoption of the CCFR Medical Protocols and EMT Training for Fire Department Personnel:** Fire Chief Tripp Lonergan and Firefighter Paul Duckworth addressed Council regarding the proposed CCFR Medical Protocols and EMT Training for the Fire Department Personnel. Mr. Duckworth explained how the protocols and training would work for the department. There was discussion on how this would benefit the city, and the cost to start the program. Mr. Duckworth would be the instructor for the EMT Training. Chief Lonergan asked for the startup fees of approximately \$7,500.00 to come from the ARP-SLFRF funds.

**Consider Ordinance 2401 An Ordinance to Amend Chapter 106 Historic Preservation; Sec. 106-25(c)(3) Regarding Terms of Office – 1<sup>st</sup> Reading & Action:** The Historic Preservation Commission is requesting for Council to review and consider amending the term limits of office. The Ordinance states that currently the members serve three-year terms and may not serve more than two consecutive terms. There are concerns this will not give the members enough time to develop their expertise in historic preservation before they must leave the Commission. Discussion was given on adding wordage to the Ordinance in the effect of “serve at the leisure of Council”. City Attorney Nelson stated he would like to check the states statue because the Historic Preservation Commission was created by a law from the State of Georgia.

**Consider Setting a Date & Time for Quarterly Work Session and Topics for Discussion:** Mayor Whitaker asked Council to look at their calendars for a date for the upcoming quarterly work session; Council was asked to bring back a date to the Regular Council meeting on Monday, January 22, 2024.

**Executive Session:** Mayor Pro tem Stokes made the motion to go into Executive Session; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Councilmember Thigpen. The motion carried with Councilmembers Bellavance, Reeves, Stokes, and Thigpen voting in the affirmative. Executive Session opened at 7:39 p.m.

Mayor Pro tem Stokes made the motion to come out of Executive Session; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Councilmember Reeves. The motion carried with Councilmembers Bellavance, Reeves, Stokes, and Thigpen voting in the affirmative. Executive Session closed at 7:57 p.m. City Manager Moore left the Executive Session at 7:48 p.m.

City Attorney Nelson reported that there was one real estate matter and one personnel matter discussed and no final action was taken. Mayor Pro tem Stokes made the motion to authorize the Mayor to sign the Affidavit affirming this report; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Councilmember Reeves. The motion carried with Councilmembers Bellavance, Reeves, Stokes, and Thigpen voting in the affirmative.

With there being nothing further before Council for discussion, Councilmember Bellavance made the motion to adjourn the meeting; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Mayor Pro tem Stokes. The motion carried with Councilmembers Bellavance, Reeves, Stokes, and Thigpen voting in the affirmative. The meeting adjourned at 7:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Leona H. Holley  
City Clerk