

**January 12, 2026**

The Eastman City Council met in a regularly scheduled meeting on the above date at 6:00 p.m. The following members were present: Dwayne Burney, Graham Snyder, Debra Sheffield, and John Battle II. Councilor Mark Peacock was out of town but participated by phone. Others present were City Attorneys Rita Llop and Chris Gordon, City Manager Spencer Barron, Police Chief Billy Cooper, Fire Chief Derl Maxwell, City Clerk April Sheffield, and Assistant City Manager Dayna Winslette. Department Heads Wynnon Pittman, Matt McDaniel, Brandon Brisco, Rodney Harrell, Evan Harrell, and Gerald Fordham were also in attendance. Other employees present included Jacoree Wilcox and Tyler Smith. Present from the community were Milton Johnson, EM Harrington III, and many friends and family to support John Battle II as he was sworn in as a new council member.

The meeting was called to order by City Manager Barron.

The invocation was given by Council Member Burney.

Pledge of Allegiance.

**SWEAR IN DISTRICT 1 COUNCIL MEMBER:**

Clerk Sheffield presented the oath of office to swear Mr. John Battle II in as the newest District 1 Council Member.

**APPOINT CHAIRMAN:**

Manager Barron called for a nomination for the Chairman. **Councilor Peacock made a motion to nominate Graham Snyder. Councilor Burney seconded the motion.** No other nominations were made. **Snyder was unanimously approved as Chairman.** Manager Barron then turned the meeting over to Councilor Snyder.

**APPOINT VICE-CHAIRMAN:**

**Councilor Sheffield nominated Mark Peacock as Vice-Chair. Councilor Burney seconded the motion,** and no other nominations were made. **Councilor Peacock was unanimously approved as Vice-Chair.**

**APPOINT CHAPLAIN:**

**Councilor Peacock made the only nomination for Dwayne Burney to preside as Chaplain. Councilor Sheffield seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.**

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**

At this time, the agenda approval was moved up to be able to amend and call an executive session. **On a motion from Councilor Burney and seconded by Councilor Sheffield, the agenda was unanimously amended to add an executive session for personnel, property, and legal matters. The newly amended agenda was unanimously approved on a motion from Councilor Sheffield and seconded by Councilor Peacock.**

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

**On a motion from Councilor Sheffield and seconded by Councilor Burney, the council adjourned into executive session to discuss property, personnel, and legal matters.**

**On a motion from Councilor Burney and seconded by Councilor Sheffield, the council entered back into regular session.**

**APPOINT ATTORNEY:**

Councilor Sheffield made the nomination to appoint Chris Gordon and Rita Llop as the City Attorneys. They were unanimously approved after a second by Councilor Burney.

**APPOINT RECORDER'S COURT JUDGE:**

Joey Marchant was the only nomination for Judge. He was unanimously approved on a motion from Councilor Burney and seconded by Councilor Sheffield.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

On a motion from Councilor Sheffield and seconded by Councilor Burney, the minutes from the December 22, 2025, meeting were unanimously approved.

**NO UNFINISHED BUSINESS:****NEW BUSINESS:****MONTHLY DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS:**

Chief Maxwell came forth to deliver the fire report for December 2025. There was a total of 184 calls for the month. Two non-working structure fires in the city. Six other fire related calls, with 2 in the city and 4 in the county. They worked 133 medical-related calls with 98 in the city and 35 in the county. Total of 9 motor vehicle accidents with 4 in the city and 5 in the county. Seventeen public service calls (alarms, smoke, trees) with 13 in the city and 4 in the county. Cancelled in route four times. The department has been requested to begin helping again at the hospital with Air Evac. They helped a total of 13 times this last month. They are also looking for a second landing location, possibly at Faith in Action church. They spent 187 hours training last month. The department ran a total of 1,979 calls for 2025, which was doubled from the year before at 961 calls.

Chief Cooper presented the report for the police department. They used 925 gallons of gas in the month of December 2025 to ride 10,164 miles. They answered 447 calls, worked 25 traffic accidents, and made 68 arrests/citations. A total of \$15,210.70 was collected in bonds and fines. The totals for the year were 11,958 gallons of gas with 135,123 miles, answered 8,061 calls, worked 257 traffic accidents, had a total of 2,334 arrests/citations, and collected \$328,164.95.

An update from last year included the addition of a camera system put up with the help of a grant secured by Ms. Winslette and Mr. Barron. Chief Cooper says that it has definitely helped with the investigation side of his department, along with solving dozens of cases. He has 3 officers in mandate school right now and they will hopefully graduate near the end of April. There are still two open positions within the department. Councilor Snyder commends the department and the hard work that they do.

Rodney Harrell presented the report on the wells for the month of December. A total of 31,602,000 gallons of water was pumped in December, which averaged out to be 1.019 MGD. The highest day was December 27 at 1.201 MGD. The total amount of water pumped for the year 2025 was 392,552,000 gallons. He was happy to report that all things are currently running well.

Evan Harrell presented the water distribution report for December. They had a total of 131 cut-ons and 217 cut-offs. There were 11 check leaks, 2 water leaks, 1 lead & copper replacement, 91 locates. They set 3 new meters, GPS 6 meters, pulled 1 meter. They performed two-meter repairs, maintenance on 3 meters, and inspected 2 meters. The department performed maintenance on 1 vehicle this month, applied cold patch in 1 spot, and filled in another hole. They performed maintenance on 3 fire hydrants.

They managed to GPS another manhole and inspected 17. Six sewer investigations. Sixteen lines cleaned out. They reinstalled or replaced 5 signs. A total of 522 work orders were completed and a total of 378 gallons of gas were used.

Matt McDaniel presented the wastewater report. Water usage at the treatment plant was 702,681 gallons. There were 12,070,000 gallons of treated water released back into Sugar Creek from the treatment plant which averaged to be 0.389 MGD. There were 620 hours used this month with a breakdown as follows: cleaning clarifiers and filters 48, lab and sampling 141, belt press and sludge 28, lift station and well repair 77, plant maintenance 103, routine rounds 28, education and training 17, management duties 12, and plant operations were 166.

Councilor Snyder asks about the hydrogen sulfide smell coming from the plant. Matt says the biggest problem is finding the money to fix the problem. Manager Barron added that no one can guarantee that spending a great deal of money on chemicals will actually solve the problem. The cost of a scrubber is at least \$250,000. Having a scrubber did help with the smell but it was also doing a lot of damage at the plant.

Gerald Fordham presented the code enforcement report. For the month of December he dealt with 2 blighted properties, handled 52 grease trap inspections, had 1 limb and leaf violation, 3 planning & zoning issues, 2 code violations, 1 building demolition, 8 building inspections, 5 building permits, and 4 electrical permits. He took in \$28,101.20 in permitting fees.

Wynnon Pittman presented the street department report. The crew spent a total of 12 hours on animal calls and 499 on curbs and gutters. Wynnon says the guys have done a phenomenal job on those. They spent 8 hours on ditches, 192 hours on Christmas décor, 8 on potholes, 14 hours on special events (movie night), 72 hours on trash pickup and 123 on limb pickup.

Wynnon addressed the issues and complaints that the city has received on the potholes. He was unable to get their usual cold patch mix and what they had was just not up to par. He has now gotten some better and they are working to get caught up.

Evan ran 380 ft of 2-inch line in the alleyway behind the Leave it Better Park. This was all while working around another 6-inch water line, a 2-inch gas line, a sewer line and several AT&T lines and other obstacles. He also connected 12 service lines to this addition. Afterwards, the crew hauled in at least 60 tons of dirt back there to level everything out.

Popco should be finishing up tying in the last of the sewer hook-ups in Jessup Heights. After that, they will just have the cleanup and refinishing of everyone's yard. The project must be completed by March 31, 2026, or they will be fined.

#### **WILLIAMS PROPERTY:**

The City of Eastman has agreed to purchase the empty lot adjacent to City Hall from Mr. Charles Williams and Ms. Patricia Matthews for the amount of \$100,000. This is to be paid out of either SPLOST, TSPLOST, or possibly the general fund. **A motion is needed to approve the acquisition and approval of the resolution including the purchase and sale agreement and amendment. Councilor Burney made the required motion with a second from Councilor Peacock and all members approved.**

#### **BID OUT LAWN MAINTENANCE:**

Manager Barron asks permission to bid out the lawn maintenance contract for 2026. He plans on using the same conditions as the previous years as far as the locations and things to be done. The only difference he requests is the option to take the contract to a 5-year term with an automatic renewal at

end of the year instead of just a 1-year term. **Councilor Sheffield made a motion to approve with a second from Councilor Burney and all members approved.**

**BID OUT DEBRIS REMOVAL:**

Barron also asks for this renewal. This concerns a disposal site for all of the limbs and debris that the city picks up on the side of the road. It must be an EPD approved site. He does recommend having the option to do this on a month-to-month basis and not lock the city into an annual contract. **Councilor Sheffield made the motion to approve with a second from Councilor Peacock and all approved.**

**SCHEDULE WORK SESSION:**

Councilor Snyder requests to schedule a work session to go over some projects. **On a motion from Councilor Peacock and seconded by Councilor Sheffield, a work session was scheduled for Thursday, February 12, 2026, at 5:30 PM.**

**ALCOHOL LICENSE:**

Vishal Sharma has requested a pouring license for his upcoming restaurant SPS Jefferson LLC at 116 Main Street. Clerk Sheffield stated that Mr. Sharma has met all of his requirements. **The alcohol license was unanimously approved on a motion from Councilor Sheffield and seconded by Councilor Peacock.**

**CITY MANAGER REPORT:**

Barron states that all 4 of the indoor pickleball courts at the Park are up and running. He thanks everyone involved for their hard work. Don't forget about the MLK parade set for January 19 at 1 PM. There is a community comprehensive plan meeting on January 29 at the Alcoa building. It is for anyone that is interested in the future of Eastman. A reminder that the blight initiative is still in effect. Please clean up your yards. Lastly, he thanks the Downtown Development Authority and all the volunteers that helped make the ice-skating rink another success this past December.

**OTHER BUSINESS FROM COUNCIL:**

Councilor Sheffield extends another welcome to Councilor Battle. Councilor Snyder also welcomes him again and Councilor Battle thanks both of them and states he is glad to be involved.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

**On a motion from Councilor Sheffield and a second from Councilor Burney, the meeting was adjourned.**

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CHAIRMAN

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CITY CLERK