

# The East Point *Informer*

Volume II

June – July 2005



*From the Editor's Desk*

*Earnestine D. Pittman*

## *Message*

### **DO NOT PANIC !!!**

Do not try to read the entire Newsletter in one sitting- just remember where you left it so you can find it later. This is a combined edition for June and July! Now stop complaining and start reading.

### **LOST OPPORTUNITY**

Once again, Council has lost the opportunity to plan and lead. The 2005-2006 Budget has been adopted with no leadership from Council. The Council failed to establish any mandates or plans for the City in the Budget. The Budget Committee (Chairperson Lance Rhodes, Co-chair Ann Douglas, CM Bill McClure, Mayor Patsy Jo Hilliard and resident Barbara Collins) recommended the Budget prepared by the City Manager with no recommendations from the Budget Committee. However, CM Rhodes did solicit individual recommendations from Council Members. Only one recommendation that was not in the proposed Budget was adopted and that was to hire an administrative assistant for the City Clerk's office.

The Mayor, as chair of the Council meeting, did not allow me to introduce my recommendation to extend the utility due date to twenty-eight days and the cut-off date to thirty-five days. This was no way to prepare and adopt the Budget. The Budget Committee failed to state what fixed costs in last year's budget (an increase of \$6 million) were included in this Budget. I know that last year's budget included a \$1.3 million payment for the City of Atlanta. We did not make the payment so what happened to the money and why was the amount not deducted as a one time expense (Full payment to the City of Atlanta is included in the CIP Bond.)? Oh, I have questions and so should you. I was the only CM to vote against the adoption of the Budget. CM McClure had to leave before the vote was taken.

Since no one on the Council or the Budget Committee could state what services were provided in the \$80.9 million Budget, I asked the City Manager and the Finance Director. Their reply is stated in the article "Found Opportunity". Residents, you should think about the following quote and if you agree with it follow through on it. "Dear Council, your lack of planning is not an emergency for us. Your lack of financial oversight will not continue to be our burden. See you in NOVEMBER."

### **FOUND OPPORTUNITY**

The Council voted to adopt the 2005-2006 Budget with another \$6 million increase. Since the Council did not put forth any Budget mandates or plans, I asked the City Manager and the Finance Director what services were offered in the \$80,903,336 Budget. According to them the City will receive:

- Once a week garbage pick-up
- Once a week trash pick-up
- Once per month street sweeping
- Once every two weeks code enforcement street drive through
- Seventeen days turn around on grass cutting on the City's right-of-ways
- Tree trimming around power lines on a "regular" basis
- Twenty-four miles of street paving or repair ninety-six miles of potholes at a cost of \$162,142 (Last year \$21,085 was spent on street paving and pothole repair.)
- New air condition unit for Jefferson Park Recreation Center (\$25,000)
- Four and a half minutes response time on medical calls from the fire dept.
- Fire response time for first fire engine at a fire is within six minutes
- Police response time is three and a quarter minutes
- Police patrol every street three times a day (once per shift)
- Delivery of electricity, water and sewer services

### **AND THAT'S ALL FOLKS!!!**

### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Special thanks to the following residents who have helped to make the delivery of the newsletters possible with their financial contributions: Carol Brown, Walter Banas, E. Cassell, Elizabeth Holland, Barbara Gwinn, Joyce Mills, L. Donna Shriver, Harold Williams, Jackie Gibbons and one shy donor. Words cannot express the thanks and gratitude for the many residents who volunteer their time distributing the newsletters to their neighbors and other residents. More residents and contributions are needed if the same number of newsletters is going to be distributed each month. It is vacation time. So if you want to continue to get a newsletter, step up to the plate. I am paying my share.

## ***THEN AND NOW***

Number of Fire Stations	4 <b>THEN</b> 2004	5, a <b>NOW</b> station is being built 2005
Number of Firemen and Officers	84	<b>87- plus 24 to be hired</b>
Number of Policemen & Officers	134	<b>147</b>
Number of Patrol Units	45	45
Number of Electrical Consumers	16,079	(+/-) 16,000
Number of Classified Employees (exclusive of police, fire and CM)	319	<b>332</b>
TOTAL Number of City Employees (excluding CM)	537	<b>590</b>
<b><u>OTHER INFORMATION</u></b>		
City Area	18.1 square miles	
Miles of Streets	150	
Number of Street Lights	4,125 approx	
Fire Rating	4	
Number of Water Consumers	9,877	
Number of Water Mains	171	
Number of Sanitary Sewers	191	
Miles of Electrical Distribution Lines	250 approx	
Number of Parks (176 acres)	16	
Number of Recreation Centers	3	
Number of Community Centers	0	
Number of Tennis Courts	11	
Date East Point Incorporated	1889	

### ***MONEY FOR RESIDENTS***

If you have not already contacted CJW Associates about the "VINEGAR SPILL" you need to do so immediately. They have been giving checks to residents who were told to evacuate whether they evacuated or not. I would suggest that you fax them a copy of your identification, utility bill and the names of all of the members in the house. Here are the phone and fax numbers. Keep calling until you get someone on the phone. Phone (678) 587-9262 and Fax (678) 587-9293. They will pay for each person in the house.

### **RECONSIDERATIONS**

On June 21, 2005, CM Lance Rhodes notified Mayor and Council that he wanted to reconsider his vote for the Resolution supporting Congressional efforts to extend The Voting Rights Act of 1965. This Voting Rights Act was first passed and signed by President Lyndon B. Johnson following the assignation of President John F. Kennedy. The Voting Rights Act was passed to ensure that minorities, especially African Americans, would have equal access to the ballot box without interference.

I am deeply troubled by any elected official having any kind of reservations about extending any legislation that insures the right to vote to anyone without the fear of intimidation, harassment and interference. I realize that CM Rhodes has