



VOICE FOR THE PEOPLE

Knowledge is Power; and Elections have Consequences!

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PROPOSED FY 24 BUDGET REVIEW #2B

This is a continuation of my **Email Newsletter: Proposed FY 24 Budget Review #1A**. Mayor and Council **have** knowingly, willingly, and **continue** to violate the Charter, Related Laws, and Policies of the City. For at least **four** years, Mayor and Council have **bypassed** the Charter by **creating Departments/Office to circumvent** having to **VOTE** at public Council Meetings for **items** that they know would **not** meet with public approval. These items would **not** meet with public **approval** because they were and continue to be **violations** of the **State Gratuity Clause; individual Pet Projects** of the Mayor and Council with **no** means of accurately **documenting** expenditures because **all** decisions of **how** the money is spent, for **what**, and to **whom** are **made** by Mayor and Council. Those **decisions** are **administrative** decisions over which the Mayor and Council **have** absolutely **no** power to **implement** in our City's form of government.

Our **form** of government is **Council-Manager**, where the Mayor and Council **legislate** policies and provides oversight of the City Manager. **According** to the Charter: **Sec. 2-302. Powers and duties of the city manager. The city manager shall, subject to the policy control, direction, and supervision of the mayor and city council, be the head of the administrative branch of the municipal government of the City of East Point and responsible for the efficient administration of all departments of said municipal government. The city manager shall be responsible to the city council for the administration of all city affairs placed in the city manager's charge by or under this charter. As the chief executive and administrative officer, the city manager shall:**

- (1) **Appoint and, when the city manager deems it necessary for the good of the city, suspend or remove all city employees and administrative officers the city manager appoints, except as otherwise provided by law or personnel ordinances adopted pursuant to this charter.** The city manager may authorize any administrative officer who is subject to the city manager's direction and supervision to exercise these powers with respect to subordinates in that officer's department, office, or agency;
- (2) **Direct and supervise the administration of all departments, offices, and agencies of the city, except as otherwise provided by this charter or by law;**

To **bypass** the power of the City Manager to supervise the administration of any Department, someone **created** the **City Council/City Clerk Department** to **funnel** money for the Pet Projects of the **Mayor** and the **eight Council Members**, over which the City Manager **would** have no control. Since Mayor and Council **failed** to create the **Department** by **Ordinance**, it could **not** be considered a **Department** or come under the **authority** of the City Manager. **In the Proposed FY 24 Budget, the "City Council/City Clerk" Department will have a lot more money for their Pet Projects and personal use.** This **Department** was listed under **EXPENDITURES** in the **FY 23** Budget with appropriations of **\$1,512,840**. In the Proposed **FY 24** Budget it has appropriations of **\$2,426,906**. **Can you imagine what could legally be done with that money to help our Residents' quality of life?**

This provision is in the Charter states.: Sec. 2-401. Role delineation.

(3) The mayor shall have no management authority or responsibility with respect to the operations and administration of city government; and

Number 3 in the Role delineation in the Charter has not **stopped** the Mayor from **finding** a way to get around it, and **setting** up alliances **with former City Manager Fred Gardiner, and current City Manager Deron King; and former City Attorney Brad Bowman, and Current Interim City Attorney Antavius Weems**. This **alliance** created a **Department** and called it the **“EXECUTIVE”**; and it only **exists** under **EXPENDITURES** in the Budgets, and the **number** of employees in the Human Resources Highlight chart (**page 82**) in the Budget Book. In the FY 23 Budget, the **“EXECUTIVE”** Department had appropriations listed under **Expenditures** for **\$2,426,906**; in the FY 24 Budget the appropriations are **\$6,449,013**. Since Mayor and Council never **adopted** the **Department** by **ORDINANCE**, it is **not** under the supervision and administration of the City Manager. The **“EXECUTIVE”** role belongs to the Mayor, who just happened to **use** her Office to **oversee** the **administration** of the Partnership with Southern Equity in **2022**, the **same** year that her **salary** jumped by more than **\$60,000**.

Now, the Mayor and the **“EXECUTIVE”** Department appears to be **back** in business for another year. Only this time with a different twist. Remember, the February 22, 2023, Budget Amendment that Mayor and Council passed to appropriate **\$1million** from the **American Recovery Act Plan (ARAP)** to fund the **“CREATION”** of the **“Office of Equity, Inclusion, and Empowerment”**. Instead of **waiting** to adopt the **“Office of Equity, Inclusion, and Empowerment”** by **ORDINANCE**, the City Manager **made** it a **“DIVISION”** in **his** Office with **two** employees. One employee makes **\$72,636.70**, and the other employee makes **\$64,598.81**.

As stated earlier, the **“EXECUTIVE”** is listed as having **fifteen (15)** positions. Those **fifteen (15)** positions are **the Mayor +8 Council Members + 1 fulltime in the Mayor’s Office + 1 parttime in the Mayor’s Office + 4 in the Office of Equity, Inclusion, and Empowerment = 15**. This would **appear** to be a comedy of errors **between** the Mayor and City Manager as to **where** to locate the **“CREATED”** Office without an **ORDINANCE!** The Mayor is **again** using her Office to **supervise** and **administrate** a **“CREATED”** Office that **violates** multiple **Sections of the Charter**.

The person who hired **Ms. Yolanda Denise Johnson** did so **without** references that would have **shown** Ms. Johnson as a **poor** choice for employment in any position for East Point. **Please see attachment**.

(4) The mayor and city council, as elected officials, shall possess fundamental oversight duties and responsibilities with respect to all operations and administration of city government, and the city manager shall be responsible and duty bound to facilitate the mayor and city council's oversight function.

The Mayor and Council **would** have you **believe** that **appropriations** of items in the **BUDGET voted** on by them grants them the **AUTHORITY** to **use** the money anyway they want to **without** bringing the items **back** to them for a **VOTE!** According to the Charter that is a **LIE!** According to the Charter **only** appropriate multi-year cost items in contracts or ongoing debt service for bonds **can** be **paid without** coming **back** to Mayor and Council for a **Vote** because they **have** already been **ENCUMBERED** by contracts.. The Charter **clearly** states in:

Sec. 2-401. Role delineation (4) **The mayor and city council, as elected officials, shall possess fundamental oversight duties and responsibilities with respect to all operations and administration of city government, and the city manager shall be responsible and duty bound to facilitate the mayor and city council's oversight function. Once the city council has passed the operating and capital budgets of the city, it shall be the responsibility of the city manager to**

administer such budgets and to keep the mayor and city council fully informed as to the city's progress against such budgets. The city manager shall provide monthly financial updates on the budgets with year to date information, and such updates shall contain all material information necessary for the mayor and city council to evaluate the financial performance and condition of the city. **However, once the city council has appropriated funds in the budget and encumbered such funds through subsequent legislative action, the city manager shall have the authority to administer such budget including contract administration and account payables as part of the management function.**

Mayor and Council are **too** afraid to **bring** the thousands of dollars **given** to **pay** for free **illegal Events, Concerts, Fairs, Give-a-ways; robo calls, unauthorized personal travel in and out of the United States, credit cards expenditures for car insurance, grocery foods, restaurants, gas, caterers, use of City staff, police and fire public safety with City Staff and outside security personnel** ; and the list goes on. **What** makes **this** Mayor and Council **think** that because they were **elected** they **have** a right to **Taxpayers'** funds to do **what** they want with **the** money?

The Mayor and Council have **failed** the Residents and the City by **violating** the **Charter, Related Laws, Ordinances , Policies, and their Oaths of Office** that they all swore to uphold. They have **collectively** violated the trust of the Residents. Their **willingness** to **stick** together and **support** the gross **wrongdoings** for each other is appalling. Their **greed, egos, incompetence, and lack of desire to govern** this City by upholding its laws, and the laws of the State of Georgia **have** cost the City **tens of millions dollars**. The **ingenuity and thought** that went into **creating** fraudulent **Departments and Offices** should have gone into **providing** the Residents with **decent Parks and Recreation Facilities; proper lighting and security at Sykes Park, and Ben Hill Road; equitable Park Programs for children and adults of all ages and abilities, and interests; for starters**. Instead, they **raised** their salaries and **doubled** their pension benefits, and **CM Cook is trying to pass another increase in the FY 24 Budget. Greedy much!**

Residents, if there are **things** that you would like to see in the **Proposed FY 24 Budget**, you need to be talking to **Mayor and Council not** the City Manager who **has** shown **himself** to be **cut** from the same **cloth** of poor leadership as the Mayor and Council. **Residents**, you **have a voice and power**, start using it. **Fill** the Council Chamber on **this Monday, May 15, 2023**, and **demand a Townhall Meeting with the Mayor and Council**. **Let** them **know** that you don't **want** any **ZOOM** meeting to **discuss** how they **have** been running this City and **spending your money**. Mayor and Council have a total of **\$8,875,919 of your money in the Budget for their own desires**. They are **using your money to buy VOTES while insulting you by providing FREE entertainment to anyone outside of the City that lasts only a few hours with nothing for you except the trash to be picked up. You deserve more , so demand it.**

I will have more specific **information** about **EXPENDITURES** in the Budget **in my next Email Newsletter**.