



**OFFICIAL MINUTES OF THE OXFORD MAYOR AND COUNCIL MEETING
REGULAR SESSION
MONDAY, DECEMBER 4, 2023 – 7:00 PM
CITY HALL**

ELECTED OFFICIALS PRESENT:

David Eady – Mayor
George Holt – Councilmember
Laura McCanless – Councilmember
Mike Ready – Councilmember
Jeff Wearing – Councilmember
Erik Oliver – Councilmember

APPOINTED/STAFF PRESENT:

Bill Andrew – City Manager
Marcia Brooks – City Clerk/Treasurer
Mark Anglin – Police Chief
Jody Reid – Supervisor of Maintenance
David Strickland – City Attorney

ELECTED OFFICIALS NOT PRESENT:

Jim Windham – Councilmember

OTHERS PRESENT: Art Vinson, Mike McQuaide

1. The meeting was called to order by the Honorable David S. Eady, Mayor.
2. **Jeff Wearing made a motion to approve the agenda for the December 4, 2023 Mayor and Council Regular Meeting. Mike Ready seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously (6/0).** (Attachment A)
3. **Jeff Wearing made a motion to accept the Consent Agenda for December 4, 2023. Mike Ready seconded the motion.**

Discussion:

Laura McCanless noted that the minutes for the November 17, 2023 work session erroneously show the meeting as being held on a Monday. This needs to be changed to Friday.

The motion was approved unanimously (6/0). (Attachment B)

4. Mayor's Report

The City Councilmembers were in agreement with trying to have the City's Christmas Dinner at one of the restaurants on the square in Covington on December 14th. Marcia Brooks will check on availability of venues and get back to everyone.

5. Citizen Concerns

Erik Oliver raised the issue of sign clutter in the City. Mayor Eady agreed to add this issue to the work session agenda.

6. Presentation of research on the benefits and effectiveness of pollinator gardens (Attachment C)

Michaelina Schach was unable to attend the meeting. She will be invited back for a future meeting. Marcia Brooks suggested that she be appointed Honorary Council Member when she attends. The City Council was amenable to doing so. Laura McCanless will coordinate with Ms. Schach.

7. WaterFirst Renewal (Attachment D)

Laura McCanless made a motion to approve renewing the WaterFirst designation with Georgia Environmental Finance Authority (GEFA). George Holt seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously (6/0).

8. Resolution for the Oxford Water and Sewer System Development Charges (SDC) (Attachment E)

Laura McCanless made a motion to approve the resolution. Mike Ready seconded the motion.

Discussion:

An extended discussion was held concerning the specifics of the proposed fees and what they include. Bill Andrew clarified that the proposed charges should be distinguished from tap fees. Tap fees must be paid in addition to these charges, which are considered system development charges.

The motion carried by a vote of 5/1 with George Holt casting a nay vote.

9. Authorization to Request Additional Sewer Capacity from the City of Covington at \$22/gallon

Discussion:

Erik Oliver expressed his support for buying more capacity than the minimum necessary to minimize the risk of spending more per gallon for capacity in the future. Mayor Eady stated that the study being conducted to determine capacity on the west side of Oxford is being leveraged to also make the same determination on the east side, which the City of Covington is servicing. He suggested waiting until that study is complete before buying any additional capacity.

Laura McCanless made a motion to request 18,000 gallons of additional capacity from the City of Covington. Jeff Wearing seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously (6/0).

10. Authorization to Withdraw \$250,000 from Oxford's Municipal Competitive Trust Fund for the Purpose of Upgrading the Geiger Street Substation (Attachment F)

Laura McCanless made a motion to authorize the withdrawal for the purpose of upgrading the Geiger Street Substation. Mike Ready seconded the motion.

Discussion:

Erik Oliver raised the point that the authorization should not be for a specific purpose since the upgrade of the substation has not been finalized. It can specify that the money will be placed in the Electric Capital account.

Laura McCanless amended her motion to authorize the withdrawal and place the money in the City's Electric Capital account. Mike Ready seconded the amended motion. The motion was approved unanimously (6/0).

11. **Invoices** (Attachment G)

The City Council reviewed invoices paid for \$1,000 or more during November 2023.

12. **Executive Session**

None.

13. **Adjourn**

Jeff Wearing made a motion to adjourn at 8:04 p.m. Mike Wearing seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously (6/0).

Respectfully Submitted,

Marcia Brooks



City Clerk/Treasurer

**OXFORD MAYOR AND COUNCIL
REGULAR SESSION
DECEMBER 4, 2023 – 7:00 P.M.
CITY HALL – 110 W. CLARK ST. OXFORD, GA 30054
A G E N D A**

1. **Call to Order – Mayor David S. Eady**
2. **Motion to accept the Agenda for the December 4, 2023 Mayor and Council Regular Meeting.**
3. **Consent Agenda**
 - a. *Minutes of the City Council Regular Session Nov. 13, 2023
 - b. *Minutes of the City Council Work Session Nov. 17, 2023
 - c. *City Council Annual Planning Retreat Nov. 17, 2023
4. ***Mayor’s Report:**
 - a. City of Oxford Christmas Dinner Plans
5. **Citizen Concerns**
6. **Presentation of research on the benefits and effectiveness of pollinator gardens –** Michelina Schach (Ms. Schach is a sophomore at Oxford College and has been an outstanding Service Leader, who has done much to further our efforts in bettering our community.)
7. ***WaterFirst Renewal** – Staff received notice on 11/29 of the 12/31 deadline for the renewal of the WaterFirst designation by the Georgia Environmental Finance Authority (GEFA), therefore, we are requesting a vote this evening on this item.
8. ***Resolution for the Oxford Water and Sewer System Development Charges (SDC)** – Oxford has 38,500 gpd left in the Covington Line. Archer is requesting 55,800, leaving us a deficit of 17,300. Our current price works out to \$9/gallon for sewer, this would rise to \$27.53 with the \$22/gallon cost from Covington.

The SDC is based on an equivalent dwelling unit (EDU) of 400 gpd for wastewater and 364 gpd for water. This translates to a cost of \$27.53 per gallon for Covington Wastewater capacity and \$5.53 per gallon for Newton County Water & Sewerage Authority (NCWSA) capacity. As water is all supplied by NCWSA, the cost is the same across the City, \$2.01 per gallon, falling from our current price of \$6.46 per gallon.

With two sewer providers, our costs for a residential connection would be as follows, with the addition of actual connection fees from a contractor:

Proposed SDC

System	Proposed	Current
Wastewater Covington	\$11,010.02	\$3,600.00
Wastewater NCWSA	\$2,210.02	\$3,600.00
Water	\$731.59	\$2,585.00

- 9. Authorization to Request Additional Sewer Capacity from Covington at \$22/gallon**
– As indicated above, Oxford has 38,500 gpd left in the Covington Line. Archer is requesting 55,800, leaving us a deficit of 17,300. Our current price works out to \$9/gallon for sewer, this would rise to \$27.53 with the \$22/gallon cost from Covington.

- 10. *Authorization to Withdraw \$250,000 from Oxford’s Municipal Competitive Trust Fund for the Purposes of Upgrading the Geiger Street Substation**

- 11. *Invoices:** Council will review the city’s recently paid invoices over \$1,000.

- 12. Executive Session:** An Executive Session could potentially be held for Land Acquisition/Disposition, Addressing Pending or Potential Litigation, and/or Personnel.

- 13. Adjourn**

*Attachments



**DRAFT MINUTES OF THE OXFORD MAYOR AND COUNCIL MEETING
REGULAR SESSION
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 2023 – 7:00 PM
CITY HALL
DRAFT**

ELECTED OFFICIALS PRESENT:

David Eady – Mayor
George Holt – Councilmember
Laura McCanless – Councilmember
(by phone)
Mike Ready – Councilmember
Jim Windham – Councilmember
Jeff Wearing – Councilmember
Erik Oliver – Councilmember

APPOINTED/STAFF PRESENT:

Bill Andrew – City Manager
Marcia Brooks – City Clerk/Treasurer
Mark Anglin – Police Chief
Jody Reid – Supervisor of Maintenance
David Strickland – City Attorney

OTHERS PRESENT: three residents at 804 Emory Street (AKA “E. George Street”), Jamie Porges (Peak Solarworks)

1. The meeting was called to order by the Honorable David S. Eady, Mayor.
2. **Jim Windham made a motion to amend the agenda for the November 13, 2023 Mayor and Council Regular Meeting to add an item regarding the recent incident at Asbury Street Park. Mike Ready seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously (7/0).**
(Attachment A)
Jeff Wearing made a motion to approve the amended agenda. Mike Ready seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously (7/0).
3. **Jeff Wearing made a motion to accept the Consent Agenda for November 13, 2023. Mike Ready seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously (7/0).** (Attachment B)
4. **Mayor’s Report**
Noted on agenda.
5. **Citizen Concerns**
None.

6. **Water Line Easement on “E. George Street”** (Attachment C)

Mike Ready made a motion to approve the water line easement. Jeff Wearing seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously (7/0).

7. **Resolution for a Sewer Connection Moratorium due to Unknown Sewer Capacity**
(Attachment D)

Jeff Wearing made a motion to approve the resolution. Erik Oliver seconded the motion.

Discussion:

Jim Windham asked for a list of the exempted property owners. He is concerned about exemptions being open-ended. Mayor Eady advised the exemption is limited to the property owners on Emory Street who have until December 23, 2023 to pay a reduced rate to connect to the North Emory Sewer tap, a property owner on Moore Street who expressed interest in a commercial warehouse on their property, and Archer Aviation. This will be documented in a memo and attached to the record.

The motion was approved unanimously (7/0).

8. **Water Fountain Replacement at Asbury Street Park** (Attachment E)

Mike Ready made a motion to approve replacement of three of the four fountains at Asbury Street Park, excluding the one next to the pavilion. Jeff Wearing seconded the motion.

Discussion:

Staff have only received one bid thus far. The price to replace three fountains would be under \$10,000.

Jim Windham asked why the fourth fountain outside the pavilion is not being replaced and what will happen to it. Jody Reid confirmed that the fourth fountain will be removed and capped because it is not needed at that location.

Mike Ready amended his motion to grant administrative discretion to Bill Andrew to approve the lowest bid if it is less than \$10,000. George Holt seconded the amended motion. The motion was approved unanimously (7/0).

9. **Bike-Friendly Community Designation from League of American Bicyclists** (Attachment F)

Erik Oliver made a motion to approve pursuit of the designation. Mike Ready seconded the motion.

Discussion:

Jeff Wearing asked if this designation would mean changes for Highway 81 and for the sidewalk being installed/replaced. He asked if bicycle lanes will be required on Highway 81. Bill Andrew stated that bicycle lanes are not required. Having the designation may provide some leverage for having a discussion with GDOT in the future about adding bicycle lanes. He has discussed a timeframe for the designation with John Devine, Executive Director of Georgia Bikes. Mr. Devine suggested laying the framework for the application by the June deadline in 2024 with the goal of fully developing the application in time for the 2025 application deadline.

The motion was approved unanimously (7/0).

10. Whatcoat Street Realignment (Attachment G)

Mayor Eady stated that the purpose of this vote is to decide whether to move forward with obtaining bids on the job based on the 100% drawings from Atkins that reflect what was approved in the 50% drawings along with some changes. Bill Andrew added that the RFP will require per-unit costs that cannot change after the contract is awarded. The bids will provide a more accurate cost for the work compared to the planning figure used in the FY 2024 Capital budget of \$700,000.

George Holt expressed concern about per-unit prices increasing after award. Jim Windham stated that any contractor will put time limitations on per-unit prices to avoid their costs increasing if the work is done later. This will put pressure on the City Council to take some action soon. Jeff Wearing stated that prices are usually good for ninety (90) days with this type of contract.

Erik Oliver asked David Strickland if there is any issue with the City putting out official bid documents related to property the City does not yet own. Mr. Strickland advised the ownership issue should not be an impediment to getting bids, because the bidding process is not approval to go forward with the actual work.

Laura McCanless stated her support of getting a more concrete cost estimate.

Mike Ready made a motion to approve releasing the job for bids. Jeff Wearing seconded the motion. The motion carried 4/3. Mike Ready, Jeff Wearing, David Eady and Laura McCanless voted yea. Jim Windham, George Holt, and Erik Oliver voted nay.

11. Atkins Task Order – Possible Bike/Pedestrian Path Routes (Attachment H)

Jim Windham made a motion to approve the Atkins Task Order. Jeff Wearing seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously (7/0).

12. Invoices (Attachment I)

The City Council reviewed invoices paid for \$1,000 or more during October 2023.

13. FOR DISCUSSION ONLY: Peak Solarworks Power Purchase Agreement (Attachment J)

In order to make the 2 MW solar project proposed by Peak Solarworks work, one of two things must be done:

1. Connect to both circuits (north and south) by running cable overhead or underground for about 5,000 feet.
2. Have the substation reconfigured to allow power to flow from one circuit to the other without going outside the meter. MEAG has advised that the substation should have been initially configured this way but was not.

The cost for either option is estimated to be around \$250,000. Jamie Porges with Peak Solarworks spoke to the City Council regarding how this additional cost would impact their proposal if they pay for it initially. He also mentioned that the estimate does not include property tax. They hope to request a property tax abatement from Newton County. They would absorb all but \$60,000 of the cost upfront and ask that \$30,000 be recouped in Years 1 and 2. In Year 5 they would have good-faith negotiations. If the savings they anticipate are realized, they are asking that one third of those savings be used to reimburse them for the remaining costs plus property taxes.

Jim Windham asked for some examples with order of magnitude figures for the discussion during the next work session.

Mayor Eady discussed an option for the City of Oxford to pay the full cost upfront by withdrawing the City's money in its Municipal Competitive Trust short term investment, which has a balance of around \$300,000.

Of the two options, George Holt and Laura McCanless supported upgrading the substation. Erik Oliver asked if Emory would realize cost reductions from the project. Mr. Porges stated that they would be able to show progress toward their environmental goals. They would get renewal energy credits in exchange for leasing the property to the City. He also stated that if the City decided to pay the full cost for the interconnection up front, his company would absorb any property tax costs.

The consensus of the City Council is to reconfigure the substation and to pay for it up front using the Municipal Competitive Trust investment funds. This decision will be ratified at the December regular session.

14. FOR DISCUSSION ONLY: New System Development Charges for Water and Sewer
(Attachment K)

Nelsnick Enterprises has been working on a rate study for water and sewer to help the City determine how to recover the cost for the additional sewer capacity needed on the Dried Indian Creek line to support Archer Aviation. The City of Covington has offered to sell capacity to Oxford at \$22 per gallon. The City's rate is substantially less than that and is based on Newton County Water and Sewer Authority (NCWSA) rates from 2016. Not only are the City's rates probably outdated but are also based on a cost structure for a different entity with different operating costs (NCWSA).

The immediate decisions to be made are whether to proceed with requesting the capacity needed from the City of Covington to support Archer Aviation, and also whether to request additional capacity based on possible future needs.

Jim Windham asked if this same company can analyze the City's future capacity needs. Bill Andrew advised they should be able to do that within the next couple of weeks.

14.5 Criminal Damage to Property Incident at Asbury Street Park on November 11, 2023

Chief Mark Anglin spoke of the incident which occurred on November 11, 2023 at Asbury Street Park. A stolen car was driven onto the green at the park and got stuck. The suspects also broke into the utility room that houses the camera system. One of the suspects was hiding in the utility room. He expressed his disappointment that the City of Oxford must rely on the Newton County Sheriff's Office for support for calls such as this, requiring taxpayers in other areas of Newton County to support Oxford. He recommends increasing sworn staff based on staffing levels at nearby law enforcement agencies and requested an administrative staff person to handle clerical and technical duties.

He has several recommendations for immediate changes. The bathrooms will be locked by deadbolt each night. He has already had a lock installed on the utility room and recommends that access to it be restricted. He recommends more barriers to prohibit vehicular access to the green.

Jim Windham stated that he pays County taxes and doesn't think the fairness of deputies supporting Oxford is a valid argument. He also mentioned that there have been very few incidents in the park and does not believe barricading the park is a solution. He does think more sworn staff are needed. The City should not have to rely on county law enforcement personnel.

Erik Oliver stated that Oxford College should provide law enforcement support or should contribute financially to augmenting the City's sworn staff because of the responsibility the City of Oxford has to protect the students on and off campus.

15. **Executive Session**

Jim Windham made a motion at 8:53 p.m. to go into Executive Session to discuss a personnel matter. Jeff Wearing seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously (7/0).

Jim Windham made a motion at 9:13 p.m. to exit Executive Session. Jeff Wearing seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously (7/0).

16. **Adjourn**

Jim Windham made a motion to adjourn at 9:13 p.m. Jeff Wearing seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously (7/0).

Respectfully Submitted,

Marcia Brooks
City Clerk/Treasurer



**DRAFT MINUTES OF THE OXFORD MAYOR AND COUNCIL MEETING
WORK SESSION
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 2023 – 9:00 AM
Newton Chamber of Commerce
DRAFT**

ELECTED OFFICIALS PRESENT:

David Eady - Mayor
George Holt – Councilmember
Jim Windham – Councilmember
Laura McCanless – Councilmember
Jeff Wearing – Councilmember
Erik Oliver – Councilmember

STAFF PRESENT:

Marcia Brooks – City Clerk/Treasurer
Bill Andrew – City Manager
Mark Anglin – Police Chief

ELECTED OFFICIALS NOT PRESENT

Mike Ready – Councilmember

OTHERS PRESENT: David Key (Carl Vinson Institute of Government), Bobby Sills (Nelsnick Enterprises), Art Vinson, Laurie Vinson

Agenda (Attachment A)

1. Peak Solarworks Power Purchase Agreement

Mayor Eady stated that based on the discussion in the last Regular Session and consensus to move forward with upgrading the City's substation, he has reached out to MEAG Power to find out what the next steps should be. This issue will be voted on at the December Regular Session.

Jim Windham asked how Peak Solarworks is coming out so good on this deal that they are able to offer the prices stated in their proposal. Mayor Eady stated that the initial cost will be partially covered by the grant they have received. They will also benefit from the Inflation Reduction Act which they will realize investment tax credits from.

Erik Oliver asked several questions concerning the solar farm, which Mayor Eady answered:

- a. How big in acres is the field? About ten acres.
- b. What is the lifespan of the panels before they must be replaced? Each panel has at least a thirty-year service life.

- c. What type of security will there be to secure the property? The proposal from Peak Solarworks states they would install a fence around the property. They would also likely install cameras. Peak Solarworks will be responsible for the security of the site.

Jim Windham and Laura McCanless both expressed appreciation to the City Hall staff for the monthly notices to customers regarding anomalous usage of water.

2. **New System Development Charges for Water and Sewer**

Bill Andrew introduced this subject by reviewing why the City of Oxford has engaged with Nelsnick Enterprises to evaluate its tap fees for water and sewer. As mentioned in the most recent Regular Session, current tap fees are based on a 2016 rate schedule of the Newton County Water and Sewer Authority (NCWSA). The current tap fees are sometimes inadequate to cover the installation costs of taps, and moreover, they do not provide for the setting aside of funds for future replacement/development of infrastructure.

Nelsnick Enterprises has evaluated Oxford's cost to install taps in the future, including staffing, infrastructure replacement, and capacity. The proposed charges are significantly higher than what the City currently charges customers, but Mr. Andrew feels that the proposed fees align with those of other jurisdictions he has experience with. He also noted that the proposed fee structure distinguishes properties on the west side of Oxford from the east side because they are in two different water basins and are served by different water authorities.

Bobby Sills with Nelsnick Enterprises provided clarification on tap fees vs. system development fees. Tap fees are development costs. If a developer absorbs the development costs, a municipality should not charge for them. If the City does the work or contracts with someone to do it, the cost should be passed on to the developer. A system development charge covers capacity charges as well as recurring charges paid to the provider and costs to replace infrastructure. The calculations also include a credit to developers to negate the effect of them essentially paying double for system development charges. Water calculations are lower because Oxford only pays a distribution cost for water. He provided a technical memo outlining the recommended charges which was sent to the City Council members. These costs are only applicable to new installations of meters. They do not apply to customers on existing meters.

Mr. Sills also mentioned that NCWSA does not currently charge anything to the City for capacity, while the City of Covington currently charges \$22 per gallon. Once NCWSA completes their study the SDC rates will need to be reevaluated.

Mayor Eady mentioned blended rates as one option to make the rates the same across the different basins. Mr. Sills stated that might work for customer monthly rates, but it would be difficult for SDC rates because one set of customers would likely be subsidizing the rates of the other set of customers.

Bill Andrew stated that the Carter & Sloope is working on some figures to help the City Council evaluate in December whether to request more capacity from the City of Covington than is needed for Archer Aviation.

3. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned by Mayor Eady at 9:57 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Marcia Brooks
City Clerk/Treasurer



**DRAFT MINUTES OF THE OXFORD MAYOR AND COUNCIL MEETING
ANNUAL RETREAT
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 2023 – 10:00 AM
Newton Chamber of Commerce
DRAFT**

ELECTED OFFICIALS PRESENT:

David Eady - Mayor
George Holt – Councilmember
Jim Windham – Councilmember
Laura McCanless – Councilmember
Jeff Wearing – Councilmember
Erik Oliver – Councilmember

STAFF PRESENT:

Marcia Brooks – City Clerk/Treasurer
Bill Andrew – City Manager
Mark Anglin – Police Chief

ELECTED OFFICIALS NOT PRESENT

Mike Ready – Councilmember

OTHERS PRESENT: David Key (Carl Vinson Institute of Government), Art Vinson, Laurie Vinson

Agenda (Attachment A)

1. Opening Remarks and Introduction of Facilitator

Mayor Eady provided updated information he has received regarding the Archer Aviation opening. Total employees for phases one and two are much higher than initial information. By 2030 Archer expects to hire 3,000 employees. An additional 15,000 employees are expected between the Rivian plant and industries coming to the area to support Rivian. The implications for Oxford could be significant in terms of housing needed, traffic on the City's streets, and ability to provide services.

Bill Andrew provided the City Council with information about a developer that has met with the Planning Commission once. He anticipates they should have an application ready for the City Council by February of 2024.

2. Decision and Execution Processes

Mayor Eady introduced David Key from CVIOG as the facilitator to lead the group in a discussion of how the City Council can improve its decision-making process.

3. **Whatcoat Street Development Project**

The City Council members discussed their concerns about the project.

4. **SWOT Analysis**

David Key facilitated a SWOT analysis exercise with the City Council members and staff.

Respectfully Submitted,

Marcia Brooks
City Clerk/Treasurer

Information for those not already familiar with WaterFirst:

From the website: <https://gefa.georgia.gov/waterfirst>

WaterFirst

Becoming a WaterFirst Community demonstrates a local government's commitment to responsible water stewardship for environmental and economic benefits. Communities that earn the WaterFirst designation are eligible for financial and other benefits from the state of Georgia. WaterFirst benefits include:

- *Statewide recognition for environmental stewardship*
- *1 percent interest rate reduction on GEFA loans*
- *Annual eligibility for water-related project applications to the [Community Development Block Grant Program](#) through the Georgia Department of Community Affairs*
- *Priority status for the [319\(h\) Grant Program](#) administered by the Georgia Environmental Protection Division.*

Local Information:

Ours is a multi-jurisdictional certification first received from DCA (Department of Community Affairs) in 2012. The original application process was wide in scope and took over a year to complete. Once received, certification must be renewed every five years. Our first renewal was completed in 2017. Due to reorganization of the program at the state level (moving it from DCA to GEFA), the renewal MOU's were delayed. As a result, our current certification extends through December 2023.

Communities designated as WaterFirst receive a 1% interest rate reduction on GEFA loans for water-related projects. If they do not re-certify, they lose the interest rate reduction and have to pay back the difference for any loans already in place. This is why renewal is essential, and your help is needed to ensure we meet the renewal application deadline.

Fortunately, the renewal application process is much narrower in scope and shorter than the original application process.

Thank you!

WaterFirst

CARING FOR OUR WATER RESOURCES

Georgia Environmental Finance Authority WaterFirst Program Renewal Application

The WaterFirst Program is a voluntary partnership between local governments, state agencies, and other organizations working together to increase the quality of life in communities through the wise management and protection of our valuable water resources. This proactive approach to water resources requires local governments to make the connection between land use and water quality, and it requires thinking beyond political boundaries to recognize the inextricable links created by shared water resources. The intended result of WaterFirst is achieving excellence beyond the current water regulations in nine major categories:

- Watershed assessment,
- Stormwater master planning,
- Wastewater treatment and management,
- Water supply planning,
- Water supply protection,
- Water conservation,
- Water reclamation and reuse,
- Educational outreach; and
- Regional water planning.

To continue qualifying for WaterFirst incentives, communities must be recertified every five years. It has been five years since your designation or renewal. GEFA needs to evaluate your programs to ensure that your community is still achieving environmental excellence.

I. Applicant Information

Please check one: Individual City or County or Multi-Jurisdictional Partnership

City/County of: Newton County and the cities of Covington, Mansfield, Oxford, Porterdale, the Town of Newborn, and the Newton County Water & Sewerage Authority

Address: 8134 Geiger Street, Suite 9

City: Covington Zip Code: 30014

Phone: 770-784-2015 Fax: N/A

Email: lriley@co.newton.ga.us

Name of Person Completing Application: Laurie Riley

Title: Manager, Keep Newton Beautiful

Address: 8134 Geiger Street, Suite 9

City: Covington Zip Code: 30014

Phone: 678-625-5090 Fax: N/A

Email: lriley@co.newton.ga.us

II. Community Profile

(If applying as a partnership, please answer the following questions for each partner, separate pages may be added.)

Are you currently a Qualified Local Government?

Newton County—Yes; Covington—Yes; Mansfield—Yes; Oxford—Yes; Porterdale--Yes

In what water basin(s) are you located?

Upper Ocmulgee, Middle Ocmulgee Water Council

Have your water services that were provided at designation changed? If so, how?

NCWSA’s growth in customers has been flat with commercial and industrial growing significantly.

Has your service area changed? If so, how?

NCWSA--Yes. High-growth areas along the borders with the City of Covington have been exchanged to Covington following the DCA’s guidelines for SDS modifications. One of the main reasons is that water customers and sewer customers are combined and served by the entity that has the treatment facilities.

Oxford—Yes. We have swapped and gained service territory with Covington and the Newton County Water and Sewerage Authority.

How many residents does each service support?

Newton County—Wholesale Water can potentially serve 140,000; Covington—Approximately 25,000; Mansfield—396; Oxford—Approximately 2600; Porterdale—1800; Newton County Water & Sewerage Authority—72,644

Has the percent of residents using private wells, septic systems changed? If so, how?

Oxford—There has been a slight decrease with about 5 to 10 households converting from septic service to public sewer.

Has your primary water source for your community changed (surface/groundwater)?

No

In comparison to five years ago, what are your water conservation savings?

NCWSA has seen its per capita usage decrease from 113 to 107 gallons per person per day.

In the past five years, have you received a GEFA loan, 319 grant, and/or CDBG funding? If so, what financial savings/amounts have you received?

In 2021, Newton County received a \$12,000,000 loan for water supply improvements. Newton County saved approximately \$2,000,000 on the loan. NCWSA—GEFA, Georgia One Fund, and federal and state grants; Oxford—We have a 10-year GEFA loan for \$525,000 with 0.81% interest. Savings are approximately \$26,883. In October of 2021, the City of Oxford received a CDBG grant of \$750,000 for a water line replacement. That project is under construction now. The total cost of that project is \$1,978,475. Oxford is using \$876,000 in ARPA funds and \$352,393 in local funds. Mansfield—In December of 2021, Mansfield was awarded \$956,600.

Please list your community's current water-related EPD permits.

Newton County—NPDES Permit GAG640000, NCWS Operating Permit WSID #2170097, Withdrawal Permit-Lake Varner #107-0410-04, Withdrawal Permit-Alcovy River #107-0410-06, Withdrawal Permit--Alcovy River and City Pond #107-0410-03; Covington--We have 3 withdrawal permits and 1 NPDES permit; Mansfield—2170002; Oxford—GANR-EPD #CP2170020; Porterdale—permit #: CP2170014; Newton County Water & Sewerage Authority—WSID #2170004, Wastewater (2)—GAJ030736, GAJ020013

Please list any EPD water-related permit violations that have occurred in the past five years. Please give details of how the violations were addressed.

Newton County—None; Covington—None; Mansfield—None; Oxford—None; Porterdale—None; Newton County Water & Sewerage Authority--None

Have any 303(D) listed streams been delisted in the past five years? If so, what stream(s)?

No. Although the NCWSA's 319 Grant covered the 303(D) listed section of the Little River, the section

remains listed. Oxford—No. Dried Indian Creek remains a 303(D) stream. The City is working on an effort to begin rehabilitating that riparian area and increase the stream buffer from the minimum 25 feet to 75 or 100 feet.

In the past five years, have you received any awards for outstanding water services?

Newton County—Yes, 2018-2019 GA WP Gold Award for Plant Operations, 2020-2022 GAWP Platinum Award for Plant Operations, 2019 Georgia Drinking Water Taste Test State Champion, 2020 and 2022 GAWWA Georgia Best Operated Water Plant 25 to 49.99 MGD; Covington—No; Mansfield—No; Oxford—No; Porterdale—No, Newton County Water & Sewerage Authority—Yes, Wastewater GAWP Gold Award Annually, NACWA Peak Performance Award Annually, CMAA Award for WRF under \$25 annually

In the past five years, have there been any permits or regulatory minimum standard changes? If so, how were they addressed?

No

Is your community on EPA's Significant Non-Compliance list? If so, please explain.

Newton County—No; Covington—No; Mansfield—No; Oxford—No; Porterdale—No; NCWSA—No

Are there any other benefits you have received since designation?

The citizens, elected officials, and water professionals of Newton County have enjoyed the support and prestige of being a WaterFirst designee. The message of protecting our water resources has grown immensely since 2012 and is recognized as a key component of economic growth and planning in our community. Oxford—We see the WaterFirst designation as the bedrock for protecting water resources within our community.

Report on your MOU goals from the past five years:

NCWSA has participated as a reviewer in five WaterFirst Reviews for other communities and has completed presentations at WaterFirst workshops. All jurisdictions continue to meet WaterFirst goals and strive for excellence.

Oxford—We are planning to: 1. Fully implement an electronic water metering system. This will enable the City to better monitor leaks and individual water use. 2. We will be improving the riparian environment around Dried Indian Creek and Turkey Creek through the encouragement of native plants and the rebuilding of the water channel to slow the rate of water flow and decrease the erosion of the channel. 3. The City is increasing our stream buffer protection from the state minimum of 25 feet to a more substantial buffer, which has yet to be determined.

What are your WaterFirst goals for the next five years?

The NCWSA will focus on three key priorities: investing in aging infrastructure, enhancing maintenance

practices, and improving customer service. We must also make prudent projections of water demand and housing growth, address revenue requirements with rate adjustments, and meet recommended financial policy goals for debt service coverage while completing a \$150M Capital Improvement Plan, which includes the construction and operation of a 3 MGD reuse plant for the commercial customers located in the Stanton Springs Development Park.

Attached is your checklist at the time of your original application. Please update the checklist and explain any significant changes in the past five years.

Please see our updated checklist attached separately.



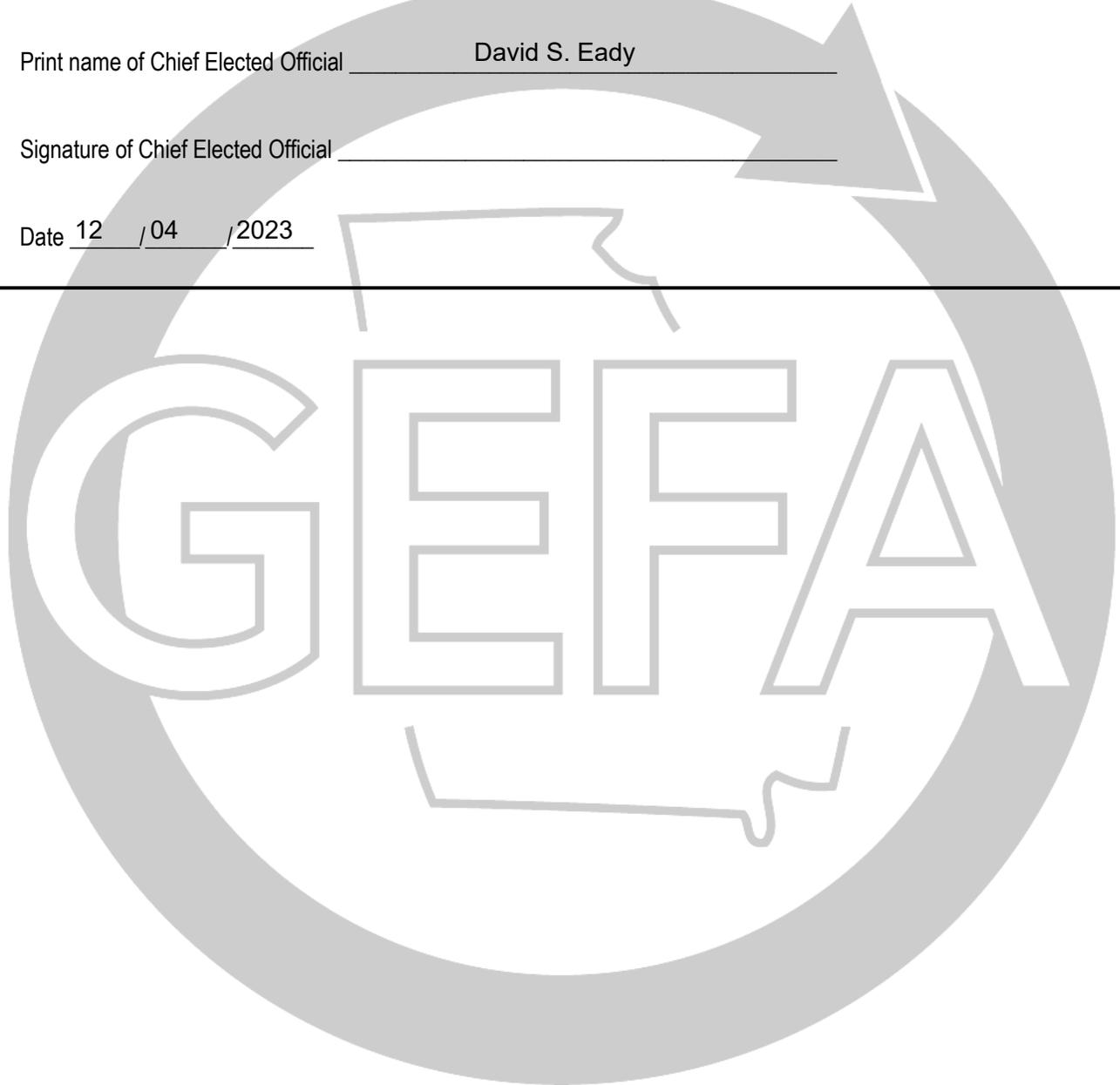
I understand that the WaterFirst Community Program is a voluntary effort to improve the management and protection of our water resources beyond the requirements of the law. I also understand that WaterFirst designation can be lost if the community fails to maintain the achievements for which the award was given and that all benefits the designation brings with it will be forfeited.

I certify to the best of my knowledge that the information in this application is true and correct.

Print name of Chief Elected Official David S. Eady

Signature of Chief Elected Official _____

Date 12 / 04 / 2023



**STATE OF GEORGIA
COUNTY OF NEWTON**

RESOLUTION

**AMENDING AND ADOPTING WATER AND SEWER RATES BY THE CITY OF
OXFORD, GEORGIA, AND TO REPEAL, REVOKE AND SUPERSEDE ALL
RESOLUTIONS OR ORDINANCES IN CONFLICT**

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council of the City of Oxford, pursuant to City of Oxford Code of Ordinances, Chapter 36, Article I, at Section 36-10: Utility Rates, are empowered to set utility rates as provided in the City Fee Schedule, and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council of the City of Oxford deem it in the best interest of the government, employees and the residents of the City to amend the same by setting new Water and Sewer Rates, as attached hereto in Exhibit “A”, said rates to become effective on January 1, 2024; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF OXFORD, that the following are adopted immediately upon and after its final passage, rates to become effective on January 1, 2024.

RESOLVED AND APPROVED by the Mayor and Council of the City of Oxford, Georgia, this ____ day of December, 2023.

CITY OF OXFORD

Hon. David S. Eady, Mayor

ATTEST:

Marcia Brooks, City Clerk

{The Seal of the City of Oxford, Georgia}

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

C. David Strickland, City Attorney

Exhibit “A”

City of Oxford – Water and Sewer System Development Charges (SDC)

Full details for the Oxford System Development Charges may be found in the November 13, 2023 Technical memorandum prepared by Bobby Sills, Nelsnick Enterprises (see below).

In short, the fees are as follows:

Proposed Residential SDC

System	Proposed	Current
Wastewater Covington	\$11,010.02	\$3,600.00
Wastewater NCWSA	\$2,210.02	\$3,600.00
Water	\$731.59	\$2,585.00

The SDC above is based on an equivalent dwelling unit (EDU) of 400 gpd for wastewater and 364 gpd for water. This translates to a cost of \$27.53 per gallon for Covington Wastewater capacity and \$5.53 per gallon for Newton County Water & Sewerage Authority (NCWSA) capacity. As water is all supplied by NCWSA, the cost is the same across the City, \$2.01 per gallon.

Note: The SDC does NOT include the cost of “tapping into” the system. The City will pass along the cost of connecting or “tapping into” the system by acquiring the appropriate contractor pricing at the time of the construction.

For more complete details, see the Technical Memorandum below.



Technical Memorandum

DATE: *November 13, 2023*

PREPARED FOR: *Mr. Bill Andrew*

PREPARED BY: *Mr. Bobby Sills, AICP*

SUBJECT: *Oxford Ga System Development Charge Calculation*

Purpose

The purpose of this technical memorandum (TM) is to provide documentation regarding the system development charge calculation for Oxford, Georgia. The system development charge (SDC) is a fee to recover the capacity cost of water and wastewater facilities from new development.

Introduction

The City of Oxford owns and operates water distribution and wastewater collection systems for the benefit of their community. They purchase water from Newton County Water and Sewerage Authority (NCWSA). They purchase wastewater treatment capacity from both the NCWSA and the City of Covington. New development is minimal for the city, but leadership desires a connection fee that fairly recovers the cost of new connections. Connection fees consist of both the cost to connect¹ new development to the collection and/or distribution system and the associated cost of the capacity to supply drinking water and to collect and treat wastewater.

The Development Impact Fee Act (DIFA) of Georgia allows local governments to recover costs associated with new development². These are known as impact fees. However, DIFA also allows water and wastewater utilities to charge a fee without the administrative burden of DIFA³. Additionally, DIFA defines the differences between a system-wide impact and a development specific impact. For water and wastewater connections, the system-wide costs are related to the treatment plants, water distribution and wastewater collection systems. Development specific costs are related to the physical

¹ Tapping cost are contracted out and not performed by Oxford staff. These costs vary per contract and are recommended to be passed on to new development at actual cost.

² CHAPTER 71 Development Impact Fees (§§ 36-71-1 — 36-71-13) of the Georgia Code.

³ DIFA requires a capital improvement element added to a local governments comprehensive plan and annual reporting and updates of impact fee collection but exempts water and wastewater systems if the calculated fee is a proportionate share of the capital cost.

connection to the system and include any project specific distribution and collection⁴ as well as customer specific metering and/or connections.

Connection fees can be configured in multiple ways. A common configuration is the fee that consists of a system development charge (SDC) which recovers system wide capital costs and a tap fee cost which recovers the cost of connecting a new customer to the water or wastewater system. The SDC is charged based on a meter size or land use to determine the proportionate share of system-wide capital cost. The tap fee is based on the actual cost to connect to the system and to provide a meter and/or backflow prevention device as needed. Some communities contract this service and the cost is then passed on to the new customers. Some communities provide this service internally; and, a fee can be calculated by using material cost, labor and overhead and any equipment costs associated with the installation.

The terms used for connection fees vary and not all communities implement a fee to recover full cost. The terms, hookup, tap, connection, capacity charge, availability charge, and many other terms may be used interchangeably and are not consistent from community to community. For this study, a system capacity charge (SDC) is related to the proportionate share cost of system capacity and tapping fee is the cost of development specific connections to the system. Currently, Oxford contracts tapping activity and the cost can be simply passed on to the new customer.

System Development Charge

A system development charge is a fee assessment to a new development to recover the cost of system capacity. The City of Oxford owns a water distribution system and a wastewater collection system. Additionally, the City of Oxford pays for wastewater treatment capacity from others. Though Oxford also receives treated water from the Water Authority, there is no purchased capacity. The following calculations provide the SDC for new water and wastewater customers.

Wastewater

The collection system includes all piping needed to collect wastewater from residents and businesses within the city of Oxford and transport it to either Covington or Newton County for treatment. New development will stress existing collection system infrastructure and both replacement and upgrades will be needed. However, the main interceptors serving the Covington plant have excess capacity and will not need to be upgraded within the next 10 years.

The bulk of treatment is performed by Newton County. However, an estimate of treatment cost has been provided by Carter and Sloope in a TM dated November 10, 2022, for additional capacity at Covington. That TM summarizes current issues related to Oxford's arrangement with the City of Covington for wastewater treatment. These issues include using metered water to determine wastewater billing versus actual flow, current impact fee assessment and the need for additional capacity beyond 2025. The current estimate of \$22 per gallon was provided in the TM for treatment plant's expansion cost. An update to the SDC is warranted given the cost to serve new development. Currently, no water or wastewater treatment capacity cost for the NCWSA is available⁵. The calculations

⁴ DIFA would allow a jurisdiction to ask a developer to oversize their system to serve adjacent areas, however, the developer would only be responsible for the cost of their proportionate share of the development, any additional cost would have to be a credit back to the developer or paid for by the jurisdiction directly.

⁵ Currently NCWSA has wholesale monthly charges and unit rates based on volume to recover the cost of treatment. Until such time that a water treatment cost can be determined, the water SDC is based solely on Oxford

below are for a SDC for new development served by the Covington treatment plant. The values are calculated per equivalent dwelling unit (EDU) at 400 gallons peak day capacity.

Wastewater SDC Calculation by Component

	Value	gpd	cost per gallon	EDU (400 gpd)
Collection	3,828,108	640,000	\$5.98	\$2,392.57
Shared	31,140	640,000	\$0.05	\$19.46
NCWSA Treatment				N/A
Covington Treatment	6,600,000	300,000	\$22.00	\$8,800.00
			\$28.03	\$11,212.03

The full cost to provide wastewater capacity is summarized below. Since additional capacity for the Covington Plant is \$22, this service area has higher capacity cost compared to the service area served by the NCWSA⁶. Cost to connect to the wastewater system will be added based on the latest contracted cost.

Service Area Specific SDC's⁷ (No Credit)

Service Area	Cost/Gallon	SDC per EDU
Oxford to Covington Plant	\$28.03	\$11,212.03
Oxford to NCWSA	\$6.03	\$2,412.03

Water

The SDC for water can be calculated by taking the value of the distribution system and dividing it by the assumed capacity. The result is a dollars per gallon that can be applied to the expected peak demand. Unlike wastewater, there is no Inflow and Infiltration (I&I)⁸ associated with water as such, the EDU for water is calculated to be 364 gallons. There is no treatment capacity cost associated with water supply.

Water SDC Calculation by Component

	Value	gpd	cost per gallon	EDU (364 gpd)
Distribution	2,532,579	1,000,000	\$2.53	\$921.86
Shared	31,140	1,000,000	\$0.03	\$11.33
			\$2.56	\$933.19

distribution system capacity cost and the wastewater SDC is a weighted average of wastewater treatment capacity cost and Oxfords collection system cost.

⁶ Currently, capacity from the NCWSA is sufficient. Additional capacity may be needed in the future and this calculation will need to be update.

⁷ Treatment cost plus collection cost.

⁸ Inflow is stormwater that enters the sewer system through rain leaders, basement sump pumps or foundation drains illegally connected to the sewer. Infiltration occurs when groundwater seeps into sewer pipes through cracks, leaky pipe joints and/or deteriorated manholes. Together, inflow and infiltration place a burden on collection systems and wastewater treatment facilities.

Water SDC Full Cost (No Credit)

Service Area	Cost/Gallon	SDC per EDU
Oxford	\$2.56	\$933.19

Credit is applied for the contribution potential of new customers towards debt and other system capacity-related costs. The primary debt from the Georgia Environmental Finance Authority (GEFA) was related to collection capacity. The remaining principal as of November 2023 is estimated to be \$328,757. New customers will contribute towards this debt via their monthly payments and therefore must be provided as credit towards the SDC. Debt is allocated to water and wastewater customers based on the number of accounts. The cost per 1000 gallons is calculated for existing customers. This amount is then calculated for new customers for the duration of the remaining debt payments. The amount is then credited to the SDC.

Credit Calculation		
\$328,756		System Debt Remaining
Water	Wastewater	
962	667	Customers
\$194,146	\$134,610	Debt Allocation
219,403	84,562	Daily billing volume average
11/1/2023	11/1/2023	Date of Calculation
8/1/2029	8/1/2029	Final Payment
5.8	5.8	Years remaining
460,746	177,580	Total volume by existing in 1000 gallons
\$0.42	\$0.76	per 1000 gallons
6.93	3.86	Average billed month in 1000 gallons
12	12	Months per year
478.5	266.5	Estimated total billed per new EDU
\$201.61	\$202.01	Credit per EDU

Findings and Recommendations

The proposed SDC excludes any cost for tapping into the system. A separate SDC is provided for the service area served by the Covington plant due to limited capacity and the cost for expansion of service. The remaining available capacity for the Covington basin can be sold at current SDC charges, however, any additional capacity needed is significantly more expensive resulting in a higher SDC.

Proposed SDC

System	Proposed	Current
Wastewater Covington	\$11,010.02	\$3,600.00
Wastewater NCWSA	\$2,210.02	\$3,600.00
Water	\$731.59	\$2,585.00

Fact Sheet for the Municipal Competitive Trust (MCT) Fund

Our MCT Fund is in an account held by MEAG which has \$342,721.74 as of September 30th.

The MCT was created in 1999 to help fight against possible deregulation of the electric market. Every Participant (City) signed an authorization for MEAG to start this fund and the proceeds were made up of bonds that were refinanced which freed up some capital. Instead of giving those funds back to the cities during the annual Year-End Settlement, the authorization for the Trust was to place those dividends in each participant account based on entitlement share for the bonds that were refinanced.

Over the years, Oxford has made annual elections on how to utilize your Year-End Settlement (YES) funds and Off-System Sales (OSS) Margins. Some years the City chose to place the YES funds in the trust. For many years now, the City has had an Evergreen election on file to place your OSS margins in the trust.

The funds in Oxford's MCT are held in flexible operating accounts so the City has access to those funds and may use them as you see fit. MEAG does not have any say on how those funds are used, but there is a process that must be followed for MEAG to authorize a transfer of funds.

When/if Oxford decides to move money from those accounts, it takes letter from Oxford on City Letterhead, detailing accounts numbers, routing numbers, etc., and it must be signed by two of the City Signatories we have on file for that account.

David Eady is a signatory (Expires 12/31/2023)

Bill Andrew is a signatory (Expires at pleasure of the Council)

City of Oxford
Invoices >=\$1,000
Paid November 2023

VENDOR	DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT
RECURRING CHARGES		
City of Oxford Utilities	September-October 2023 services	1,406.61
Oxford Historical Cemetery Foundation	Foundation portion for sale of burial rights for one interment space	1,000.00
Newton County Water & Sewerage Authority	Sewer Treatment Fees, 9/28/2023-10/30/2023	7,546.00
Marcus Jordan, Newton County Tax Commissioner	Invoice for 2023 City of Oxford Tax Digest	1,820.00
Newton County Board of Commissioners	Water Purchased for Resale – October 2023; Invoice #3156	21084.00
Newton County Board of Commissioners	Landfill fees, October 2023	1,052.24
Georgia Municipal Association	Telecommunications & ROW Management service subscription for 2024	1,280.72
Georgia Municipal Association	GMEBS Life & Health Premiums, November 2023	11,776.35
Georgia Municipal Association	GMEBS Retirement, November 2023, invoice #453144	2,034.75
Municipal Electric Authority of Georgia (MEAG)	Monthly Electric Purchases for October 2023	90,538.25
Electric Cities of Georgia	Consulting and planning services for November 2023	5,984.00
U.S. Dept. of Energy	SEPA Energy Cost September 2023 – invoice #B-23-3071 – 2,865.00 October 2023 – invoice #B-24-0101 – 3,131.29	5,996.29
U.S. Dept. of Treasury	Federal Payroll Taxes, November 2023	16,386.91
Courtware Solutions	Licensing, support and maintenance for Municipal Court case management – October 2023	1,200.00
Latham Home Sanitation	Residential and Commercial Waste Removal Services October 2023	10,263.75
VC3, Inc.	IT monthly services October 2023, invoice #128454 – 2,900.37 November 2023, invoice #130908 – 2,900.37	5,800.74

VENDOR	DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT
PURCHASES/CONTRACT LABOR		
C. David Strickland, P.C.	Legal services, October, 2023	2,400.00
Freeman Law Firm	Municipal Court Solicitor services; Invoice #701 April-June 2023 – 1,500.00 July-October 2023 – 1,300.00	2,800.00
Rushton	FY 2023 audit; Invoice #54213	15,000.00
McNair McLemore Middlebrooks & Co.	Support for FY 2023 audit	5,250.00
Atkins North America	Pavement Resurfacing Assessment	1,312.50
Keck + Wood	Emory Street Sidewalks Soule to USPS, plan development phase (Phase II)	1,560.00
Carter & Sloope	Stormwater Management Annual Report	2,963.75
Jordan Engineering	E. George St. easement; invoice #18280	2,400.00
Pi-Jon, Inc.	Fuel – Public Works and Police Departments; Inv. #A21913	3,688.67

VENDOR	DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT
PURCHASES/CONTRACT LABOR		
Cintas	Uniform services for Public Works Dept. September 2023 – 1,525.80 October, 2023 – 1,309.95	2,835.75
Big & Heavy Equipment Service LLC	Repairs to small bucket truck P.O. #15338 – 3,679.12 P.O. #15357 – 9,284.60	12,963.72
Jarod Environmental, Inc.	Water/Sewer supplies; P. O. #15327	2,438.85
Over and Under General Contractors	Emergency call for West Clark Street; P.O. #15733	1,069.04
Southern Water Service, LLC	Sewer pump for Victoria Station; P.O. #15340	4,626.60
Axon Enterprises, Inc.	License Subscription – Body Camera Storage – 1,391.98 Body Camera Service Contract – 3,187.92	4,579.90
Otis Elevator Service	Annual Maintenance Plan November 2023 – October 2024; Invoice #100401342641	3,026.76
Mason Exteriors	Repair roof at 810 Whatcoat St. (Old City Hall)	2,300.00
HCS Services	Relocate two water taps, East Metro Parkway; P. O. 15329	1,500.00
Jet Utility Service	October pump station maintenance and repairs, Victoria Station	1,000.00