

**REGULAR MEETING  
MARCH 11, 2008**

A Regular Meeting of the Mayor and Board of Aldermen of the City of Natchez, Mississippi, was held in the City Council Chamber at 11:00 AM on Tuesday, March 11, 2008. Mayor Phillip C. West presided at the meeting, which was opened with prayer by Sabrena Bartley, Senior Center Executive Director.

MAYOR & BOARD PRESENT	ELECTED OFFICIALS ABSENT	CITY OFFICIALS & DEPARTMENT HEADS
<b>Phillip C. West</b> Mayor  <b>Bob Pollard</b> Alderman, Ward 3  <b>Theodore West</b> Alderman, Ward 4  <b>David Massey</b> Alderman, Ward 5  <b>Jake Middleton</b> Alderman, Ward 6	<b>Joyce Arceneaux-Mathis</b> Alderwoman, Ward 1  <b>J. "Ricky" Gray, Jr.</b> Alderman, Ward 2	Donnie Holloway, City Clerk Everett Sanders, City Attorney Darlene D. Williams, Dep. City Clerk Sabrena Barrley, Senior Center Executive Director Brett Brinegar, Grants Coordinator Paul Dawes, Building Official Rick Freeman, Traffic Director David Gardner, Engineer/Water Superintendent Mike Mullins, Police Chief Connie Taunton, Tourism Director Walter Tipton, Convention Center Director Ralph Tedder, Recreation Director Darryl White, Tourism Management Wilbert Whitley, Recreation Department Natchez Democrat

**MINUTES APPROVED**

A motion was made by Aldermen West and seconded by Alderman Pollard to dispense with the reading of the minutes of the regular meeting of February 26, 2008 and approve as submitted. The motion carried unanimously.

**GENERAL SUPPLY BIDS**

Mayor West noted that there were no bids submitted for general supplies.

**VISITORS WELCOMED**

Mayor West welcomed all visitors to the meeting and asked that all comments be limited to three (3) minutes. He thanked all friends and citizens of Natchez Adams County for attending the meeting.

**a. TOM SCARBOROUGH - ILLEGAL DUMPING**

Mayor West recognized Mr. Tom Scarborough.

Mr. Tom Scarborough, 26 Cemetery Road, Ward 1. He said he was present to bring the attention to a illegal dump site across the street from the Old Charity Hospital site. There is a gully that is filled with waste, appliances, construction materials, and general trash the rim of the property. Mr. Scarborough said he was aware that there was a trailer on the property bordering the gully to the south and it was removed. The garbage could be from the removal of the trailer, and the debris on the north side was dumped by the community. He requested that the city allocate the resources to have the site cleaned because it is across the street from the Historic City Cemetery. There are a number of visitors from out of town and he is tired of looking at the site.

Mr. Scarborough requested that the city take under serious consideration a program of recycling. He suggested the possibility of approaching Waste Management since they are the contract carrier for Natchez. Waste Management has recycling all over the United States and communities and it seems like the time has come where the city need to look into having curb side recycling in Natchez.

Mayor West said the Ward 1 Alderperson, Joyce Arceneaux-Mathis is not present. Mayor West requested comments from the board.

Alderman Pollard noted that he attended the Beautification Committee Meeting and the recycling program is being studied. He said Mr. Andy Yates, Director of Waste Management is aware of the need and he attends the Beautification Committee Meetings. Alderman Pollard said the request is being addressed.

Mr. Scarborough said he attempted to contact the Alderperson for Ward 1, he said he sent six (6) e-mails, telephone calls were made, and message were left at City Hall and he received no response.

Mayor West said for the record Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis and Alderman Gray are in Washington, D.C. at the National League of Cities Conference.

Alderman Massey asked if there were still funds available for dump site clean-up.

Ms. Briniger said she would check and bring the information back to the board.

Alderman Massey said he would discuss the location with Mr. Smith, Public Works Director and have him see what can be done by the city with the equipment available to clear what is visible. Alderman Massey said he will ask that the site be placed on the list of illegal dump sites.

Alderman West said for the record during the Crime Prevention Meeting the site was on the list as an illegal dump site.

b. WALTER BROWN, ATTORNEY

Mayor West recognized Attorney Walter Brown and requested comments.

Attorney Walter Brown noted that he presented a resolution and proposed local and private bill to amend the 2001 legislative act that was introduced and passed at that session. He said this deals with the city properties along the Riverfront that in 2001 in House Bill 1547 it was enacted to allow for long term leases. In negotiations with the Lane Company one of the components of negotiation was to have a ninety-nine (99) year lease where the present bill only allow for a fifty (50) year lease. Attorney Brown said that was a concession the City of Natchez made in trading off on other points to their favor. Attorney Brown said he along with Mr. Sanders, City Attorney and Watkins, Ludwig & Stennis have been involved with the drafting of the legislation which is lengthy because there is a resolution and recitation twice. Attorney Brown said the bill will increase the time you can enter into a lease for fifty (50) to ninety-nine (99) years. It will address the manner in which you have to get appraisals to justify what you arrive at for the lease consideration. The principal part of the bill is to allow you to extend the term from fifty (50) years to ninety-nine years and from time to time revise that as you may need to do in drafting this lease or future leases that you may have on the remainder of city riverfront properties.

Mayor West requested comments.

Alderman Massey asked Attorney Sanders if he was involved in writing and development of the resolution and if so is there a recommendation to the board.

Attorney Sanders said he was involved with the development and recommend adoption.

Alderman Middleton asked if there were changes in the property lines.

Attorney Sanders said there were no changes in the description of the lots. The same description was used in the option.

Attorney Brown said when the actual lease is completed, it would be a more specific description. He said there was never a leaps and bounds description on the land. There is a broad description to make sure everything was included. When the lease is complete for Roth Hill Road it will have to be defined where Roth Hill Road ends under the hill. A plat and full description will be a part of the lease provided by Jordan Kaiser & Sessions.

Attorney Sanders said it is the same language as in the previous statute.

Alderman West asked how the city would be protected in regard to income from the lease.

Attorney Brown said those are the negotiations that the board had previously and did arrive at a specific number for the lease consideration subject to the appraisal being done.

Alderman West asked what would be done in the future.

Attorney Brown said it would be the same process, negotiate a price and make sure the

appraisal met the criteria and arriving at what the lease was. He said some terms have been negotiated. Attorney Brown said for future terms you have to go through the same process. He said it is the language of Section 21-17-1. The city will be protected, and the ultimate decision will be on the Board, but it does have to meet the appraisal price. The resolution will grant the authority to lease for ninety-nine years.

Mayor West requested comments.

**A motion was made by Alderman West and seconded by Alderman Pollard to adopt the resolution. The motion carried unanimously.**

## **2. Joe Retnerio - Project Manager for Rentech**

Mayor West recognized Mr. Joe Retnerio and requested comments.

Mr. Retnerio noted that he wanted to bring the Board up to date on the Rentech project, and also request a formal resolution associated with non-annexation for the industrial park property known as the IP Mill site. The project is moving along with the expected closure date being March 28, 2008. Mr. Retnerio said the first element of the project would be approximately 450 million dollars and be operational in 2011 with 100 full time employees. The second phase of the project will be in the 2012 time frame with a 4.8 billion dollar project. Mr. Retnerio said the project is fully advanced. He said his presence is on the down swing as he gracefully transitions the project to the construction group. The property will be purchased from IP, the site will be prepared following the acquisition. Mr. Retnerio introduced Mark Hall. He said they are looking forward to the project. Mr. Retnerio asked the Board to support a resolution of non-annexation of the property. He said given the industrial nature of the property they are desirous to maintain the presence in the county rather than under city jurisdiction. He requested a formal resolution not to annex the former IP Mill site to preserve the current status of the position with the inspector.

Mayor West noted that copies of the resolution was presented to the Board for review. He said Attorney Sanders did review the document. Mayor West requested comments.

Alderman Massey said the Nissan Plant in Canton, Mississippi was a \$950 million dollar project. He said this is a 4.8 billion dollar project. Alderman Massey wanted the public to know and understand that the project is of a greater size than the Nissan Plant.

Mayor West requested comments.

**A motion was made by Alderman Massey to adopt the resolution for non-annexation of the IP Mill site. The motion was seconded by Alderman Middleton. The motion carried unanimously.**

Mayor West welcomed Mr. Mark Hall and Mr. Bill Harrell to the City of Natchez. Mayor West thanked them for bringing Rentech to fruition.

Mr. Harrell said he was pleased to be in the City of Natchez.

## **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**None**

## **DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS**

### **SENIOR CITIZENS DEPARTMENT, Sabrena Bartley**

Mrs. Bartley said the restoration of the trolley was complete and it is up and running. She said there were repairs done from the top to the bottom. Mrs. Bartley invited everyone to join on Monday, March 17, 2008, St. Patricks Day for Getting Around Downtown-Let's Ride the Trolley Day. She said the trolley will be at the Visitors Reception Center Colonnade at 10:00 AM for free rides. The trolley will serve the downtown area from 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM, Monday through Friday. The hours will be abbreviated on Saturday & Sunday to accommodate the demand and need. Mrs. Bartley said the trolley rides will be free during the week of 3/17/08 – 3/21/08. The regular fare will be a three dollar pass per day with unlimited stops. This will allow everyone to park and ride the trolley to help with the limited parking in the downtown area. The trolley route is designed to assist the community and visitors through a park and ride system. She said she is working on a project that will allow a free ride zone in the downtown area. Mrs. Bartley said she is exploring options with the Downtown Development Association and Mrs. Taunton to finalize the project.

Mrs. Bartley said due to gas prices the demand response service will be based on a twenty-four (24) hour call request. Individuals who need the service will be required to call in advance and schedule a pickup. This will allow the department to group calls based on the location. In addition to that there are able bodied individuals who do not need the demand response service, so starting April 1, 2008 there will be a semi-fixed route system to serve cluster of population that will link them to shopping centers, the downtown area and other places throughout the city. The service will be operated between the hours of 7:00 AM and 7:00 PM which will allow a bus in an area at a certain time and stop at designated places. The schedule will be posted.

Mrs. Bartley said the grant for the GIS program was awarded and they now know the exact location of each vehicle and the time it takes between destinations. This will cut down on the gas consumption although the prices are up. It will also allow the department to look at the clusters of people and design stops to better serve their needs.

Mrs. Bartley introduced Ms. Carla Monroe, Program Director at the Senior Center. Mrs. Bartley said Ms. Monroe was hired eight months ago and has done a great job and brought a new freshness to the center. Mrs. Bartley said they have added activities to the program which include, bowling, drama classes, healthy living classes, there is a reading 101 class where volunteers read to the seniors, a fashion show scheduled, Easter Egg Hunt, and a program sponsored by Pilgrim Baptist for Easter recognition. She said Fridays will be reserved for movies and pop corn. There are programs for individuals who are not 60 years old, although they

are fifty and retired.

Mayor West welcomed Ms. Monroe to the City of Natchez family.

Alderman Pollard said during the renovation of the trolley there was discussion about advertisement for the interior to assist with the cost. He asked if the advertisement was an option.

Mrs. Bartley said the advertisement was an option and they are working out the details.

Alderman West requested an explanation of demand response.

Mrs. Bartley said demand response is when individuals call on the same day and ask to be picked up at a certain time and the vehicle is dispatched at that time. She said they will continue demand response based on a twenty-four hour call in. Mrs. Bartley said they would like to have all calls on the schedule when the drivers report in the morning. The demand for transit has tripled over the past years and they are looking for a better way to accommodate.

#### **GRANTS COORDINATOR, Brett Brinigar**

Ms. Brinigar said she received notice that they would be awarded the grant for the finger print scanner for the Natchez Police Department. She said arrangements have been made to purchase the equipment and bring the community in line with other cities the size of Natchez. Ms. Brinigar said Natchez is the only city in southern Mississippi that is still inking fingerprints. The equipment will be a great piece of equipment for the Natchez Police Department.

#### **INSPECTION DEPARTMENT, Paul Dawes**

Mr. Dawes presented the monthly report for February, 2008.

ATTACHMENT

#### **ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT, David Gardner**

Mr. Gardner requested action on the Hobo Forks Pump Station Force Main, CCA Prison project. He said the board authorized the notice of award although it was never formal action taken to execute the contract. Mr. Gardner requested ratification of the action in the execution of the contract documents and bond documents. To be forwarded to the contractor and the State Department.

Mayor West requested comments.

**A motion was made by Alderman West and seconded by Alderman Pollard to ratify the authorization of Mayor West to execute the necessary documents for the CCA Prison project. The motion carried unanimously.**

## **ATTACHMENT**

Mr. Gardner requested action on the West Stiers Lane EWP Drainage project that was awarded in the amount of \$78,000. He said the award was made by the Board of Aldermen although ratification of the authorization was not approved for Mayor West to execute the documents. Mr. Gardner said the documents were reviewed by the City Attorney.

Mayor West requested comments.

**A motion was made by Alderman Massey and seconded by Alderman West to ratify the authorization of Mayor West to execute the necessary documents for the West Stiers Lane EWP Drainage project. The motioned carried unanimously.**

## **RECREATION DEPARTMENT , Wilbert Whitley**

Mr. Whitley reported on the close of the season for the Youth Basketball league. He noted that there were 369 youth participants with 288 games played in the youth division. Mr. Whitley said the closing ceremony will be held on Saturday, March 29, 2008 at the Martin Gym. He invited all officials to attend the ceremony.

Mr. Whitley said the Adult Basketball league will start the championship tournament on March 16, 2008 and end on March 30, 2008. He noted that there was a city team in the league this year and they are looking to win the tournament with their secret weapon, Mayor West.

## **MAYOR'S REPORT**

Mayor West requested the adoption of a resolution of Ex-Senator Hawfman, State of New York who has been involved through the years with the involvement of students touring from New York to Mississippi studying the Civil Rights Era. Mayor West said movement was making a request of Congress to expand the history connection and Natchez was asked to provide support in the form of a resolution.

**A motion was made by Alderman West and seconded by Alderman Massey for the adoption of the resolution in support of the expansion of the history tours. The motion carried unanimously.**

Mayor West requested that the Board go on record in support of Holy Family Catholic School remaining opened. He said a letter of support to the appropriate officials will be forwarded to Jackson. Mayor West noted that the school is the oldest black catholic school in the country.

**A motion was made by Alderman West and seconded by Alderman Massey for the adoption of a resolution in support of Holy Family Catholic School remaining opened. The motion carried unanimously.**

Mayor West said a request was made from the Mississippi Municipal League to oppose

the adoption of Senate Bill 2744. He said the bill is an act to amend Section 23-15-35 of the Mississippi Code to delay until July 2011 the date on which registration of municipal voters must comply with the requirements of the state wide election. Mayor West said the MML would like the City of Natchez oppose the extension of the registration.

**A motion was made by Alderman West and seconded by Alderman Massey to support the Mississippi Municipal League in opposition of Senate Bill 2744 for the extension to delay the date on which registration of municipal voters must comply with requirements of the statewide election. The motion carried unanimously.**

Mayor West said there was a request from the Port Commission to oppose the creation of a new port facility in Vidalia, La.

Alderman Massey said he was opposed to a port facility be created in Vidalia, La. He said the tax payers money should not be used because there is an available facility just across the river.

**A motion was made by Alderman Massey and seconded by Alderman Pollard to oppose the creation of a port facility in Vidalia, La. The motion carried unanimously.**

Mayor West announced that an Appeal Hearing will be held on Tuesday, March 25, 2008 for Ms. Eloise Trask. Mayor West said Ms. Trask is appealing the decision of the Natchez Planning Commission to deny a mobile home variance.

Mayor West said he and David Gardner along with Tony Byrne attended a meeting in Jackson regarding the St. Catherine Creek Project. Mayor West said during the meeting with Homer Wilks he informed them of an emergency situation with the washout of Marblestone Road. Mayor West said Mr. Wilks agreed to send a team to Natchez to review the site and see what could be done to rectify the situation. He said he was assured the problem would be corrected if at all possible. The cost of the repairs would be approximately \$150,000. There are ten or twelve homes affected by the problem. Mayor West said the City Engineer and Public Works Director both visited the site prior to them going to Jackson. Mayor West said it would be good if the repairs could be done immediately.

Mr. Gardner said he will meet the team and take them to the site when they arrive.

Mayor West said the issue was brought up about not having funds to do the four (4) major arteries coming into the city. He said he talked with Representative Robert Johnson, and Representative Sam Mims who set up the meeting with Commissioner Wayne Brown, MDOT Director Butch Brown, Billy McCoy, Angela Cockerham, Bobby Moak, Dan Perranage, Johnny Stringer, City Lobbyist Camille Young and they all agreed to a bill to be passed out of the House of Representatives for the 1.3 or 1.5 million dollars to complete the four major arteries as relates to them be designated as gaming roads. This request was made last year in order to be able to access funds so the State can take care of the expenditures as opposed to the city trying to locate funds. Mayor West said he felt good about the request and he mentioned it to Senator Bob Dearing so he would be aware that the legislation would be coming from the House of

Representatives to the Senate and he can make sure it is protected. He said this is good news for the city.

Alderman Pollard said the project was approved last year although it was not funded.

Mayor West said the project would be specifically identified as something for the City of Natchez. He said the last time it was a designation of the arteries as a gaming road but there were no funds attached to the bill as it relates to designating the funds. Mayor West said the gaming road funds go into the General Fund. He said what they discussed was whether they would specifically earmark 1.5 million dollars. The Speaker of the House said he would support the bill.

Alderman West requested identification of the arteries.

Mayor West said the four major arteries would be classified as Martin Luther King Jr. Street, St. Catherine Street/Jefferson Street, Main Street and Homochitto Street.

Mayor West said he met Senator Hillary Clinton and she said she had visited Natchez, Mississippi.

Alderman Massey said she attended the Governor's Conference held in Natchez in 1990.

## **CITY OFFICIALS' REPORTS**

### **ALDERWOMAN ARCENEUX-MATHIS**

**Not present**

### **ALDERMAN GRAY**

**Not present**

### **ALDERMAN POLLARD**

Alderman Pollard said since his four years as Chairman of Tourism Committee they have tried to get new hotels and get larger groups. He said the city was missing out on the larger conventions which would bring in more tourism dollars to Natchez which every one dollar turns over ten times. Alderman Pollard said the bookings for the next four months, due to the sales team at the Visitors Center and the new Management Team there will be thirty-six (36) total meetings and conventions held in Natchez. He said eleven (11) of the meetings will accommodate 500 member and five (5) meetings that will be over 1000 members. Alderman Pollard said these are numbers that Natchez did not have in the past.

### **ALDERMAN WEST**

Alderman West presented the Natchez Fire Department monthly report for the month of February, 2008.

ATTACHMENT

**ALDERMAN MASSEY**  
**No Report**

**ALDERMAN MIDDLETON**

Alderman Middleton thanked Mr. Whitley for the report on the basketball leagues and noted that he is dedicated to that program.

Alderman Middleton said the Annual Easter Egg Hunt coordinated by Bobby Ewing of Dallas Production will take place in Duncan Park at the Carroll Jones and Sprague Goussett ball fields on Saturday, March 22, 2008 from 10:00 - 10:30 a.m. He said over 8,000 Easter Eggs will be hidden for the kids to find. Alderman Middleton said hundreds of Natchez area children participate in this event at Duncan Park each year. This will be the 43<sup>rd</sup> year that the Ewing family has provided this event for our children. Alderman Middleton said there are no fees for the children to participate. He asked that the Ewing family be thanked for their generosity.

Alderman West asked if the golf course was ready for the Harvest Club Tournament and if the extra golf carts would be available.

Alderman Middleton said he had not discussed the tournament with Mr. Tedder and was not aware of the request for extra golf carts for the tournament.

Mr. Tedder said he talked with Eddie West and K.G. Watson and they were supposed to discuss the matter with the mayor. Mr. Tedder said they were requesting twenty-five (25) extra golf carts.

Alderman West said at the last meeting it was discussed that the extra golf carts would be the responsibility of the Recreation Department.

Mayor West said no one discussed the matter with him. He said there was some discussion on the matter but no decision was made. Mayor West said no one specifically made a proposal in terms of what should be considered.

Alderman Middleton said the extra golf carts should be the responsibility of the tournament.

Alderman West said if the extra carts are leased would the city receive the revenue.

Mr. Tedder said this is a group of two hundred and they will receive a group rate. He said the more carts you have will not add revenue. Mr. Tedder said there is no place to store the extra carts and they would be the liability of the city. He said there were two carts stolen from the park and will be replaced. Mr. Tedder said the carts would be stored outside and be the responsibility of the tournament. He said he would need additional information from the board prior to leasing extra carts.

Alderman West asked if it would be the responsibility of the Recreation Department to accommodate the tournament.

Mr. Tedder said the department never did in the past. He said if additional carts were used they were leased by individuals. He said there would be an additional expense and the liability.

Alderman Pollard asked if other tournaments needed more than the available fifty (50) golf carts who would be responsible for leasing them. He said the Harvest Club tournament is asking the city to provide twenty-five (25) and be responsible for the cost.

Mr. Tedder said that was the request made by Mr. West and Mr. Watson.

Alderman Pollard said the tournament would be responsible for the extra carts needed for the tournament over the fifty (50) owned by the city.

Alderman West said during the meeting it was stated by Alderman Middleton that it would be the responsibility of the City to provide the extra carts.

Alderman Middleton said he agreed to discuss the possibility of getting the carts but he did not agree to pay the cost.

Alderman West asked if the revenue would be returned to the city if there were additional carts.

Mr. Tedder said there would not be additional revenue once the tournament fees are paid.

Mayor West asked if this is the largest tournament to be held at Duncan Park this year or will there be others. He asked would be done if extra carts are required.

Mr. Tedder said there is the Joe Fortunato Tournament, St. Jude Tournament. He said when there is a large group of one hundred individuals they usually do a Double Shotgun with half playing in the morning and half playing in the afternoon. He said the group fees is a lower rate based on the number of players. The tournament would not bring in additional revenue because they are not bringing in additional players. Mr. Tedder said the rental carts would be provided with gas, the question is where would you store twenty-five (25) additional carts.

Alderman Middleton questioned the rental rate per cart for the duration of the tournament.

Mr. Tedder said he did not have the rate. He said he would contact the rental service and request a rate for the duration of the tournament.

Alderman Middleton said they would have to know the rental rate prior to discussion of the request.

Mayor West asked when the fee is charged for a tournament would the green fee and the cart fee would be included. If there are additional persons coming in and carts are rented would that not provide additional monies. He said if there are no extra carts to accommodate the registered golfers would the individuals not pay the cart fee. Mayor West said if there are two hundred (200) registered for the golf tournament and there are not enough carts they may decide to not return to Natchez and the city will not receive the funds.

Mr. Tedder said there are never walkers in a tournament because it would slow the tournament and it would not be completed. He said tournaments are designed to not include more numbers than the number of carts you have. Mr. Tedder said with the number of golfers it is designed to have half start in the morning and the remaining start in the afternoon. He said because they want everyone to start in the morning there will not be enough carts.

Mayor West said if 100 golfers can not participate in the tournament because there are no carts then that is revenue the city will lose. He said the situation could impact the city.

Mr. Tedder agreed. He said the decision would have to be made immediately so he can order the carts or the tournament committee can order them.

Mayor West asked how the board would like to handle the matter.

Alderman Middleton said they will need to know the cost of the carts. He said the reason the extra carts are needed is because the tournament committee would like everyone to start in the morning. Alderman Middleton said most tournaments tee off in the morning and others tee off in the afternoon because there are not enough carts. This would accommodate all the players.

Alderman West asked that once the rental fees are defined would the Chairman of Recreation be willing to meet and discuss the request.

Alderman Middleton said he would meet once the information is provided.

Mayor West requested comments.

**A motion was made by Alderman West and seconded by Alderman Massey to form a committee to review the facts and in a reasonable way determine if the request would be feasible to the tournament and not cost the city money. The motion carried unanimously.**

**CITY CLERK'S REPORT, DONNIE HOLLOWAY  
Not Present**

**CITY ATTORNEY'S REPORT, EVERETT SANDERS**

Attorney Sanders said in the absence of Mr. Holloway, City Clerk he asked that docket #3276 through #4024 be approved. Attorney Sanders said he did review the docket.

**A motion was made by Alderman West and seconded by Alderman Pollard to approve docket #3276 through #4024 as submitted. The motion carried unanimously.**

**NEW BUSINESS**

**None**

**ADJOURNMENT**

**A motion was made by Alderman West and seconded by Alderman Pollard to adjourn the Regular Meeting of March 11, 2008. The motion carried unanimously.**

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**PHILLIP C. WEST,  
MAYOR**

**ATTEST:**

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**DONNIE HOLLOWAY, CITY CLERK**