

**REGULAR MEETING  
APRIL 8, 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 a.m. on Tuesday, April 8, 2008. Mayor Phillip C. West presided at the meeting, which was opened with prayer by Colonel Erle Drane, Veteran Service Director.

MAYOR & BOARD PRESENT	ELECTED OFFICIALS ABSENT	CITY OFFICIALS & DEPARTMENT HEADS
<b>Phillip C. West</b> Mayor  <b>Joyce Arceneaux-Mathis</b> Alderwoman, Ward 1  <b>J. "Ricky" Gray, Jr.</b> Alderman, Ward 2  <b>Bob Pollard</b> Alderman, Ward 3  <b>David Massey</b> Alderman, Ward 5  <b>Jake Middleton</b> Alderman, Ward 6	<b>Theodore West</b> Alderman, Ward 4	Donnie Holloway, City Clerk Everett Sanders, City Attorney Darlene D. Williams, Dep. City Clerk Brett Brinegar, Grants Coordinator Paul Dawes, Building Official Rick Freeman, Traffic Dept. David Gardner, Water Superintendent Temple Hendricks, Mayor's Secretary Darlene Jones, Comm. Dev. Director John Lewis, City Planner Mike Mullins, Police Chief Eric Smith, Public Works Administrator Wilbert Whitley, Recreation Department Ralph Tedder, Recreation Director Walter Tipton, Convention Center Director Natchez Democrat

**MINUTES APPROVED**

**A motion was made by Alderman Massey to dispense with the reading of the minutes of the Regular Meeting of March 25, 2008 and approve as submitted. The motion was seconded by Alderman Pollard. The motion carried unanimously.**

**A motion was made by Alderman Pollard and seconded by Alderman Middleton to dispense with the reading of the minutes of the Recess Meeting of March 26, 2008 and approve as submitted. The motion carried unanimously.**

**VISITORS WELCOMED**

Mayor West welcomed all visitors to the meeting. He reminded everyone of the policy that allows all visitors to speak for three (3) minutes before the board.

**A. Business of the Month - Dairy Queen Brazier**

Mayor West noted that the April, Business of the Month is Dairy Queen Brazier, opened in

1980. The operation began in Natchez on John R. Junkin Drive and currently has thirty (30) employees. Mayor West said Dairy Queen is owned by Larry & Karen Gardner, and they take pride in a friendly restaurant atmosphere. They have provided an additional solarium, remodeled interior, cake display freezers and new equipment added to the kitchen. Dairy Queen continues to thrive to be a statement of the community. Mayor West said there are plans for additional renovations in the near future. Dairy Queen contributes to the community by supporting the Children Miracle Network and donating thousands of dollars to the Blair E. Baston Children's Hospital in Jackson, sponsor softball teams and donate products organizations throughout the community. Dairy Queen Brazier looks forward to serving the community for many years to come.

Mayor West congratulated Larry & Karen Gardner - Dairy Queen Brazier for being chosen April Business of the Month.

Alderman Pollard made the presentation of the plaque and the banner.

Mr. Gardner said they recently hired Waycaster & Associates to design a complete remodel of the store. He said there would be a major renovation to the exterior and the interior. Mr. Gardner said the blueprints would be complete within the next thirty (30) sixty (60) days. He said the approximate renovation cost would be \$300,000 to bring the store up to the new grill and chill concept design. Mr. Gardner said they are reinvesting into the community.

## **B. Susan Cassagne**

Mayor recognized Ms. Susan Cassagne, Judge Armstrong Library.

Ms. Susan Cassagne noted that she presented a handout of information to the Board. She said next week the library will celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Celebration of National Library Week. She noted that the schedule will include:

1. Monday - Open house
2. Tuesday - Host annual poetry contest for 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> graders
3. Wednesday - Children's Librarian will hold a special library theme story time
4. Thursday - Host a teen poetry slam after school

Ms. Cassagne said the handout provided information about other things that are done in the community, outside of the library and in the library. There are many services offered by the library on a regular basis. Ms. Cassagne said a printout on the comparison of the library funding. She said she is asked constantly why things can happen at Concordia Parish Library and not in Natchez. Ms. Cassagne said she became aware of the ability to download the data from the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES). She said the funding is different in Louisiana and Mississippi. Ms. Cassagne said there is a pamphlet on the Value of Library Services. This gives a way of showing in a dollar amount what is done by the library. She said for every dollar that the public library gets in public funding it is turned around and services are provided.

Ms. Cassagne reminded the board that the Mississippi Library Association will be bringing the annual conference to Natchez in October, 2008. She said the members are looking forward to returning to Natchez.

Mayor West requested comments.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis said there is an extraordinary difference between the amount of money in Louisiana. She asked if in some of the instances the performances were held to raise funds, she asked if that was a thought process within the local organization. Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis asked if there was consideration to bring those type events to the area.

Ms. Cassagne said there are events when grants are available similar to the Rotary Grant to help address literacy. She said grants become available they attempt to obtain them, but as far as local funding, each State handles libraries differently. In Louisiana, the voters actually vote on the amount of money provided to the library.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis asked if there is a law in the State of Mississippi that does not allow for fund-raising projects similar to that demonstrated by Vidalia.

Ms. Cassagne said she was not aware of any law that would prohibit fund raising. She said there are fund-raising projects when funds are solicited from local businesses to help with the extra things done for the Summer Library Programs.

Mayor West requested comments.

Alderman Middleton said of the monies received in Concordia Parish is there a way of breaking down what is received from each parish.

Ms. Cassagne said it is not reported to the National Data Base in that way, it is broken down on a state level. She said in many states there are county libraries, city libraries and they are not always part of the same system, they are reported individually. Ms. Cassagne said in Mississippi there is one Administrative Board for the county regardless of the number of municipalities there are.

Mr. Holloway asked if Concordia Parish was receiving advalorem taxes or sales tax.

Ms. Cassagne said it is reported as local funding. There is a vote of the people to determine the amount.

## **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None

## **DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS**

### **VETERANS SERVICE, Erle Drane**

Mr. Erle Drane noted that it is time to consider looking at the area 11<sup>th</sup> graders and encouraging them to apply for Mississippi American Legion Boys State, which is a preparatory school for future leadership positions in the State, County, and Cities. He noted that applications were submitted to counselors at the area high schools. Mr. Drane said the individuals would benefit

from attending the activity at Co-Lin in Wesson on May 24 - May 30, 2008. He said applications are also available at the Veterans Service Office. Mr. Drane said information can be found on the website at [www.msboysstate.com](http://www.msboysstate.com)

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

Mr. Dawes presented the Inspection Department Monthly Report for March, 2008.

Mr. Dawes said in regard to the request for a report on properties that the Planning Department surveyed. He said the following is the progress made on the list of properties.

7 Claiborne Street - Boarded  
30 Minor Street - Demolished  
85 St. Catherine Street - Boarded  
112 Natchez Street to be sold  
Letters sent out to additional properties five (5)

Mr. Dawes said he talked with Chief Mullins and Mr. Lewis, City Planner and discussed the situation. Mr. Dawes said some of the properties are federal government and the city does not have jurisdiction over them. He said some properties are in the Historic District which requires a special treatment. Mr. Dawes said he will deal with those sites on an as needed basis.

Mayor West questioned the federal property near the bluff.

Mr. Dawes said the federal property is located along Canal Street.

Mayor West requested comments.

Alderman Gray asked Mr. Dawes if the property on Claiborne Street was considered Historical property.

Mr. Dawes said the property on Claiborne Street is owned by The Historic Natchez Foundation but not in the historic district. He said the owner will demolish the building and not try and save it.

Alderman Gray said a document regarding 6 Laird Street indicated that following thirty (30) days the city would proceed with demolition.

Mr. Dawes said the site would be placed on the list to be submitted to the board for demolition following the notification of the property owner and the public hearing.

Alderman Gray asked when 6 Laird Street would be submitted for approval for demolition. He said the adjacent property owners have said over and over that the property is an eyesore and something should be done. Alderman Gray requested a time line as to when the property will go to court.

Mr. Dawes said the letter sent out to the property owner to provide a thirty (30) day notice of

the violation. He said the letter was not claimed by the property owner. Mr. Dawes said the letter was returned to the department unclaimed. He said he will proceed with the next process.

Alderman Gray questioned the next step.

Mr. Dawes said there is a hearing scheduled before the Board of Aldermen.

Alderman Gray asked if a hearing for 6 Laird Street can be prepared for the next board meeting.

Mr. Dawes said the hearing cannot be scheduled for the meeting of April 22, 2008 due to the process which is to send the letter to the property owner and allow thirty (30) days for a response. He said there is an additional thirty (30) days to schedule the public hearing and not to extend past that time. Mr. Dawes said the property owner will have thirty (30) days to respond and the hearing must be scheduled prior to the end of the sixty (60) day period. He said there is a thirty day period allowed by State Law to hold the hearing. He said there is also the time required by the City Attorney to take the matter to Circuit Court.

Alderman Gray said he would like the community to know that the process is not simple.

Alderman Middleton said that the initial letter is initially giving the property owner thirty (30) days to respond.

Alderman Gray asked if charges can be filed against the property owner.

Mr. Dawes said the city cannot extradite an individual to come and answer the charges on a misdemeanor.

Alderman Gray said there should be a process in place so it will not take two years to have one piece of property demolished and cleared. He said the process is taking too long because there are properties on the list from years ago. Alderman Gray said once the property is turned over to the City Attorney will it go to court, and is that the process that is stalling the demolition. He said he would like to find out what is slowing the process down.

Mr. Dawes said the court system is slowing the process down. He asked if the properties submitted were placed on the docket.

Attorney Sanders said the properties submitted are on the list

Mr. Dawes said those properties are beyond the step of the Inspection Department.

Alderman Gray said he would like the people to know the process so they can clearly understand that it is not a short process. He said this cannot be handled in thirty (30) days unless it is declared a public nuisance.

Mr. Dawes said the property has to be in eminent danger of collapse, a true emergency before

you can go and demolish it.

Mayor West said in regard to the process taking only thirty (30) days when actually there is a thirty (30) day notification for the first part of the process. He said more people are becoming aware that the process is statewide and it is not just a local policy.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis asked City Attorney Sanders what is the status of the properties that were submitted last year ( 12, 14, 16 Irving Street). She said one property is in danger of collapse. Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis said the properties were discussed last year and there was a meeting held to further discuss the situation. She asked what the status of the properties listed last fall.

Attorney Sanders said there was a list of properties that were notified indicating that they had an opportunity to appear before the Mayor and Board of Aldermen. Those property owners failing to appear for the set hearing were listed to be petitioned to court. Attorney Sanders said the petition was prepared, although that is not every property listed in the city.

**A motion was made by Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis and seconded by Alderman Gray requesting a detailed report listing the addresses of those properties that have gone through the process and are now in court. The motion carried unanimously.**

Attorney Sanders said he will provide the information.

#### **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, Darlene Jones**

Mrs. Jones requested authorization and approval of the filing of an application for HOME Funds through the MDA by the Mayor and Board of Aldermen contingent upon the following resolutions:

1. Resolution Authorizing and approving the filing of an application for a Department of Housing and Urban Development Home Investment Partnership programs as administered by the State of Mississippi and authorized under Title II of Cranston-Gonzalez national Affordable Housing Act;
2. Resolution approving the Affirmative Marketing Plan.

Alderman Middleton asked if this was the 350,000 projects discussed previously.

Mrs. Jones said it was the same project.

Mayor West requested comments.

Mrs. Jones noted that the city will be working with Mrs. Fannie Brown of AJFC on the project. Mrs. Jones said that Mrs. Brown is the best person in the State of Mississippi to be working on the proposed projects. The application will be filed and implemented by Mrs. Brown.

**A motion was made by Alderman Gray and seconded by Alderman Middleton to approve the following resolutions as submitted. The motion carried unanimously.**

## ATTACHMENTS (2)

### ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT, David Gardner

Mr. Gardner said the Union Street Federal Aid Urban Project (FAU) is ready to move forward. He said an application must be filed with MDOT, with a project activation request, normally called the PAR Form. Mr. Gardner said \$636,400.00 will be federal funds with the local share being \$134,100.00 making a total project of \$770,500.00 for the Union Street project.

Mr. Gardner requested authorization to have Mayor West execute the necessary documents.

**A motion was made by Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis and seconded by Alderman Gray to authorize Mayor West to execute the necessary documents for the Union Street Federal Aid Urban Project.**

Mayor West requested comments.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis questioned the local amount of the project.

Mr. Gardner said the local share would be 20%, although there could be other cost associated with which was \$25,000 for survey and other items that may come about the project. He said the amount would be applied to a soft match credit meaning whatever is spent will be taken off the match. Mr. Gardner said the local amount is \$134,000 if \$25,000 is spent.

Mayor West requested additional comments.

**The motion carried unanimously.**

Mr. Gardner requested the execution of a general agreement between the City of Natchez and MDOT for the Union Street Federal Aid Urban Project. He said it is the same agreement executed on all FAU project. Mr. Gardner requested authorization of Mayor West to execute the necessary documents to be spread on the minutes.

Mayor West requested comments.

**A motion was made by Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis and seconded by Alderman Gray to authorize Mayor West to execute the necessary documents for the Union Street Federal Aid Urban Project to be spread on the minutes. The motion carried unanimously.**

Mr. Gardner noted that the bids received for General Supplies were reviewed and made recommendations on the low bid. He said he would like to submit the document to be spread on the minutes. Mr. Gardner recommended that the Board of Aldermen accept the low bid as submitted in the document to be spread on the minutes.

**A motion was made by Alderman Massey to accept the lowest and best bids for General**

**Supplies. The motion was seconded by Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis. The motion carried unanimously.**

Mayor West requested a report as it relates to the Silver Street water situation. He said the Board discussed serious consideration should be given to the closing of Roth Hill Road. Mayor West requested comments.

Mr. Gardner said the forecast was not available on the river stage. He said he is scheduled to receive a copy of the report immediately. Mr. Gardner said the previous forecast had the river going up to 56' which was the same as the previous day. He said if the stage reaches 56' D.A. Biglane Street will be closed. The high water plan dictates that the street will close at 54'. Mr. Gardner said there are a lot of factors, and they do not follow the plan exactly because it gives some flexibility to make judgement calls. He said if the stage will go to 56' it is inevitable that the street must be closed. Those decisions will not be made until the final forecast is available and he can discuss the situation with Mr. Jack Sours and his staff. Mr. Gardner said he is working closely with Mr. Sours trying to make the final decision. Mr. Gardner said the casino is the only business impacted by the closure of D.A. Biglane Street. He said Silver Street is not a two-way street with no parking on either side to accommodate for the extra width for two way traffic. There is consideration about moving the casino north and allow the gang plank fall into the street where the Wharf Master building is located. He said they have not had the option in the past because the sites were operating businesses. The location will lend itself to the closure of the street in that area and allow the area to be a staging area for the casino personnel. He said the engineers will review the sites and make sure the cables are secure. Mr. Gardner said if this is not an option D.A. Biglane Street will be closed at some point which would close the casino.

Mr. Gardner recommended the closing of the gates at Roth Hill to vehicle traffic because the water is fast approaching the top of the area. He said the location of the water may give an individual a false sense of where the river is.

**A motion was made by Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis and seconded by Alderman Gray to close the Roth Hill gates to vehicular traffic.**

Mayor West requested comments.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis stated that in 1997 the option of moving the casino was not a part of the equation there was no place to go.

Mr. Gardner said they have to make sure the move will be safe. He said the issue about the utility hookups is a very serious matter because the flexible hose is loose and you do not want to pull the casino up and break the hose. Mr. Gardner said it is not as easy as saying move the boat.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis said the plan that was put in place was done with a lot of deliberation and consideration.

Mr. Gardner said the plan is working and there is a good relationship with Mr. Sour and his staff. He said everything is discussed openly in making a good decision. Mr. Gardner said they are

all on the same team because they do not want to close the street but it is recognized that it must happen at some point. He said the decision to close D.A. Biglane will be made by all involved.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis asked if the river stage to close the street would be 55 or 56 feet.

Mr. Gardner noted that the stage is 56 feet. He said the stage was 56.3 feet in 1997 and that is cause for alarm because when it approach that stage it is a large amount of water. Mr. Gardner said the street would be closed before the river stage reaches 56 feet.

Mr. Gardner said the forecast for the river stage is 56 feet.

Mayor West said the motion on the floor is to close the gate at Roth Hill Road. He requested a vote on the motion.

**The motion carried unanimously.**

Alderman Massey said he remembered the trouble faced during the last high water stage and trying to keep the street opened. He said he is not sure if the community is aware of the amount of revenue received from the casino and the amount of people employed. Alderman Masses said he was concerned with the lift station, he asked if anything was done to make sure the casino could remain open. He asked if the lift station would cause the close of the casino.

Mr. Gardner said at one time there were problems with the lift station because there was a leakage from the river into the line and the station was pumping river water. He said since that time it was sealed and is holding well. At some point there may be a problem because the line was not designed to be under pressure. Mr. Gardner said when there is water that is above the lines they become a pressurized system. He said he is hoping the lines will hold.

Alderman Massey said if there is anything the Public Works Department can do to assist in the matter please feel free to contact Mr. Smith. Alderman Massey said everyone is for keeping the casino open.

**A motion was made by Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis and seconded by Alderman Pollard to allow Mr. Sours, General Manager-Isle of Capri Casino to speak. The motion carried unanimously.**

Mr. Jack Sours, General Manager - Isle of Capri Casino said he is working with the City Engineer, Police Chief and other City Departments regarding the situation to keep the area safe for pedestrians, guests and the general public. He said he is thankful and appreciative of the cooperation from everyone. Mr. Sours said they reviewed the option of moving the casino up river but clearly with the current crest at 56 feet it will be impossible to remain at the current site. He said at some point safety issues will take precedence and D.A. Biglane will be closed to the public. Looking at the option of moving upriver, he employed an engineer specialist from New Orleans, La to review the mooring system. Mr. Sours said the initial feedback was that it would not be feasible to move upriver. He said the mooring system is a balance system and when the boat is moved there is undue

pressure on the mooring lines and they become unstable.

Mr. Sours said the initial feedback is not good in regard to moving upriver. He said there are concerns with the shore connections making the run up river. Mr. Sours said they will continue to look at the options although the initial assessment is not favorable. The current plan is to continue working with the city and safely stay in place as long as possible while implanting sandbags to keep the casino open safely.

Mayor West requested comments.

Alderman Middleton asked if the other two exits would reach the land safely.

Mr. Sours said in the current position the other exits are on land and safe.

Mr. Gardner said if the other exits are implemented into the plan the casino capacity would be restricted by 500 people.

Mr. Sours said the bigger issue is that in the down river position, which is part of the existing plan sits at 55 feet. He said when you talk about 56 feet, the waters virtually surround the entire area so the sandbags are of no assistance.

Mayor West thanked Mr. Sours and Mr. Gardner for their comments.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis asked Chief Mullins if there would be any danger for people walking and touring down Roth Hill Road.

Chief Mullins said the danger would be for vehicles traveling down Roth Hill and not be able to stop and not knowing how deep the water is. He said there is no danger to pedestrians they can walk along the sidewalk.

Mayor West recognized and acknowledged the new Planning Director, Mr. John Lewis. Mayor West welcomed Mr. Lewis to the City of Natchez and requested comments. Mayor West requested a motion to ratify the employment of Mr. Lewis, City Planning Director.

**A motion was made by Alderman Pollard and seconded by Alderman Middleton to ratify the employment of John Lewis as the City of Natchez Planning Director. The motion carried unanimously.**

Mr. Lewis said repeatedly since he came to Natchez just precisely how delighted he is to be on board. He said he has been interested in Natchez for forty years and specifically in being a part of the Planning momentum and the energy in the city. Mr. Lewis said he was looking forward to being with the city. He said it was a wonderful opportunity for him and he would like for it to be a win win situation for the city. Mr. Lewis said he will look forward to talking with each Alderperson individually.

Mayor West welcomed Mr. Lewis to the City of Natchez Family and noted that he recognize that often the city will try to employ people who are very interested in being in the city and care a great deal for the city. He said sometimes they are not always correct in the assessment but they all

believe that have made a great decision.

Mayor West requested comments.

Mayor West noted that the board had a personnel matter that was addressed regarding the Natchez Police Department. He said there was further discussion on the matter during the finance meeting and asked if the board would like to reaffirm or make another decision regarding the action taken regarding the personnel matter.

**A motion was made by Alderman Pollard to reaffirm and uphold the decision made by the Police Chief. The motion was seconded by Alderman Massey. The motion carried unanimously.**

#### **PERSONNEL DEPARTMENT, Patricia Gibson**

Mrs. Gibson submitted the following personnel reports of February, 2008 to be made a part of the minutes of the April 8, 2008 meeting.

#### **ATTACHMENTS (2)**

#### **MUNICIPAL COURT, Judge Jim Blough**

Judge Blough submitted the following monthly report for March, 2008 to be made a part of the minutes of the April 8, 2008 meeting.

#### **ATTACHMENT**

### **CITY OFFICIALS' REPORTS**

#### **ALDERWOMAN ARCENEAUX-MATHIS**

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis said the report submitted was from her and Alderman Gray from the League of Cities meeting. She said she was unable to present the following information at the last meeting.

#### **ATTACHMENT**

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis said when they are registered for the conference if the particular meetings can be setup at that time in November to help them meet while in Washington for the League of Cities Conference. Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis said everyone from Mississippi will be trying to meet and schedule appointments. She said it is very difficult for specific elected officials to meet if the requests are not scheduled early. Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis said the scheduling should be done in November for the March conference.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis said she had a copy of the information regarding the Marblestone project. He said they provided a proposal for the project. Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis said even though they are saying the project was turned in as part of the budget request it would help if the information is available to provide.

## **ATTACHMENT**

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis said when a motion is made and carried what is the next process.

Mayor West said when action is officially taken by the board it would depend on what is authorized.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis said if a department head is not present at the meeting when action is made regarding their department how is the information forwarded. She asked if they are required to read the minutes.

Mayor West said when certain action is taken, how is the information passed on to the appropriate individual. He said if the department head is not present and no one takes the necessary time to inform them of the action then they would not know.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis said by accident she found information from September 12, 2006 which included a request for help from the Inspection Department regarding 14 Zoa Street, abandoned property, possible demolition of structure. She said there was a motion made and when the minutes were pulled it read 'that the public works department contact Eugenia Lewis, 16 Zoa Street regarding a cistern under her house and review the situation. Alderwoman Arceneaux said there is an abandoned house located at 14 Zoa Street that should be addressed by the Inspection and Planning Department for code violations, the house should be boarded up for the safety of the community.' She noted that Mr. Dawes said that no one ever provided the information to him. Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis said that information was dated September 12, 2006 and today April 8, 2008 that resident is still sitting next to the house and it is not boarded up or demolished. She said the people are having problems because they do not see where the officials come out and talk with them that any action is being taken. Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis said the residents will say that those running for office are taking no action. She said in the same particular piece 'Alderwoman Arceneaux said she was contacted by Mrs. Marvel on River Terminal Road regarding water running onto her property causing damage to her driveway. Mr. Gardner was asked to review the area and contact the property owner.' Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis said in the same set of minutes there was discussion about the Beverly Hills pond. 'Alderwoman Arceneaux asked that public works address the situation of the green pond at the entrance of Beverly Hills Subdivision.' She said this was done on September 12, 2006. She asked if there was a meeting scheduled for everyone to look at the pond because information was provided regarding the court proceedings. She said the situation was bad when it was discussed in September, 2006 and now it is bad now.

Mr. Gardner said he is available to meet and discuss the situation.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis said her point is that it looks as if you only getting to the

problems now. She said she wanted to know the process, because it is broken. If the process can be cleaned up and if specific areas of the meeting minutes are actually placed with the department heads that they should be addressed by. She said whenever there is a motion there should be a response from the department head.

Mayor West noted that the department heads receive a copy of the minutes via e-mail. He said however that is done after the meeting takes place. Mayor West said the board could consider doing something in addition to that which would be to have those motions that would impact various departments specifically addressed to them via e-mail or hard copy. He said those are things to be taken under consideration. Mayor West said sometimes there are motions made that are not designated to one department, and different people should get together and no one is designated to be the initiator.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis said everyone should come together. She said there was a meeting with a gentleman who came in to work with the city and the suggestions provided included the board meeting on a religious basis with the department heads so they can provide information on the status of situations. It will help the officials keep up with the direction the city is going from bullet one-bullet two, and it will not end up being a three year gap between the times it is discussed.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis said it is raining and the weather is beautiful but guess what, the grass is growing. She said the same properties just discussed for demolition will have grass growing through the roofs if they are not addressed. The same people will not cut their grass. She said if the property owners are not going to do anything with the property and it is falling down they are not going to have the grass cut. Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis said for the record, she would like to have the same streets reviewed (Irving, Bluff, Zoa) for overgrown grass. She welcomed the Planning Director and said he would be on top of the grass growing situation and code violations so the city can make sure that in August they are not trying to have grass cut that is growing as we speak.

## **ALDERMAN GRAY**

Alderman Gray noted that he did present a proposal for Holy Family Catholic School to Congressman Bennie Thompson after he was notified that they provided funds to historic black school and he wanted them to be aware of the situation.

Alderman Gray said he received a call from Mrs. King, 32 Concord Street about a tree on the corner of Salvo and Concord which is on city property and she would like to have the area cleaned. He asked that Mr. Smith review the situation.

Alderman Gray said he was sorry he was not available to attend the Forks of the Road Dedication. He said he was told that the event was great.

Alderman Gray said he received calls from the residents on Ray Street regarding a speed bump to slow the traffic going to the rear entrance of the baseball field at Frazier School. He said the request was made last year although the speed bump was not installed.

Alderman Gray asked that Attorney Sanders close the matter between the City and George Smith on Stiers Lane. Alderman Gray said Mr. Smith would like the city to either deed him the right of way or cut the tree down immediately. Alderman Gray said the tree is in danger of damaging the Smith property. He asked that Attorney Sanders speed up the process so the matter can be closed.

Alderman Gray said there was a pot hole on Old Washington Road near Holiday Apartments that was inspected by the Public Works Department and not it proved to be a major sewer problem. He said he contacted the Engineering Department and the Public Works Department about the matter. Alderman Gray said the point is there have been many problems at the Holiday Apartment Complex. He asked if there was anything that could be done about the quality of life for the residents at Holiday Apartments. Everything in the apartments is deteriorating and broken. Alderman Gray asked if the city could assist with the problems of the residents.

Mayor West said the Building Official could address the problems if there are code violations and because it is private property there is nothing the city can do.

Ms. Brinigar said if the complex is receiving Section 8 funds from the Federal Government the Mississippi Home Corp will come in and inspect the site. She said she would provide the contact information to Alderman Gray.

Alderman Gray congratulated Stan Owens on his new appointment as the Civil Defense Director.

Alderman Gray said there were two (2) City employees who had deaths in their families. Alderman Gray said his sympathy was with the families.

Alderman Gray announced that Ms. Alcorn State university for the 2008-2009 year is Ms. Anika Minor from Natchez. He asked that ASU alumni support Ms. Minor during her term.

#### **ALDERMAN POLLARD**

Alderman Pollard said the asphalt plant is up and running and ready to proceed. He said there were major repairs that were completed during the months of January and March when the weather would not permit the lay down of asphalt. Alderman Pollard said he discussed the matter with Mr. Smith and there will be street repairs in the upcoming weeks.

#### **ALDERMAN WEST**

**Not present**

#### **ALDERMAN MASSEY**

Alderman Massey suggested that members of the board try and discuss concerns and problems with Department Heads on a one on one basis or via e-mail and not bring every situation to the board meeting. He said there are some concerns that can be easily taken care of outside the meeting.

#### **ALDERMAN MIDDLETON**

Alderman Middleton presented the following Recreation Committee report:

- I. The Duncan Park Golf Course is still active with both High School Golf and Tennis Matches.
- II. The Duncan Park Golf Course is now in great shape: 1) with the completion of all of the sand trap bunkers being rebuilt with drainage correction; 2) with early fertilization program greening up the fairways and greens; 3) with erosion areas being filled in and bare spots being grown back through top dressing procedures; 4) with chemical treatments applied to remove poa annua weeds, fungus, goosegrass, crab grass and mole cricket infestations.
- III. The Duncan Park Golf Course has hosted (3) successful Golf Tournaments since January 08;

- |  |                 |
|--|-----------------|
| 1) <u>The Knights of Columbus Tournament.</u>            | March 1, 2008   |
| 2) <u>The First United Pentecostal Church Tournament</u> | March 22, 2008  |
| 3) <u>The Harvest Club Tournament</u>                    | April 5&6, 2008 |

The next (3) scheduled Golf Tournaments in May 08 are:

- |   |                |
|---|----------------|
| 1) <u>The Montego Wantego's Tournament</u>                    | April 11, 2008 |
| 2) <u>The Ernest T. Jones Letterman's Weekend Tournament</u>  | April 25, 2008 |
| 3) <u>The Joe Fortunato Celebrity Golf Classic Tournament</u> | May 3&4, 2008  |
| 4) <u>The Special Olympics Tournament</u>                     | May 10, 2008   |

- IV. The **Natchez Leadership 2008** has committed to raising **\$15,000** to purchase the Materials Kit for a 24' x 40' Open Air Laminated Wood Gables Picnic Pavilion at the center Playground in Duncan Park. The Adams County Board of Supervisors have pledged to Natchez Leadership to install the concrete slab which is a **\$6,000 - \$7,000** expense. The City of Natchez Mayor and Board of Aldermen have pledged to install the Pavilion on the concrete slab at a **\$7,000 - \$8,000** expense. We want to thank the Natchez Leadership Team that was spear headed by **Charlie Speed** and **Michael Cates** for making this project happen. This is \$30,000 project that is only going cost the City \$ 7,000 - \$ 8,000.

#### **CITY CLERK'S REPORT, DONNIE HOLLOWAY**

Mr. Holloway requested approval of Docket #4030 - 4765.

Alderman Middleton asked if the docket was reviewed by the City Attorney.

Attorney Sanders said he reviewed the docket.

**A motion was made by Alderman Middleton and seconded by Alderman Pollard to approve Docket #4030-4765 as submitted. The motion carried unanimously.**

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

**No Report**

#### **MAYOR'S REPORT**

Mayor West stated that the request made regarding the local and private legislation as it relates to the hotel occupancy tax passed last week. He said there was not a vote on the floor against the legislation on the Senate side. Mayor West said it will be taken up on the House side soon. He said one hurdle was crossed as it relates to the Senate, and hopefully the House will take up the matter soon.

Alderman Massey said an e-mail was sent from Attorney Brown providing information on when the matter will be taken up by the House of Representatives.

Mayor West noted that he would be going to Jackson following the meeting, and he did discuss the matter with Attorney Brown. Mayor West said he was informed of the language in the legislation that was not expected. He said they will have the language removed by the time the bill reaches passage.

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

Alderman Pollard said the gazebo was being painted.

Mayor West said he initiated having the gazebo on the bluff painted because the paint was peeling. He said once the painter started it was determined that the structure was in a deteriorated condition so he asked Mr. Smith, Public Works Director to inspect the site and let him know what should be done. Mayor West said Mr. Smith said there were deteriorating floor boards and the rail was weak and should be replaced.

Mayor West said he took it upon himself for the safety of the community to have the gazebo repaired and painted. He asked the board to authorize the renovations to the Bluff Gazebo that is in deteriorated condition. Mayor West said the contract would be on a per hour basis under the guidance of the Public Works Director.

**A motion was made by Alderman Pollard and seconded by Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis to authorize the renovation and painting of the Bluff Gazebo on a per hour basis under the guidance of the Public Works Director. The motion carried unanimously.**

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

**A motion was made by Alderman Pollard and seconded by Alderman Massey to Adjourn the Regular Meeting of April 8, 2008. The motion carried unanimously.**

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**PHILLIP C. WEST,  
MAYOR**

**ATTEST:**

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**DONNIE HOLLOWAY  
CITY CLERK**

From an email from David Gardner on 4/22/2008

Please delete the following paragraph under A. Business of the Month:  
Also, please note my email address change to [dgardner@natchezwaterworks.com](mailto:dgardner@natchezwaterworks.com)

Mr. Gardner said they recently hired Waycaster & Associates to design a complete remodel of the store. He said there would be a major renovation to the exterior and the interior. Mr. Gardner said the blueprints would be complete within the next thirty (30) sixty (60) days. He said the approximate renovation cost would be \$300,000 to bring the store up to the new grill and chill concept design. Mr. Gardner said they are reinvesting into the community