

## **REGULAR MEETING**

### **May 26, 2009**

A Regular Meeting of the Mayor and Board of Aldermen of the City of Natchez, Mississippi, was held in the City Council Chamber at 6:00 P.M. on Tuesday, May 26, 2009. Mayor Jake Middleton presided at the meeting, which was opened with prayer by Pastor John Collard.

<b>MAYOR &amp; BOARD PRESENT</b>	<b>ELECTED OFFICIALS ABSENT</b>	<b>CITY OFFICIALS &amp; DEPARTMENT HEADS</b>
<b>John ‘Jake’ Middleton Mayor</b>		Donnie Holloway, City Clerk Coretta L. Logan, Deputy Clerk Darlene Jones, Community Development Sabrena Bartley, Senior Center Paul Dawes, Building Official Patricia Gibson, Personnel Director Connie Taunton, Tourism Director David Gardner, Engineering Mike Mullins, Police Chief Oliver Stewart, Fire Chief Brett Brinegar, Grants Coordinator Natchez Democrat
<b>Joyce Arceneaux-Mathis Alderwoman, Ward 1</b>		
<b>J. ‘Ricky’ Gray, Jr. Alderman, Ward 2</b>		
<b>Bob Pollard Alderman, Ward 3</b>		
<b>Ernest ‘Tony’ Fields Alderman, Ward 4</b>		
<b>Mark Fortenbery Alderman, Ward 5</b>		
<b>Daniel Dillard Alderman, Ward 6</b>		

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### **MINUTES APPROVED**

A motion was made by Alderman Fields to dispense with the reading of the minutes of the Regular Meeting of May 12, 2009 and approve the minutes as submitted. The motion was seconded by Alderman Pollard. The motion carried with Alderman Gray opposing.

### **VISITORS WELCOMED**

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

### **Susan Cassagne**

Mrs. Cassagne discussed the kick of the library summer program. She added that NASA would be there to provide goodies at the City Auditorium next Tuesday. She stated that the theme for this summer is “Be creative at your library.”

## **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**NONE**

## **DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS**

### **PLANNING DEPARTMENT, John Lewis**

Mr. Lewis asked to conduct a public hearing on June 9, 2009 for a proposed text amendment to allow a special exception land use for industrial sales inside industrial sales with no outside storage in an I1 Industrial District.

### **GRANTS COORDINATOR, Brett Brinegar**

Ms. Brinegar stated that the Daisy Street Public Facilities application was completed and hand delivered to Mississippi Development Authority on Thursday.

Ms. Brinegar stated that there is no match but they received word from Congressmen and Senators that the city will received \$171,000 from the National Museum Foundation for Waist Side Exhibits for the Trail. She added that the application deadline is July 1, 2009.

### **ENGINEERING, David Gardner**

Mr. Gardner stated that he submitted the fiscal year 2010 Energy and Water Development sub committee appropriations bill in the amount of \$3.5 million to Senator Cochran's Office for the 592 Project. He added the total project cost is now \$12,667,000.

Alderman Arceneaux-Mathis stated that she needed to get with Mr. Gardner to find out which packet is the best one to send to the Corp of Engineers in support of the 3.5 million dollars.

Mr. Gardner stated to Alderman Dillard that the available funds for construction are approximately a little over 2.5 million dollars for the 592 Project.

Mr. Gardner stated that he had to advertise for the construction of the Commerce Street EWP Project and asked that the board ratify his actions. He added that the board would receive the bids on June 23, 2009. He stated that this is a project that was approved by NRCS.

**Alderman Arceneaux-Mathis made a motion to allow Mr. Gardner to advertise for the construction of the Commerce EWP Project. Seconded by Alderman Fields. The motion carried unanimously.**

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis asked for an update on the Union street environmental documents.

Mr. Gardner stated that they have contacted the MDOT representative and she has stated that she has been overwhelmed with environmental requests and she has asked for our patience but she will try to get to it next week.

Alderman Dillard stated to Mr. Gardner that there are two large trees in the drainage system behind 102 Duncan Avenue. He asked who would be responsible for the matter.

Mr. Gardner stated that the matter would fall under the city's maintenance and operation agreement.

### **POLICE CHIEF, Mike Mullins**

Chief Mullins stated that he has received donations for the purchase of a new K9 from Margaret King of Vidalia, Sally Young of Natchez, Ms. Richard Campbell of Natchez, and Corrections Corporation of America. He added the total is \$500.00. He requested that the board allow the Natchez Police Department to accept any donations received.

**Alderman Gray made a motion to accept any donations received for the purchase of a new K9. Seconded by Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis. The motion carried unanimously.**

Chief Mullins stated that now they only need \$8,400 more. He added that the dogs are expensive, but they usually last around 8 years.

Chief Mullins stated that he, Commander White, and Darlene Jones met with Mr. Fells, the new apartment manager of Susie B. West apartments. He added that he was very impressed with Mr. Fells and they were really hoping that he could be here tonight. He stated that hopefully there will be some improvements at Susie B. West Apartments after having the meeting with Mr. Wells.

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

Mr. Dawes presented a list of properties that were declared as a nuisance and request for demolition. He stated that the properties were sent numerous notices on different occasions and received no response.

1 Lynn Lane  
6 Mimosa Lane  
6 Woods Street  
15 Brenham Avenue  
15 Reynolds Street  
48 Brenham Avenue  
52 Parker Street  
58 E Oak Street

103 Louisiana Street  
115 Parker Street  
1207 Daisy Street  
1228 Daisy Street  
1230 Daisy Street  
1234 Daisy Street  
1234 Watkins Street

Mayor Middleton asked if the board wanted to allow residents that are present to speak in defense of there dilapidated property.

Mrs. Freiberger spoke behalf of Kenneth Taylor of 268 West Steirs Lane. She indicated that her client received a letter from the Inspection Department and was compelled to attend the meeting. She stated that Mr. Taylor has attempted to secure the property and it went beyond the ability of his means to maintain the property.

Mrs. Freiberger stated that there is a water line above the ground that is still active on the 268 West Steirs Lane property that runs beneath the affected property that would need to be addressed before any demolition takes place. She added that the property is on a steep slope so there may be some possible erosion or stabilization issues.

Mrs. Freiberger asked that the board not assess a 25% penalty on Mr. Taylor.

Mayor Middleton stated that they should have an answer at the next board meeting once Mr. Dawes takes a look at the property.

Carolyn A. Wright of 48 Brenham Avenue stated that she responded to letter and mailed the card back to the Inspection Department. She indicated that the Inspection Department had an error on the card where it was sent back to her instead of the Inspection department. She stated that she currently lives in Montgomery, Alabama and had a family illness which she had to address first. She added that the grass would be cut and maintained this weekend.

Mayor Middleton stated to Mrs. Wright that the board will work with her.

Mr. Dawes asked about the structure of the property.

Mrs. Wright stated that the structure of the property is sound.

Mr. Dawes stated that the minimum that his department will require is that the property be boarded up.

Mrs. Wright stated that she would be glad to get the property boarded as quickly as possible.

**Alderman Arceneaux-Mathis made a motion allow demolition on the list of properties excluding 48 Brenham Avenue pending City Attorney's approval. Seconded by Alderman Dillard. The motion carried unanimously.**

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis asked where they are in the grass cutting process.

Mr. Dawes stated that he will get with Anita to see where she is on that.

## **CITY OFFICIALS' REPORT**

### **ALDERMAN FORTENBERY - WARD 5**

Alderman Fortenbery stated that Public Works is still working hard picking up debris and he appreciates what they do while they continue to keep up the daily needs. He added that for citizens that are having problems with debris to call the Public Works office and give them a physical address.

Alderman Fortenbery stated that he had a few complaints about the tree down on the bluff. He stated the tree is supposed to be cut up before it can be hauled off and asked for everyone's patience.

Alderman Fortenbery stated that there are a few other areas that Public Works is cleaning up Under the Hill.

Alderman Fortenbery commended Natchez Water Works on keeping the businesses open by keeping the water and sewer lines going in the right direction. He added that they are doing an outrageous job and he knows that the businesses are grateful as well.

Alderman Fortenbery stated that Natchez Water Works also works with Public Works well and its part of them being a team and helping the City to grow and move forward.

### **ALDERMAN DILLARD - WARD 6**

Alderman Dillard thanked Public Works and Alderman Fortenbery for the debris pile clean up at Duncan Park.

Alderman Dillard stated that he passed the list of streets with potholes on to the Public Works Director. He added that this is the time to begin repairing the potholes because the weather is warm and the asphalt will flow.

Alderman Dillard stated that they are committed to getting a firm understanding of the budget and that they are going to look for accountability for the budget.

### **ALDERWOMAN ARCENEAUX-MATHIS - WARD 1**

**Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis made a motion that the City of Natchez contacts the state of Mississippi to ask the state to give to the City the lot at the corner of 630 North Wall Street. Seconded by Alderman Gray. The motion carried unanimously.**

She added that the property is abandoned and grass grows tall every year. She stated that if we ask the state to donate the property to the City, then the City will get in touch with Habitat for Humanity so that they can build on the lot.

**Alderman Arceneaux-Mathis made a motion to allow Valencia Hall to speak in regards of the Woodlawn Neighborhood Watch. Seconded by Alderman Fields. The motion carried unanimously.**

Valencia Hall, Chairman of the Woodlawn Neighborhood watch commended Commander White and Chief Mullins on the excellent job that they are doing in her neighborhood. She stated that she would like for a few more patrolmen to patrol the area more often because there are groups of women and adolescence girls that are walking in the streets and will not move.

Mayor Middleton stated that he would get with Alderman Gray and the Chief of Police to discuss more patrolling in the area.

Ms. Hall added that she would like to also commend Alderman Arceneaux-Mathis and Alderman Gray for attending and supporting their neighborhood watch meetings.

Alderman Gray stated that for any individual that comes on the properties of the city parks and have a weapon should be banned.

Alderman Arceneaux-Mathis stated that there should be a meeting of land owners who rent properties in those neighborhoods to discuss the impact their renters have on the neighborhoods and the property owners' legal responsibilities.

Alderman Arceneaux-Mathis asked Mr. Freeman for the update on Maple Street.

Mr. Freeman stated that they are still waiting the response from the City Engineers request that was submitted.

Alderman Arceneaux-Mathis stated that the citizens of Maple Street have been calling and they need a recommendation from Mr. Freeman & Mr. Gardner.

## **ALDERMAN GRAY - WARD 2**

Alderman Gray encouraged citizens that sometimes they may have to pick up paper in front of their homes and not wait on Public Works to do it.

Alderman Gray stated that the *Take Back you Neighborhood* was a good article and that he was going to place a copy in everyone's box.

Alderman Gray recognized the Youth Build children for doing a good job with helping to build the Habitat House.

Alderman Gray stated that the Holiday Apartments and Ram Circle Neighborhoods watch meetings need to start back up.

Alderman Gray announced that Hugh Green will be inducted into the Mississippi Sports Hall of Fame. He added that the event will take place Friday, July 31, 2009.

Alderman Gray thanked the Natchez Police Department for doing a great job. He added that he had a productive meeting at the West Steirs Lane neighborhood watch meeting. He asked Chief Mullins if a policeman could stop in at the next neighborhood watch meeting so that the residents can get familiar with the officers.

Chief Mullins stated to Alderman Gray to let him know when the next neighborhood watch meeting will be so that he can arrange it.

Alderman Gray stated that the school is out and parents need to know where their kids are. He added that we need to create a village when it comes to these kids.

Alderman Gray stated that he will get with members of the board to discuss a fun day for the youth.

### **ALDERMAN POLLARD - WARD 3**

Alderman Pollard stated that there is a major culvert that is collapsing in the Woodhaven Subdivision. He added that it is collapsing on the west side of the road and it has collapsed approximately 4 feet deep.

Alderman Pollard stated that he and Mr. Gardner went out there to look at the culvert. He asked Mr. Gardner to send his inspection team to the area and bring back estimates and advice on the matter.

### **ALDERMAN FIELDS - WARD 4**

Alderman Fields thanked Public Works for the job that they are doing with the debris pick up. He asked that they double check the side streets in Ward 4. He stated that there are a lot of hidden streets that also have storm damage as well.

Alderman Fields stated that the Minor Street Group is planning the Minorville Jubilee. He added that they have a lot of great activities planned for the young people. He stated to Chief Mullins to do exactly what they did last year because there was really good police coverage.

Alderman Fields asked Mr. Gardner and Mr. Freeman to look into having a pedestrian cross walk on the Martin Luther King area by Cathedral School.

Alderman Fields congratulated David Gardner and the entire Natchez Water Works staff for being efficient and professional at their jobs and being awarded a double A- rating.

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

Mr. Holloway asked the board to pass a resolution to authorize tax anticipation note in the amount of \$500,000 on the 12<sup>th</sup> of May. He added that Concordia Bank and Trust was the lowest bidder.

**Alderman Arceneaux-Mathis made a motion to pass a resolution to authorize tax anticipation note in the amount of \$500,000 on the 12<sup>th</sup> of May to Concordia Bank. Seconded by Alderman Fields. The motion carried unanimously.**

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

NONE

## **MAYOR'S REPORT**

Mayor Middleton stated that he met with Worth Peters today and asked Mr. Peters to bring him up to speed. He added that Mr. Peters said that there are no monies that are coming down to this particular district. He stated that Mr. Peters said that he would be more than happy to stay on top of it if anything monies come down. He stated that he asked Mr. Peters if there was anything that the board needed to do and Mr. Peters said that there was nothing that the board needed to do. Mr. Peters said that he would keep in touch with the board and if any funding is available he will notify the board.

Mayor Middleton stated that there is a request for Senator Cochran to earmark funds to conduct a feasibility study to tap into the Alluvial Lateral Aquifer for industrial process water needs.

He added that Rentech wants to draw from the water and it does not affect the city's nor county's water wells. He stated that it is filtered through a sand base and it is a lot easier to treat.

Mayor Middleton stated that this is just a study and we are acknowledging our support.

**Alderman Fields made a motion to approve the request for Senator Cochran to earmark funds to conduct a feasibility study to tap into the Alluvial Lateral Aquifer for industrial process water needs. Seconded by Alderman Pollard. The motion carried unanimously.**

Mayor Middleton stated that the next workshop will be June 2, 2009 at 4:00pm.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

**Alderman Dillard made a motion that no monies from the tax anticipation loan account be transferred, loaned, nor spent without the approval of this board. Seconded by Alderman Fields. The motion carried unanimously.**

Mayor Middleton recognized Alderman Gene Lofton from Woodville, Mississippi.

Ms. Eva Dunkley asked Mayor Middleton what is the procedure to be placed on the agenda.

Mayor Middleton stated that you must call Temple Hendricks a week before the meeting and have it in writing. He added that he would like to know what is it that the individual would like to speak on the matter specifically.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

**A motion was made by Alderman Fields, seconded by Alderman Fortenbery to adjourn the Regular meeting of May 26, 2009. The motion carried unanimously.**

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**JAKE MIDDLETON  
MAYOR**

**ATTEST:**

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**DONNIE HOLLOWAY  
CITY CLERK**