

REGULAR MEETING
January 12, 2010

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, January 12, 2010. Mayor Jake Middleton presided at the meeting, which was opened with prayer by Pastor Aaron Wesley.

MAYOR & BOARD PRESENT	ELECTED OFFICIALS ABSENT	CITY OFFICIALS & DEPARTMENT HEADS
John ‘Jake’ Middleton Mayor		Donnie Holloway, City Clerk Coretta L. Logan, Deputy Clerk Darlene Jones, Community Development
Joyce Arceneaux-Mathis Alderwoman, Ward 1		Sabrina Bartley, Senior Center David Gardner, City Engineer Mike Mullins, Police Chief
J. ‘Ricky’ Gray, Jr. Alderman, Ward 2		Oliver Stewart, Fire Chief Natchez Democrat
Bob Pollard Alderman, Ward 3		
Ernest ‘Tony’ Fields Alderman, Ward 4		
Mark Fortenbery Alderman, Ward 5		
Daniel Dillard Alderman, Ward 6		

MINUTES APPROVED

A motion was made by Alderman Fields to dispense with the reading of the minutes of the Regular Meeting of December 22, 2009 and approve as presented. The motion was seconded by Alderman Pollard. The motion carried unanimously.

RECEIVE BIDS:

Mayor Middleton opened and acknowledged the bids for the Trails Project.

The bids for the Trails Project were received from:

Quality & Design Construction, LLC	\$2,921,591.50
Southern Rock, LLC	\$2,135,007.60
Southwest Design & Landscaping, LLC	\$2,035,014.00
Camo Construction	\$1,609,694.75
Mayrant & Associates, LLC	\$2,108,041.75
Dozer, LLC	\$3,301,651.15
Fenton Rigging & Contracting, Inc	\$1,968,142.00

Alderman Arceneaux-Mathis made a motion to take the bids under advisement. Seconded by Alderman Pollard. The motion carried unanimously.

BUSINESS OF THE MONTH

Mayor Middleton announced Pearl Street Pasta for the business of the month for the month of January.

WELCOME VISITORS

Leadership Natchez

Mayor Middleton recognized the Leadership Natchez class. He thanked them for coming.

Trinity Football Team

Mayor Middleton issued certificates to the Trinity Football Team for being the MAIA Class A State Champions.

Kathleen Jenkins

Mrs. Jenkins submitted a report for the National Park Service Planning Update

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Alderman Dillard stated that the amount to allow the City to enter into a contract with First Insurance Funding Corporation for the premium service should have been in the amount of \$271,760 not \$2,071,760 in the December 22, 2009 minutes.

DEPARTMENT HEADS

RECREATION, Ralph Tedder

TO: Mayor and Board of Aldermen

FROM: Ralph Tedder, Director

RE: Request Approval to Reduce the Duncan Park Golf Course Fees effective

February 1, 2010 in order to increase the continuous reduced rounds of golf.

Mr. Tedder requested approval to reduce the Duncan Park Golf Course Fees effective February 1, 2010 in order to increase the continuous reduced rounds of golf. He added that they are especially encouraging increased youth and family golf play

He stated that he has attached a copy of the Proposed February 1, 2010 Duncan Park Golf Course Fee Structure. He added that all fees highlighted in yellow have been reduced and also attached is the current 2009 approved Duncan Park Golf Course Fee Structure for comparison.

Mr. Tedder stated that the golf course rounds of play have been drastically falling since last year and continue to drop this year. He added that the Rounds of Golf Reports are also attached to the memo for review. He further stated that with the economy dropping so has the golf revenues.

He stated that we should make this fee reduction move in order to encourage and attract more play at the Duncan Park Golf Course. The Alderman Recreation Committee Chairman, Dan Dillard is in full support of this adjusted Golf Course Fee Structure.

Mr. Tedder recommended for a motion to approve the Duncan Park Golf Fees effective February 1, 2010.

Alderman Fields made a motion to approve the Duncan Park Golf Fees. Seconded by Alderman Dillard. The motion carried unanimously.

VISITORS CENTER, Connie Taunton

Mrs. Taunton thanked Alderwomen Arceneaux-Mathis, Public Works, and the Inspection Department for working hard on the Christmas decorations. She added that they really did a great job.

Mrs. Taunton stated that another important group will be coming to Natchez on March 28th for two and a half days for the Mississippi Society of Association Executives. She added that we are hosting there midyear conference. She added that she would like the downtown area to be spruced up and looking good.

Mrs. Taunton stated that she is inviting the board to come to the opening reception on March 28th from 6:00 to 7:30 pm., the location not determined as of yet. She added that they are also working on a Natchez Day at the Capitol.

Mrs. Taunton stated that on January 28th Natchez Regional will be hosting Business afterhours at the Visitors Center. She stated that she felt like this was something that they could do for the community.

Mrs. Taunton asked the board to contact the Legislatures and ask them to please continue to fund the \$24,000 for the Mississippi Parkway.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, Darlene Jones

Mrs. Jones stated that she has been awarded a \$600 scholarship from the Mississippi Economic Development Council to attend the new south based Economic Development course.

Mrs. Jones requested permission from the board to travel in a city vehicle to the Mississippi Economic Development Council's 2010 winter Conference that will be held in Jackson February 4th - 5th to be paid out of the Community Development's budget.

Alderman Arceneaux-Mathis made a motion to allow travel in a city vehicle to the Mississippi Economic Development Council's 2010 winter Conference that will be held in Jackson February 4th - 5th to be paid out of the Community Development's budget. Seconded by Alderman Gray. The motion carried unanimously.

Mrs. Jones requested permission to travel to Louisville, Mississippi in a city vehicle to the Keep Mississippi Beautiful Meeting on February 25th – 26th to be paid out of the Community Development budget.

Alderman Fields made a motion to allow travel to Louisville, Mississippi in a city vehicle to attend the Keep Mississippi Beautiful Meeting on February 25th – 26th to be paid out of the Community Development budget. Seconded by Alderman Arceneaux-Mathis. The motion carried unanimously.

Mrs. Jones stated that that Census forms will be coming out the end of February or the beginning of March to every household. She said that she is asking everyone to please fill out the forms because it helps our community. She added that they will be out in the community raising awareness.

Mrs. Jones stated that there are three YouthBuild participants who have received their GED certifications, 6 participants that are now enrolled in college, 1 participant that has received a job at Subway and 1 participant who had a job interview this morning at Shaw Flooring in Port Gibson. She added that she is so proud of the YouthBuild students.

Mrs. Jones stated that they are currently accepting applications for the next YouthBuild class.

ENGINEERING, David Gardner

Mr. Gardner stated that they have 18.375 million dollars worth of projects including Union Street Overlay, ARRA, Soil Conservation Projects, Downtown Trails Projects, Green Waste Tater Treatment Upgrade, Bio Solid Land Farm Sludge Project, North Natchez Drainage, and Regional Transportation Facility.

Mr. Gardner stated that they have not started on the NRCS Projects because they have not heard back from the funding. He added that they are still in corresponding MDOT.

Mr. Gardner stated that he needs to have a meeting with the board to discuss the final phases of North Natchez Drainage project.

Mr. Gardner stated that he needs permission to advertise for General Bids for the city on February 12th – 19th and open the bids on March 9th.

Alderman Fortenbery made a motion to allow the City Engineer to advertise for General Bids for the city on February 12th – 19th and open the bids on March 9th. Seconded by Alderman Pollard. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Gardner stated that they are currently working on a second access into Anne Holdens Lane and hopes that it can qualify for CBDG funding.

Mr. Gardner stated that a thorough review has been made on the Trails Project bids. He added that he would like to recommend that an award be made to the low bidder, Camo Construction in the amount of \$1,609,694.75, contingent upon the concurrence of MDOT.

Alderman Fields made a motion to award the bid to Camo Construction Company, contingent upon concurrence from MDOT. Seconded by Alderman Fortenbery. The motion carried unanimously.

CITY OFFICIALS

ALDERMAN GRAY – WARD 2

Alderman Gray stated that Ward 2 still has a lot of abandon houses that need to be added to the list. He added that he also has serious road problems and drainage problems in Ward 2.

Alderman Gray stated that we need to pray for those in the accident that happened on New Year's Day. He added that it could have been worse than what it was.

Alderman Gray stated that he would like to see us get a poverty committee together. He added that everywhere he goes they say that you judge your community on how you treat your poor people and if that's the case, then we have a zero.

Alderman Gray stated that he would like to advise the Senior Citizens of the cold weather. He added that the individuals need to know about the organizations that help with weatherizing homes.

Alderman Gray stated that he also attended the Legislative breakfast and it was nice. He added that one of the legislators made a comment that caught his attention. He stated that people always say that we can't recruit businesses because of our schools, healthcare, and unemployment rate. He said that North Mississippi recruited a business and the state helped them with \$15 million dollars and they have a 27% unemployment rate and their school system is on the bottom. He said all the time it's not about your schools and health care, but it's about the community. He added that it is about having more unity in the community.

Alderman Gray stated that the Census 2010 is very important and that everyone needs to be counted.

Alderman Gray stated that several lights are out throughout the city and it is very dark, so we need to pay attention to these areas and get the lights back to working.

Alderman Gray stated that his sympathy goes out to the Washington family and Cameron family. He added that he would like to end the meeting with a moment of silence for the Sanders family.

Alderman Arceneaux-Mathis made a motion to allow any board members including the City Engineer to travel to Washington for the League of Cities or the El Camino East/West Corridor. Seconded by Alderman Gray. The motion carried unanimously.

Alderman Gray stated that he wants everyone to take every safety precautions in keeping your doors locked. He added that someone tried to break into his home while he was watching the football game. He added that he will be filing his report at the Natchez Police Department today.

ALDERMAN POLLARD – WARD 3

Alderman Pollard read the Fire Department report for the month of December.

Alderman Pollard stated that the Firemen are not just standing around doing nothing, 1200 hours of training is substantial. He added that he commends them on doing a good job.

ALDERMAN FIELDS – WARD 4

Alderman Fields stated that the freezing temperatures during the last few days created a number of problems for the Natchez Water Works and its customers. The service men and maintenance crews responded to quite a number of broken pipes calls as the temperatures rose and pipes began to thaw out.

Alderman Fields stated that as of 9:00 a.m. today, our service men have answered 79 calls from customers to shut off water due to broken pipes caused by the freezing temperatures. He added that it was necessary for us to have one additional service man on call for the weekend to be able to minimize their water loss.

Alderman Fields stated that the Water Treatment Plant and Waste Water Treatment Plant adverted major problems by spending extra time last week winterizing the plant.

Alderman Fields made a motion to fill the Library position with Mrs. Joyce Johnson. Seconded by Alderman Arceneaux-Mathis. The motion carried unanimously.

Alderman Fields stated that his condolences go out to the families whose children were involved in the accident on Canal Street and the Sanders family.

ALDERMAN FORTENBERY – WARD 5

Alderman Fortenbery stated that he would like to see Mr. Gardner and Mr. Atkins get some prices on a pothole patching machine.

Alderman Gray stated that we should not have to duplicate what the County is already doing. He stated that the county is responsible for patching up the potholes because the city is in the county of Adams.

Alderman Fortenbery stated that they still should get a few prices together just to see if the board can be able to go forth with it.

ALDERMAN DILLARD – WARD 6

Alderman Dillard stated that he would like to tell the constituents of Ward 6 that he is beginning to start a map of Ward 6 to identify the streets and potholes. He added that he will ask the City Engineering department to begin a street assessment.

Alderman Dillard stated that the some of the property violations are from owners that own multiple properties. He added that he would like to look into a stiffer response. If you own multiple properties and you are in violation of those multiple properties, you may take the risk of forfeiting your rights, if you were renting these properties for example.

Alderman Dillard stated that the approval of the Boyette Study for the EDA Group is one of the things that must continue to go through in the legislative session.

Alderman Dillard stated that he would like the city through the mayor to request a log of Cable One's service to determine if they are having more outages and more calls than a comparable community of the same size. He stated that the current agreement with Cable One will expire in 2012.

Alderman Dillard stated that the sales revenues for the city are dropping. He added that we are almost at a five year low. We have to keep it in front of us until we can pull out of this recession. He added that if we continue to shop Natchez first, pay attention to our expenditures, and we start to trim where we can; we'll have the best footing to survive.

ALDERWOMAN ARCENEAUX-MATHIS – WARD 1

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis thanked Mayor Middleton and Mr. Gardner for giving her the information about fully funding the 592 North Natchez Drainage project in the areas that affected families.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis stated that she will get with Mr. Laird again to see what groundwork he has made on appealing the MDA's denial on Natchez's application on flood water.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis stated that there are several pieces of property in her Ward that have a For Sale sign in the yard but you cannot see the sign because of the grass that has grown up over it.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis stated that her sympathy goes out to the community at large and prays that everyone will be in a better situation.

CITY CLERK – DONNIE HOLLOWAY

Mr. Holloway asked the board to approve docket number 1918 – 2340 and claims docket number 2351 – 2588.

Alderman Pollard made a motion to approve docket number 1918 – 2340 and claims docket number 2351 – 2588. Seconded by Alderman Fortenbery. The motion carried with Alderman Gray opposing against vendor number 356157.

Mr. Holloway stated that an individual wants to lease the back part of the Old Waste Management to park his trucks. He added that he told the gentleman that it would be \$100 per month. The area is about 20 feet wide.

Mr. Holloway stated that the attorney will have to create a lease agreement between the individual's company and the City of Natchez.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis made a motion to allow the City to inter into a lease agreement with the individual with the stipulation of a 30 day written notice to cancel contract. Seconded by Alderman Gray. The motion carried unanimously.

CITY ATTORNEY, Everett Sanders

No Report

MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Middleton stated that the next board meeting has been rescheduled for Monday, January 25th. He added that he was in Jackson last week to attend the Tourism Luncheon. He added that Senator Kevin Butler from Magnolia Mississippi was awarded the Tourism Award for the Senate.

Mayor Middleton stated that he also attended the MEC. He added that the governor was there, Eric Clark, and the State Superintendent. He added that the governor stated that they are cutting the budgets. He mentioned they will not cut the Department of Corrections.

Mayor Middleton stated the governor said that it will be 2013 before things start to get better.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Alderman Fields, seconded by Alderman Pollard to Adjourn the Regular Meeting of January 12, 2010. The motion carried unanimously.

**JAKE MIDDLETON
MAYOR**

ATTEST:

**DONNIE HOLLOWAY
CITY CLERK**