

REGULAR MEETING
February 23, 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 6:00 P.M. on Tuesday, February 23, 2010. Mayor Jake Middleton presided at the meeting, which was opened with prayer by Reverend John Elery.

MAYOR & BOARD PRESENT	ELECTED OFFICIALS ABSENT	CITY OFFICIALS & DEPARTMENT HEADS
John “Jake” Middleton Mayor	Bob Pollard Alderman, Ward 3	Donnie Holloway, City Clerk Coretta L. Logan, Deputy Clerk Oliver Stewart, Fire Chief Ralph Tedder, Recreation Director Rick Freeman, Traffic Department Connie Taunton, Visitor’s Center Darlene Jones, Community Dev. David Gardner, City Engineer Natchez Democrat
Joyce Arceneaux-Mathis Aldерwoman, Ward 1		
J. “Ricky” Gray, Jr. Alderman, Ward 2		
Ernest “Tony” Fields Alderman, Ward 4		
Mark Fortenbery Alderman, Ward 5		
Daniel Dillard Alderman, Ward 6		

MINUTES APPROVED

A motion was made by Alderman Fortenbery to dispense with the reading of the minutes of the Regular Meeting of February 9, 2010. The motion was seconded by Alderman Dillard. The motion carried unanimously.

WELCOME VISITORS

Mr. Phillip Stokes of 9 Wiggins Lane stated that he petitioned for assistance from the board in the matter of four pitbull dogs in the West Steirs area. He added that when the neighbor’s pitbull dog sees his son, the dog begins to bark and attempt to jump the fence to get the child.

Mr. Stokes stated that several complaints have been made about the pitbulls, as well as being written up at the Police Department, as a leash law violation. He said that no major resort has happen regarding the vicious animals. He added that this is a matter that is getting out of hand.

Mayor Middleton stated that several discussions haven taken place. He assured him that the matter will be taken care of regarding all vicious dogs.

The Aldermen thanked Mr. Stokes for coming forward with the matter and agreed that this matter is very important for the safety of the citizens and children.

Alderman Arceneaux-Mathis made a motion that the City Attorney develops an ordinance dealing with pitbull dogs and other vicious animals. Seconded by Alderman Gray. The motion carried unanimously.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

NONE

DEPARTMENT HEADS

ENGINEERING, David Gardner

Mr. Gardner stated that the North Natchez 592 Drainage Project Phase 2 plans have been submitted and they are in review.

Mr. Gardner stated that on the Regional Transportation Facility, he needs the board to allow the Mayor to sign a purchase option agreement with the land owner that will extend our option for a period of up to six months.

Alderman Arceneaux-Mathis made a motion to allow the Mayor to sign a purchase option agreement with the land owner that will extend our option for a period of up to six months. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Gardner stated that on the Union Street Project, all contracts have been approved and MDOT has concurred on everything. He added that they have issued a notice to proceed to the contractor to begin work. He added that the contractor will have 180 calendar days from February 25th to complete the project.

Mr. Gardner stated that the ARRA Project has a completion date of April 14th. He added that they have already issued a notice to proceed on that project as well.

Mr. Gardner stated that the contractors have requested that a supplemental agreement be prepared to change the mix to a warm mix instead of a hot mix. He added that this is an approved MDOT mix. He stated that he would like for the Mayor to sign a supplemental agreement, modifying the contract to allow the use of a warm mix in leau of the hot mix.

Alderman Fortenbery made a motion to allow the Mayor to sign a supplemental agreement, modifying the contract to allow the use of a warm mix in leau of the hot mix. Seconded by Alderman Dillard. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Gardner stated that on the Trails Project, the contractor has resubmitted the disadvantage business prize forms to MDOT. He added that he is on the agenda for the February 26th Commission Agenda for Final Approval.

Mr. Gardner stated that he has a meeting set up next week with Mr. Allen Laird on the Daisy Street Project.

Mr. Gardner stated that he met with Mr. Wirt Peterson on the North Natchez Drainage Phase 3 Project. He added that Mr. Peterson has submitted the grant for the appeal.

Mr. Gardner stated that he sent the packet to Washington on the North Natchez Drainage Project, the Comprehensive Recreation Complex, and the Marblestone / West Steirs Lane Project.

Alderman Gray stated that the Owner of Hawk's Lounge has not showed up again. He added that this is the second time that the citizens have come and the owner did not show up.

Mayor Middleton stated that it is a done deal as far as he's concern.

Alderman Gray stated that there needs to be a better way to communicate to the residents, because some have cancelled other obligations to be at this meeting.

CITY OFFICIALS

ALDERMAN FORTENBERY – WARD 5

Alderman Fortenbery stated that he would like to thank the Public Works department for the hard work that they have done through the snowy weather. He added that Public Works also spent countless hours for the Mardi Gras parade.

Alderman Fortenbery stated that Public Works is gearing up for the grass cutting season. He added that the good thing about the cold weather is that the grass doesn't get too bad.

Alderman Fortenbery stated that the mechanic shop has been able to help service the City vehicles. He added that hopefully that will save the taxpayers a little money.

Alderman Fortenbery stated that he has a few ideas that he will be getting with Mr. David Atkins on.

ALDERMAN DILLARD – WARD 6

Alderman Dillard stated that the grass cutting contracts will go into effect in March. He added that a close eye will be kept on the contractors to see how that works out for the city.

Alderman Dillard stated that the Tennis Shop is in pretty bad shape. He added that he would like Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis to advise him on what could be done.

Mayor Middleton stated that we could use the next YouthBuild group to assist in the reconstruction of the Tennis Shop.

Alderman Dillard stated that they will be looking at one more program for the Accounting software. He added that we are moving in the right direction.

Alderman Dillard stated that he would also like Mr. Allen Laird to look into the STIP grants. He added that the City loss \$400,000 dollars in STIP money. He further added that he would like to see what we can do to recover those funds.

Alderman Dillard stated that the numbers in revenue are still falling. He added that they have continually fallen under what they were last year. He further stated that this is a significant problem that we need to address.

ALDERWOMAN ARCENEUX-MATHIS – WARD 1

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis stated there are many lots in her Ward that have been identified as belonging to either the state or the city and have reoccurring problems with grass cutting. She added that she would like to add the properties as surplus property.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis made a motion to declare the property on the corner of Beaumont and Bishop be declared as surplus property subject to determination of the property being City owned. Seconded by Alderman Gray. The motion carried unanimously.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis made a motion to declare the property on Wall Street to be declared as surplus property subject to determination of the property being City owned. Seconded by Alderman Gray. The motion carried unanimously.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis stated that she would like the City to look into the tax status of the three (3) lots on Irving Lane to determine if these lots are current on the tax rolls or have been acquired by the State of Mississippi.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis made a motion that the Carp Fish be installed in the Green Pond at Beverly Hills. Seconded by Alderman Gray.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis asked Mr. Atkins to speak about the Carp Fish.

Mr. Atkins stated that the Carp fish are none reproductive. He added that the cost will be around \$8 – \$12 per fish plus shipping. He further stated that the life of a carp fish is generally 20 years.

Mayor Middleton stated that he had concern if this is on private property.

Attorney Sanders stated that the city has easements to the property.

Mayor Middleton stated that there should also be No Fishing Signs placed.

The motion carried unanimously.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis stated that she would like to see a work session with Mr. Donnie Holloway, Mr. David Gardner, and Mr. Tony O'Beirne concerning the tax/lien situation with properties that are taken over by the State of Mississippi, in terms of the City of Natchez receiving any leveys attached to those properties.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis stated that there was also a discussion with Mr. David Atkins and Mr. Robbie Dollar on tipping fees.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis asked Mr. Rick Freeman to check the status of the street sign change on B Street from MLK to Rankin to Beulah Street. She added that the church is getting ready for a program on Sunday and would like to have the name changed.

ALDERMAN GRAY – WARD 2

Alderman Gray stated that as citizens, we need to work with the police and sheriff department any way we can because we are having a lot of crime. He added that it is better to be safe than sorry.

Alderman Gray stated that at the end of South Blue Bird Street, people have been dumping there. He added that it needs to be cleaned up and there needs to be a no dumping sign placed there.

Alderman Gray stated that he received a call from a lady on Dale Court stating that there is an abandoned unsafe structure at 6 Dale Court.

Alderman Gray stated that Mr. Allen Laird will need to get the DEQ sites to plan for the grant. He added the sites that he has for the DEQ grant are Oak Street and West Steirs Lane.

Alderman Gray stated that the residents of Oak Street have complained about the speeding. He added that once the board gets an opportunity to look into speed humps, the residents of Oak Street would like to have them placed in the area.

Alderman Gray stated that there is still a leak at Martin Gym. He added that the leak needs to be fixed because the Martin Gym is the only gym we have for the children.

Alderman Gray stated that he has pictures to help with the CBDG grant. He said the water is all over Daisy Street and in the West Steirs Lane area.

Alderman Gray stated that one of his constituents wrote a letter to the Mayor and Board of Alderman concerning the erosion at 6 John Lane. Alderman Gray asked the Public Works Director to check into the erosion problem to see what can be done.

Alderman Gray asked for an update on the EWP list.

Mr. Gardner stated that we should be getting the funding at anytime. He added that it is unusual that it has taken this long.

Alderman Gray stated that we need a Human Resource Director that just deals with human resource only.

Alderman Gray stated that his sympathy goes out to the Ivory family.

ALDERMAN POLLARD – WARD 3

Absent

ALDERMAN FIELDS – WARD 4

Alderman Fields stated that the Natchez Water Works have refreshed some of the holes and cuts that were in the streets. He added that they are waiting on the asphalt plant to get going so they can finalize the work. He further added to please be patient and drive safely until the workers can take care of it.

Alderman Fields stated that February is heart disease awareness month. He added that heart disease is the number one killer in women. He further added that everyone should be aware of the heart attack symptoms.

Alderman Fields stated that he is seeing a lot of Christmas dumping on East Oak Street. He added that the illegal dumping aids in the erosion that we are experiencing. He further stated to please stop the illegal dumping.

Alderman Fields stated that the speed study has been completed on East Oak Street. He added that he and Mr. Freeman discussed that speed signs need to be placed on the street.

Alderman Fields asked for clarification on the limbs pickup.

Mr. Atkins stated that Waste Management will pick the limbs up if they are in 2 cubic feet piles, about the size of a wheelbarrow.

Alderman Fields made a motion the Public Works Administration submit a plan to the Board of Aldermen for the rest of the grass cutting in the City. Seconded by Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis. The motion carried unanimously.

Alderman Fields stated that the Legacy Tribute that was done on Saturday, honoring our local heroes was very well done and all of the honorees were very deserving.

CITY CLERK – DONNIE HOLLOWAY

Mr. Holloway stated he received a request from the Senior Center that there are 6 buses that need to be place in surplus properties. The buses are B6008, B6009, B8754, B8719, B6840, & B6841.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis made a motion to place the six buses, B6008, B6009, B8754, B8719, B6840, & B6841 into surplus properties. Seconded by Alderman Gray. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Holloway stated that there are a lot of scrap parts such as computers, chairs, tables, and typewriters. He asked that we take them off of inventory and dispose of them.

Alderman Fields made a motion to remove the scrap inventory parts from the inventory list and allow disposal. Seconded by Alderman Fortenbery. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Holloway stated that he has spoken with Mr. Atkins and Mr. Dollar about the purchase of two new lawn mowers. He added that he has gotten a price on the 62 inch cuts. He further stated that the funds are in their budget.

Mr. Holloway stated that he would like to get some rates on the mowers and put it in for 48 months lease purchase to get the best rate and bring back to the board.

Alderman Dillard made a motion to allow the purchaser of the two 62 inch cut mowers. Seconded by Alderman Fortenbery. The motion carried unanimously.

CITY ATTORNEY, EVERETT SANDERS

Attorney Sanders stated that the Interlocal Agreement between the City of Natchez and the Natchez Water Works expires on May 31, 2010 whereby this Natchez Water Works provides engineering service to the city.

Alderman Fields made a motion that the city give notice to Natchez Water Works in accordance with the Interlocal Agreement and engage in negotiations regarding the continuation of the relationship between the city and Natchez Water Works. Seconded by Alderman Dillard. The motion carried unanimously.

MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Middleton stated that this weekend he was also at the Legacy Tribute Saturday night and it was a very nice tribute. He added that he enjoyed hearing Representative Percy Watson speak.

Mayor Middleton stated that on Friday night he attended the Natchez Civic and Business League annual awards banquet which was also a very nice event. He added that the speaker was Ex Senator Barbara Blackmon.

Mayor Middleton stated that on Sunday, he attended the YouthBuild graduation. He added that it was very rewarding to see the young men and women receive their diplomas. He further added that he was thoroughly impressed.

Mayor Middleton asked for an alderman to nominate Mr. Keith Smith on the Planning Commission.

Alderman Fortenbery made a motion to elect Mr. Keith Smith to be placed on the Planning Commission. Seconded by Alderman Dillard. The motion carried unanimously.

Alderman Gray stated that he would like Mr. Keith Smith to come to an meeting and introduce himself to the board so that they can put a name with a face.

Mayor Middleton stated that they received a call from GSA and the Natchez Federal Courthouse has been nominated by the National Trust Awards Review Committee. He added that he even heard down the line that the award may be handed out by the president of the United States.

Mayor Middleton stated that the final Regional Meeting will be on March 11th at 5:30 at the Natchez Community Center. He invited everyone to come.

NEW BUSINESS

Alderman Gray stated that there is an expired term on the school board. He asked Mayor Middleton to set a date for resumes deadline.

Mayor Middleton stated that the board will accept résumés until the last meeting on March 23, 2010 at noon.

Alderman Gray asked about the people in the Old A-B Motor Company.

Mayor Middleton stated that he has talked with them and assured them that he would help them to relocate.

Alderman Gray asked Mr. Dawes to get a plan in place about the dilapidated houses.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis announced that MML will host an Annual Congressional Appreciation reception on Tuesday, March 16th.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis asked Mr. Holloway to check to see if we are currently financially up to date with NBC-Leo. She added that the memberships have to be kept up to attend the meetings in Washington.

Alderman Gray recognized Mrs. Newsome.

Mayor Middleton asked for a silent prayer for Mr. Claude Gregory Ray.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Alderman Fields seconded by Alderman Fortenbery to Adjourn the Regular Meeting of February 23, 2010. The motion carried unanimously.

**JAKE MIDDLETON
MAYOR**

ATTEST:

**DONNIE HOLLOWAY
CITY CLERK**

