

REGULAR MEETING

June 22, 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, June 22, 2010. Mayor Jake Middleton presided at the meeting, which was opened with prayer by Reverend Marvel.

MAYOR & BOARD PRESENT	ELECTED OFFICIALS ABSENT	CITY OFFICIALS & DEPARTMENT HEADS
John 'Jake' Middleton Mayor	Ernest "Tony" Fields Alderman, Ward 4	Donnie Holloway, City Clerk Coretta L. Logan, Deputy Clerk Everett Sanders, City Attorney Darlene Jones, Community Development Sabrena Bartley, Senior Center Ralph Tedder, Recreation Dept. Director Paul Dawes, Building Official David Gardner, City Engineer Connie Taunton, Tourism Director Mike Mullins, Police Chief Oliver Stewart, Fire Chief Natchez Democrat
Joyce Arceneaux-Mathis Alderwoman, Ward 1		
J. "Ricky" Gray, Jr. Alderman, Ward 2		
Bob Pollard Alderman, Ward 3		
Mark Fortenbery Alderman, Ward 5		
Daniel Dillard Alderman, Ward 6		

MINUTES APPROVED

A motion was made by Alderman Pollard to dispense with the reading of the minutes of the Regular Meeting of June 8, 2010 and approve as submitted. The motion was seconded by Alderman Fortenbery. The motion carried unanimously.

VISITORS WELCOMED

Recreation Committee

Mr. Tate Hobdy stated that he would like to give an update on the Recreation Committee. He stated that they have been meeting on a weekly basis. They have visited the St. Francisville Complex and have put together a sub committee group to help get feedback from citizens on what particular sports they are interested in. He added that they have visited all the local facilities to see what needs to be replaced or improved.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis stated that she would like an update on the bid process on North Natchez Drainage 2-A.

Mr. Gardner stated that they took the awards and made it contingent upon the Corp of Engineers' approval. He added that it is up to the contractor to get his bond. The contractor's bonding company is requiring a lot of information. He added that a 10 day extension has been granted to the contracting company in which they have to have their bond in place by June 28th.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis stated that she does not want the project to be delayed.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis made a motion to authorize the City Attorney and the City Engineer to liquidate the bond, contact the bonding company, and then proceed with the award to the next bidder. Seconded by Alderman Gray. The motion carried unanimously.

DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS

POLICE DEPARTMENT, Chief Mullins

Chief Mullins stated that they are still trying to raise monies to purchase a K-9 Dog. He added that Wal-Mart Corporation donated \$1,000. He stated that he needs the board's permission to accept the donation.

Alderman Gray made a motion to accept the \$1,000 donation from Wal-Mart for the purchase of a K-9 dog. Seconded by Alderman Pollard. The motion carried unanimously.

Chief Mullins stated that they have utilized a seat belt enforcement grant for this year from the Department of Public Safety. He added that they will apply for another seat belt enforcement grant in the amount of \$45,000. He further requested permission from the board to apply for the grant.

Alderman Gray made a motion to allow Natchez Police Department to apply for the Seat belt enforcement grant. Seconded by Alderman Pollard. The motion carried unanimously.

TOURISM, Connie Taunton

Mrs. Taunton stated that there is a chance on the City getting two tennis tournaments. The first one is the USTA League which is 25 teams with 250 players and the seconded tournament is the Southern State Seniors Mississippi Championship that will be in October. She added that the direct economic impact is approximately \$170,000 per tournament.

Mrs. Taunton stated that she attended the Mississippi Development Authority meeting and there will be an application for communities to apply for a grant. She added that it is a tourism type grant and the Trail Project will be eligible for this grant. She added that she will keep everyone updated on when the application process begins.

Mrs. Taunton thanked Alderman Fortenbery, Mr. Robbie Dollar, and the Public Works Department for assisting her at the ASHTO Convention.

CITY PLANNER, Robert Nix

Mayor Middleton introduced the new City Planner Robert Nix.

Alderman Gray stated that the next time the West Steirs Lane Neighborhood has a meeting, he'd like for Mr. Nix to come and answer some questions and concerns that the residents may have.

CITY OFFICIALS' REPORT

ALDERMAN GRAY, WARD – 2

Alderman Gray made a motion that the officer with badge number 301290 be relieved of patrol duties and be assigned to duties at the police station pending an investigation received by the Personnel Department & the City Attorney. Seconded by Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis. The motion carried with Alderman Pollard opposing.

Alderman Gray stated that the West Steirs Lane residents have some serious concerns. He added that the area was annexed in 1975 and the residents feel that they have not been getting what they should be for their tax dollars. He further added that he insisted on the residents to come before the board to discuss their concerns.

Alderman Gray asked when the Union Street Project will begin.

Mr. Gardner stated that the company is W.E. Blain and they have the green light to begin. He added that whenever W.E. Blain gets finished milling on the bypass, then they will bring the milling machine to Union Street. He added that once it's milled then they can begin doing the overlay.

Alderman Gray asked when we are going to review our ordinance for vicious animals.

Attorney Sanders stated that they are working on the ordinance and it is geared toward the registration of dogs and not focus on a specific breed.

Alderman Dillard stated that he read an ordinance and it referred to dogs at large. He added that there are specific breeds that account for the vast majority of dog bite vitalities. He further added that we can do some things to get us in the right direction and bring regulation to the dog matter.

Alderman Gray asked for Mr. Willie B. Jones to give an update on Brumfield Apartments

Mr. Jones stated that the Stafford Management Company of Brumfield Apartments continuously tell lies and does not keep their promises on agreements that are made. He added that yesterday an elderly tenant passed out from heat at Brumfield Apartments. He

further added that another tenant had to spend money to stay at a hotel just to keep cool. Mr. Jones stated that the city can put fines on the management companies for neglect of the properties.

Mayor Middleton stated that he has a note on his desk to call the management company in the morning to see were they are in completing the repairs.

Alderman Gray urged parents to be aware of incense that are being sold in stores called, Spice, K2, and Urban Incense. He added that it is harmful and a danger to your health.

Alderman Gray stated that his sympathy goes out to the Williams and Davis family.

ALDERMAN POLLARD – WARD 3

NO REPORT

ALDERMAN FIELDS, WARD 4

ABSENT

ALDERMAN FORTENBERY – WARD 5

NO REPORT

ALDERMAN DILLARD – WARD 6

Alderman Dillard stated that they received a midterm report and for three months and the city's sales revenue has been positive. He added that this month has shown our largest gain over last year's revenues for this month.

Alderman Dillard encouraged the youth to participate in the Norman Puckett Junior Golf tournament. He added that they will instruct the children as well as give them a set of clubs. He further added that he will talk with the City Clerk to approach some local industries for donations.

Alderman Dillard asked what are the schedules of the Water Works patches and repairs.

Mr. Gardner stated that the patches are scheduled to start this week.

Alderman Dillard asked where we are on Sherwood Drive becoming a FAU Street.

Mr. Gardner stated that they are currently working on it and when Mr. Rick Freeman gets his traffic counters out, they will begin taking a traffic count. He added that they have some drafted letters.

ALDERWOMAN ARCENEAUX-MATHIS – WARD 1

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis stated that Mr. Burns wrote a letter stating that there were left over remainings of wall components and dirt left at the work site.

Alderman Fortenbery stated that he spoke with Mr. Burns today as well; however, Public Works had to take care of immediate issues that were critical. He added that he assured Mr. Burns that Public Works would be back to finish.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis stated that she spoke with Mrs. Bettye Oliver, Program Director, USDA Rural Development about two weeks ago in Jackson. She thanked Mayor Middleton for preparing a letter inviting Mrs. Oliver.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis stated that she received a call from a resident on 517 Rankin Street regarding the burned property next to it. She added that the property owner wants to know when the property will get cleaned up.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis stated that she has received a lot of calls about problems on Vine Street with the pothole fillings. She added that she was surprise that they were not on the agenda. She further added that they will be coming before the board to address their specific needs.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis stated that she spoke with the Chair of the neighborhood watch on Lewis Drive. She added that things are pretty still down there. She further added that the next neighborhood watch meeting will be sometime in September.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis stated that she wants to know if the Board of Aldermen approves a motion; can that motion be overturned by phone polling? She added that she is writing to the Attorney General and her specific inquiry, is can an official action of the board of Aldermen be overturned by phone polling of the members of the Board of Aldermen, if so, how should the poll be conducted, i.e., should all Aldermen be contacted.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis made a motion to confirm Mr. Robert Nix as the City Planner for the City of Natchez. Seconded by Alderman Gray. The motion carried.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis stated that she would like Mr. Laird to add 829 North Rankin Street to his list for a potential property for the Home Investment Partnership Grant with the state of Mississippi and the Mississippi Development Authority.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis asked for the status of Maple Street becoming a One Way.

Mr. Gardner stated that he has talked with residents and he needs to meet with Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis about it.

CITY CLERK'S REPORT, DONNIE HOLLOWAY

Mr. Holloway stated that SpringBrook will be here the second week in July. He added that we will be in service hopefully by the first or middle of November.

Mr. Holloway requested permission to enter into a contract with PolyCom, which is a new phone system for the city.

Alderman Gray made a motion to allow the City Clerk to enter into a contract with Polycom. Seconded by Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis. The motion carried unanimously.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis stated that on the last docket her travel to Washington was reported wrong and she contacted the City Clerk that day. She said that it was \$444 which was a double amount and it should have been \$222. She stated that City Clerk Holloway stated that he said he immediately changed the amount to the correct amount of \$222.

CITY ATTORNEY'S REPORT, EVERETT SANDERS

Attorney read a resolution for a Veterans' Home in Natchez.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis made a motion to adopt the resolution. Seconded by Alderman Pollard. The motion carried unanimously.

Attorney Sanders stated that he is requesting the Mayor and Board of alderman approve the memorandum of agreement between the National Park Service and the City of Natchez Office of Tourism Management which is the same agreement that we have had. He added that the contract is for a period of two years with a 3 year renewal.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis made a motion to enter into the contract between the National Park Service and the City of Natchez Office of Tourism Management. Seconded by Alderman Pollard. The motion carried unanimously.

MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Middleton stated that he and Alderman Gray met with the women of the Watkins Street Cemetery. He added that they came up with some good ideas and he has addressed a couple of those ideas but has not received an answer back as of yet.

Mayor Middleton stated that he also met last week with Directors from American Rail Car. He added that he spoke to Mayor Copeland about the situation and Mayor Copeland is willing to help in anyway that he can.

Mayor Middleton stated that Rentech has assured the Congressional Delegation that when Rentech is up and running, they will be placing approximately 200 railcars a month into Natchez with materials for construction.

Mayor Middleton stated that this Friday night will be the official lighting of the bridge. He added that the event will start at 7:30 at the Convention Center in Vidalia.

NEW BUSINESS

Alderman Gray asked who cut the city owned property by Concord.

Mr. Wilbert Whitely stated that no one cuts it now, but they used to.

Mr. Tedder stated that the property is tied in with the Armstrong Estate and it is not the City's property to cut or sell.

Alderman Gray stated that he wants the Code Enforcer to contact the Armstrong Estate Owners to let them know that they need to cut their grass.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Alderwoman Fortenbery seconded by Alderman Pollard to adjourn the meeting until June 22, 2010. The motion carried unanimously.

**JAKE MIDDLETON
MAYOR**

ATTEST:

**DONNIE HOLLOWAY
CITY CLERK**