

**REGULAR MEETING
February 22, 2011**

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 22, 2011. Mayor Jake Middleton presided at the meeting, which was opened with prayer by Reverend Denny Read.

MAYOR & BOARD PRESENT	ELECTED OFFICIALS ABSENT	CITY OFFICIALS & DEPARTMENT HEADS
John ‘Jake’ Middleton Mayor		Donnie Holloway, City Clerk Coretta L. Logan, Deputy Clerk Everett Sanders, City Attorney Sabrena Bartley, Senior Center 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		
Ernest “Tony” Fields Alderman, Ward 4		
Mark Fortenbery Alderman, Ward 5		
Daniel Dillard Alderman, Ward 6		

MINUTES APPROVED

A motion was made by Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis to dispense with the reading of the minutes of the Regular and Finance Meetings of January 31, 2011 and February 8, 2011 and adopt the minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Alderman Fields. The motion carried unanimously.

A motion was made by Alderwoman-Arceneaux Mathis to go out of regular order for a public hearing. Seconded by Alderman Fields. The motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC HEARING

Bob Nix requested that the board adopt three resolutions for the adjudication of 937 North Union, 820 North Rankin, and 201 (also known as 209) North MLK. He added that the structures are unsafe and uncleanliness.

Alderman Fields made a motion to close the public hearing. Seconded by Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis. The motion carried unanimously.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis made a motion to go back into regular session. Seconded by Alderman Fields. The motion carried unanimously.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis made a motion to adopt each of the resolutions proposed by staff that adjudicates the buildings on the properties listed in the staff's agenda memorandum as being in a state of uncleanness which constitutes a menace to the public health, safety and welfare of the community, and to direct the staff to take the corrective actions required in the resolutions. Seconded by Alderman Gray. The motion carried unanimously.

RECEIVE BIDS

Engineering Department – Engineering Services for Daisy Street CDBG

Mr. Gardner stated that Jordan Kaiser and Sessions scored the highest from the Select Committee and it is the committee's recommendation that the city enter into a contract and award Jordan Kaiser and Sessions for the engineering services for Daisy Street.

Alderman Dillard made a motion to authorize the City Engineer to award and enter into a contract with Jordan Kaiser and Sessions for the engineering services for Daisy Street. Seconded by Alderman Gray. The motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Middleton opened and acknowledged bids for the Public Works Department for Mowing & Trimming Select City Properties from:

Precision Lawn Care

CC&M

Don's Construction Company

Thompson Tree and Spraying Services dba Live Oak Landscapes

Wright's Tree Service Inc.

Unlimited Resources

Natchez Lawn & Landscape, LLC

Jeffrey Ross Industrial Services

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

VISITORS WELCOMED

None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Alderman Fields read a press release regarding Brumfield Apartments.

PRESS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE February 22, 2011

Following up on the several discussions over the past few weeks about the situation with Brumfield Apartments and Natchez General Hospital, also known as Oak Towers, I met this past week with the Mayor, City Clerk, City Planner, Legal Staff, Catholic Charities and others regarding the status of these two programs and how the City might assist those affected by the announced abandonment of the projects by the owners of the two buildings involved.

As most of you know, Stanford Management of Portland, Maine, has been managing these two projects for a number of years representing the owners of the respective properties. On January 28, 2011, the City was notified by letter of the termination of the agreements without explanation or reason.

First, the Management Agreement is between the owners and Stanford and the City is not directly involved. These projects began back in the mid-1990s and by and large were successful for a number of years particularly at the old Natchez General Hospital and operating under the name of Oak Towers in which Catholic Charities carried out several programs very successfully and responsibly. The Catholic Charities programs are still ongoing and providing a very valuable public service for women and children in this community.

Brumfield Apartments has been less successful, particularly of late, although it too has provided shelter for many families in our community.

With both of these management arrangements being apparently abandoned by the owners, our first responsibility is to make sure the short-term needs of those participating in these programs will not be adversely impacted. This will involve the continuation of utilities to these sites and to that end intercessions have been made to Natchez Water Works and the power companies to make sure the program at Natchez General Hospital continues without interruption and with respect to Brumfield that such services continue to be provided until the program is closed down at least on a temporary basis or until something more successful can be brought on line by the City or preferably by the present owners or other developers who see this as an opportunity to provide a valuable service and at the same time be financially viable.

Accordingly it my recommendation and those of us who met last week with the Mayor that tenants of Brumfield Apartments be notified that effective March 31 the building and

program will be at least temporarily shut down and they will be required to relocate. We are in contact with Mississippi Regional Housing Authority and the Natchez Housing Authority and will be talking with other entities as well as with Catholic Charities to assist in turning around both of these programs around or at least to maintain for certain the operation and programs at Natchez General Hospital.

There are much bigger legal issues involved and particularly the responsibility of the owners under federal and state law as well as the agreements the City of Natchez has with them and with federal agencies and these will be addressed by the City Attorney in due time. Our first responsibility today is to make the changes necessary to protect the people involved as well as the financial integrity of the City and the programs that are currently ongoing. I will be bringing you periodic updates as they occur and will be happy to answer any questions.

END OF REPORT

DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS

No Department Head Reports

CITY OFFICIALS' REPORT

ALDERWOMAN ARCENEUX-MATHIS – Ward 1

Aldermoman Arceneaux-Mathis made a motion to allow Change Order for the 592 Project in the mount of \$5,183 for the removal of three trees. Seconded by Alderman Gray. The motion carried unanimously.

ALDERMAN GRAY, Ward 2

Alderman Gray stated that since it is Black History month, he wanted to recognize some of the local heroes in Natchez; Reverend Leon Howard, Reverend James Anderson, and the late Reverend Henry Russell.

Alderman Gray stated that his condolences go out to the Butler, Sewell, Cornet, Johnson, Harris, Barnes, Brown and Sanders family.

ALDERMAN POLLARD – WARD 3

No Report

ALDERMAN FIELDS – WARD 4

Alderman Fields read the press release regarding Brumfield Apartments. (See Unfinished Business.)

ALDERMAN FORTENBERY – WARD 5

Alderman Fortenbery made a motion to allow the City Engineer to submit an application to the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Park, for funding under the Recreational Trails Program for Fiscal Year 2011 funding. Seconded by Alderman Gray. The motion carried unanimously.

ALDERMAN DILLARD – WARD 6

Alderman Dillard made a motion that the Board direct the City Attorney to give written notice to Premier Gaming, an agent of Natchez Enterprises, LLC, an affiliate of the Lane Company of Atlanta, Georgia, that they have failed to comply with the terms of the Option Agreement and that they have not made substantial progress towards securing an approval to proceed with development from the Mississippi Gaming Commission as defined in the Option Agreement. And that, as such, the Option Agreement entered into July 10, 2007 has expired and is now Null and Void. Seconded by Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis. The motion carried with Alderman Pollard opposing.

CITY CLERK’S REPORT, DONNIE HOLLOWAY

Mr. Holloway stated that he needed to get authorization for a resolution to lease purchase for the telephone equipment in the amount of \$109,674.90. He added that the new phone system will save the city \$500 per month.

Alderman Dillard made a motion to allow the City Clerk authorization for a resolution to lease purchase the telephone equipment in the amount of \$109,674.90. Seconded by Alderman Fortenbery. The motion carried unanimously.

CITY ATTORNEY’S REPORT, Everett Sanders

No Report

MAYOR’S REPORT

No Report

NEW BUSINESS

No Report

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Alderman Fields, seconded by Alderman Dillard to Adjourn the Regular Meeting of February 22, 2011. The motion carried unanimously.

**JAKE MIDDLETON
MAYOR**

ATTEST:

**DONNIE HOLLOWAY
CITY CLERK**