

**REGULAR MEETING**  
**July 12, 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 11:00 a.m. on Tuesday, July 12, 2011. Mayor Jake Middleton presided at the meeting, which was opened with prayer by Reverend Jones.

<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 Logan, Deputy Clerk Diane Holland, Deputy City Clerk Everett Sanders, City Attorney Sabrena Bartley, Senior Center Oliver Stewart, Fire Chief Salena Edwards, Recreation 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>		

**MINUTES APPROVED**

A motion was made by Alderman Pollard to dispense with the reading of the minutes of the Regular and Finance Meetings of June 14, 2011 and adopt the minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Alderman Fortenbery. The motion carried unanimously.

**OPENING OF BIDS**

Mayor Middleton opened and acknowledged of the quotes for grass cutting.

Alderman Dillard made a motion to take all bids under advisement. Seconded by Alderman Pollard. The motion carried unanimously.

**VISITORS WELCOMED**

**Jay Pearson – MS School of Protocol and Etiquette**

Mr. Pearson stated that they will be working with mayors across the state of Mississippi to establish a Mayor’s Youth Council. He added that through the council they will create a unified trained voice to help

gear young individuals to become great leaders. He added that the six week training is no cost to the city. He further added that it is open to public, private, and home based students.

**Alderman Arceneaux Mathis made a motion that the city adopts the MS School of Protocol and Etiquette for the Mayor's Youth Council. Seconded by Alderman Fields. The motion carried unanimously.**

**Family of Fire Chief Sonny Moore – Proclamation**

Mayor Middleton recognized the wife of Fire Chief Sonny Moore and read the proclamation.

**Elizabeth Swaim - Property Complaint**

Ms. Swaim, of 723 North Pearl Street stated that four homes down from her residence is a property that no one has lived in since 1991. She added that the property owners cut the grass approximately twice a year and that she asks that the board require that the property is maintained

Mrs. Anita Smith stated that a notice will be sent to the property owner today.

Mr. Nix stated that the property is not on the unsafe structures list. However, they will begin to take action now that his office has been notified.

**Rhonda Stevens – Air Med Care**

Ms. Stevens stated that she is here to solicit for their services. She stated that they have over 145 aircraft locations across 24 states. She added that they have more than 925,000 network members. She further added that they have over 70 years of combined experience with more than 300,000 safely flown transports. The membership is \$60 per family.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS**

**Bob Nix –Planning Department**

Mr. Nix submitted a list of unsafe structures throughout the city. He added that if there are any structures that are missing from the list to notify him or the staff. He asks that the aldermen look over the list because he will present this again on the first meeting in August.

Alderman Arceneaux- Mathis stated that there are two pieces of properties on the Unsafe Structure Lists that belong to the United States Park Service and they need to do something about it.

Alderman Fortenbery asked Mr. Nix about the status of the mobile home being moved from the Morgantown area.

Mr. Nix stated that they have contacted the individual and he indicated that he is currently unemployed and does not have the funds to move the mobile home. He added that they will have to cite the property owner and the owner of the shopping center if it is not moved.

**Connie Taunton – Visitor's Center**

Mrs. Taunton stated that they are running about 21% ahead of their \$2 Room Taxes collection. She added that the department does not receive any funding from City of Natchez General Fund. She further stated that Personnel & Expenses paid to the City of Natchez/Office of Tourism.

Mrs. Taunton stated that Kelin Hendricks was awarded a scholarship from Southern Living Magazine to attend the 2011 Southeast Tourism Society's Marketing College at North Georgia College & State University in Dahlonega.

Mrs. Taunton stated that there will be a Tourism Committee meeting July 21<sup>st</sup> at 4:00 pm at the Natchez Convention Center in the St. Francisville Room.

### **David Gardner – Engineering**

Mr. Gardner stated that he would like the authority for the mayor to enter into an agreement with Ridgepoint Consultants for the turn key right of way acquisitions on the North Natchez Drainage. He added that the price was well within the budget.

**Alderman Arceneaux-Mathis made a motion to allow the mayor to enter into an agreement with Ridgepoint Consultants for the turn key right of way acquisitions on the North Natchez Drainage. Seconded by Alderman Dillard. The motion carried unanimously.**

Mr. Gardner stated that he would like to get permission for the mayor to enter into a construction engineering contract with Jordan, Kaiser, and Sessions for the FAU project for Liberty Road, Ratcliff, and Brenham Ave, which includes the construction, inspection, and the testing.

**Alderman Dillard made a motion to allow the mayor to enter into a construction engineering contract with Jordan, Kaiser, and Sessions for the FAU project for Liberty Road, Ratcliff, and Brenham Ave, which includes the construction, inspection, and the testing. Seconded by Alderman Gray. The motion carried unanimously.**

Mr. Gardner stated that he recommends the low quote be awarded to Jeffery Ross contingent upon MDOT's approval. He added that he is not sure if we will receive any money back from MDOT because it depends on how many cuttings they have had. He further stated that the \$6,900 would have to be an amendment to the Public Works' budget.

**Alderman Dillard made a motion to award the low quote to Jeffery Ross contingent upon MDOT's approval. Seconded by Alderman Fortenbery. The motion carried unanimously.**

Mr. Gardner stated that he needs permission for the City Planner and the City Engineer to make application with Department of Transportation for enhancement funds to rehab the Colonnade and the old railroad depot building.

**Alderman Arceneaux-Mathis made a motion to allow permission for the City Planner and the City Engineer to make application with Department of Transportation for enhancement funds to rehab the Colonnade and the old railroad depot building. Seconded by Alderman Dillard. The motion carried unanimously.**

**Alderman Dillard made a motion to authorize the City Engineer to make application for the FAU submittal of Sherwood Drive overlay. Seconded by Alderman Fortenbery.**

Alderman Fields asked what is the normal process in prioritizing which streets needs federal funding.

Mayor Middleton stated that the street must first qualify for federal funding.

Alderman Gray stated that we need to table this and discuss it as a board because every alderman has FAU streets in their ward.

Alderman Fields stated that if he knew this was going to be the process, he would have made a motion for a FAU street in his ward.

Mr. Gardner stated that Alderman Dillard wants him to begin the engineering on the street and now would be the time to do it.

Roll Call Vote:

**Alderman Arceneaux-Mathis: naye**

**Alderman Gray: naye**

**Alderman Pollard: yea**

**Alderman Fields: naye**

**Alderman Fortenbery: yea**

**Alderman Dillard: yea**

**Mayor Middleton voted yea. Motion carried.**

## **CITY OFFICIALS' REPORT**

### **ALDERMAN GRAY – WARD 2**

Alderman Gray stated that they received the Center for Government training technology books. He added that everyone should have one in their box.

Alderman Gray stated that he wants to congratulate Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis on becoming the president for MBC-LEO. He added that she will be the president until next summer.

Alderman Gray stated that there is a barrel that is on Ivy Lane that is almost blocking a resident's driveway. He asked Mr. Gardner to check into the matter.

Alderman Gray stated that we need to begin using the personnel evaluation forms for all department heads.

Alderman Gray stated that he went to many classes. He added that he attended a social media class that discussed what you can and cannot talk to the media about.

Alderman Gray stated that we need to get a proclamation for a city employee that passed Mr. Andrew Gasper; he served 39 years with the city.

Alderman Gray stated that the ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in the moment of comfort or convenience, but where he stands in the time of challenge and controversy. Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes.

Alderman Gray stated that if God is not in your life, then you will not be able to do the job.

Alderman Gray stated that his condolence goes out to the family of his classmate Mrs. Kayshell Williams.

Alderman Gray expressed his condolences to the other families that have lost loved ones.

### **ALDERMAN POLLARD – WARD 3**

#### **No Report**

### **ALDERMAN FIELDS – WARD 4**

Alderman Fields' report:

The Mississippi Municipal League 80th Annual Conference was very insightful and offered meaningful and worthwhile topics and tangible solutions and recommendations to some of the problems we face that are not unique to Natchez. Many of the towns and cities in Mississippi are looking for some of the same answers we are looking for.

Alderman Fields stated that he attended Menace Property: What the city can do It was conducted by the Stennis Institute of MSU. When we bring up the dreaded topic of grass most importantly we're talking about health and safety. Before you can even get that deep your eye and your mind recognizes that it just looks bad. So appearance really matters.

Alderman Fields stated that he is going to focus on St. Catherine St. today. He added that we have the unsightly overgrowth from Perrault St., St. Catherine St. that needs immediate action. The Blue Bay window house on St. Catherine needs immediate attention. The lot next to the Shaw Apts. needs monthly attention because it gets too tall and it's next to senior citizen housing. Development complaint forms to identify/track problem areas. Document dates of conversations notifications and photos of property complaint forms. City property should set the bar for the entire community. Do as I say, not as I do does not apply...I'm requesting a list of all city owned property broken down by Ward and disseminated to the board. Then we can work on a plan to lead by example.

I believe we are going to have to get creative in our encouraging property owners who are repeat offenders and those who have been on the adjudication list for over a decade to clean their properties first. One thing I've seen this summer that we can use as an incentive is in the clean up process. Some properties have been cleaned but because the home has no utilities that means there's no garbage pickup. In those instances we can communicate to the property owner if you clean the property we will dispose of the debris. That still beats us going in and doing the whole job never recouping the dollars spent.

The most interesting to me were the workshops on the Redistricting of Ward. Quite simply the ward lines must be drawn or redrawn according to what the data from the Census numbers and population shows us. According to the MML redistricting and annexation goes hand in hand and we annexed in wards 2 & 3. I was and I still am in favor of the annexation because as far as I know land is one thing God isn't making any more of and as much as this city can acquire I think we should get. Having said that, I need copies of all documentation from DEQ and all other agencies that show the land that was annexed in Ward 2 can be developed and become a thriving residential area. Just like the area in Ward 3 is going to be developed.

That scenario will affect those census or voting numbers if the annexed land in ward 2 is not or cannot be developed. In representing the 4th Ward I need this land to be developed because there is a private group Stonehurst Arms who wants to build quality low income in the 4th Ward. I think they have a good product, they all start off good anyway but there's simply no room. I will not vote to allow someone to build and develop on top of people in an already heavily populated low income area. With the annexed land we acquired I can tell them where to go to build and it can potentially be profitable to everyone the city, the developer, the water works, and the potential residents.

This year will mark the 20th Anniversary of the Minorville Jubilee. The Jubilee is always the last Saturday in July. On July 30th we are asking everyone to come and share with the Minorville Family in celebrating our community. Mr. Burnette Bridgewater, Mrs. Katie Ruth Moore, Mrs. Carolyn Smith and the Minorville Dreamers have done another fantastic job of coordinating the activities for the day. Again on July 30th come and celebrate with the Minorville Family. The 4th of July fireworks show was second to none!!! Stratton Hall and her committee did an outstanding job and the turnout was phenomenal. Lastly congratulates to the New President of The Mississippi Black Caucus of Local Elected Officials Mrs. Joyce Arceneaux Mathis.

#### **ALDERMAN FORTENBERY – WARD 5**

Alderman Fortenbery discussed the county overlaying a neighborhood street in his ward.

**Alderman Fortenbery made a motion that he would like the board to grant \$25,000 of the money to match with the county pending that the funds are received from Premiere Gaming to overlay the Forest Lawn subdivision. Seconded by Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis.**

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis stated that she wanted to know how do you get the correct amount of miles per street within the city limits. She added that she made a motion and had that to be place in the records. She further added that a motion died due to the lack of a second to earmark the funds that come from the county to go into the Public Works to resurface of the streets but passed when Alderman Dillard brought the motion back up. She further stated that she does not want to mix these two monies because fire and properties are two different things.

**The motion carried unanimously.**

#### **ALDERMAN DILLARD – WARD 6**

Alderman Dillard discussed that we are at our budget cycle at this point. He added that he has reviewed some of the budget items and he would like to know when they will have the opportunity to discuss the budget.

Mr. Holloway stated that he was planning to meet next week.

Alderman Dillard asked when a public hearing will will be held.

Mr. Holloway stated that a public hearing is required when you do the new budget.

Alderman Dillard stated that when the budget is revised anymore than 10% you must advertise it and hold a public hearing. He asked will it look like the city may have to borrow money to meet the obligations between now and the end of the year.

Mr. Holloway stated hopefully not, if the sales taxes continue the way they are going.

Alderman Dillard stated that if we can get pass October, we can certainly borrow money against our future tax revenues.

Alderman Dillard asked if Premiere Gaming Natchez Enterprise made application to Mississippi Gaming Comission to be on the agenda for the July 21<sup>st</sup> meeting.

Attorney Sanders stated no.

Alderman Dillard stated that he wants to make sure that we give them proper due notice in the proper timeframe.

Alderman Dillard announced that the Duncan Park golf course has been vandalized again. He added that we have to look into to increasing security for the protection of the park.

Mayor Middleton stated that there will be a reward for the person(s) convicted.

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

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis stated that the residents of Madison, Wall, and Oak will meet at the Council Chambers on Monday July 18<sup>th</sup> at 6:00pm regarding the 592 project.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis asked for an update on Marblestone from Mr. Atkins.

Mr. Atkins stated that Mr. Dollar has visited the area and more repairs will be made when they receive the material for the pothole patcher machine.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis stated that she attended the class reunion of 1976 both North and South. She added that Alderman Fields was the key-note speaker. She further added that was the first class she taught upon returning from Detroit.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis stated that she also completed the advance requirements for certification of Elected Officials and she is looking forward to receiving her certificate from MML. She added that next she will be working towards the professional status.

Alderwoman stated that she has a long report from MML. She added that she will make copies to pass out.

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

Mr. Holloway stated that he would like the board to approve docket number 6910 – 7202 and 6457 to 6899.

**Alderman Gray made a motion to approve docket number 6910 – 7202 and 6457 – 6899. Seconded by Alderman Fields. The motion carried unanimously.**

Mr. Holloway stated that he needs a resolution for the city to borrow \$46,325 for three patrol cars. He added that the interest rate is 4.39% for 24 months.

**Alderman Gray made a motion for the city to adopt a resolution allowing the city to borrow \$46,325 for three patrol cars. He added that the interest rate is 4.39% for 24 months. Seconded by Alderman Fields. The motion carried unanimously.**

Mr. Holloway stated that he has several surplus items that he needs to get off the inventory list and to spread across the minutes.

**Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis made a motion to place the inventory list into surplus properties. Seconded by Alderman Fortenbery. The motion carried unanimously.**

Mr. Holloway stated that he would like the City Attorney to draw up a RFP for the redistricting.

**Alderman Gray made a motion to allow the City Attorney to draw up a RFP for the redistricting. Seconded by Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis. The motion carried unanimously.**

#### **CITY ATTORNEY'S REPORT, Everett Sanders**

No Report

#### **MAYOR'S REPORT**

No Report

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

**A motion was made by Alderman Fields, seconded by Alderman Fortenbery to Adjourn the Regular Meeting of July 12, 2011. The motion carried unanimously.**

**ATTEST:**

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**JAKE MIDDLETON  
MAYOR**

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**DONNIE HOLLOWAY  
CITY CLERK**