

REGULAR MEETING
October 25, 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, October 25, 2011. Mayor Middleton presided at the meeting, which was opened with prayer by Father O’Conner.

MAYOR & BOARD PRESENT	ELECTED OFFICIALS ABSENT	CITY OFFICIALS & DEPARTMENT HEADS
John ‘Jake’ Middleton Mayor		Donnie Holloway, City Clerk Diane Holland, Deputy Clerk Everett Sanders, City Attorney David Gardner, City Engineer 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 Alderman Fortenbery to dispense with the reading of the minutes of the Special Call meeting of September 29, 2011, and October 18, 2011, and Regular & Finance Meeting of October 11, 2011. The motion was seconded by Alderman Fields. The motion carried unanimously.

Alderman Fields made a motion to go out of order for a public hearing on adjudication of lots. Seconded by Alderman Fortenbery. The motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC HEARING

Mr. Nix reported on the following properties:

Location: 0 John R. Junkin Drive adjacent to 587 John R. Junkin Drive, Adams County Nursing Center; 8 East Franklin Street; 301 Magnolia Place; 1204 Reed Street; 607 East Steirs Lane; 87 Marblestone Road; 21 Buckners Avenue; 131 Marblestone Road; 0 Fraser Street at the intersection of Fraser and Rickman; 705 Madison Street; 198 St. Catherine Street; 19 Henderson Street; 28 Parnell Street; 7 Pelican Street; 728 Martin Luther King Street.

Background: This hearing regards 15 lots that remain noncompliant. We are continuing the enforcement process for all of the lots on our repeat offenders list.

Staff Findings: As stated in the attached resolutions, staff inspected these properties and found code violations. Staff re-inspected these properties prior to preparing the attached resolutions, and found that the code violations were not corrected at the time of that inspection.

Mayor Middleton asked if there was anyone present to speak on behalf of the listed properties.

Alderman Gray made a motion to go out of the public hearing. Seconded by Alderman Dillard. The motion carried unanimously.

Alderman Dillard made a motion to waive the reading of the resolutions. Seconded by Alderman Fortenbery. The motion carried unanimously.

Alderman Arceneaux Mathis made a motion to declare all of the properties listed as locations in the Staff Memorandum as properties harboring nuisance conditions which are menaces to the public health, safety and welfare that violate the Mississippi Code of 1972, and to adopt the Resolutions recommended by the staff. Seconded by Alderman Gray. The motion carried unanimously.

VISITORS WELCOMED

No visitors.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Alderman Dillard made a motion to reappointment Mr. Duncan Morgan as chairman to the Natchez Housing Authority. Seconded by Alderman Gray. The motion carried unanimously.

DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS

Engineering, David Gardner

Mr. Gardner's report:

Miscellaneous Updates on City Projects

Liberty – Ratcliff – Brenham Avenue STP Overlay: Receiving Bids November 8th

Mr. Gardner stated that they are good to go on Addendum for Liberty, Ratcliff, and Brenham Overlay project.

Municipal Roof Replacement (ARRA Funding):

Mr. Gardner stated that they have advertised for bids and ad-hoc committee will meet on November 18th at City Hall Conference Room. Bids will be opened and read aloud at which time Amelia Salmon will request that the bids be taken under advisement. Amelia Salmon and Allen Laird will review the bids between Nov 18th and the November 22nd BOA meeting, at which time the bids will introduced to the BOA with a recommendation of award.

Daisy Street Update:

Mr. Gardner stated that utility Adjustments are ongoing which include Natchez Water Works, Cable One, Entergy, Atmos, and AT&T. We anticipate the utilities being relocated within the next few weeks, at which time we will be ready to advertise for bids.

Alderman Dillard asked Mr. Gardner about the Ridgepoint invoices. He added that the City Clerk needs to make note of the references to the invoices L1 & S1.

Police Chief, Mike Mullins

Chief Mullins ask that the board allow him to apply for the traffic safety grant that will assist in paying officers' overtime to allow more eyes on the road.

Alderman Gray made a motion to allow Chief Mullins to for the traffic safety grant. Seconded by Alderman Fields. The motion carried unanimously.

Public Works, David Atkins

Mr. Atkins stated that Public Works has a contract with Natchez Transit for the hauling of prisoners only to and from the correctional facility in Woodville at a monthly cost

Mr. Atkins requested that Public Works needs approval to purchase four new vehicles. A 15 passenger van, two ¾ ton crew cabs, and a ½ ton ext. cab.

Alderman Fortenbery made a motion to approve to purchase four new vehicles for Public Works Department. Seconded by Alderman Dillard. The motion carried unanimously.

CITY OFFICIALS' REPORT

ALDERMAN POLLARD – WARD 3

Alderman Pollard stated to Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis that if she had an alternative plan for redistricting, why it was not brought before the entire board at the Public Hearing instead of letting only 3 of the 6 aldermen aware of it.

Alderman Pollard stated that Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis was dishonest and untrustworthy of this board and he does not appreciate it.

ALDERMAN FIELDS – WARD 4

Alderman Fields stated that he received a street patching report from Natchez Water Works and Atmos Energy. He added that Atmos has 13 listed and 5 completed. Natchez Water Works has 20 listed and 2 completed.

Alderman Fields expressed his condolences to previous Alderman of Ward 4, Theodore Bubber West.

Alderman Fields made a motion to rename the Concord Avenue Park to Theodore Bubber West Minorville Community Park. Seconded by Alderman Gray. The motion carried unanimously.

ALDERMAN FORTENBERY – WARD 5

Alderman Fortenbery discussed his concerns with the article in the newspaper regarding the redistricting. He added that it is not good for board members to go behind other board members' backs. He further added that we all are adults and should act accordingly.

ALDERMAN DILLARD – WARD 6

Alderman Dillard asked the City Attorney if Premiere Gaming has made application for the Mississippi Gaming Commission for October 27th meeting.

Attorney Sanders stated that they are not on the published agenda.

Alderman Dillard asked when it will be the appropriate time to send the developer notice that the agreement has terminated.

Attorney Sanders stated that it would be November 1st, if the board chooses to do that.

Alderman Dillard discussed his intent to direct the City Attorney to notify Premiere Gaming that they are not in compliance with the agreement and that the agreement is null and void.

Mayor Middleton stated that he received a phone call indicating that Premiere Gaming has been invited to the October 27th meeting.

Alderman Dillard stated that in the 2007 for the Soil Conservation Service Special audit the fund showed a balance of a positive \$24,487. He added that this passed audit in 2009 shows a negative balance of \$78,654. He further stated that he has asked Mr. Holloway to explain this information.

Mr. Holloway stated that this did not happen overnight, he added that the deficit did incur in 2008.

Alderman Dillard stated that he will still need paperwork on the funds and the transfer information by the next board meeting.

Alderman Dillard asked the Mr. Holloway will the accounting software be available for use in November.

Mr. Holloway stated that the training will begin in two weeks.

Alderman Dillard stated that the board was able to approve \$110,000 for an Information Technology department. He added that this is long overdue and it will be a way to communicate between departments.

Alderman Dillard stated that process is being made in cleaning up the medians. He added that the sweeper truck will also begin to clean the gutter pans. He further added that he is waiting to see this take effect.

Alderman Dillard asked Mayor Middleton if any progress has been made regarding Downtown Development Association's attempt to rename to MainStreet program. He further asked if Natchez, Inc. would assist in the financial efforts.

Mayor Middleton stated that he has spoken to Mr. Chandler Russ, but has not received a definite answer yet.

Alderman Dillard stated that downtown Natchez is a tremendous asset to Natchez. He added that he will soon be asking the board to reconsidering funding downtown Natchez.

Alderman Dillard stated that the redistricting is a great deal to gain or lose and it all depends on the trust and relations in each other. He added that at this point, he has more questions than answers.

ALDERWOMAN ARCENEUX-MATHIS – WARD 1

Alderwoman stated that even though she is an elected official of this board, she did not give up any of the rights guaranteed to her by the constitution of the United States. She further discussed that she does not have to share any information that she works on privately. She indicated that she was elected to do the best job that she can possibly can and did not run on a plank of friendship.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis stated that she voted against their current redistricting political consultant Holland & Rigby. She said that every citizen has the right to seek information on redistricting and additional information.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis stated her concerns of Mrs. Julie Cooper's opinion column published in the Natchez Democrat newspaper. She said that every elected official places their hand on the bible and swears to uphold the constitution of the United States of America. She added that she always have had the utmost respect for her opponents.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis stated that she did not request that any of the original streets in Ward 1 as of the 2003 redistricting be moved in the 2010 redistricting process.

ALDERMAN GRAY, WARD 2

Alderman Gray stated read the police report for the month of September.

Alderman Gray stated that this month is breast cancer awareness month. He added that breast cancer also affects men and they should be just as careful as women.

Alderman Gray stated that there should also be domestic violence awareness as well. He added that domestic violence is a pet peeve of his.

Alderman Gray stated that he contacted Natchez Democrat regarding the redistricting article. He added that he informed them that the article regarding Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis was not true. He further added that she was trying to do what was best for the city and so is he.

Alderman Gray stated that he would not attack his fellow board members in result of what the Natchez Democrat prints. He added that information printed in the Natchez Democrat is not always accurate.

Alderman Gray stated that job training for citizens is needed now, so that when the new companies break ground, Adams County citizens can be hired for the job.

Alderman Gray stated that the price of everything is going up. He added that the city employees' salaries need to go up so that they will not be living in poverty.

Alderman Gray made a motion to allow Mr. George West to speak to the board regarding the Watch DOGS program. Seconded by Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. West presented to the board the Watch Dog program, Dads of Great Students. He stated that the presence of dads on school campuses not only increases the sense of safety, but also provides an objective mentor for students.

Mr. West stated that the program is part of the father involvement initiative of the National Center for Fathering that organizes fathers and father figures in order to provide positive male role models for the students, enhance school security, inspire children and reduce bullying. Today, more than 2,200 active programs in 41 states participate in the Watch DOGS Program.

Alderman Gray stated that the Henry Harris Tennis Foundation will have their 2nd Annual Tennis event on October 29th at 7:00. He added that the tickets are \$15.00.

Alderman Gray stated that his sympathy goes out to

Alderman Gray stated that Mr. Theodore Bubber West help him when he first became an Alderman. He added that the he would like to thank the West family for all their contributions that they have made in this community.

Alderman Gray stated that he would like to thank Alderman Fields for making the motion to change the name of Concord Avenue Park to Theodore Bubber West Minorville Community Park.

Alderman Gray stated both Alderman Hardin and West served this community well.

CITY CLERK'S REPORT, Donnie Holloway

Mr. Holloway expressed his condolences for Mr. Theodore Bubber West. He added that Mr. West was very helpful to him as well, when he first came into office. He further added that it was a pleasure working with Mr. West for 8 years.

CITY ATTORNEY'S REPORT, Everett Sanders

Attorney Sanders read a resolution for the tax increment financing plan for Holiday Inn.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis made a motion to suspend the reading of the resolution and adopt it. Seconded by Alderman Pollard. The motion carried unanimously.

Attorney Sanders stated that there will be a hearing on November 8th at 11:00 on the tax increment financing plan.

Attorney Sanders stated that the 15th amendment Interlocal agreement between the city of Natchez and Adams County to provide fire protection. He added that this involves \$566,300.84 per year to be paid to the city by the county.

Mayor Middleton stated that the Interlocal agreement needs to be changed for the next budget. He added that each board has already been adopted for this fiscal year.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis stated for the record Mayor Middleton went to the county before their budget process with the request for assistance.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis stated that it has been over two administrations and the county still has not assisted the city with fire protection.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis made a motion that both boards meet prior to the next board meeting of November 8th before voting on the fire protection resolution. Seconded by Alderman Gray.

Alderman Gray stated that the entire Board of Aldermen and Board of Supervisors need to all meet together regarding fire protection.

Alderman Gray asked Mr. Holloway will we lose the \$160,000 from the state.

Mr. Holloway stated that he does not think so, however he is not sure.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis stated that it is unfair for the residents that live in the city (Ward 1) pay double taxes, city and county, and then continue to subsidize county fire when the fire department gets more call to the county than the city.

Roll call vote:

Arceneaux-Mathis: aye

Gray: aye

Pollard: naye

Fields: aye

Fortenbery: naye

Dillard: naye

Mayor Middleton voted naye. The motion failed.

Alderman Fortenbery made a motion to sign the resolution for fire protection. Seconded by Alderman Pollard. The motion carried unanimously.

Roll call vote:

Arceneaux-Mathis: naye

Gray: naye

Pollard: aye

Fields: naye

Fortenbery: aye

Dillard: aye

Mayor Middleton voted aye. The motion carried.

Attorney Sanders discussed the need of a motion to allow Waste Pro to make application for a business license in the city.

Alderman Fields made a motion to allow Waste Pro to make application for a business license in the city. Seconded by Alderman Fortenbery. The motion carried unanimously.

Attorney Sanders stated that a final Public Hearing will be October 27th at 6:00 pm on redistricting. He added that a copy of the recommended plan and alternate plan will be available at the city hall.

MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Middleton read a proclamation for Racial Reconciliation Celebration for the month of October.

Alderman Fields made a motion to adopt the resolution for Racial Reconciliation Celebration for the month of October. Seconded by Alderman Fields. The motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Middleton expressed his condolences for the Theodore Bubber West family.

Mayor Middleton announced that he is officially a grandfather for the fourth time today.

NEW BUSINESS

Alderman Gray stated that he would like to invite everyone to come out and participate in the March against violence. He requested that any fees or requirements be waived.

Chief Mullins stated that there are no fees for the event.

Alderman Fields stated that the march against violence will begin at Zion Chapel AME Church at 1:00 pm on Saturday.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Alderman Fortenbery, seconded by Alderman Pollard to Adjourn the Regular Meeting of October 25, 2011. The motion carried unanimously.

**JAKE MIDDLETON
MAYOR**

ATTEST:

**DONNIE HOLLOWAY
CITY CLERK**