

FINANCE MEETING

July 8, 2014

The Finance Meeting of the City of Natchez met in the Council Chambers on Tuesday, July 8, 2014, at 9:30 a.m.

PRESENT:

Mayor Larry L. "Butch" Brown	
Alderwoman Joyce Arceneaux-Mathis	Ward 1
Alderman Ricky Gray	Ward 2
Alderwoman Sarah Carter Smith	Ward 3
Alderman Tony Fields	Ward 4
Alderman Mark Fortenbery	Ward 5
Alderman Dan Dillard	Ward 6

ALSO PRESENT:

City Clerk Donnie Holloway
City Attorney Hyde Carby
Temple Hendricks, Board Secretary
James Johnston, Planning Department
Ed Bowser, IT Director
Frankie Legaux, City Planner
Sabrena Bartley, Senior Citizens Center & Natchez Transit
Chief Danny White, Police Department
Fire Chief Oliver Stewart, Fire Department

John Bergeron appeared advising that he'd received a citation from Municipal Court for uncut property below the Vue (previous site of the Ramada Inn). He had been unsuccessful in getting equipment in to mow the site due to a deep ditch that had been installed by a previous developer. Mr. Bergeron asked that the City cut his property. Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis advised that she'd had a lengthy conversation with Mr. Bergeron the previous day and he was amenable to the city cutting his property and he'd reimburse the city. Today Mr. Bergeron said that he'd given it more thought and he'd be willing to co-op the expense but he would not pay for all of the mowing himself. She suggested that it be determined who is the owner of the easement if in fact the city owns the road, who the ditch belongs to. After a lengthy discussion, it was determined that City Attorney Carby will determine the ownership of the easement and Mr. Bergeron is to do nothing at this point. The city will get back in touch with Mr. Bergeron.

Virginia Salmon, Pat Williams, Carrie Jones, Earl McMillan, Bob Barrett and Peter Dale appeared representing the Adams County Soil and Water Conservation. Mr. Dale and Mr. McMillan spoke on the services and programs that the ACSWC provides including 21 projects totaling \$742,500.00 which had been completed in the city over the last five years. \$3.5M had been completed in the county over the same time period. They had previously requested an appropriation of \$25,000.00 but were now asking for \$80,000.00. The total request for appropriations are \$168,672.00 this year with half to come from the city and half to come from the county—the county has always provided their half as requested.

James Johnston, Planning Department

Preservation of Yazoo & MS Valley Railroad Depot
Project No. STP-0340-00(036)LPA / 106674-701000
MDOT had concurred with the City of Natchez on Supplemental Agreement #1 to increase the scope of work on SSR's Preliminary Engineering Services contract, increasing the value of the contract by \$31,426.03 to \$112,272.01, incorporating 2014 TAP award.

Mr. Johnston would be asking the BOA to make a motion to approve and execute SSR's Supplemental Agreement #1 and to issue a Notice to Proceed to SSR.

Alderman Dillard asked where the Depot project appeared on the budget report as was not listed under Capital Improvements. Mr. Johnston advised that an invoice from SSR appeared on today's payment docket. Alderman Dillard discovered that the SSR invoice was being paid under the Colonnade Project. Mayor Brown said that funding sources for the Colonnades were: \$100,000.00 from the State of MS to CVB for repairs (which was dedicated to the Colonnades), \$50,000.00 from MDA/Division of Tourism, and \$200,000.00 from MDOT for a total of \$350,000.00 for the Colonnade Project. Alderman Dillard asked the City Clerk to reconcile and get the funds and docket straight.

Regional Recycling Cooperative Grant
MS Department of Environmental Quality

Mr. Johnston asked the BOA to recall that the city and its partners including the City of Brookhaven and Wilkinson County received a \$317,162.00 Regional Recycling Cooperative Grant to expand recycling efforts in southwest Mississippi. Along with Education and Outreach (E&O) efforts, equipment and supplies would need to be purchased. Per the MS Code of 1972 Annotated, equipment could be purchased and distributed to Natchez's recycling partners for their respective recycling programs pursuant to Section 31-7-13(m)(vi) of the Code, specifically allowing for intergovernmental sales, purchases and donations without following any of the familiar procurement procedures. The only requirement was that a local government needed to have the terms of the arrangement placed on the minutes and, if the "sale" was for less than fair market value, that the governing authority had determined on its minutes that such a sale was in the best interest of the taxpayers of Mississippi. Additionally, the MS Attorney General had opined that donations between governmental entities in this manner were acceptable.

With this said, in the coming days the city would be issuing Request for Bids and/or would issue purchase orders to purchase equipment and supplies for the recycling program. The following equipment would need to be purchased and "donated" to the following governmental entities –

Wilkinson County

- One (1) 2 CY Compactor and one (1) 40 CY Compactor Receiving Container
- B/N 15 and 20 65 Gal (or 95 gal). standard Blue HDPE recycling containers w/lids
- Approx. twenty (20) 18-gal recycling blue totes

City of Brookhaven

- Approx. fifty-seven (57) standard green outdoor metal recycling receptacles with white vinyl decals affixed
- Approx. nine-hundred (900) standard BLUE thirty-five (35) gal HDPE recycling containers w/lids
- Approx. thirty (30) directional signs w/ fifteen (15) 10' galvanized U-channel post
- Approx. twenty (20) 65 or 95 gal standard blue HDPE recycling containers w/lids.

In addition, the City of Natchez would be purchasing the following items w/ grant funds –

- Outdoor metal receptacles to place in the downtown and along the Natchez Bluffs
- 2 CY Compactor and accompanying 40 CY Container
- 65 and/or 95 gal containers
- 18 gal. totes
- Rubbermaid Plastic Tilt Trucks for ASU, Co-Lin, convention center, etc...
- Misc. recycling receptacles for the convention center

In addition, the city, via the recycling grant, would be paying for Brookhaven's and Wilkinson County's Education and Outreach (E&O) efforts including newspaper advertising and radio spots, marketing trinkets and the monthly recycling collection fee of \$1.99 per container, etc.

In the board meeting Mr. Johnston would be requesting a motion pursuant to MS Code 31-7-13(m)(vi) that the previously mentioned equipment, etc. to the City of Brookhaven and Wilkinson County would be "disposed of" below market value and that disposing of the mentioned equipment was in the best interest of the taxpayers of the State of Mississippi to enable the City of Brookhaven and Wilkinson County to increase and expand their respective recycling efforts. In addition, increasing recycling efforts would reduce the amount of garbage taken to area landfills, reduce tipping fees paid by these communities, prolong the useful life of area landfills and extend the supply of dwindling natural resources. (the motion was not requested)

Mr. Johnston said that he would like to discuss the Alcorn Farmers' Market proposed lease agreement in Executive Session.

Frankie Legaux, Planning Department

Mrs. Legaux advised that a public hearing would be held regarding the designation of the Forks of the Road site as a Landmark Site. Once this is done, it would be easier to incorporate other sites that constituted the original Forks' site.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis and Mayor Brown asked Mrs. Legaux why the owner of 820 N. Rankin, when appearing before the Preservation Commission, was given an extension until August 13th to stabilize the property (he agreed to keep the property mowed)—the property had been adjudicated so how could Preservation rule on it? Mrs. Legaux said this was an example of where the property should go before the Preservation Commission before being adjudicated. A discussion was held that Mr. Clark, owner of 820 N. Rankin, had stated to the Preservation Commission that he'd owned the property for two years but advised he'd owned since 2010 before Judge Heidelberg. Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis asked Mr. Carby to see what can be done.

Mr. Carby advised that the Recreation Commission personnel issue that was listed on the agenda needed to be held in open session. Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis said that she'd made a motion at the previous meeting for the city appointees to the Recreation Commission to attend this BOA meeting as she wanted clarity on what had happened at the recent BOS meeting and the BOS response. Tate Hobdy, Recreation Commission, advised that the county had originally said that they would fund the \$45,000.00 salary and benefits for a recreation director. The county was prepared to go ahead and move forward with hiring the director who would manage county recreation sites. Mr. Hobdy said that the county having a recreation director didn't make sense as the county has little in regards to recreation.

Mr. Hobdy said that yesterday the Recreation Commission asked the BOS for a letter of intent to fund capital improvements per the recommendations of the recreation director, when hired. The BOS would be issuing a letter of intent whereby they would say that they would fund recreation's capital improvements sometime in the future under the direction of a recreation director. The BOS had mentioned a salary of \$45,000.00 but would discuss a higher salary if needed. Mr. Hobdy said that he didn't think a problem for the county to also provide a vehicle for the recreation director to move things forward. Mr. Hobdy said the letter of intent should be completed this week.

Alderman Dillard advised that at the June 10th meeting he'd made a motion that the City Attorney forward a written statement to the Recreation Commission directing them to present a financial plan to the BOA which included capital improvements. Alderman Dillard asked Mr. Hobdy if he'd received that letter—Mr. Hobdy said that he hadn't received anything at his post office box and Mr. Carby said that he hadn't sent the request. Mr. Hobdy said that he'd received an e-mail from the mayor's office asking the city's appointees to the Recreation Commission to attend the meeting and a copy of Alderman Dillard's financial plan had been included. Mr. Hobdy had a copy of proposed operation & maintenance from 2011, proposed organizational chart of 2011 and landscape architect plan from 2011—those are his best numbers which can be tweaked.

Mr. Hobdy said that the Recreation Commission had received \$11,000.00 from a grant (city's share) and \$11,000.00 each from the BOS and school board. The money was used to hire a landscape architect and to have a feasibility study done. Bubba Kaiser advised that \$10,000.00 remained unspent. Alderman Dillard asked when the consultant was hired, was he not asked for a financial plan? Mr. Hobdy said the plan included a capital improvements plan and was given to the BOA in March 2011. Alderman Dillard reviewed the report and said that \$4,427,000.00 for base and some contingencies were listed—it adds up to the \$5.4M. Mr. Hobdy said that the Recreation Commission doesn't think that these numbers are on the table.

Mr. Hobdy said the objective at this point was to get a recreation director hired. Alderwoman Carter Smith said that the county didn't have the funds for recreation as they'd hoped. She said that the city needs to consider having the county hire the recreation director as the city doesn't have the funds to hire anyone.

Alderman Fields asked once a director was in place, what would be the timeline on building a swimming pool? Mr. Hobdy said the director needs to make an inventory and make changes to maximize what Natchez has as well as make 1, 3, 5 year plans—the needs assessment is now 5 years old.

Mayor Brown said that the BOS had stated that they were not putting up any money until a pool was involved. He said that the city wasn't going to write a blank check until an assurance from the county saying that they'd be funding and when it would happen—Mayor Brown hoped that the Recreation Commission understood that the city wasn't turning over its recreation budget until something firm was received from the county. Mr. Hobdy said if this was the city's attitude, recreation in the county would continue to flounder for 5 or 10 years. Mayor Brown assured Mr. Hobdy that recreation will not flounder and the city would go it alone if necessary. Alderman Fortenbery suggested that the city and county each put up \$1.4M, hire a director, each entity sign a letter of intent and proceed. Mr. Hobdy didn't think that the county would put up \$1.4M—he would ask the county.

Alderman Dillard said that difficult to enter in a long term, binding agreement with it being left up to what the director is going determine. The city needed to know if the county was going to fund and how much was the county willing to spend on capital improvements. Mr. Hobdy said won't be known until the director is hired. Alderman Dillard then asked how much is the county able to fund?

Alderwoman Carter Smith asked if too much for the county at this time, that they provide a financial plan with what they can add yearly. Alderman Dillard suggested that the county provide a 17 year financial plan to appropriate \$3.4M as the city had just picked up the county's \$3.4M hospital debt. Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis asked Mayor Brown if the city could go ahead and hire a recreation director as no progress is being made. Mayor Brown said the school board is now onboard.

Alderman Fortenbery recommended that the letter of intent from the county include a number and ask that the county match the city's \$1.4M. Mr. Hobdy said he'd ask the BOS. Mayor Brown said the city was asking the county to fund a one-time \$1.4M but the city would fund \$1.4M yearly. Alderman Fields said the \$1.4M was a place to start, not a cap, but a fair and equitable number to start. Mr. Hobdy said he feared that the county would pay their \$1.4M and not fund more down the line in two or three years.

Alderman Gray asked that the county dedicate millage to recreation so that the money would be in place and the city could proceed. Mayor Brown said a good idea that the county establish a mill as the city does. Mr. Hobdy said he'd ask the BOS to amend the letter of intent to fund \$1.4M or dedicate millage. Mr. Holloway said the county could only levee 2 mills for recreation and the city appropriated 2 mills, \$300,000.00.

Mr. Kaiser said that the Recreation Commission had been looking at operating costs. The most recent budget Mr. Kaiser had received from the City Clerk showed \$1,044,000.00 budgeted for recreation, not the \$1.4M which has been discussed. Mayor Brown said that the Recreation Commission should change the number that they're working with to \$1,044,000.00.

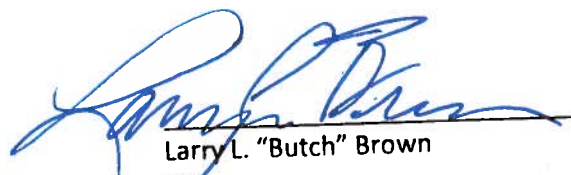
Mr. Kaiser advised that the Recreation Commission wanted to assist the city to expand recreation-they were not asking for a blank check only to work with the city's funds that are in place. He reminded the BOA that the administration costs for the Recreation Department had gone from \$70,000.00 to \$14,000.00. Mr. Kaiser said they'd like to develop a new plan and start over.

Alderman Gray made the motion to close the Finance Meeting to make a determination that a valid reason existed to go into Executive Session. Alderman Fields seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

Mr. Carby returned and advised that it had been determined that a valid reason existed to go into Executive Session which was the discussion of a contract for Natchez Transit and the performance of a Natchez Police Department officer.

After meeting in Executive Session, Alderman Dillard made the motion to go out of Executive Session and adjourn to the Finance Meeting of the Board of Aldermen. Alderman Gray seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

Alderman Gray made the motion to adjourn the Finance Meeting to go into the Regular Meeting of the Board of Aldermen. Alderwoman Carter Smith seconded the motion which carried unanimously.


Larry L. "Butch" Brown
Mayor

Attest:


Donnie Holloway, City Clerk