

REGULAR MEETING
June 23, 2009

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 23, 2009. Mayor Jake Middleton presided at the meeting, which was opened with prayer by Pastor Ed Temple.

MAYOR & BOARD PRESENT	ELECTED OFFICIALS ABSENT	CITY OFFICIALS & DEPARTMENT HEADS
John ‘Jake’ Middleton Mayor		Donnie Holloway, City Clerk Coretta L. Logan, Deputy Clerk Darlene Jones, Community Development Sabrena Bartley, Senior Center Paul Dawes, Building Official Connie Taunton, Tourism Director David Gardner, Engineering Mike Mullins, Police Chief Oliver Stewart, Fire Chief Brett Brinegar, Grants Coordinator 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 Pollard to dispense with the reading of the minutes of the Regular and Recessed Meeting of June 9, 2009. The motion was seconded by Alderman Fortenbery. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Dawes stated that he determined that there was not adequate notification given on 1024 MLK. He added that the public hearing will have to be delayed until the next board meeting. He added that the notifications came back; therefore the property owner has not been notified yet.

Mayor Middleton stated that the public hearing will be held on July 28, 2009.

RECEIVE BIDS

Mayor Middleton opened and acknowledged the bids for the Commerce Street EWP.

Company	Total Bid	Certificate of Responsibility #
1. Camo Construction	\$58,233.00	#12423
2. R.A. Edgin Construction Co.	\$89,674.80	#03229-MC
3. R.W. Delaney Construction	\$85,975.64	#10977-MC
4. Midway Construction	\$55,201.00	#10251-MC
5. Dozer Inc.	\$78,546.00	#15670
6. Selby Brothers Construction	\$119,929.46	#14968

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

VISITORS WELCOMED

Mayor Middleton welcomed visitors to the meeting. He reminded everyone of the policy that allows all visitors to speak for three (3) minutes before the board.

National Coalition of 100 Black Women (Angeletty House) – Leola Harris

Mrs. Leola Harris stated that she is the President of the National Coalition of 100 Black Women, Inc., Southwest Mississippi Chapter. She submitted a calendar of events for the upcoming months. She added that the Angeletty House is city owned property and thanked the city of Natchez for allowing the coalition to be housed at the Angeletty Facility. She added that they are also requesting a replacement of the balcony.

Mr. Kendrick Fells – Manager of Susie B. West Apartments

Mrs. Dorothy Sanders

Mrs. Sanders of 531 West Steirs Lane stated that she is the Chairperson for the neighborhood and she is asking for the board to consider providing relief to those residents that have erosion and drainage problems. She added that their Alderman is aware of the situation; however he needs some help from the board. She added that when it rains, you can see him taking pictures. She indicated that the last storm that occurred, only one area was able to get some relief. She asked that the board help the West Steirs Lane area.

Alderman Gray stated that it is important that they receive some of the stimulus money to alleviate the problems in the West Steirs Lane area. He added that Mrs. Sanders does an awesome job as the Chair.

Tony Scudiero

Mr. Scudiero stated that it has been 13 months since he has returned back to Natchez. He recognized his Isle of Capri team for their efforts and long hours when the storm came through. He also recognized Mr. Gardner, Chief Mullins, and the Natchez Police Department for their courtesy and help. He added that Isle of Capri continuously gives back to the community. He said that their number one Charity has always been United Way. He added that they also donated the Food Pantry \$10,000 to keep it open. He added that they donated 100 turkeys to the Stewpot. He stated that he worked closely with the Children's Home, Sunshine Shelter, and Girl Scouts. He added that he also donated a check to Watkins Street Cemetery for the maintenance and cleanup of the cemetery.

Mr. Scudiero stated that he just got approval from his corporate office to give Mr. Gardner the approval to bring the Trails Project further down like Mr. Gardner wanted to. He added that they are going to donate one of their days to help clean up the Watkins Street Cemetery. He added that they also helped the Habitat for Humanity.

Mr. Scudiero stated that the Isle of Capri Casino received the Seventh Seals award. He added that the award is the highest award given by the NESGR. He also stated that it was created to publicly recognize American employers.

Mr. Scudiero stated that he is here to present a check to Mayor Middleton and Mrs. Darlene Jones for the YouthBuild program in the amount of \$5,000.

Mayor Middleton stated that Lady Luck & Isle of Capri have always been good corporate citizens to the community. He added that because of them, the city of Natchez was able to survive.

Mrs. Jones thanked Mr. Scudiero and stated that they will use the check to purchase computers.

Mr. Scudiero added that if an organization is in need and the Isle of Capri can be of assistance; feel free to contact Donna Smith at 53 Silver Street.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS

ENGINEERING, David Gardner

Mr. Gardner stated that all the bids have been reviewed for the Commerce Street EWP Project and the low bidder is a valid bid and recommend that the board award the bid to Midway Construction Company contingent upon approval of NRCS. He added that it is an 85%/15% cost share, 85% federal money.

Alderman Arceneaux-Mathis made a motion to award the bid to the low bidder, Midway Construction Company contingent upon approval of NRCS. Seconded by Alderman Gray. The motion carried unanimously.

VISITORS CENTER, Connie Taunton

Mrs. Taunton stated the unveiling of the blues marker was scheduled for this Friday at the Angeletty House; however, it has been cancelled. She added that it has been postponed until August and she will notify the board with a specific date.

Mrs. Taunton stated that they started installing the new exhibits at the Visitor's Center today and invited everyone to come out and look at them.

Mrs. Taunton extended her condolences to Alderman Gray.

Alderman Arceneaux-Mathis asked Mrs. Taunton for an update on the Finely Collection event.

Mrs. Taunton stated that she was out of town and that she spoke with Mr. Darryl White and it was well received. She stated that it was approximately 50-60 people that came out to view the exhibits. She added that they have ordered the banner for the building and it should be in within a couple of weeks.

INSPECTION DEPARTMENT, Paul Dawes

Mr. Dawes read the Monthly Report for the month of May.

PERSONNEL DEPARTMENT, Patricia Gibson

Ms. Gibson submitted the Personnel Report for May 2009

CITY OFFICIALS' REPORT

ALDERMAN DILLARD - WARD 6

Alderman Dillard stated that he is looking at ways that he can reduce the costs of the Recreation Department and provide more services for the public. He added that each year the City has to appropriate approximately \$300,000 to keep our recreation at the current level. He added that we should look at ways to cost effectively use the monies that have been appropriated to return the best services for the community.

Alderman Dillard stated that if we could cost effectively provide care and maintenance to the properties, we can then take the savings and use them to put into the programs that we have charged for recreation.

Alderman Dillard stated that he would like to make a motion eventually, to put out a bid proposal for lawn services to see what the private market will bring. He added that the lawn services are more competitive now and we can get a better return on our money. He added that if we were able to do this, he would like to address the dilapidated utility building that Director Harris has to work out of for the Summer Tennis Youth Programs.

Alderman Dillard stated that another issue that he and the Mayor discussed is a comprehensive consolidated recreational effort where, if they organized it, they can save the money and provide the services that they intend.

Alderman Dillard stated that he would like this board to strongly consider this effort as a way that they can more effectively use their public's monies for their intended purposes.

Alderman Gray asked what do we do with the employees that are currently doing the job.

Alderman Dillard stated that lay offs would occur if we could use the contract services, and the competitive bid process to bring about \$200,000 to \$300,000 or even \$150,000. That's the way to a new tennis facility, and a third of the way to a new swimming pool. That's the way you will get the programs that you promised the people.

Alderman Gray stated that he is more concerned with the employees that have been working those jobs to take care of their family and all of a sudden, they are out of a job.

Mayor Middleton stated that lateral transfers would be an option.

Alderman Dillard stated that the City could take advantage of the WIN Job Center. He added that he is more concerned about the younger guys that would be affected. He added that he would like to see them in an industry that is growing besides the maintenance projects.

Alderman Dillard stated that if there is anyone else in Ward 6 that has storm debris accumulated to call City Hall and they will give him the message.

Alderman Dillard stated that he needs to get help from the Mayor for the property at 903 West Wood. He added that it is a sanity and health issue.

Mayor Middleton stated that he will revisit the matter with the City Judge again.

Alderman Dillard stated that he would like to continue to receive the sweeper truck log so that he can continue to monitor his streets. He thanked Public Woks for the removal of the tree that was blocking the drainage system.

ALDERWOMAN ARCENEAUX-MATHIS - WARD 1

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis requested that Public Works cut the grass on the properties of Pogo Street and Irving Street. She added that these are the same repeat offenders that they have every year.

Alderman Fortenbery asked who will maintain the properties. He stated that in his opinion, they cannot take on any extra.

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The motion carried with Alderman Fortenbery opposing.

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ALDERMAN GRAY, Ward 2

Alderman Gray stated that he has received numerous calls about dogs running loose. He stated that he recommended the caller to contact Public Works.

Alderman Gray asked Chief Mullins how will the fire cracker issue be addressed because there is an ordinance about shooting fire crackers in the city limits.

Chief Mullins stated that it is a disturbing the peace offense and it is a battle every year. He added that they generally give people a warning, and if it continues, they make an arrest.

Alderman Gray stated that maybe they can do an article in the newspaper to educate the public on fire crackers inside the city limits.

Mr. Holloway suggested placing a ban on fire works inside the city limits since we have dry weather and the grass is so dry.

Alderman Gray stated that there are individuals that are driving the wrong way down Purnell Hill.

Mr. Rick Freeman stated that he would look into the matter.

Chief Mullins stated that they will also monitor that area.

Alderman Gray asked Mr. Smith if 583 West Steirs Lane is on the list to be cut and for Mr. Dawes to see if the city could demolish the property.

Alderman Gray thanked the Isle of Capri for donating to the Watkins Street Cemetery. He added that maybe they could help Chief Mullins in the K9 dog situation.

Alderman Gary stated that the city should adopt a policy such as the *Clean Up or Else* article in the Jackson newspaper. He added that we need to inform the public that the City will not tolerate abandoned houses and tall grass anymore.

Alderman Gray stated that he extends his sympathy to the Oten and Ransom families.

ALDERMAN POLLARD - WARD 3

No report

ALDERMAN FIELDS - WARD 4

Alderman Fields stated that Brenham Avenue and East Oak Street are having serious erosion problems. He added that they are going to have to get something done. He added that a retaining wall is needed on East Oak Street.

Alderman Fields stated that he was able to attend the Southern Minority Leadership Conference. He added that it was a great conference and very motivating. He added that everyone that spoke talked about everybody working together despite their race and working through this economy.

Alderman Fields stated that he would like to remind everyone about the Minorville Jubilee on July 25. He added that he would like to ask everyone around the table to give a donation to the Minorville Jubilee. He added that those representatives will come and speak before the board themselves.

Alderman Fields wished Mrs. Thelma Newsome a happy birthday. He added that she had a great birthday celebration at the Natchez Convention Center. He added that it was a great event.

Alderman Fields stated that he was paid a visit last meeting while he was at the Southern Minority Leadership Conference. He added that he really respects Mr. Calhoun and he understands where he is coming from. He added that he is also living with it himself because he has dilapidated properties on either side of his home. He also stated that he spoke to the AME Church again about doing something with the property. He added that they are looking to sell it. He added that the property will be properly boarded and they will have to make a better effort with the grass cutting. He added that if not, Mr. Dawes and the board will just do what they have to do.

Alderman Fields asked Mr. Dawes to keep a close eye on the property.

Alderman Fields stated that he would like to offer his condolences to Alderman Gray and his family, Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis and her family, and the Ransom Family.

Alderman Gary stated that he would like to express his thanks and appreciation to Leola Harris and everything that the 100 Black Women do. He added that they are very visible in the community. He asked Mr. Dawes to look into repairing the balcony or replacing it with a replica of some sort.

ALDERMAN FORTENBERY - WARD 5

No Report

CITY CLERK'S REPORT, DONNIE HOLLOWAY

Mr. Holloway asked the board to authorize a resolution for a lease purchase agreement for the eight patrol vehicles.

Alderman Gray made a motion to authorize a resolution for a lease purchase agreement for the eight patrol vehicles. Seconded by Alderman Pollard. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Holloway stated that he would like to give his condolences to Alderman Gray's family, Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis' family, & the Ransom Family.

CITY ATTORNEY'S REPORT, EVERETT SANDERS

Attorney Sanders stated that he has a proposed order correcting the retirement benefits of former Fire Chief Paul Johnson and the city's records.

Alderman Gray made a motion to adopt the proposed order correcting the retirement benefits of former Fire Chief Paul Johnson and the city's records. Seconded by Alderman Fields. The motion carried unanimously.

Attorney Sanders stated that he has a proposed Interlocal Cooperation Agreement between the City of Natchez, Natchez-Adams County and the Natchez-Adams County School District for the planning, financing, and maintenance of a joint recreation program and facilities in Adams County Mississippi.

Alderman Fields made a motion to inter into an Interlocal Cooperation Agreement between the City of Natchez, Natchez-Adams County and the Natchez-Adams County School District for the planning, financing, and maintenance of a joint recreation program and facilities in Adams County Mississippi. Seconded by Alderman Fortenbery. The motion carried with Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis opposing.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis stated that she is opposing because she feels that the first passage of this should come from the Board of Supervisors who has the authority to place it on the ballot. She added that she does not want them to feel that we are surpassing them and are forcing something down their throats by doing something. She added that she wanted it to be a cooperative effort where we are all working together and nobody is pushed into a corner.

MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Middleton stated that due to the MML Convention, the next Board meeting will be July 7, 2009.

NEW BUSINESS

Alderman Gray made a motion that the Board table the Personnel report for the month of May 2009 except new hire, Tiffany Mosby. Seconded by Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis. The motion carried unanimously.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis stated that she wanted to extend her heartfelt sympathy to the Ransom and Oten families. She added that they have been hit hard this week with deaths and illnesses. She stated that her prayers go out to the Angelethy family.

She added that her deepest sympathy goes to Alderman James “Rickey” Gray for the death of his father. She stated that since she will not be here for the funeral she wanted to say that Alderman Gray’s father left large shoes for him to fill.

She added that she heard people who are here for Mrs. Oten’s funeral, talk about the contributions Mr. Gray made to them while growing up and the many recreation outlets through swimming and other athletic avenues that they appreciated. She said that Mr. Gray left one legacy for this city and that is a young man who not only was dedicated to his family and worked tirelessly to assist his father throughout his illness but never ceased to work for all the families in his charge to enhance their quality of life while working with his own family. She stated that Alderman Gray is a role model for young men in Natchez-Adams County and she knows that his father is proud of his endeavors.

Mayor Middleton stated that his sympathy goes out to Alderman Gray, Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis, and the Ransom Family.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Alderman Fields, seconded by Alderman Fortenbery to Adjourn the Regular Meeting of June 23, 2009. The motion carried unanimously.

**JAKE MIDDLETON
MAYOR**

ATTEST:

**DONNIE HOLLOWAY
CITY CLERK**