

REGULAR MEETING
August 11, 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, August 11, 2009. Mayor Jake Middleton presided at the meeting, which was opened with prayer by Sabrena Bartley.

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 Natchez Democrat
Joyce Arceneaux-Mathis Alderman, 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 Meeting of July 28, 2009. The motion was 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.

NONE

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

NONE

DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS

Mrs. Bartley stated that the Natchez transit is hosting two events this week that will bring people into Natchez. The first event is the Town Hall meeting, which is sponsored by Department of Transportation. It will be on August 12, 2009 from 10:00 am – 11:45 am at the Natchez Convention Center. The second event is the Mississippi Public Transit Association. She added that it will tomorrow afternoon until Friday.

INSPECTION DEPARTMENT, Paul Dawes

Mr. Dawes read the financial report for the month of July . Mr. Dawes stated that three of his Inspectors need travel permission from the board to go to Vicksburg for certification examination on September 12. He added that he will also need to go to Starkville for an Asbestos refresher course on August 27.

Alderman Dillard made a motion to allow the three Inspectors to travel to go to Vicksburg for certification examination on September 12 and Mr. Dawes to go to Starkville for an Asbestos refresher course on August 27. Seconded by Alderman Gray. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Dawes stated that 12 Irving Lane was approved for demolition by the court. He request permission to secure quotations to proceed with the demolition.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis made a motion to demolished 12 Irving Lane. Seconded by Alderman Gray.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis stated that we could use Public Works' equipment to demolish the property.

Alderman Fortenbery stated that the city is in need of maintenance and duties can't continue to be place on Public Works.

Mr. Smith stated that all of the additional help that was at Public Works is gone.

Alderman Fortenbery suggested that the City should get with the County to see if they could assist in helping with this matter.

Mayor Middleton stated that he would give Mike Lazarus a call.

Alderman Gray asked is the cost to take it to the landfill going to cost more that to hire a contractor.

Mr. Dawes stated that in the past when Public Works demolished properties the cost incurred were higher than if a contractor did it.

Mr. Holloway stated that it is going to cost the City less money to hire a contractor rather than doing it ourselves. He added that those were the numbers generated in the past.

Mr. Dawes stated that he has two bids, one for \$1700.00 and on for \$1800.00

The motion carried unanimously.

Alderman Arceneaux-Mathis made a motion that the board accepts the lowest bid from the Contractors for 12 Irving Lane. Seconded by Alderman Gray. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Dawes stated that the bid for 11 Winston Hill is \$1900, \$2800
1024 MLK is \$2850, \$2000

Alderman Gray made a motion to accept the lowest bidder for 11 Winston Hill and 1024 MLK. Seconded by Alderman Fields. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Dawes stated that he has submitted request for demolish on 12 Irving Lane and 11 Winston Lane because the properties are owned by the state.

Alderman Arceneaux-Mathis stated that on 11 Irving Lane, the City petitions that State to reimburse the funds, then after the city receives the funds, at a later date the city petition that the state donate the property to the city, so that the city can donate the property to Habitat for Humanities.

Alderman Dillard asked Mr. Dawes for an update on 10 Beachwood and 903 Westwood. Mr. Dawes stated that both properties are waiting for action by the Municipal Judge. Alderman Dillard stated that the Mayor and Board of Alderman are waiting for the Municipal Judge to act on the two properties.

Fire Department, Chief Stewart

Chief Stewart stated that he is requesting the old football field Martin Stadium be used as a training facility for the Fire Department. He added that he and Mr. Gardner inspected the area and determined that it would be feasible for use. He stated that Engineering and Public Works will clean off the property. He added that they will maintain the property after that.

Alderman Arceneaux-Mathis asked the board to wait until next meeting until she can find out what Mrs. Sanders has decided to do in regards for using that property for the Boys and Girls Club.

Mayor Middleton stated to wait two weeks from now and the board will make a decision then.

Alderman Fortenbery stated that the board should take into consideration that these training facilities that we provide will help with insurance and premiums for the City.

TOURISM, Connie Taunton

Mrs. Taunton stated that the Advisory Committee, Convention Promotion Commission, and members of the Hospitality Industry met in retreat last Thursday on August 6th. She added that it was a well attended retreat and very productive. She added that the retreat discussed that tourism is down approximately 10% in cities. She added that three areas are up which are the Sports Market, Family Reunions, and Girlfriend Getaways. She added that they are having a committee meeting tomorrow and Thursday. Mrs. Taunton stated that they will be receiving \$5000 donation and \$2500 will go to NAPAC and \$2500 will go to FatWater. She added that both of those projects needed funds.

She stated that for the month of July the traffic was 19,561 people come through the visitor center.

Mrs. Taunton state that from October through July their Tourism tax revenues 875,521.23. She added that includes hamburger 1 and hamburger 2. She added that they are up from last year about 9%. She added that total dollars are up about \$49, 063.00

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis stated to Mrs. Taunton that she would like for the Alcorn State University's Jazz Festival to come to Natchez and the Convention Center would possibly be needed along with several stages.

Mayor Middleton stated that he attended the retreat last week and it was a very good meeting.

ENGINEERING, David Gardner

Mr. Gardner stated that the retaining Wall on Commerce Street is now complete. He added that there will be a final inspection that will occur next week with the NRCS officials. Mr. Gardner asked the board for permission to close out the project, the documents, and forward them to the appropriate Soil Conservation departments pending upon the review of the Final Inspection.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis made a motion to allow Mr. Gardner to close out the Commerce Street retaining wall project contingent upon Final Inspection. Seconded by Alderman Gray. The motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Middleton asked if there was any funding available to plant an azela.

Mr. Gardner stated that he will be getting in touch with Margaret Graves. He added that the preservation commission requested for them to plant some type of fig vine that would grow on the wall.

Mr. Gardner stated that he needed to get a small change order approved. He added that when it rained, there was some erosion on ends of the wall that they had to redo. He added that he has a change order number 2 that will be approximately \$1,265 to cover the additional necessary improvements to the project.

Alderman Arceneaux-Mathis made a motion to approved change order number 2 on the Commerce Street retaining wall project. Seconded by Alderman Gray. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Gardner stated that he and Alderman Mark Fortenbery are on the agenda to go to the County next Monday to ask for their participation in the Oak Hill project.

Mr. Gardner stated that on the North Natchez Drainage, he spoke with the surveyors that were working with Howard Herring and they should be completing the remaining property surveys this week. He added that in the final assessment there will be two eminent domain cases that he will have to go to court on.

Mr. Gardner stated that he needed to get authorization to enter into a North Union Street contract with Jordan, Kaiser, and Sessions for construction, engineering, and inspection contingent upon MDOT'S approval and review by the City Attorney.

Alderman Fields made a motion to authorize Mr. Gardner to enter into a North Union Street contract with Jordan, Kaiser, and Sessions for construction, engineering, and inspection contingent upon MDOT'S approval and review by the City Attorney. Seconded by Alderman Arceneaux-Mathis. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Gardner stated that he needed to get authorization to enter into a Trails Project contract with Jordan, Kaiser, and Sessions / Weatherforde McDade for construction, engineering, and inspection contingent on review by the City Attorney and MDOT final approval.

Alderman Fields made a motion to authorize Mr. Gardner to enter into a Trails Project contract with Jordan, Kaiser, and Sessions / Weatherforde McDade for construction, engineering, and inspection contingent on review by the City Attorney and MDOT final approval. Seconded by Alderman Pollard. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Gardner stated that he felt relieve because he has gotten the right of way resolved on the Trails Project. He added that all three entities (Canadian Railroad, Isle of Capri, & Callon Family) have been cooperative and he appreciates their efforts.

CITY OFFICIALS' REPORT

ALDERMAN FIELDS - WARD 4

Alderman Field stated that he is having a serious problem on Lumber Street. Mr. Gardner stated that it is more of a Public Works issue. Mr. Smith stated that they are talking care of the issue.

Alderman Fields stated that there is also grass cutting issues that need to be addressed on Lumber Street as well.

Alderman Fields asked Anita and Willie B TO help him get a meeting with the management at Cedar Hurst, Brumfield, and Williams Apartments.

Alderman Fields stated there are serious potholes on LaSalle and Gayosa Street. He asked Mr. Smith to check into it.

Alderman Fields stated that they need to revisit the speed bumps being placed on Arlington Avenue. He asked Chief Mullins and Mr. Freeman to address he issue.

Alderman Fields asked Mr. Freeman to place another speed sign on Minor Street.

Alderman Fields stated that he would like to thank YouthBuild for assisting him in getting the school supplies together to distribute. He added that they worked hard and were very mannerable.

Alderman Fields stated the YouthBuild kids were not there to help him on Saturday. He added that he went to the complexes and there weren't many children out. He added that the schools are getting him the list of the children that live in Brumfield, Williams, and Cedar Hurst apartments so the supplies that he has left will be distributed through the schools.

Alderman Fields stated that he is glad to hear that the Retaining Wall on Commerce is completed. He asked that they please stay vigilant added that the retaining wall on East Oak Street and the erosion problems on Brenham Avenue.

ALDERMAN FORTENBERY - WARD 5

Alderman Fortenbery asked Eric where are they with the mosquitoes spraying. He added that he has received several calls regarding the mosquitoes.

Mr. Smith stated that they will be back in the Steirs area today.

Alderman Fortenbery stated he commends Public Works for having to continue to work through assigned duties when there is a shortage of guys. Alderman Fortenbery asked the board to be cautious of what they assigned Public Works to do.

ALDERMAN DILLARD – WARD 6

Alderman Dillard stated that he would like Public Works to look at the overgrowth on Winchester. He added that he also has a problem with debris pickup on Park Place Mr. Smith stated that that is an issue that Waste Management can take care of themselves. Alderman Dillard stated that the home owners need to cut the debris into two feet lengths.

Alderman Dillard stated that there are 6 holes in Ward 6 that needs to be addressed. He added that he has the procedure for cutting and patching the streets.

Alderman Dillard stated that he wants the public to know that we are at the end of a fiscal year and at the beginning of another budget fiscal year. He added that the City Administration has the responsibility for administering and managing the expenses and the departments as it applies to the budgets. He added that the 1.3 million dollar tax anticipation loan came to the board 20 minutes before the board of Alderman took the floor. He added that the second loan came in the form of a street overlay that came 45 days after the first pay application was forwarded by the contractor. He added that the second tax anticipation loan came to the board 18 hours before the meeting. Alderman Dillard stated that if you total all the loans together, that is 2.5 million dollars that the city administration has borrowed in the first 12 months. He stated that this s something that has to be addressed.

Alderman Dillard stated that we are going to have to live within our budget and have realistic expectations of what does revenues are.

ALDERWOMAN ARCENEAUX-MATHIS - WARD 1

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis stated that she did participate in National Nights Out and it was very interesting.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis asked the Fire Chief on Cemetery Road want the reestablishment of the Fire plug that was previously there.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis made a motion the board including the City Engineer set up a meeting with Congressman Greg Harper. Seconded by Alderman Gray. She added that the board needs to discuss the 592 project. The motion carried unanimously.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis stated that she would like for Mr. Warren Ruther to come and meet with the board on the next work session concerning cruise lines.

ALDERMAN GRAY, Ward 2

Alderman Gray stated that he has serious problems with 5 & 7 Claiborne Street. He added that the Historic Foundation has not cut the grass and the Prince Street Day Care is complaining about the property.

Alderman Gray asked Mr. Dawes to get with the property owner of 22 Woodlawn because grass has covered the entire house.

Alderman Gray stated that there is a serious dumping problem of the Old Horseshoe Lane property. He added that he has sent an individual to the police Department so that they can file charges on the person they seen dumping.

Alderman Gray stated that the problem has been alleviated on Beaumont Street. He added that the scent came from a dead dog in a plastic bag. He advised the community to call Public Works if they have a dead animal.

Alderman Gray stated that this City needs to send out a message that we will not tolerate crime in our City and serious penalties need to be placed on people committing crimes.

Alderman Gray stated that the officers need to be aware that there is a day curfew while school is going on.

Alderman Gray requested a proclamation for the retired officer Lieutenant Charles Pollard.

Alderman Gray asked if the City pays any funds to Southwest Planning.

Mr. Holloway stated no.

Alderman Gray made a motion to allow Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis to travel to Tunica for the Congressional Black Caucus Legislative Workshop. Seconded by Alderman Fields. The motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Middleton stated that this Conference is attended by both black and white Congressman and other elected City Officials throughout the United States. He added that it will be well worth the City to have someone to represent the City of Natchez.

Alderman Fields stated that he wished that Mayor Middleton could go as well. He added that we should be all over the stimulus money because we need to get some of these projects off the table so they can get some projects on the table.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis stated that she is only asking the city for two days.

Alderman Gray stated that he has gone to this Conference for the last 4 years and this year, he decided not to go. He added that you need to attend conferences in order to get things done for the city.

Alderman Gray stated that he was glad to see Alderman Pollard doing better.

Alderman Gray stated that he would like to see this administration put together a cash reserve fund.

ALDERMAN POLLARD - WARD 3

Alderman Pollard stated that he would like to thank Mrs. Taunton for the wonderful report on the Tourism Department. He added that it is refreshing to hear that Tourism is doing so well.

Alderman Pollard read the Fire report for the month of July. He added that we have the best Fire Department in the State of Mississippi.

CITY CLERK'S REPORT, DONNIE HOLLOWAY

Mr. Holloway asked the board to approve the docket # 7770 - 8062.

Alderman Pollard made a motion to approve docket # 7770 -8062. Seconded by Alderman Fields.

Alderman Dillard stated that it appears that the Weatherford McDade is still being paid out of the Capital Improvements fund.

Mr. Holloway states that yes, but they are being reimbursed through the MDOT funds. He added that there are three different paying agencies coming through.

The motion carried with Alderman Gray opposing.

Mr. Holloway stated that he would like the board to change our hospitalization to a \$1500 deductible, raise the co-pay on Physicians to \$30, from \$25 specialty, and \$15 primary care, and the pharmaceuticals 1 going from \$10 to \$15, raise Category 2 from \$25 to \$30. He added that this will save approximately City approximately \$340,000 in deductibles, \$32,000 in physician's care, and \$28,000 in pharmaceuticals.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Alderman Fields, seconded by Alderman Pollard to Adjourn the Regular Meeting of August 11, 2009. The motion carried unanimously.

The motion carried unanimously. The motion carried unanimously. The motion carried.

**JAKE MIDDLETON
MAYOR**

ATTEST:

DONNIE HOLLOWAY
CITY CLERK