

## **REGULAR MEETING**

### **September 8, 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 11:00 A.M. on Tuesday, September 8, 2009. Mayor Jake Middleton presided at the meeting, which was opened with prayer by Rev. Clifton Marvel.

MAYOR & BOARD PRESENT	ELECTED OFFICIALS ABSENT	CITY OFFICIALS & DEPARTMENT HEADS
<b>John ‘Jake’ Middleton</b> 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 Mike Mullins, Police Chief Oliver Stewart, Fire Chief Natchez Democrat
<b>Joyce Arceneaux-Mathis</b> Alderman, Ward 1		
<b>J. ‘Ricky’ Gray, Jr.</b> Alderman, Ward 2		
<b>Bob Pollard</b> Alderman, Ward 3		
<b>Ernest ‘Tony’ Fields</b> Alderman, Ward 4		
<b>Mark Fortenbery</b> Alderman, Ward 5		
<b>Daniel Dillard</b> Alderman, Ward 6		

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### **MINUTES APPROVED**

**A motion was made by Alderman Fortenbery to dispense with the reading of the minutes of the Regular Meeting of August 25 & Recessed Meeting of August 29, 2009. The motion was seconded by Alderman Pollard. The motion carried unanimously.**

**Alderman Pollard made a motion to go out of order to conduct an Appeal Hearing for Fat Mama’s Tamales, NPC09-072. Seconded by Alderman Gray. The motion carried unanimously.**

Attorney Bob Latham stated that David Gamble filed an application to install a wooden trellis over the patio of Fat Mama’s Tamales to provide shade for the customers. He added that the Preservation Committee approved the request but under the condition of installing parking bollards. He stated that there was an agreement signed by the City and

the Mr. Gamble to install chain links on the Washington Street side of his lot. Attorney Latham indicated that that was the only agreement that was entered in to.

Attorney Latham stated that they are asking the board to approve the application and delete the provision that requires Mr. Gamble to install parking bollards because it has nothing to do with the wooden trellis.

Mr. Rusty Lewis stated that there has been parking in the green space on the property for over a year since Fat Mama's Tamales obtained their Certificate of Occupancy. He added that there is no order in the way customers are parking. Mr. Lewis stated that the agreement that was composed last year was not specific enough.

Alderman Pollard stated that the trellis has nothing to do with parking. He added that those are two totally different issues in his opinion.

Mayor Middleton stated that the issue at hand is the trellis and the original agreement. He added that Attorney Latham and Attorney Sanders will need to work out the kinks.

Attorney Latham stated that he would be glad to meet with Attorney Sanders.

**Alderman Dillard made a motion to close the Appeal Hearing for Fat Mama's Tamales, NPC09-072. Seconded by Alderman Pollard. The motion carried unanimously.**

**Alderman Fortenbery made a motion to take the Fat Mama's Tamales request under advisement and reach a decision by next board meeting. Seconded by Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis. The motion carried unanimously**

**Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis made a motion that the board go back into regular order. Seconded by Alderman Fields. The motion carried unanimously.**

#### **BUSINESS OF THE MONTH – Southwest Distributors**

Mayor Middleton recognized Southwest Distributors as Business of the month for the month of September.

#### **VISITORS WELCOMED**

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

Jennifer Ogden Combs stated that she is speaking on behalf of Supervisor Boo Campbell, Faye Minor, and Robert McNeeley.

Mrs. Combs stated that she is a board member of the Boys and Girls Club of the Miss-Lou. She discussed that the most critical time for kids is the afterschool hours when they are not supervised.

Mrs. Combs stated that the facility is in need of repairs. She added that there are several fundings that she can go after to help refurbished the facility, but only if they have the facility on a long term basis. She also stated that they would like to do a road block fundraiser downtown before the golf Tournament on Friday to raise money and awareness for the Boys and Girls Club.

**Alderman Fields made a motion to allow the Boys and Girls Club to conduct a traffic fundraiser downtown on their chosen date. Seconded by Alderman Gray. The motion carried unanimously.**

Mrs. Combs stated that there are some potentially NFL grants available that they can apply for if they have the authority and the right to represent the Martin Gym facility. She added that the grants are for refurbishing football fields. She also added that it would need to be a long term lease before they can apply for these large grants.

Alderman Gray stated that his only concern is if it would affect the city programs at the gym. He added that all of us will have to work together and do what's best for the kids. He added if the school could get involved to utilize the gyms and properties that they have, it could alleviate a lot of the problems.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis stated that the board should look into having a long term lease agreement for the Boys and Girls Club and what areas the Boys & Girls Club can use for the football field, and check with the schools for their cooperation.

## **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

NONE

## **DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS**

### **GRANTS COORDINATOR – Brett Brinegar**

Mrs. Brinegar stated that there will be a stimulus training session next week in Jackson on September 16<sup>th</sup> at 1:00pm. She added that it is opened to the public.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis asked Mrs. Brinegar to explain the invitation only for CDBG-R funding.

Ms. Brinegar stated that she was out of town when the invitation letter came to the Mayor's Office, which was on the 17<sup>th</sup> of August. She added that this is for Disaster Recovery funds. She stated that she and Mr. Dawes are working on the application.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis asked Mrs. Brinegar to bring back information on the Governor's pocket of funds that he will be allocating.

Alderman Pollard asked Mrs. Brinegar about the stimulus funding for the Fire Department. Mrs. Brinegar stated that the funding is still available and she is working with Chief Stewart currently.

Alderman Gray asked if the Police Department's roof would be eligible.

Mrs. Brinegar stated that any City owned municipality can apply for the stimulus funding.

### **RECREATION DEPARTMENT, Ralph Tedder**

Mrs. Tedder requested that the board allow him authorization to expand a special at the golf course, which is half price on Green-fees on Tuesday mornings to Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday mornings until noon.

**Alderman Dillard made a motion to allow Mr. Tedder authorization to expand the special at the golf course to Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday mornings until noon. Seconded by Alderman Gray. The motion carried unanimously.**

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis asked Mr. Tedder to look at those specials to include employees of the Schools System as well.

### **TOURISM DEPARTMENT, Connie Taunton**

Mrs. Taunton stated that they are in desperate need of speed humps at the Visitors Center. She added that drivers are turning at the light and speeding through the Visitors Center parking lot. She added that they once had the portable speed strips, but the spikes would damage the Visitors' tires.

Alderman Dillard stated that even with the asphalt, they had to pay for a driver's transmission. He added that this is a paradox within an enigma.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis stated that the board should take the matter under advisement with Alderman Fortenbery and Public Works.

Alderman Gray stated in the meantime until the board decides what can be done; a patrol car should be placed in the parking lot.

Mr. Taunton stated that she is having a hard time getting in touch with Dr. Miller of Alcorn State University's Jazz Festival. She added that she will try to set up an appointment to meet with him.

Alderwoman-Arceneaux Mathis stated that she thinks that he is reluctant in bringing it to Natchez since it has been successfully housed in Vicksburg.

Mrs. Taunton reminded everyone that October 8<sup>th</sup> will be the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary and 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary for the National Park and the Visitors' Center.

#### **INSPECTION DEPARTMENT, Paul Dawes**

Mr. Dawes read the financial report for the month of August.

Mr. Dawes stated that he has a travel request for one of his employees to travel to Tupelo for code classes on the 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup>. He added that the only cost incurred would be the hotel and the per diem.

Mr. Holloway stated that Mr. Dawes does not have the funds in his budget.

Mayor Middleton stated that the employee can use some of his travel.

**Alderman Fortenbery made a motion to allow the transfer of the Mayor's travel funds to allow the trip to Tupelo for the code class. Seconded by Alderman Gray. The motion carried unanimously.**

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis asked were there any new requests for grass cuttings.

Mr. Dawes stated that he would have to get with Anita to see.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis asked what is the status of 937 Union Street. Ms. Anita Smith stated that the property has been adjudicated and has been sent to Judge Blough.

Mayor Middleton asked Mr. Dawes to check on the 819 property across from the Children's Home as well.

Alderman Gray asked for an update on 22 Claiborne Street.

Mr. Willie B. Jones stated that a letter was sent to the property owner out but there was no response.

Alderman Gray stated that by the next board meeting, there should be an answer about the properties.

#### **CITY OFFICIALS' REPORT**

##### **ALDERMAN DILLARD – WARD 6**

Alderman Dillard stated that he has not seen an advertisement for the budget process. He added that he doesn't believe the City has a balanced budget. He indicated that this is probably one of the reasons that the city continuously borrows money from one year to the next.

Alderman Dillard stated that until the board receives more information, which includes the General Fund and the Aggregate of non major capital funds, and all the funds reporting by the end of the year, the board will not be able to make an intelligent decision.

Alderman Dillard stated that there is still a lot of work to do.

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

Alderwoman Arceneux-Mathis stated that she spoke with Supervisor Grennell about some patchwork for Marblestone. She added that she and Mr. Smith will need to set up a meeting.

Alderwoman Arceneux-Mathis stated that they are trying to get a handle on the budget and want to be as accurate as they possibly can be, as overseers of public funds.

Alderwoman Arceneux-Mathis asked Alderman Dillard to get the board a copy of the summary of all the funds that he has.

### **ALDERMAN GRAY – WARD 2**

Alderman Gray stated that he would like Mr. Gardner and Mr. Smith to go on Woodlawn Street and check the conditions of the cracks.

Alderman Gray stated that Canal Street and West Steirs Lane concern him because they flood when there are heavy rainfalls.

Alderman Fortenbery stated that he will get Public Works to check on the drainages.

Alderman Gray stated that he has a list of abandoned properties and tall grasses in Ward 2 that he will submit to the Code Enforcers and they will copy it to Mr. Smith.

Alderman Gray stated that the City must do an article in the newspaper clarifying what Pubic Works will pick up and what Waste Management will pick up, because when individuals move, they are throwing everything out on the street.

Alderwoman Arceneux-Mathis stated that we need to check with Waste Management in advertising another forgiveness day, so that the citizens can get everything out, rather than throwing items in the bayou.

Alderman Gray stated that he has a light out on the corner of Bob Lee Williams & West Steirs Lane and 903 MLS.

Alderman Gray stated that his condolences go out to the Sherman, Buchanan, Ellis, and Johnson family.

#### **ALDERMAN POLLARD - WARD 3**

Alderman Pollard read the Fire report for the month of August.

#### **ALDERMAN FIELDS - WARD 4**

Alderman Fields stated that he has concerns with Old Washington Rd., Mascagni St., and Brenham Ave. abandoned properties and grass cutting. He added that we need to come up with some type of systematic process to tackle these issues.

Alderman Fields stated that St. Catherine Street and Lumber Street will have their neighborhood watch meeting at the Police Department on Wednesday at 5:30pm. He added that the Minorville area is looking to do the same thing as well.

Alderman Fields stated that he attended the unveiling of the Blues Marker at the Jack Waite Park on Friday. He added that the event was wonderful. He stated that the park is a hidden jewel in the city. He thanked Mr. Darryl White along with Mrs. Taunton, The CVB, and The 100 Coalition of Black Women. He also thanked Mr. Tedder for a well manicured park. He asked that Mr. Smith and Mr. Gardner check on the water trench in the park, because it may need to be redone.

#### **ALDERMAN FORTENBERY - WARD 5**

Alderman Fortenbery thanked Mr. Smith and Public Works for the job done on John Quitman Boulevard in getting the roads opened.

Alderman Fortenbery asked that everyone to be patient with their abandoned properties and grass cutting problems. He added that Public Works is getting to them but they also have other duties as well.

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

Mr. Holloway asked the board to approve the docket # 8550 - 8806.

**Alderman Fortenbery made a motion to approve docket # 8550-8806.  
Seconded by Alderman Pollard.**

Alderman Dillard asked if there were any line items that are in excess of their budgeted amount on the docket.

Mr. Holloway stated that he would have to go back and look at the budget along with the docket items.

**The motion carried with Alderman Gray opposing and Alderman Dillard opposing.**

Mr. Holloway stated there will be a budget meeting on Wednesday.

#### **CITY ATTORNEY'S REPORT, EVERETT SANDERS**

**No Report**

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

Mayor Middleton stated that he also attended the Blues Marker unveiling and it was a very nice event. He said that it was quiet a crowd that was there. He added that Mr. Darryl White did a great job putting it together. Mayor Middleton stated that the Mayor of Ferriday was also there.

Mayor Middleton stated that last week he was at the SASHTO Convention in Biloxi for two days. He added that there were a lot of people that stopped by their booth from different cities along the 84 El Camino Corridor. He also stated that it was a very good trip and that the (NASHTO) National Association of State and Highway Transportation Officials conference will be held in Natchez next April.

Mayor Middleton asked for permission for him, Mr. Holloway, and Alderman Gray to travel to Tunica for the Board of Directors meeting on September 18<sup>th</sup>. He added that he has been appointed to the Legislative Committee for the MML and he will be meeting up there as well. He added that Mr. Holloway and Alderman Gray will ride with him.

**Alderman Fields made a motion to allow Mayor Middleton, Mr. Holloway, and Alderman Gray to travel to Tunica for the Board of Directors meeting. Seconded by Alderwoman-Arceneaux Mathis. The motion carried unanimously.**

#### **NEW BUNIESS**

**Alderman Pollard made a motion to allow him to travel to Washington on the 16<sup>th</sup> and return on the 17<sup>th</sup> for a National Tourism Summit. Seconded by Alderman Gray.**

He added that there will be a reception that evening with Congressman Harper, Senator Cochran, Senator Wicker, Senator Thomas, and the entire delegation.

**The motion carried unanimously.**



**Alderman Fields made a motion to send Mr. David Gardner to go to a half day Green Building Training on September 18<sup>th</sup> in Oceans Springs. Seconded by Alderman Gray. The motion carried unanimously.**

**Alderman Gray made a motion to allow Mr. Kenny Moe to speak to the board. Seconded by Alderman Fields. The motion carried unanimously.**

Mr. Moe stated that he apologizes for missing the last meeting. He indicated that he had a HUD meeting in Atlanta, Georgia at the time. He stated that he has received several letters regarding the vacant units. He added that he contacted Mr. Kelvin Wilson, which is the Maintenance Manager, and Mr. Wilson has replaced all of the broken glass with plexiglass. He added that all vacant doors have been screwed shut.

Mr. Moe stated that they have initiated a bi-monthly inspection instead of a quarterly inspection. He added that they have also contacted Entergy to add additional lighting to the property.

Mr. Moe stated that there has been a problem with people hanging out in the front of the property. He stated that when the police are called and the area is patrolled, once the officer leaves, the people hang out again. He indicated that they would like to offer to the Police Department a rent free unit for an officer to reside there or set up a police sub station.

He added that the property was acquired by new ownership approximately two years ago. He stated that they are trying everything they know to keep the property up.

Alderman Gray asked if they have considered placing security cameras throughout the property. He added that residents called him and told them that it was a shooting that took place at the property.

Alderman Gray indicated that a lot of the issues go on when the manager is gone and maybe she should live on the property for a while. He added that it is a serious problem for the entire area including the residents that live across the street.

Mr. Moe stated that the security systems are expensive and the property does not have the funding to hire a security officer for the property. He added that it would have to be an insured off duty Police Officer.

Alderman Gray asked about the status of the banned list.

Mr. Buesche stated that he would resend the updated list to Alderman Gray.

Mr. Moe stated that if a property calls them to see if an individual is on the banned list, they can indicate that there was an issue with the tenant.

Alderwoman-Arceneaux Mathis asked if HUD comes out to inspect.

Mr. Moe stated that they are inspected annually by HUD and are required to maintain a score of 60 or higher to receive the assistance funds.

Mr. Wilson stated that every time he comes to the property, he gets with the maintenance team to take care of maintenance issues. He added that he visits the site constantly.

Alderman Gray indicated that they should take care of the residents that live on the property first and then address the vacant units last.

Mayor Middleton stated that he appreciates their efforts and to keep the residents in a good place where we wouldn't mind living.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

**A motion was made by Alderman Fortenbery, seconded by Alderman Pollard to Adjourn the Regular Meeting of September 8, 2009. The motion carried unanimously.**

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**JAKE MIDDLETON  
MAYOR**

**ATTEST:**

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**DONNIE HOLLOWAY  
CITY CLERK**