

REGULAR MEETING
October 27, 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, October 27, 2009. Mayor Jake Middleton presided at the meeting, which was opened with prayer by Father David O'Connor.

MAYOR & BOARD PRESENT	ELECTED OFFICIALS ABSENT	CITY OFFICIALS & DEPARTMENT HEADS
John 'Jake' Middleton Mayor		Donnie Holloway, City Clerk Coretta L. Logan, Deputy Clerk
Joyce Arceneaux-Mathis Aldерwoman, Ward 1		Darlene Jones, Community Development Sabrena Bartley, Senior Center
J. "Ricky" Gray, Jr. Alderman, Ward 2		Paul Dawes, Building Official David Gardner, City Engineer Connie Taunton, Tourism Director
Bob Pollard Alderman, Ward 3		Mike Mullins, Police Chief Oliver Stewart, Fire Chief Natchez Democrat
Ernest "Tony" Fields Alderman, Ward 4		
Mark Fortenbery Alderman, Ward 5		
Daniel Dillard Alderman, Ward 6		

MINUTES APPROVED

A motion was made by Alderman Fields to dispense with the reading of the minutes of the Regular Meeting of September 22, 2009 and approve with the necessary corrections. The motion was seconded by Alderman Pollard. The motion carried unanimously.

VISITORS WELCOMED

Ed Worley

Mr. Worley stated that he is a business person in the community. He stated that he has been in this city since 1999 and he looks forward to building this city. He stated that his family has pumped a lot of money into this city.

Mr. Worley stated that the city really needs to look into how we can attract tourism. He added that the city can use Broadway like Beale Street in Memphis. He stated that street

can be used for entertainment. He also stated that Natchez has something that no other city on the Mississippi River has, that is you can see cities on both sides on of the river. He stated that if a theme park would come to the city that would be a phenomenal park. He stated that the way you attract tourism is entertainment.

Mr. Worley also stated that there are no restrooms that available along Broadway. He added that the first phase of the Trails Projects has no restroom facilities. He stated that during the Harley rally, there were two portlets in place. He stated that there needs to be somewhere for the people go.

Mr. Worley stated that the city needs more parking desperately.

Mr. Worley said that the City needs to have handicap accessible streets and sidewalks. He stated that he likes to get around to the different businesses in town but he cannot due to the overlays on the streets his mobile chair cannot get on. He stated that the city has a serious problem and these matters should be addressed.

Mr. Worley stated that he hopes these issues can be worked out.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Mayor Middleton stated that they received the permission to begin advertising for bids on the Trails Project and Union Street Project.

DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS

NONE

CITY OFFICIALS' REPORT

ALDERWOMAN ARCENEUX - MATHIS – WARD 1

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis stated that hopefully all of the Christmas lights will go on the Friday after Thanksgiving. She added that Ginger Highland came and spoke to the Downtown Development Group. They will have twenty new pole reefs and six new skyline garlands, block chairs, silhouette lights, and store competitions. She added that they will work on decorations for the gazebo and on the bluff. She added that they are waiting on Mr. Ward to get back with them. Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis stated that it is her understanding that the Natchez Mall will be ready with their Christmas lighting and hopefully the car dealerships as well. She further stated that the schools will be decorating themselves and hopefully all churches will get involved. The Natchez Housing Authority will be decorating. She stated that all businesses should try to have their lights on as an addition to the main lights that will be on the Friday after Thanksgiving.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis stated that she attended the Hob-Nob. She added that they are looking at the possibility of cuts where they and can be done, and government

consolidation. She stated that she will issue the board a copy of her notes from the meeting.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis stated that she met with the governor for approximately four minutes. She added that he ran through but he did allow them to meet with Amanda Jones, which was set up by Senator Dearing. She's working specifically with the funding that the governor will have with no oversight from the legislature. The funding is called SFSF (State Fiscal Stabilization Funds.)

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis stated that she discussed primarily the 592 Drainage Project, Marblestone West Steirs Lane Neighborhood Revitalization Project, and the 1.3 million dollar street Project for Ingress / Egress.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis stated that she will be getting with Mr. Dollar and the code enforcers to ride Ward 1. She added that she will do a list of the areas that individuals have been calling about.

ALDERMAN GRAY – Ward 2

Alderman Gray stated that they had another neighborhood watch meeting in Holiday Apartments. He added that from his understanding, they are in the process of getting new management. He said that there were threats made and Chief Mullins and Commander White handled the situation well.

Alderman Gray stated that boarding houses up should be temporary and not a permanent solution.

Alderman Gray stated that he wanted to send his condolences out to the Scott family. He stated that he also wanted to thank Mrs. Darlene Williams for the 30 years that she served with the city.

Alderman Gray stated that the members of the board need to get a copy of the City Charter Code. He added that we have veered off from what the charter says. He added that the board needs to get back to doing what the charter says or changing the charter to doing what the board is doing now.

Alderman Gray recognized Mr. Mayfield and Mr. Brown as Sheriff Candidates.

ALDERMAN POLLARD – WARD 3

Alderman Pollard stated that he is in full support of the Recreation Referendum. He added that he is glad to see the First Baptist Church situation has been settled even though demolition was the final solution. He further stated that there were a lot of memories that went into the church and that is probably what most people did not want to see happen. Alderman Pollard stated that he has been on the board for five years and it

has been debated, discussed, and argued the entire five years, and now he is glad to see that it has been settled.

ALDERMAN FIELDS – WARD 4

Alderman Fields stated that he did like the memo from Public Works that was sent to him on things that can be done and things that will have to be looked at. He added that he still wants them to look at Lumber Street and submit a report.

Alderman Fields stated that he has also spoke with his code enforcer and he's going to give an update on Brumfield Apartments. They are approaching their deadline for improvements. He added that he wants to see improvements at Brumfield Apartments and Cedar Hurst.

Alderman Fields stated that the Elderly Apartments on St. Catherine Street are not handicap accessible. He added that that is something that the city will have to look into.

Alderman Fields stated that he had a chance to speak at the forum on Recreation. He added that it is airing on Channel 9. He stated that we should invest in the Recreation endeavor because it would impact the youth in a positive way.

ALDERMAN FORTENBERY – WARD 5

Alderman Fortenbery stated that he would like to remind everyone there is a new Supervisor at Public Works. He added that there were so many work orders that were placed on the backburner. Alderman Fortenbery stated that he just wants to ask the other Aldermen to be patient with what there needs are because they are trying to catch up on items that were dropped in the past. He added that Public Works is trying to make all of the citizens happy and for them to feel like they are getting their money's worth as a taxpayer.

Alderman Fortenbery stated that Mr. David Atkins and Mr. David Gardner have really stepped in and done a tremendous job. He added that he appreciates them and the Public Works crew for what they stepped up and did. He further stated that the City will definitely see the benefit of this.

Alderman Fortenbery stated that he also attended the Recreation Forum and added that Alderman Fields did a good job speaking on the topic. He said that he is in favor of the Recreation Referendum and hopes that everyone remembers to get out and vote.

Alderman Fortenbery stated that he asks for the public to continue their support because it could get a lot worse.

ALDERMAN DILLARD – WARD 6

Alderman Dillard stated that they are continuing to research for software for municipal financial accounting. He added that it will be a big difference in the way that the city will be able to handle financial affairs. He added that if we can get this software, it will enable us to get better information in a timely manner, in order to make better decisions.

Alderman Dillard stated that they are looking at a public financial consultant. He added that this is something that will bring resources to the city.

Alderman Dillard stated that there have been 24 grass cutting bids picked up. He added that this is a very competitive process and they will see how the numbers work out.

Alderman Dillard stated that the downtown property owners should consider unchaining their parking lots to accommodate the city's tourist and visitors. He added that he would like to entertain an agreement between the Private Property owners and the City regarding cleaning the properties after usage.

Alderman Dillard said that he will be looking in Ward 6 for potholes that need to be filled. He added that a little preventative maintenance that goes a long way.

He added that he is still proceeding with the 903 Westwood and the 10 Beachwood. He added that he has spoken with the Judge and he's assured him that they will be successful with this.

CITY CLERK'S REPORT, DONNIE HOLLOWAY

Mr. Holloway stated that they are in the process of trying to come up with new software for accounting. He added that they have been trying to do this for a long time and now it needs to happen. He added that we have had some assistance from other cities in getting names of various software to get the biggest bang for our buck.

Mr. Holloway stated that he would like the board to allow the City to borrow funds from the Natchez Water Works for repairs on the bucket truck.

Alderman Fields made a motion to allow the City to borrow funds from Natchez Water Works for repairs on the bucket truck. Seconded by Alderman Fortenbery. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Holloway asked that board to approve the municipal questionnaire and that it be spread upon the minutes.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis made a motion to approve the municipal questionnaire and that it is spread upon the minutes. Seconded by Alderman Dillard. The motion carried with Alderman Gray opposing.

Mr. Holloway requested permission from the board to travel to Jackson to the MML Youth Committee to attend their first meeting this year.

Alderman Arceneaux-Mathis made a motion to allow Mr. Holloway to travel to Jackson to attend the MML Youth Committee Conference. Seconded by Alderman Gray. The motion carried unanimously.

CITY ATTORNEY'S REPORT, EVERETT SANDERS

NONE

MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Middleton stated that this coming week, Natchez will be hosting the Small Town Conference for a two day conference. There will be anywhere from 200 to 250 elected officials here from across the state. He added that the City is proud to host the event

Mayor Middleton stated that he also attended the Hob-Nob in Jackson. He added that this is a good time to meet with state officials and get to know them on a first name basis. He stated that Ms. Jones at the Governor's Office was very positive and we are going to see some results from it.

Mayor Middleton stated that next Tuesday is a very important election so please get out and vote. He added that the Recreation Referendum is a non binding referendum. He added that it is important for a quality of life and economic development. And let everybody know we are moving this city forward.

Alderman Arceneaux-Mathis made a motion to go on record that the entire board is completely endorsing the Recreation Project. Seconded by Alderman Fields. The motion carried unanimously.

Alderman Dillard stated that you do measure a community by how it recreates and it is a big quality in life.

Alderman Gray recognized Mrs. Jones and the Mayor's Youth Council.

Alderman Arceneaux-Mathis thanked Alderman Gray for working hard to get the small town conference. She added that she intends on being there both days.

Alderman Arceneaux-Mathis stated that at the next meeting she will be bringing up at the Waste Management site in the form of a motion to use it for parking.

NEW BUSINESS

Alderman Pollard made a motion that the board appoint Mr. Robert McNeely to the Civil Service Commission. Seconded by Alderman Fortenbery. The motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Middleton stated the Work session will be held Monday at 5:00pm.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Alderman Fields, seconded by Alderman Pollard to Adjourn the Regular Meeting of October 27, 2009. The motion carried unanimously.

**JAKE MIDDLETON
MAYOR**

ATTEST:

**DONNIE HOLLOWAY
CITY CLERK**