

REGULAR MEETING

January 11, 2011

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, January 11, 2011. Mayor Jake Middleton presided at the meeting, which was opened with prayer by Pastor Melvin White.

MAYOR & BOARD PRESENT	ELECTED OFFICIALS ABSENT	CITY OFFICIALS & DEPARTMENT HEADS
John ‘Jake’ Middleton Mayor		Donnie Holloway, City Clerk Coretta L. Logan, Deputy Clerk Everett Sanders, City Attorney Robbie Dollar, Public Works David Gardner, City Engineer Robert Nix, Planning 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 Fields to dispense with the reading of the minutes of the Finance & Regular Meeting of December 14, 2010 and adopt the minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Alderman Gray. The motion carried unanimously.

A motion was made by Alderman Gray to go out of regular order for a public hearing on unsafe structures. Seconded by Alderman Fields. The motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC HEARING

Mr. Nix stated that properties 31 Beaumont Street, 3 Caddo Street, 22 South Concord Street, 15 Garden Street, 120 Homochitto Street, 639 Maple Street, 116 and 118 McIntyre Boulevard, 106 October Street, 0 Parker Street (a/k/a 2, 4, and 6 Old Mimosa Lane), 2 Purnell Street, 500 and 505 and 810 North Rankin Street are all deemed as unsafe structures.

Mr. Nix stated that the Building Inspector and Code Enforcement Officers have been conducting an inventory of unsafe structures in the city and this report is only one of several recommendations that will be made as the inventory progresses.

Mr. Nix stated that in his Staff Findings all of the addresses listed under the heading location in this memorandum contain buildings that have been examined by the city's Building Inspector, and determined to be unsafe. All have also been determined to be Dangerous Buildings, as that term is defined in the International Existing Building Code. All of the buildings on these properties are recommended to be demolished. The Preservation Commission has approved the demolition of the buildings on this list that are located in the Preservation Districts.

Mr. Nix stated that the budget impact and potential liability for demolishing buildings always presents potential liability issues. However, the Building Inspector recommends that funds should be allocated to immediately demolish the following buildings, should the Board of Aldermen adjudicate them as unsafe:

2 Purnell Street, estimated cost:	\$5,500
3 Caddo Street, estimated cost:	\$5,000

Mr. Nix stated as the Director of Planning and Zoning, he also recommend that the debris from the burned mobile home at 106 October Street be removed immediately with the presently available funds. Estimated costs, 106 October Street: \$2,500; Total potential budget impact, all requests: \$13,000. Funds appropriated: \$25,000. Potential funds remaining: \$12,000.

Alderman Gray asked Mr. Nix if any funds are left over can 16 & 18 McIntyre Boulevard is added to the list for demolition.

Mr. Nix stated as long as the properties have been properly adjudicated.

Mayor Middleton asked if there were property owners present that wanted to speak before the board regarding any of the properties.

Michael Stewart of 812 North Rankin Street stated that his family has offered to purchase the property at 810 North Rankin to demolish it, but the property owners have declined each time.

Mayor Middleton stated that this may be the right time to go and make another offer to the family, since their property is on the list to be demolished.

Alderman Gray made a motion to close the public hearing and go back into regular session. Seconded by Alderman Fortenbery. The motion carried unanimously.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis made a motion to adopt each of the resolutions proposed by staff, to adjudicate the buildings on the properties listed in the staff's agenda memorandum as being in a state of uncleanliness which constitutes a menace to the public health, safety and welfare of the community, and to direct the staff to take the corrective actions required in the resolutions.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis stated that when the proper adjudication is done, 937 North Union will move to the forefront of the demolition list.

Seconded by Alderman Fields. The motion carried unanimously.

RECEIVE BIDS – 2 year Bank Depository

The following bids were opened and acknowledge by Mayor Middleton.

Concordia Bank
United MS Bank
Regions Bank
Britton & Koontz

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis made a motion to take the Bank Depository Bids under advisement. Seconded by Alderman Fields. The motion carried unanimously.

VISITORS WELCOMED

Natchez Leadership

Mayor Middleton recognized Natchez Leadership for attending the Mayor and Board of Aldermen meeting.

Jessie Winston

Alderman Fields recognized Mr. Jessie Winston – 100 years old
Mayor Middleton read a proclamation for Mr. Jessie Winston.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis asked for an update on the street lights survey.

Chief Mullins stated that the officers have been notifying dispatchers of light outages and they are contacting Entergy with the locations.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis and Alderman Fields asked for the dispatchers to keep a running record of the list and the light outage addresses.

DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS

Chief Mullins introduced the two new police officers that have joined the Natchez Police Department, Kimberly Furnace and Mathew McDonald.

ENGINEERING, David Gardner

Mr. Gardner stated that it is time to begin advertising for general supplies. He asked that the board authorizes him to do so. He added that the pothole patching truck materials will be included.

Alderman Fortenbery made a motion to authorize Mr. Gardner to begin advertising for General Bids. Seconded by Alderman Fields.

Mr. Holloway asked Mr. Gardner if the patching truck materials were included in the budget.

Mr. Gardner stated that there needs to be some type of allotment of funds to tap in for material costs. He added that they are getting bids but does not necessarily have to buy.

The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Gardner stated that he needed authority to enter into a contract with Natchez Historic Foundation for the design on the second phase of the Trails Project for St. Catherine St. He added that it is a zero match requirement.

Alderman Fields made a motion to enter into a contract with Natchez Historic Foundation for the design on the second phase of the Trails Project for St. Catherine St. He added that it is a zero match requirement. Seconded by Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Gardner stated that he has a flood prevention damage ordinance that he would like to get adopted at the next board meeting. He added that it is a more updated version.

Mr. Garner stated that the board needs to firm up the agenda to take to Washington. He added that there only needs to be no more than three projects taken. He further stated that the two in mind now are the Visitors' Center transfer and the 592 Project.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis stated that she is going to come out to the engineering department and redo the letter that was sent to Trish and redirect the letter. She added that at the Legislative breakfast she and the mayor talked in depth with Representative Johnson about the \$650,000 that is still trying to be recuperated for the Downtown overlays and the millions of dollars or whatever is less from the Phase 2 of the 592 project. She added that he strongly suggested that the city make the applications to MDA for the \$650,000 and the matching money that's needed for the 592 project, send them to MDA, then come to Jackson with those copies, and Representative Johnson will it walk through with us to make sure when they are in the process of funding MDA that it comes up; whatever the match is for Phase 2b.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis stated that the post office is the project she really feels should be revisited. She added that the post office is inadequate.

PLANNING, Bob Nix

Mr. Nix stated that regarding the funding of Martin School there's a gas leak and the repairs will cost between \$1,400 and \$3,000. He added that there is a water leak and loose bricks need to be repaired immediately. He added that the total maximum cost is \$5,000. He added that he needs permission to use funds to make repairs out of the public properties account.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis made a motion to allow the necessary repairs at the Martin School. Seconded by Alderman Dillard. The motion carried unanimously.

CITY OFFICIALS' REPORT

ALDERMAN FIELDS – WARD 4

Alderman Fields stated that he has some lighting issues on Vidal Street and at the corner of Minor and Martin Luther King.

Alderman Fields asked that Chief Mullins investigate the hit and run on the decorative MDOT pole. He added that we could file it on the driver's insurance.

Alderman Fields stated that he was very excited about the Ann Holdens Subdivision Reconstruction plan. He asked that the Mayor and Board consider placing the plan high on the city's priority list. Alderman Fields stated that the MLK youth luncheon will be Monday at 11:00 am at the Convention Center and the parade will follow at 2:00pm. He added that the NAACP's banquet will be Sunday at 7:00pm at the Natchez Community Center.

Alderman Fields stated that the city applied for an energy grant using LED lights. He added that Southwest MS Planning and Development are asking for a \$2,500 cash request, which will be 100% refunded, to send with the application.

Alderman Filed made a motion submit \$2,500 to Southwest MS Planning and Development for the EECDBG energy grant application. Seconded by Alderman Gray. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Holloway stated that the \$2500 will come out of the General Fund.

ALDERMAN FORTENBERY – WARD 5

Alderman Fortenbery made a motion to advertise bids for cutting municipal sites (boulevards, drives, bluffs, etc.). Seconded by Alderman Dillard.

Alderman Gray stated that if we continue to bid properties out, what will happen to the workers.

Mayor Middleton stated that Mr. Atkins and Mr. Dollar will determine what the costs savings will be. He added that none of the workers are going to be laid off; they will have more time to work on other projects within the city.

The motion carried unanimously.

ALDERMAN DILLARD – WARD 6

Alderman Dillard made a motion to renew the first two contracts for the recreational complex and solicit quotes on the third contract (ball fields), because of the scope of work and performances. Seconded by Alderman Fortenbery. The motion carried unanimously.

Alderman Dillard made a motion to allow travel for the board to travel to the National League of Cities Conference in March. Seconded by Alderman Fields. The motion carried unanimously.

Alderman Dillard stated that looking at the sales revenue for the city, for the last 11 months, the city of Natchez has outperformed 8 out of 11 months from the previous year. He added that we are begging to see that our economy here is holding its own. He further added that it makes a difference when you shop and do business in Natchez.

Alderman Dillard stated that we are about 95% complete on the accounting software. He added that soon he will be asking for a comparison of our expenses to our total revenue for the first quarter. He further added that if we can make adjustments now then we can position the city through the fiscal year.

Alderman Dillard made a motion that the City Attorney and Mayor get together to put together a resolution of appreciation Larry L. Butch Brown. Seconded by Alderman Gray. The motion carried unanimously.

ALDERWOMAN ARCENEAUX-MATHIS, Ward 1

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis read the following statements regarding the property of Cheryl J. Strauder-Smith being torn up by DirtWorks.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis asked for Mr. Gardner to discuss the matter.

Mr. Gardner stated that they have sent a letter to the contractor, Dirt Works prohibiting it from doing any more work on the project until all of the matter is resolved. He added that they will not let the contractor resume until the Engineering department, the land-owner, and the city have inspected the property to make sure the conditions of the property are in as good or better condition than before the project began.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis asked the Attorney Sanders to explain what the city can or cannot do in terms of the matter.

Attorney Sanders stated that the city does not have any responsibility in terms of the actions of the contractor. He added that the land owner would have to address the matter with the contractor. He further added that the city can influence the contractor to make the conditions of the property in as good or better condition than before the project began.

Alderwoman Arceneaux –Mathis sated that it is her understanding that projects that the city enter in that if the contractor goes on personal property without permission of land owner, the city is responsible for contacting the contractor to leave the property and restore the property back to its original state but any fees involved would mean that the property owners deems due to them they would have to seek their own private counsel for litigation on projects that the city initiated if they are seeking fees.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis made a motion to recognize Mr. Smith to speak regarding the property the DirtWorks has torn up. Seconded by Alderman Gray. The motion carried with Alderman Dillard and Fortenbery opposing.

Mr. Smith discussed that his Wall Street property has been encroached upon by DirtWorks. He added that for sale signs were on the property with phone numbers but no one from DirtWorks called the phone number on the for sale sign.

Mayor Middleton stated that Mr. Gardner has stopped the project. He added that the property will be corrected and put back into as good or better condition than before the project began. He further added that if the property owner is seeking compensations, and then the landowners would need to consult with an attorney.

Alderman Gray asked that the project not be shut down.

Alderman Arceneaux-Mathis stated that DirtWorks is a very peculiar animal to work with. She added that they have had problems with them on Zoa Street which was why she made the motion that on any project the planner, public works director, and the engineer work together because our people need to be protected.

Alderman Arceneaux-Mathis made a motion that the City Attorney develops a no tolerance policy of domestic violence for city personnel. Seconded Alderman Gray. The motion carried unanimously.

Alderman Arceneaux-Mathis requested that monthly balances on city properties account be given and explained to her.

Alderman Arceneaux-Mathis recognized Mrs. Anna Burns and the Public Works department for their assistance in coordinating the Christmas in Natchez decorations at the Inter Modal Center.

ALDERMAN GRAY, Ward 2

Alderman Gray made a motion to spread the remaining monies from Lovie Martin's salary to the two dispatchers and jailers. Seconded by Alderman Arceneaux-Mathis.

Mr. Holloway stated that he opposes this decision just like he opposes Public Works' action due to the fact that the city is not out of the woods yet.

Alderman Gray stated that if we do not have the money, then he will take his motion back.

Mr. Holloway stated that he did not say that we did not have the money, he is saying that he opposes to Public Works' salary increases as well as Police Department's salary increases.

Alderman Gray stated that the money is already in the budget and he is doing this the right way.

Alderman Gray asked Public Works to check back with Mr. & Mrs. Wesley regarding their property on Ivy Lane.

Alderman Gray stated that there is water in front of 382 West Steirs Lane.

Alderman Gray stated that Mr. Butch Brown has been a big asset to the city of Natchez and to pray for a speedy recovery.

Alderman Gray stated that he needs to get resolutions approved for Mr. Cameron and Mrs. Danelly.

Alderman Gray stated that his condolences go out to the Cameron, Danelly, Brown, Young, and Chatman family.

Alderman Gray stated that if the Police Department receives any seized money, look at putting it towards another dog.

Alderman Gray stated that he has not given up on the West Steirs Lane project.

ALDERMAN POLLARD – WARD 3

Alderman Pollard made a motion that he and Mayor Middleton be allowed for travel to Washington, D.C. which is within their budget. Seconded by Alderman Fortenbery. The motion carried unanimously.

CITY CLERK’S REPORT, DONNIE HOLLOWAY

Mr. Holloway stated that he would like the board to approve docket 1906 – 2330 and 2340 – 2622.

Alderman Pollard made a motion to approve docket 1906 – 2330 and 2340 – 2622. Seconded by Alderman Dillard.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis asked to pull of all payments made to DirtWorks from the docket.

Alderman Gray stated that he is not voting for #356728.

The motion carried.

Mr. Holloway asked for approval of the personnel report for December 2010.

Alderman Pollard made a motion to approve the personnel report for December 2010. Seconded by Alderman Fortenbery. The motion carried with Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis opposing.

Mr. Holloway asked the board for a resolution to borrow from Britton & Koontz bank in the amount of \$69,844.00 with an interest rate of 2.95% for 60 months to purchase a truck and asphalt machine.

Alderman Fortenbery made a motion to borrow from Britton & Koontz bank in the amount of \$69,844.00 with an interest rate of 2.95% for 60 months to purchase a truck and asphalt machine. Seconded by Alderman Dillard. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Holloway asked for a motion place the old Crown Victoria patrol cars into surplus properties to advertise to sell.

Alderman Dillard made a motion to allow the City Clerk to place the old Crown Victoria patrol cars into surplus. Seconded by Alderman Fortenbery. The motion carried unanimously.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis made a motion to allow the City Clerk to advertise the old Crown Victoria police cars for sell. Seconded by Alderman Dillard. The motion carried unanimously.

CITY ATTORNEY'S REPORT, Everett Sanders

No Report

MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Middleton stated Rick Freeman put in a request similar to Public Works showing the savings that the traffic department has had and get a 5% raise for the 3 workers in Mr. Freeman's department. He added that it would not increase the department's budget.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis stated that she wanted every employee with the city to make the maximum amount of money that they can make. However, she does not want to lay off anyone. She further added that she is going to vote naye on the raises because she will also vote naye to lay off employees because she wants to keep everyone employed.

Alderman Fortenbery made a motion to allow a 5% raise to the Traffic Department employee's salary. Seconded by Alderman Dillard.

Alderman Dillard stated that he is in favor of this if department heads can move away from the spend it or lose it mentality and move toward a save it and earn it mentality.

The motion carried with Alderwoman-Arceneaux-Mathis opposing it.

Mayor Middleton stated that the next regular board meeting will be held Monday, January 31, 2011 at 6:00 pm due to the MML Midwinter Conference.

Alderman Gray made a motion that the regular board meeting will be held Monday, January 31, 2011 at 6:00 pm due to the MML Midwinter Conference. Seconded by Alderman Fields. The motion carried unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

Alderman Fortenbery stated that he would like the Public Works' 5% salary increase to be spread across the minutes.

Alderman Fortenbery made a motion to appoint Mr. Duncan McFarland to the Library Commission. Seconded by Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis. The motion carried unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Alderman Fields, seconded by Alderman Dillard to Adjourn the Regular Meeting of January 11, 2011. The motion carried unanimously.

**JAKE MIDDLETON
MAYOR**

ATTEST:

**DONNIE HOLLOWAY
CITY CLERK**

