

MEETING OF THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL CITY OF COLUMBUS, MS

**SEPTEMBER 15, 2020
5:00 P.M.**

The Mayor and City Council met in Regular Session on Tuesday, September 15, 2020 at 5:00 p.m. in the Court Chambers of the Municipal Complex. Mayor Robert E. Smith, Sr. presided over the meeting, and all Council Members were present. (Council Member Jones arrived late). Also present were the COO, CFO, General Counsel, Police Chief, Assistant Police Chief and the HR Director. All other Department Heads participated via teleconference.

I. CALL TO ORDER AND INVOCATION

Mayor Smith called the meeting to order and called upon Council Member Box to offer the Invocation.

II. APPROVE MINUTES FOR THE MEETINGS OF SEPTEMBER 1 & 8, 2020

Council Member Gavin made a motion to approve the Minutes for the Meetings of September 1 & 8, 2020. Council Member Beard seconded the motion.

All Council Members present voted in favor of the motion.

The motion carried.

III. APPROVE DOCKET OF CLAIMS

Council Member Gavin made a motion to approve the Docket of Claims for September 15, in the amount of \$460,470.85. Council Member Stewart seconded the motion.

All Council Members present voted in favor of the motion.

The motion carried.

IV. CONFIRMATION OF/OR AMENDMENTS TO THE AGENDA

CONSENT AGENDA:

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Change Item "B" to read: *Approve request for two (2) Fire and Rescue personnel to attend "HazMat Awareness Operations Final: to be held in Jackson, MS, and approve payment of \$50.00 for travel and reimbursement for meal expenses.*

POLICY AGENDA:

There are no changes to the Policy Agenda.

Council Member Gavin made a motion to approve the Agenda as presented, with the above amendments. Council Member Stewart seconded the motion. The Mayor called for discussion, and there being none, all Council Members present voted in favor of same, with a unanimous vote.

V. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Accept letter of resignation from Thomas Stone, Fire and Rescue Firefighter, effective September 16, 2020, and approve compensation for unused vacation leave and transfer unused sick leave to PERS.
- B. Approve request for two (2) Fire and Rescue personnel: Mike Chandler and Kameron Pearson, to attend "HazMat Awareness Operations Final" to be held in Jackson, MS, and approve payment of \$50.00 for travel and reimbursement of meal expenses.
- C. Approve request for one (1) Fire and Rescue personnel, Michael Chandler, to attend "Peer Assessor Site Visit" to be held in Norfolk, VA. There will be no cost to the City to attend this event.
- D. Ratify request for three (3) Fire and Rescue Engineers: Chris Carter, Melvin Junkin, and Wes Mims, to attend "Hurricane Laura Deployment" in Louisiana, and approve payment of \$172.00 for fuel and reimbursement of meal expenses.
- E. Approve request for the City Properties Manager/Trotter Director to submit a Notary application, and approve payment of necessary fees and supplies.
- F. Accept letters of resignation from Public Works Department employee, Stephen Wilkerson, effective September 8, 2020 and authorize the Human Resources Director to begin the normal recruitment process.
- G. Accept letter of resignation from Police Officer, James Tubbs II, effective September 21, 2020 and approve payment of unused vacation leave and transfer unused sick leave to PERS.

Council Member Beard made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented, with the above amendment. Council Member Stewart seconded the

motion. The Mayor called for discussion, and there being none, all Council Members present voted in favor of same, with a unanimous vote.

VI. REPORTS, PROCLAMATIONS, RECOGNITIONS AGENDA

A. General Comments from the Mayor and Council Members

Ms. Jennifer James came forward and distributed information regarding ***“Hope for the Cure – Real Men Wear Pink”*** event which will be held October 21, 2020 at the Soccerplex. Additional information will be released prior to the event date.

B. Monthly Report from the Columbus Fire and Rescue Department for August 2020

The Monthly Report from the Columbus Fire and Rescue Department for August 2020 was presented. No action was taken.

C. Monthly Report from the Municipal Court Division for August 2020

The Monthly Report from the Municipal Court Division for August 2020 was presented. No action was taken.

D. Monthly Report from the Public Works Department for August 2020

The Monthly Report from the Public Works Department for August 2020 was presented. No action was taken.

E. Monthly Report from the City Planning and Community Development Department for August 2020

The Monthly Report from the City Planning and Community Development Department for August 2020 was presented. No action was taken.

F. Monthly Report from the Code Enforcement Department for August 2020

The Monthly Report from the Code Enforcement Department for August 2020 was presented. No action was taken.

G. Monthly Report from the Columbus Recreation Department for August 2020

The Monthly Report from the Columbus Recreation Department for August 2020 was presented. No action was taken.

H. Monthly Report from the Columbus Police Department for August 2020

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The Monthly Report from the Columbus Police Department for August 2020 was presented. No action was taken.

I. Monthly Report from the Building Inspection Department for August 2020

The Monthly Report from the Building Inspection Department for August 2020 was presented. No action was taken.

J. Monthly Financial Report

Deliah Vaughn, CFO, distributed the Monthly Financial Report for August and remarked that the City currently has a combined total of \$8,622,640.94 with the General Fund having \$6,017,181.39 and Special Revenue Funds totaling \$2,605,459.55. The General Fund Operating Cash for the month of August was \$2,442,228.00; prior year was \$1,200,825.33, which is a \$1,241,402.97 difference from August 2019. The Sales Taxes report has not been received.

K. BOARD VACANCIES

David Armstrong, COO, announced vacancies on various boards and remarked that appointments can be made tonight.

CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

- 1 Vacancy, Remainder of Quincy Harris' 3-Year Term, Expires 11/19/2022.
- Mr. Harris resigned July 15, 2020 due to Military Assignment.
- Appointment will be made September 1, 2020.

APPLICANTS:

- Jermaine Shanklin
- Jarvis Fenster

Council Member Stewart made a motion to appoint Jermaine Shanklin to the City Planning Commission for a 3-Year Term, until 11/19/2022. The motion failed due to the lack of a second.

Council Member Box made a motion to appoint Jarvis Fenster to the City Planning Commission for a 3-Year Term, until 11/19/2022. Council Member Mickens seconded the motion.

All Council Members present voted in favor of the motion.

The motion carried.

REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY BOARD

- 1 Vacancy, 5-Year Term, Expires 9/15/2020.
- Chris Chain was appointed 5/19/2020 to fill the remainder of this term previously held by John Acker, who passed away on 3/31/2020.
- Appointment will be made September 15, 2020.

APPLICANT:

- Chris Chain

Council Member Mickens made a motion to appoint Chris Chain to the Re-Development Authority Board for a 5-Year Term, until 9/15/2025. Council Member Gavin seconded the motion.

All Council Members present voted in favor of the motion.

The motion carried.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

- 1 Vacancy, Remainder of 4-Year Term, Expires 9/20/20.
- The 9/1/2020 agenda incorrectly listed Carolyn Burns Kaye.
- Carolyn Burns Kaye resigned 7/24/2018.
- Kenny Frye was appointed on 9/04/2018 to fill the remainder of this position.
- Appointment can be made September 15, 2020.

APPLICANT:

- Kenny Frye

Council Member Gavin made a motion to reappoint Kenny Frye to the Re-Development Authority Board for a 5-Year Term, until 9/20/2024.

All Council Members present voted in favor of the motion.

The motion carried.

VII. CITIZENS INPUT AGENDA

VIII. POLICY AGENDA

A. Approve List of Appropriations for FY 2020 – 2021.

Council Member Gavin moved that we approve all appropriations to the

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organizations and agencies in the proposed Budget and for the sums specified (\$718,300.00 total), to be paid during the City's next fiscal year, and that we donate money from the general fund to match any other funds of these organizations and agencies, dollar for dollar. Included in my motion is that the Mayor and Council have made a finding of fact that all these organizations and agencies are the type of social, economic and community service programs eligible by State law to receive such donations, and that these donations be made a part of the official minutes of the City of Columbus. Council Member Mickens seconded the motion.

All Council Members voted in favor of the motion.

The motion carried.

B. Approve FY 2020-2021 Budget

. Council Member Jones moved that we adopt the 2020 – 2021 Fiscal year Budget as presented, in the total amount of \$ 22,952,258.00 . Council Member Box seconded the motion.

All Council Members present voted in favor of the motion.

The motion carried.

THE FY 2019 – 2020 BUDGET FOLLOWS:

C. Discuss Good News Columbus Report from Columbus Fire & Rescue Hurricane Laura Response Team.

Joe Dillon came forth and presented a report to the Mayor and Council regarding Fire and Rescue personnel that were deployed to Louisiana to offer relief after Hurricane Laura; however, the team has been deployed again to the Gulf Coast. The Fire and Rescue team reported on activity in the Gulf Coast via Zoom. The Fire and Rescue employees are Chris Carter, Wes Mims, Melvin Junkin, and Marco Rodriguez. They are deployed to Harrison County, Mississippi and updated the Mayor and Council on their actions.

D. Discuss/Approve part-time employment at the Columbus Fire and Rescue Department

Council Member Gavin made a motion to hire Tabitha Barham on a part-time basis for 15 – 20 hours per week for approximately two (2) months. Council Member Beard seconded the motion.

All Council Members present voted in favor of the motion.

The motion carried.

E. Discuss/Approve Recommendations request to remove property from the 2017 Blight Elimination Program.

George Irby came forward and requester to remove the structure from the 2017 Blight Elimination Program because the property owner cannot obtain a title. Council Member Gavin made a motion to approve the request to remove the structure from the 2017 Blight Elimination Program. Council Member Mickens seconded the motion.

All Council Members present voted in favor of the motion.

The motion carried.

F. Consider/Approve Construction Contract Change Authorization for Lee Park.

Greg Lewis, Recreation Department Director, came forward and requested approval of a change order for Lee Park in the amount of \$7,000.00. Council Member Gavin made a motion to approve the request. Council Member Stewart seconded the motion.

All Council Members present voted in favor of the motion.

The motion carried.

Council Member Jones arrived.

G. Discuss/Approve Submission for MDOT TAP Grant

Kevin Stafford, City Engineer, dba Neel-Schaffer, Inc., came forward and requested approval to submit for the MDOT TAP Grant in the amount of \$1.5M with a match of \$300,000.00 that won't be due until the work begins, the 2021-2022 budget year. The grant deadline is 9/30/20. Council Member Jones made a motion to approve the request to submit application for the MDOT TAP Grant. Council member Gavin seconded the motion.

All Council Members voted in favor of the motion.

The motion carried.

H. Discuss/Approve Advertising Bids for the 2020-2021 Bond Paving.

Kevin Stafford requested approval to advertise for bids for the 2020 – 2021 Bond Paving. He has met with all Council Members and is prepared to move forward. Council Member Gavin made a motion to advertise for bids for the 2020 – 2021 Bond Paving. Council Member Jones seconded the motion.

All Council Members voted in favor of the motion.

The motion carried.

I. Discuss/Approve Neel-Schaffer's Contract for 2020 – 2021 Bond Paving.

Kevin Stafford remarked that he is pleased to offer engineering services to the City of Columbus for the Columbus 2020 – 2021 Bond Paving. All services will be performed in accordance with the current Master Agreement and propose to perform the Scope of Work for 5% of the construction cost. Council Member Beard made a motion to approve Neel-Schaffer's Contract for 2020 – 2021 Bond Paving. Council Member Gavin seconded the motion.

All Council Members voted in favor of the motion.

The motion carried.

J. Discuss/Approve Derelict Property Docket

WILL KING
605 – 4th Street North
CASE NUMBER 20-0200

DELETED

ROBERT E. WOODS, III
701 – 4th Street South
CASE NUMBER 20-0212

VEGETATION

The General Counsel called cause number **20-0212**. No one appeared. Code Enforcement Officer Sasha James stated the property has been **remediated** by the owner, and it is his recommendation to enter the proposed Order under Section 21-19-11 of the Mississippi Code, finding that this property was in such a state of uncleanness as to be a menace to the public health and safety of the community. This Order should provide for such re-entry as the Statute allows. Council Member Beard made a motion in accordance with Section 21-19-11, and for an Order stating the City may remediate the property with respect to cutting grass and weeds and removing rubbish, personal property and other debris no more than twelve (12) times in a twenty-four (24) month period immediately following the Order, with further notice to the owner as required by law. Costs are to be assessed as allowed under Section 21-19-11 of the Mississippi Code. Council Member Jones seconded the motion.

All Council Members present voted in favor of the motion.

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NIA COLOM BLACKMAN
1103 – 5th Avenue North
CASE NUMBER 20-0144 VEGETATION, MAINTENANCE CODE

The General Counsel called cause number **20-0144**. No one appeared. Code Enforcement Officer Sasha James stated the property was in such a state of uncleanliness as to be a menace to the public under Section 21-19-11 of the Mississippi Code and asked the Mayor and Council to adjudicate the property as such and that an Order be entered to such effect, requested **immediate abatement** on the structure, and that an Order be issued for the property. Council Member Jones made a motion in accordance with Section 21-19-11 of the Mississippi Code, and for an Order stating the City may remove dilapidated buildings or dilapidated fences up to six (6) more times in the twelve (12) month period immediately following the Order and cutting grass and weeds and removing rubbish, personal property and other debris no more than twelve (12) times in a twenty-four (24) month period. Council Member Beard seconded the motion.

All Council Members voted in favor of the motion.

The motion carried.

JOHN T. THOMPSON
2424 – 6th Avenue North
CASE NUMBER 20-0215 VEGETATION

The General Counsel called cause number **20-0215**. No one appeared. Code Enforcement Officer Sasha James stated the property was in such a state of uncleanliness as to be a menace to the public under Section 21-19-11 of the Mississippi Code and asked the Mayor and Council to adjudicate the property as such and that an Order be entered to such effect, requested **immediate abatement** on the structure, and that an Order be issued for the property. Council Member Jones made a motion in accordance with Section 21-19-11 of the Mississippi Code, and for an Order stating the City may remove dilapidated buildings or dilapidated fences up to six (6) more times in the twelve (12) month period immediately following the Order and cutting grass and weeds and removing rubbish, personal property and other debris no more than twelve (12) times in a twenty-four (24) month period. Council Member Beard seconded the motion.

All Council Members present voted in favor of the motion.

The motion carried.

WILLIAM AND ALICE R. LENOIR
2002 – 13th Avenue North

CASE NUMBER 20-0186

VEGETATION, MAINTENANCE CODE

The General Counsel called cause number **20-0215**. No one appeared. Code Enforcement Officer Sasha James stated the property was in such a state of uncleanliness as to be a menace to the public under Section 21-19-11 of the Mississippi Code and asked the Mayor and Council to adjudicate the property as such and that an Order be entered to such effect, requested **immediate abatement** on the structure, and that an Order be issued for the property. Council Member Jones made a motion in accordance with Section 21-19-11 of the Mississippi Code, and for an Order stating the City may remove dilapidated buildings or dilapidated fences up to six (6) more times in the twelve (12) month period immediately following the Order and cutting grass and weeds and removing rubbish, personal property and other debris no more than twelve (12) times in a twenty-four (24) month period. Council Member Beard seconded the motion.

All Council Members present voted in favor of the motion.

The motion carried.

ADA AND JOHN M. VALETINE
2004 – 13th Avenue North
CASE NUMBER 20-0187 VEGETATION

The General Counsel called cause number **20-0215**. No one appeared. Code Enforcement Officer Sasha James stated the property was in such a state of uncleanliness as to be a menace to the public under Section 21-19-11 of the Mississippi Code and asked the Mayor and Council to adjudicate the property as such and that an Order be entered to such effect, requested **immediate abatement** on the structure, and that an Order be issued for the property. Council Member Jones made a motion in accordance with Section 21-19-11 of the Mississippi Code, and for an Order stating the City may remove dilapidated buildings or dilapidated fences up to six (6) more times in the twelve (12) month period immediately following the Order and cutting grass and weeds and removing rubbish, personal property and other debris no more than twelve (12) times in a twenty-four (24) month period. Council Member Beard seconded the motion.

All Council Members present voted in favor of the motion.

The motion carried.

GEORGE LARRY WOODWARD
AND JAMES ALAN WOODWARD
932 Military Road
CASE NUMBER 20-0140 DILAPIDATED

The General Counsel called cause number **20-0140**. George Woodward came

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forward and requested an extension of **45 Days to remediate the property**. The Code Enforcement Officer, Sasha James was asked if that was her recommendation. She answered yes and remarked that the property was in such a state of uncleanness as to be a menace to the public under Section 21-19-11 of the Mississippi Code and asked the Mayor and Council to grant the **45-day extension**. Council Member Gavin made a motion in accordance with Section 21-19-11 of the Mississippi Code to grant a 45-day extension for owner to remediate the property and obtain a building permit. Council Member Beard seconded the motion.

All Council Members present voted in favor of the motion.

The motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT:

The Mayor then asked if there was any other business to come before the Mayor and City Council. There being none, Council Member Beard moved that the meeting be adjourned. Upon second by Council Member Stewart and unanimous vote, the Mayor announced that the meeting was ADJOURNED.

Approved by: _____
Robert E. Smith, Sr., Mayor

Deliah T. Vaughn
CFO- Secretary-Treasurer

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