

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

**MARCH 16, 2021
5:00 P.M.**

The Vice-Mayor and City Council met in Regular Session on Wednesday, March 16, 2021 at 5:00 p.m. in the Court Chambers of the Municipal Complex. Vice-Mayor Bill Gavin presided over the meeting. All Council Members participated in the meeting via teleconference (Zoom). Those also present in person were the COO, CFO, the General Counsel, the Police Chief, Assistant Police Chief, and the HR Director. All other Department Heads participated via teleconference.

I. CALL TO ORDER AND INVOCATION

Vice-Mayor Gavin called the meeting to order and called upon Council Member Box to offer the Invocation.

II. APPROVE MINUTES FOR THE MEETINGS OF MARCH 2 & 5, 2021.

Council Member Jones made a motion to approve the Minutes for the Meetings of March 2 & 5, 2021. Council Member Box seconded the motion.

All Council Members present voted in favor of the motion.

The motion carried.

III. APPROVE DOCKET OF CLAIMS.

Council Member Stewart made a motion to approve the Docket of Claims for March 16, 2021 in the amount of \$525,077.15. Council Member Jones 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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Add Item "L." - Accept letters of resignation from two (2) Public Works Department employees, effective March 12, 2021 and March 19, 2021, and authorize the HR Director to begin the normal recruitment process.

Add Item "M" – Accept letter of resignation from one (1) Columbus Recreation Department Maintenance Technician, effective March 12, 2021, and authorize the HR Director to begin the normal recruitment process.

POLICY AGENDA:

Add Item "F" – Discuss/Approve request from the Mississippi Home Corporation.

Add Item "G" – Discuss/Approve payment of invoice from Certified Local Grant/South Columbus Historic Resource for a survey.

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

V. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Approve request for two (2) Fire and Rescue personnel: Justin Garza and Joseph Denton, to attend "Overland Search/Rescue FUNSAR Certification" to be held in Meridian, MS, and approve reimbursement for meal expenses.
- B. Accept request for Fire and Rescue Firefighter, Kyler Kidder, to attend "Hazardous Materials Awareness and Operations" to be held in Jackson, MS and approve payment of \$25.00 for meals reimbursement.
- C. Approve request for three (3) Fire and Rescue Engineers: James Hays, Josh Westbrook and Chris Carter, to attend "NFPA 10-21 final testing" to be held in Jackson, MS, and approve payment of \$75.00 for meals reimbursement.
- D. Approve request for Fire and Rescue Training Chief/Accreditation Manager, Mike Chandler, to attend "Accreditation Site Visit" to be held in Jackson, MS at no cost to the City.
- E. Approve request for four (4) Fire and Rescue Firefighters: William Boyd, Lukas Borntrager, Landon Hill, and Thomas Parsons, to attend "CPAT-E" to be held in Jackson, MS, and approve payment of \$400.00 for lodging, \$25.00 for travel, and reimbursement for meal expenses.

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- F. Approve request for reimbursement for three (3) Fire and Rescue Firefighters: Lukas Borntrager, William Boyd and Thomas Parsons, to attend “Hazardous Materials Awareness and Operations” to be held in Jackson, MS.
- G. Approve request for COO, David Armstrong, and City Planner, George Irby, to attend the “LPA Project Development Manual, to be held in Ridgeland, MS, and approve payment of \$159.00 for lodging, \$25.00 for travel, and reimbursement of meal expenses.
- H. Approve request for the Chief of Police, Assistant Police Chief and Director of Training to attend the “Mississippi Delta Community College Law Enforcement Training Academy Graduation” on March 25, 2021, at no cost to the City.
- I. Approve Permit requests submitted by Andrew Misulia, M.D., on behalf of the Triple B Cowboy Band, to host a “Country Gospel Music Band Playing” to be held on March 26, 2021, and on recurring dates from 11:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. at the corner of Fifth Street South and College Street at the gazebo, and on May 15, 2021 from 8:00 a.m. until 12:00 noon at the Farmers’ Market parking lot.
- J. Ratify approval for Investigators to travel to conduct interviews at a medical facility in Jackson, MS, and approve payment for travel and meal expenses.
- K. Approve request to pay Poll Workers, Resolution Board and Custodians for working at the polls for the Primary Election on April 6, 2021.

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

VI. REPORTS, PROCLAMATIONS, RECOGNITIONS AGENDA

A. General Comments from the Mayor and Council Members

There were no comments from the Vice-Mayor and Council Members.

B. Monthly Report from the Columbus Fire and Rescue Department for February 2021

The Monthly Report from the Columbus Fire and Rescue Department for February 2021 was presented. No action was taken.

C. Monthly Report from the Municipal Court Division for February 2021

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The Monthly Report from the Municipal Court Division for February 2021 was presented. No action was taken.

D. Monthly Report from the Public Works Department for February 2021

The Monthly Report from the Public Works Department for February 2021 was presented. No action was taken.

E. Monthly Report from the City Planning and Community Development Department for February 2021

The Monthly Report from the City Planning and Community Development Department for February 2021 was presented. No action was taken.

F. Monthly Report from the Code Enforcement Department for February 2021

The Monthly Report from the Code Enforcement Department for February 2021 was presented. No action was taken.

G. Monthly Report from the Columbus Recreation Department for February 2021

The Monthly Report from the Columbus Recreation Department for February 2021 was presented. No action was taken.

H. Monthly Report from the Columbus Police Department for February 2021

The Monthly Report from the Columbus Police Department for February 2021 was presented. No action was taken.

I. Monthly Report from the Building Inspection Department for February 2021

The Monthly Report from the Building Inspection Department for February 2021 was presented. No action was taken.

J. Monthly Financial Report

Deliah Vaughn, CFO, distributed the Monthly Financial Report for February 2021 and remarked that the City currently has a combined total of \$18,607,369.11. The General Fund has a total of \$15,122,101.48 and Special Revenue Funds totaling \$3,485,267.63. The General Fund Operating Cash for the month of February was \$4,338,973.76, prior year was \$3,799,481.68, which is \$539,481.68 more than February 2020. The Sales Tax collections for the month were \$792,874.49, which is an increase of \$75,487.65 compared to the same time the prior year.

K. Board Vacancies

David Armstrong, COO, announced vacancies on various boards and remarked that no appointment will be made tonight.

VII. CITIZENS INPUT AGENDA

BOB RAYMOND – Fallen CAFB Pilots Memorial

Mr. Bob Raymond requested approval to hold a memorial service at the site of the Airplane on Highway 45 North. Council Member Box made a motion to approve the request, subject to approval from MDOT, if required. Council Member Beard seconded the motion.

All Council Members voted in favor of the motion.

The motion carried.

TOMMY BROWN – Mask Ordinance

Mr. Tommy Brown participated in the meeting via teleconference and asked the Mayor and Council to follow the Governor's guidelines on the mask mandate or allow the citizens to choose. Vice-Mayor remarked that his request was taken under consideration.

ANGIE VERDELL – 1624 4th Avenue South

Angie Verdell participated in the meeting via teleconference and requested to have property located at 1624 – 4th Avenue South rescinded from the Derelict Property list so she, the new owner, can make the property inhabitable. Building Official, Kenny Wiegel, stated that the exterior of the structure is in poor condition, but after walking through, the interior appears to be solid enough to perform renovations. Council Member Box made a motion to rescind the order of immediate abatement of the property. Council Member Mickens seconded the motion.

All Council Members voted in favor of the motion.

The motion carried.

Ms. Verdell then requested 45 days to remediate the property. Council Member Box made a motion to approve the request to grant Ms. Verdell 45 days to apply for a building permit and begin repairing the structure. Council Member Jones seconded the motion.

All Council Members voted in favor of the motion.

The motion carried.

KAMAL KARRIEM – Street Name Dedication

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Mr. Kamal Karriem participated in the meeting via teleconference and requested that the City dedicate a section of 15th Street North, beginning at the intersection of 7th Avenue North and 15th Street North and continuing to 8th Avenue and 16th Street North as Helen Karriem Lane. Council Member Jones made a motion to this effect. Council Member Mickens seconded the motion.

All Council Members voted in favor of the motion.

The motion carried.

VIII. POLICY AGENDA

A. Discuss/Approve Promotion of two (2) Fire & Rescue Department Firefighters to Engineer.

Council Member Jones made a motion to promote Justin Martin and Baron McKee to the position of Engineers, with the appropriate pay increase. Council Member Beard seconded the motion.

All Council Members voted in favor of the motion.

The motion carried.

B. Discuss/Approve request to hire two (2) part-time Maintenance Technicians at the Trotter Convention Center to replace one (1) employee that resigned and one (1) employee who cannot work due to medical issues, and authorize the Human Resources Director to begin the normal recruitment process.

Council Member Jones made a motion to approve the request to hire two (2) part-time Maintenance Technicians for the Trotter Convention Center at \$11.00 per hour. Council Member Stewart seconded the motion.

All Council Members voted in favor of the motion.

The motion carried.

C. Discuss/Approve request to hire four (4) Police Officers, contingent on successful completion of a pre-employment medical exam and drug screen.

Council Member Jones made a motion to hire four (4) Police Officers: **Darrius Goss, Tykeria Harris, Jayonna Traxler-Minor and Jaylan Barry**, contingent on successful completion of a pre-employment medical exam and drug screen. Council Member Beard seconded the motion.

All Council Members voted in favor of the motion.

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The motion carried.

- D. (March 2, 2021 Agenda Consent Item E moved to Policy and tabled.)** Approve permit request submitted by Nancy Carpenter, on behalf of the Columbus Cultural Heritage Foundation, to host “Catfish in the Alley” on April 10, 2021 from 10:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. (*See attached map*).

Council Member Mickens made a motion to remove this item from the table. Council Member Jones seconded the motion.

All Council Members voted in favor of the motion.

The motion carried.

Council Member Jones made a motion to approve the request from the Columbus Cultural Heritage Foundation to host “Catfish in the Alley,” which will begin on April 8, 2021, with the recommendation of adhering to the mask mandate. Council Member Beard seconded the motion.

All Council Members voted in favor of the motion.

The motion carried.

E. Discuss/Approve Derelict Property Docket

EDDIE W. SHELTON
1813 – 3RD Avenue South
CASE NUMBER 20-0253 VEGETATION, RUBBISH AND GARBAGE

The General Counsel called for cause number **20-0253**. Property owner Eddie Shelton, appeared. Code Enforcement Officer Sasha James stated 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 adjudicate the property as such and that an Order be entered to such effect. Mr. Shelton remarked that the debris was not on his property. The General Counsel suggested that the Council not adjudicate this property and contact the Public Works Director to have the debris picked up. No further action was taken.

EDDIE W. SHELTON
918 – 6th Street South
CASE NUMBER 21-0021 RUBBISH AND GARBAGE

The General Counsel called for cause number **21-0021**. Property owner Eddie Shelton, appeared. Code Enforcement Officer Sasha James stated 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

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to adjudicate the property as such and that an Order be entered to such effect . Mr. Shelton remarked that the debris on the street was left in rental property that he owns and he was under the understanding that the Public Works Department would pick it up. Council Member Jones made a motion to table this matter until the next meeting to give the Counsel time to research the code. Council Member Beard seconded the motion.

All Council Members voted in favor of the motion.

The motion carried.

PEARLIE LEE
American Arbitrage Associates, LLC
1522 – 5th Avenue North &
417 – 16th Street North
CASE NUMBER 20-0302 DILAPIDATED

The General Counsel called for cause number **20-0302**. Property Owner Pearl Lee 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** of the structure, and that an Order be issued for the property. Ms. Lee requested the City to demolish the dilapidated structure on the back of the lot. 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/demolish 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 Stewart seconded the motion.

All Council Members voted in favor of the motion.

The motion carried.

MAJOR ANDREWS, III, SHIRLEY ANDREWS
AND MAJOR ANDREWS IV
1212 Moss Street
CASE NUMBER 20-0295 MAINTENANCE CODE, DILAPIDATED

The General Counsel called cause number **20-0295**. 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 Beard

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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 Stewart seconded the motion.

All Council Members voted in favor of the motion.

The motion carried.

MARCEL HILL

1722 – 10th Avenue North

CASE NUMBER 21-0003

RUBBISH AND GARBAGE

The General Counsel called cause number **21-0003**. Property owner Marcel Hill, participated in the meeting via teleconference and requested a **10-day extension** to remediate the property. Code Enforcement Officer, Sasha James, was asked what her recommendation was. She remarked that the property owner requested an extension to remediate the property and 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. Council Member Jones made a motion give the property owner a **10-day extension** to remediate the property, and that an Order be issued for the property 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 remove rubbish, personal property and other debris no more than twelve (12) times in a twenty-four (24) Council Member Beard seconded the motion.

All Council Members voted in favor of the motion.

The motion carried.

CALEB O. GRACE

1324 – 12TH Avenue South

CASE NUMBER 21-00019 RUBBISH AND GARBAGE

The General Counsel called cause number **21-0019**. Property owner Caleb Grace participated in the meeting via teleconference and requested a **20-day extension** to remediate the property. Code Enforcement Officer, Sasha James, was asked what her recommendation was. She remarked that the property owner requested an extension to remediate the property and 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. Council Member Stewart made a motion give the property owner a **20-day extension** to remediate the property, and that an Order be issued for the

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property 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 remove rubbish, personal property and other debris no more than twelve (12) times in a twenty-four (24) Council Member Jones seconded the motion.

All Council Members voted in favor of the motion.

The motion carried.

**SUIT DEVELOPMENTAL, INC.
DUTCH OIL COMPANY
310 Lehmberg Road
CASE NUMBER 21-0010**

**Exterior damage, Maintenance Code, and
Roof and Drainage**

The General Counsel called cause number **21-0010**. No one appeared. Code Enforcement Officer, Sasha James, remarked that the property owner requested a 45-day extension to remediate the property and stated that the property owner requested an extension to remediate the property and stated 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. Council Member Box made a motion to give the property owner a **45-day extension** to remediate the property, and that an Order be issued for the property 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 remove rubbish, personal property and other debris no more than twelve (12) times in a twenty-four (24) Council Member Jones seconded the motion.

All Council Members voted in favor of the motion.

The motion carried.

**WILLIAM VAUGHN AND EVELYN VAUGHN
2624 – 6TH Avenue North
CASE NUMBER 21-0004**

RUBBISH AND GARBAGE

The General Counsel called cause number **21-0004**. No one appeared. Code Enforcement Officer Sasha James stated the property has been **remediated** by the owner, and it is her 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,

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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 Stewart seconded the motion.

All Council Members present voted in favor of the motion.

The motion carried.

F. Discuss/Approve request from the Mississippi Home Corporation.

George Irby, Director of Planning and Community Development, remarked that the Mississippi Home Corporation is requesting Council authorization for Vice-Mayor Bill Gavin to sign documents in the absence of the Mayor. Council Member Jones made a motion to approve the request. Council Member Stewart seconded the motion.

All Council Members voted in favor of the motion.

The motion carried.

G. Discuss/Approve payment of invoice from Certified Local Grant/South Columbus Historic Resource for a survey

George Irby requested approval to pay JLD Preservation Consulting in the \$9,497.50 for conducting a survey that was previously approved by the Council. Council Member Beard made a motion to approve the request. Council Member Jones seconded the motion.

All Council Members voted in favor of the motion.

The motion carried.

CLOSED DETERMINATION:

Council Member Beard made a motion to go into closed session to determine whether it is necessary to go into Executive Session. Council Member Stewart seconded the motion.

All Council Members voted in favor of the motion.
The motion carried.

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All members of the public, with the exception of the Vice-Mayor, the Council, the General Counsel, the COO, the Police Chief, the Assistant Police Chief and the HR Director, exited the Council Chambers.

Vice-Mayor Gavin apprised the Council of two (2) Personnel matters and one (1) prospective litigation matter and remarked that these matters warrant being heard in Executive Session.

Council Member Box made a motion to go into Executive Session to discuss two (2) Personnel matters and one (1) Prospective litigation matter. Council Member Mickens seconded the motion.

All Council Members present voted in favor of the motion.

The motion carried.

The Chief Operations Officer then announced to the general public outside the Council Chambers that the Council was going into Executive Session to discuss two (2) Personnel matters and one (1) Prospective litigation matter.

IX. EXECUTIVE SESSION:

OPEN SESSION:

Council Member Beard made a motion to end the discussion of this matter and return to Open Session. Council Member Jones seconded the motion.

All Council Members voted in favor of the motion.

The motion carried 5/0.

The Chief Operations Officer then announced to the general public outside the meeting room that the Council was back in Open Session.

The General Counsel reported that the Vice-Mayor and Council went into Executive Session to discuss two (2) Personnel matters and appointed a committee to meet and come up with a resolution in an attempt to resolve grievances and one (1) Prospective Litigation matter and voted to purchase a new alarm system for Fire Station #5.

ADJOURNMENT:

The Vice-Mayor then asked if there was any other business to come before the Vice-Mayor and City Council. There being none, Council Member Jones moved that the

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meeting be adjourned. Upon second by Council Member Stewart and unanimous vote, the Vice-Mayor announced that the meeting was ADJOURNED.

Approved by: _____
Bill Gavin, Vice-Mayor

**Deliah T. Vaughn
CFO- Secretary-Treasurer**

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