

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

**APRIL 19, 2022
5:00 P.M.**

The Mayor and City Council met in Regular Session on Tuesday, April 19, 2022 at 5:00 p.m. in the Court Chambers of the Municipal Complex. Mayor Keith Gaskin presided over the meeting, and all Council Members were present, except Council Member Beard, who participated in the meeting via ZOOM. Also present were the General Counsel, the CFO, Police Chief, Assistant Police Chief, HR Director, and all other Department Heads. The COO participated in the meeting via ZOOM.

I. CALL TO ORDER AND INVOCATION

Mayor Gaskin called the meeting to order and called upon Rev. Anne Russell Bradley, Pastor of Congregational Care at Columbus First United Methodist Church, Columbus, MS, to offer the Invocation.

II. CONFIRMATION OF/OR AMENDMENTS TO THE AGENDA

Council Member Stewart made a motion to adopt the Agenda as presented. Council Member Greene seconded the motion.

All Council Members voted in favor of the motion.

The Motion carried 6/0.

III. APPROVE MINUTES FOR PREVIOUS MEETING

Council Member Diccio made a motion to approve the Minutes for the Meeting of April 5, 2022. Council Member Stewart seconded the motion.

All Council Members voted in favor of the motion.

The motion carried 6/0.

IV. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Approve request for two (2) Forensic Lab personnel, Shanna Cunningham and Kristina Zwerg, to attend "AFIX Tracker User Group Meeting" to be

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held in Pelham, AL, and approve payment of \$50.00 for travel and reimbursement of meal expenses.

- B. Approve request for Fire and Rescue personnel, Clayton Aldridge, to attend "Vehicle Extrication Technician" to be held in Tuscaloosa, AL and approve payment of \$50.00 for travel, and reimbursement of meal expenses.
- C. Approve request for Fire and Rescue personnel, Sally Kerstetter, to attend "Hazardous Materials Awareness and Operations," to be held in Pearl, MS, and approve payment of \$50.00 for travel and reimbursement of meal expenses.
- D. Approve request for the Court Administrator, Wendy Blunt, to attend the 2022 Mississippi Court Administrators Spring Conference, to be held in Biloxi, MS, at no cost to the City.
- E. Approve permit request submitted by LaChunda Sparks, on behalf of the CAFB and Stokes Beard Elementary School to host a "Child Abuse Prevention Awareness Parade" to be held on April 20, 2022 from 8:15 a.m. until 8:40 a.m., starting at Stokes Beard Elementary School, 311 South Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive.
- F. Approve request for CPD Officer, Justin Robinson, to attend the "Strategic Self-Defense and Gun Fighting Tactics Instructor Certification Course" to be held in Oxford, MS, and approve payment of \$700.00 for registration, \$400.00 for lodging, travel and reimbursement of meal expenses.
- G. Accept letter of resignation from CPD Officer, Cameron Lamar, effective April 15, 2022.
- H. Accept letter of retirement from CPD Investigator, Eric D. Lewis, effective April 30, 2022 and approve purchase of his service weapon pursuant to Mississippi Code 45-9-131 at a cost of \$10.00.
- I. Approve permit request submitted by Tony Price, on behalf of Kingdom Vision and Life Church Outreach, to host "Adopt-A-Block" Block Party to be held on April 30, 2022, ending at or before 10:00 p.m. at 12th Avenue North and Wheat Street, blocking Wheat and Clover Streets.

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

V. APPROVE DOCKET OF CLAIMS FOR APRIL 19, 2022

Council Member Mickens made a motion to approve the Docket of Claims for April 19, 2022, in the amount of \$545,919.07. Council Member Jones seconded the motion.

All Council Members voted in favor of the motion, except Council Member Dickey, who opposed.

The motion carried 5/1.

VI. REPORTS, PROCLAMATIONS, RECOGNITIONS AGENDA

A. GENERAL COMMENTS FROM THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL

Mayor Gaskin asked if any Council Members had any comments/announcements. There were none.

Mayor Gaskin offered the following observations/remarks:

He began by reading an excerpt from the Day of the Remembrance Proclamation:

WHEREAS, the Holocaust was the state-sponsored, systematic persecution and annihilation of European Jewry by Nazi Germany and its collaborators between 1933 and 1945; and

WHEREAS, six million people were murdered; Jews were the primary victims, but Gypsies, the handicapped, Poles, and others were also targeted for destruction of decimation for racial, ethnic, or national reasons and also suffered grievous oppression and death under Nazi tyranny; and

WHEREAS, the United States Holocaust Memorial Council designates the Days of Remembrance of the Victims of the Holocaust to be Sunday, April 24th – Sunday, May 1, 2022, including the Day of Remembrance known as Yom Hashoah, April 28, 2022.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that I, Keith Gaskin, Mayor of the City of Columbus, Mississippi, do hereby proclaim Sunday, April 24th – May 1, 2022 as DAYS OF REMEMBRANCE OBSERVANCE in and for the City of Columbus, including the Day of Remembrance known as Yom Hashoah, April 28, 2022.

MONTHLY REPORTS:

Mayor Gaskin asked the Council if they had any questions for Department Heads.

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B. Monthly Report from the Columbus Fire and Rescue Department for March 2022

The Monthly Report from the Columbus Fire and Rescue Department for March 2022 was presented. No action was taken.

C. Monthly Report from the Building Inspection Department for March 2022

The Monthly Report from the Building Inspection Department for March 2022 was presented. No action was taken.

D. Monthly Report from the Columbus Forensic Lab for March 2022

The Monthly Report from the Columbus Forensic Lab for March 2022 was presented. No action was taken.

E. Monthly Report from the Municipal Court Division for March 2022

The Monthly Report from the Municipal Court Division for March 2022 was presented. No action was taken.

F. Monthly Report from the Code Enforcement Department for March 2022

The Monthly Report from the Code Enforcement Department for March 2022 was presented. No action was taken.

G. Monthly Report from the Columbus Police Department for March 2022

The Monthly Report from the Columbus Police Department for March 2022 was presented. Chief Shelton reported that 179 traffic tickets were written and ten (10) were retired to the file. No action was taken.

H. Monthly Report from Public Works Department for March 2022

The Monthly Report from the Public Works Department for March 2022 was presented. Members of the Council had questions for the Public Works Director about various pieces of equipment and an estimate cost to replace needed equipment. Mr. Bush was then directed to prepare a list of equipment that is detrimental to operations of his department. No action was taken.

I. Monthly Report from the Office of Planning & Community Development Department for March 2022

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The Monthly Report from the Office of Planning & Community Development Department for March 2022 was presented. No action was taken.

J. Monthly Report from the Columbus Recreation Department for March 2022

The Monthly Report from the Columbus Recreation Department for March 2022 was presented. No action was taken.

K. Monthly Financial Report (Sales Tax and ARPA Initial Reporting)

Mr. Jim Brigham, CFO, offered the following comments regarding the City's Finance Department.:

- Finance personnel are reconciling and correcting fiscal years 2021 and 2022 concurrently and good progress is being made.
- I'm working with Watkins, Ward and Stafford Accounting Firm to complete the 2020 audit. CPA Firm is determining if a Single Audit is required. *A Single Audit is required when a municipality is awarded at least \$750,000.00 in grants.* Working hard to finalize FEMA filings. The City has eight (8) projects and have collected on three (3) of them. Working with Joe Dillon, FEMA Coordinator, to close out all FEMA projects.
- I'm preparing the initial American Rescue Plan Act reporting that is due 4/30/22. As outlined in the final rule, recipients have the option to make a one-time decision to calculate revenue loss according to the formula outlined in the final rule or elect a "Standard Allowance" of up to \$10 million, not to exceed the award allocation, to spend on government services throughout the period of performance. The option to make this one-time decision will be provided during the April 30, 2022 reporting deadline. *For recipients electing the "Standard Allowance," Treasury will presume that up to \$10 million, not to exceed the award allocation, in revenue has been lost due to the public health emergency and recipients are permitted to use that amount to fund "government services."*
- Received City Diversion Sales Tax Allocation April 14, 2022 that totaled \$823,694.38, which is an increase of \$107,728.94 (15.05%) compared to April 16, 2021 collection that was \$715,965.44; 2% Food & Beverage Special Tax collected for same period totaled \$153,105.84 compared to \$143,300.44 for 2021, which is an \$9,805.40 (6.84%) increase and 2% Hotel Special Tax collected was \$25,296.65 compared to \$16,273.43 for 2021, an increase of \$9,023.22 (55.45%).

VII. CITIZENS INPUT AGENDA

A. Dr. Cherie Labat, CMSD Superintendent

Dr. Cherie Labat, Columbus Municipal School District Superintendent, appeared before the Mayor and City Council to advocate for students, schools, parents and the community and requested that the City leaders consider OPTING OUT of the medical marijuana initiative. Dr. Labat cited her concerns. This request was taken under consideration and no action was taken.

B. Mr. Terry Pittman

Mr. Terry Pittman, a potential investor of the medical marijuana initiative, appeared before the Mayor and City Council and requested that the City leaders consider OPTING IN of the medical marijuana initiative and cited reasons for doing so. This request was taken under consideration and no action was taken.

VIII. POLICY AGENDA

A. Discuss/Approve Derelict Property Docket

JNT CONST LLC
1216 Military Road
CASE #: 22-0041

**Accumulation of Rubbish and
Garbage, Disposal of Rubbish**

The General Counsel called cause number **22-0041**. 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 uncleanliness 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 Jones 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 Stewart seconded the motion.

All Council Members voted in favor of the motion.

The motion carried 6/0.

FRANK AND WILLIE SHELTON ESTATE

1700 22nd Street North

CASE #: 22-0031

**Accumulation of Rubbish and
Garbage**

The General Counsel called cause number **22-0031**. 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 Jones 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 Stewart seconded the motion.

All Council Members voted in favor of the motion.

The motion carried 6/0.

WILLIE AND ROSE MINGA

2415 Bell Avenue

CASE #: 22-0012

**Accumulation of Rubbish and
Garbage, Disposal of Rubbish**

The General Counsel called cause number **22-0012**. 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 Jones 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 Stewart seconded the motion.

All Council Members voted in favor of the motion.

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The motion carried 6/0.

ANTIONETTE D. BLACK
409 & 409 ½ Warren Street
Case Number 22-0024 Burned Structure

The General Counsel called cause number **22-0024**. 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** and that an Order be issued for the property. Council Member Greene 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 Jones seconded the motion.

All Council Members voted in favor of the motion.

The motion carried 6/0.

B. Discuss/Approve promotion of one (1) CPD Sergeant to Lieutenant

Council Member Jones made a motion to approve the promotion of Sergeant Christopher Smith to the position of Lieutenant with the proper pay adjustment. Council Member Beard seconded the motion. The Police Chief and Assistant Police Chief came forward and pinned the Lieutenant badge and insignia on the Lt. Smith.

All Council Members voted in favor of the motion.

The motion carried 6/0.

C. Discuss/Approve hiring one (1) CPD Officer, contingent upon a successful drug screen and pre-employment medical exam

Council Member Mickens made a motion to hire **Ke`Shawn Adams** as a full-time Police Officer, contingent on successful completion of a drug screen and pre-employment medical exam. Council Member Jones seconded the motion.

All Council Members voted in favor of the motion.

The motion carried 6/0.

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D. Discuss/Approve hiring one (1) CPD Reserve Officer, contingent upon a successful drug screen and pre-employment medical exam

Council Member Beard made a motion to approve the request to hire **Anganesha Sanders** as a Reserve Police Officer, contingent on successful completion of a drug screen and a medical exam. Council Member Jones seconded the motion.

All Council Members voted in favor of the motion.

The motion carried 6/0.

E. Approve request to fill vacant position of Collection Clerk in the Municipal Court Division, contingent on successful completion of a pre-employment medical exam and drug screen

Council Member Stewart made a motion to approve the request to hire **SARAH WATKINS** as Collection Clerk in the Municipal Court Division at \$11.03 per hour, contingent on successful completion of a pre-employment medical exam and drug screen. Council Member Jones seconded the motion.

All Council Members voted in favor of the motion.

The motion carried 6/0.

F. Discuss/Approve the hiring of six (6) summer workers for the Columbus Recreation Department to supervise school children at the Community Centers during the summer at \$8.00 per hour and the hiring of one (1) seasonal Laborer at \$10.00 per hour to assist with cutting grass, contingent on successful completion of a pre-employment drug screen

Council Member Jones made a motion to approve the request to hire six (6) summer workers for the Columbus Recreation Department to supervise school children at the Community Centers during the summer at \$8.00 per hour and the hiring of one (1) seasonal Laborer at \$10.00 per hour to assist with cutting grass, contingent on successful completion of a pre-employment drug screen. Council Member Mickens seconded the motion.

All Council Members voted in favor of the motion.

The motion carried 6/0.

G. Discuss/Approve City Hall parking stall property swap between Firehouse Commons (Mark Smith) and City of Columbus

Kevin Stafford, dba Neel-Schaffer, Inc., came forward and remarked that the City swapped parking spaces with Mark Smith, owner of Firehouse

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Commons, .010 acres for .005 acres. When paving the parking lot. Mr. Smith gave the City two (2) spaces for in exchange for one (1) space. Council Member Beard made a motion to approve the request. Council Member Jones seconded the request.

All Council Members voted in favor of the motion.

The motion carried 6/0.

H. Discuss/Approve Concession Contract for Columbus Recreation Department in the amount of \$1,000.00 for the 2022 Baseball/Softball Season

Council Member Jones made a motion to approve the Concession Contract with **Veleria Scott** for the Columbus Recreation Department, in the amount of \$1,000.00 to be paid to the City of Columbus for the 2022 Baseball/Softball Season. Council Member Mickens seconded the motion.

All Council Members voted in favor of the motion.

The motion carried 6/0.

I. Discuss/Approve Recommendations from the April 11, 2022 Planning Commission meeting

Permitted Use Request 22-06

On Behalf of Stuart Phillips
522 Island Road
Tax Parcel 10E01-00-02800
R-5 Mobile Homes & Mobile Home Parks District

Request to expand an existing R/V Park

The Planning Commission unanimously recommended approval to add an additional thirty-one (31) spaces to the existing park.

Council Member Greene moved that the facts and findings of the Planning Commission be adopted as the facts and findings of the Mayor and City Council, and that the recommendation of the Planning Commission to grant request to expand an existing R/V Park f be approved. Council Member Mickens seconded the motion. Building Official, Kenney Wiegel, stated that there were no objections to this request. There followed discussion, consideration, and review by the Council of the issues and facts presented by this request and the action taken by the City of Columbus Planning Commission.

All Council Members voted in favor of the motion.

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The motion carried 6/0.

J. Discuss/Approve Emergency purchase of used Fire Truck and appoint designee for emergency purchases

Council Member Jones made a motion to approve Emergency purchase of a used Fire Truck under “NUNC PRO TUNC” (now for then) terms due to having three (3) fire apparatuses in need of repair requiring the Columbus Fire and Rescue Department to borrow a fire apparatus from Lowndes County, and appoint Mayor Keith Gaskin as designee for emergency purchases. Council Member Mickens seconded the motion.

All Council Members voted in favor of the motion.

The motion carried 6/0.

K. Discuss/Approve grant of access easement over and across .14 acres of land South and West of Friendship Cemetery

Council Member Mickens made a motion to approve the request to grant access easement over and across .14 acres of land South and West of Friendship Cemetery pursuant to Deed of Easement that follows and recommendation of General Counsel Turnage. Council Member Greene seconded the motion.

All Council Members voted in favor of the motion.

The motion carried 6/0.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS FOLLOW:

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Instrument prepared by:	Indexing instructions:
M. Jay Nichols, MSB#10066 Crowell Gillis & Cooper, PLLC Post Office Box 1827 Columbus, MS 39703-1827 (662) 243-7330	SW ¼, S21, T18S, R18W Lowndes County, MS N1708

STATE OF MISSISSIPPI

DEED OF EASEMENT

COUNTY OF LOWNDES

For and in consideration of the sum of Ten Dollars (\$10.00) and other good and valuable considerations, the receipt and sufficiency of which is hereby acknowledged, **City of Columbus, Mississippi**, Post Office Box 1408, Columbus, Mississippi 39703, Telephone (662) 328-2381, Grantor, does hereby convey and transfer unto **S&S Cypress Lake Farm, LLC**, a Mississippi limited liability company, 419 Third Street South, Columbus, MS 39701, Telephone (305) 546-0812, Grantee, a permanent and perpetual but non-exclusive easement for ingress and egress over and across the following described tract located in Lowndes County, Mississippi, to-wit:

The following description is based on the Mississippi State Plane Coordinate System, East Zone, NAD 83, grid values, US Feet, using a scale factor of 0.9999673143 and a grid to geodetic azimuth angle of (+) 00 degrees 13 minutes 20.9 seconds developed at the approximate center of the following described parcel.

An easement for ingress and egress being more particularly described as follows:

Commencing at a found ½" rebar at the Northeast Corner of the Southwest Quarter of Section 28, Township 18 South, Range 18 West, Lowndes County, Mississippi;

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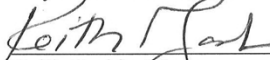
thence North 90 degrees 00 minutes 00 seconds West a distance of 1901.83 feet; thence North 00 degrees 00 minutes 00 seconds East a distance of 3162.96 feet to a set ½" rebar; thence North 02 degrees 51 minutes 11 seconds West a distance of 40.00 feet to a point on the South line of a tract of land found in Deed Book 55 Page 270 on file in the Chancery Clerk's Office of Lowndes County, Mississippi; thence, along said South line, South 87 degrees 08 minutes 49 seconds West a distance of 100.25 feet to a set ½" rebar, said point being the Point of Beginning of the herein described easement; thence, along the South line of said tract, South 87 degrees 08 minutes 49 seconds West a distance of 82.60 feet to a set ½" rebar; thence, along the South line of said tract, North 52 degrees 33 minutes 22 seconds West a distance of 435.34 feet to a found marble monument at a fence corner; thence South 55 degrees 31 minutes 46 seconds East a distance of 416.33 feet to a set ½" rebar; thence South 73 degrees 38 minutes 07 seconds East a distance of 88.48 feet to the Point of Beginning, containing 0.14 acres (5904 sq ft), more or less, and lying in the Southwest Quarter of Section 21, Township 18 South, Range 18 West, Lowndes County, Mississippi.

This agreement, together with other provisions of this grant shall constitute a covenant, running with the land, for the benefit of the Grantee, its successors and assigns and shall be binding upon the Grantor, its successors and assigns. Grantor expressly reserves the right to use this strip for the purposes, which will not interfere with Grantee's full enjoyment of rights granted herein.

WITNESS the execution hereof on this the 19 day of April, 2022.

City of Columbus, MS

By:

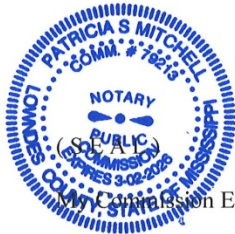

Keith Gaskin, Mayor

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STATE OF MISSISSIPPI)

COUNTY OF Lowndes)

Personally appeared before me, the undersigned notary public in and for said county and state aforesaid, on this 19th day of April, 2022, within my jurisdiction, the within named Keith Gaskin, who acknowledged before me that he is the Mayor of the City of Columbus, Mississippi, and that for and on behalf of the said City of Columbus, Mississippi, and as its act and deed, he executed the above and foregoing instrument, after first being duly authorized so to do.



Patricia S. Mitchell
NOTARY PUBLIC

My Commission Expires: March 2, 2026

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L. Consider/Approve addendum #2 to contract for purchase and sale of Woody's property at Marina to extend closing date to not later than June 15, 2022

Council Member Jones made a motion to approve Addendum #2 to contract for purchase and sale of Woody's property at Marina to extend closing date to not later than June 15, 2022. Council Member Stewart seconded the motion.

All Council Members voted in favor of the motion.

The motion carried 6/0.

IX. EXECUTIVE SESSION

There were no Executive Session matters to come before the Mayor and Council tonight.

ADJOURNMENT:

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

Approved by: _____
Keith Gaskin, Mayor

James Brigham
Secretary-Treasurer/City Clerk