

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

**DECEMBER 6, 2022
5:00 P.M.**

The Mayor and City Council met in Regular Session on Tuesday, December 6, 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. Also present were the General Counsel, the COO, CFO, Interim Police Chief, HR Director, and all other Department Heads.

I. CALL TO ORDER AND INVOCATION

Mayor Gaskin called the meeting to order and offered the Invocation.

II. CONFIRMATION OF/OR AMENDMENTS TO THE AGENDA

Councilwoman Stewart made a motion to adopt the Agenda as presented. Councilwoman Diccico seconded the motion.

All Council Members voted in favor of the motion.

The motion carried 6/0.

**III. APPROVE MINUTES FOR MEETINGS OF NOVEMBER 15 & 22 AND
DECEMBER 1, 2022**

Councilwoman Diccico made a motion to approve the Minutes for the Meetings of November 15 & 22 and December 1, 2022. Council Member Greene seconded the motion.

All Council Members voted in favor of the motion.

The motion carried 6/0.

IV. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Accept letter of resignation from CPD Officer, Laketa Williams, effective December 2, 2022.

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- B. Approve request for twenty-eight (28) Fire and Rescue personnel to attend a refresher course on NREMT Re-certification held at Station 4, Columbus, MS and payment of \$3,300.00 to Instructor Richard Holloway.
- C. Approve request for 28 Fire and Rescue personnel for MS EMS Certification/Re-certification license in the amount of \$1,120.00
- D. Approve request for four (4) Command Staff Fire and Rescue personnel: Chief Hughes, Training Chief Mike Chandler, Fire Life & Safety Educator Mike Walker and Fire Marshal Alan Lewis, to attend Graduation for Kaelan Brownstein for NFPA 1001 I & II to be held at the MS Fire Academy in Pearl, MS, and approve payment of travel in the amount of \$50.00.
- E. Approve request for Fire and Rescue personnel, James Dunnam and Montreal Neal to attend "*National Registry EMT Certification Course*" at EMCC in Mayhew, MS, and approve payment of registration, background check, drug screen, and required vaccinations, in the amount of \$2,300.00 each in a total cost of \$4,600.00.
- F. Approve request for Fire and Rescue personnel, Sally Kerstetter, to attend "National Registry NREMT Exam in Tuscaloosa, AL from December 8 – 22, 2022 and approve reimbursement payment in the amount of \$98.00.
- G. Approve request for reimbursement for lodging and other expenses in the amount of \$284.85.

Council Member Greene made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Councilwoman Diccio 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

The Docket of Claims for December 6, 2022 was presented. Councilwoman Stewart made a motion to approve the Docket of Claims in the amount of \$1,174,049.78. Mayor Gaskin called for a second. There was no second and the motion failed. The Council engaged in a discussion of some vouchers on the Docket of Claims, which include Bridge & Watson, Inc. totaling \$1743.47. The General Council remarked that this charge was for a map of the area after the state approved Medical Cannabis. The Council Members then discussed payment of voucher numbers 209986 – 208990 totaling \$94,236.05 to Waggoner Engineering, Inc. CFO, Jim Brigham, elaborated on the fund for which the payment would come from.

SUBSTITUTE MOTION:

Council Member Beard made a motion to approve the Docket of Claims for December 6, 2022 in the amount of \$1,174,049.78 less \$94,236.05 for Waggoner Engineering, Inc. Council Member Greene seconded the motion.

All Council Members voted in favor of the motion.

The motion carried 6/0.

VI. REPORTS, PROCLAMATIONS, RECOGNITIONS AGENDA

A. Mayor Gaskin asked if any Council Members had any comments/announcements.

Councilman Beard announced that the State of the Ward meeting for Ward IV was not held in October and November, but will be held the last Monday in December, 12/26/2022.

Mayor Gaskin made the following announcements/observations:

- I'd like to thank Columbus Main Street, the other sponsors, volunteers, businesses, etc. for their work during Wassail Fest and the Christmas parade. Thank you to the churches, organizations, schools, civic organizations, community groups who participated as well.
- We encourage citizens to participate in the many holiday events and programs in our community. Also, please be sure to give to reputable charities as you are able and remember our area food pantries.

B. Swearing In of two (2) Police Department Police Officers

- **Dustin Capps and Neosha Dozier**

Mayor Gaskin swore in new Columbus Police Department Police Officers as the officers recited the Oath of Office. Members of the Police Department Command Staff were present to present Police Officers Dustin Capps and Neosha Dozier their badge and insignia.

C. Board Vacancies:

Ms. Jammie Garrett, COO, announced vacancies on various boards and remarked that no appointments will be made tonight.

TREE BOARD:

2 Vacancies, 3-Year Terms, Michael Foster and Mildred Monroe Terms Expire 12/03/2022.

The Appointment will be made on December 6, 2022.

There are no applicants at this time.

GOLDEN TRIANGLE REGIONAL WASTE MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY:

1 Vacancy, 4-Year Term, Julie Goodin's Term Expires December 31, 2022.

The Appointment will be made January 3, 2023.

There are no applicants at this time.

Mayor Gaskin reported that the City is preparing RFPs (Request for Proposals) to explore other options. Some of GTRWMA's truck are inoperable again.

Ms. Garrett encouraged interested citizens to apply for vacant board positions, which can be done by applying online or picking up an application from City Hall.

VII. CITIZENS INPUT AGENDA

No one signed up to be on the Citizens Input Agenda.

VIII. POLICY AGENDA

A. Discuss/Approve Derelict Property Docket

HILDA FOX

1801 3rd Avenue South

CASE NUMBER: 22-0373 Accumulation of Rubbish & Garbage

The General Counsel called cause number **22-0373**. No one appeared, but the Code Enforcement Officer stated that a request was made for an extension. Code Enforcement Officer Sasha James recommended a **10-day extension** to remediate the property. 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. Councilwoman Stewart made a motion give the property owner a **10-day extension** to remediate the property, obtain a building permit expeditiously and show progress of improvement, and that an Order be issued for the property in accordance with Section 21-19-11 of the Mississippi Code, 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) month period. Council Member Greene seconded the motion.

All Council Members voted in favor of the motion.

The motion carried 6/0.

OLIVER MILLER
College Street Lot

CASE NUMBER: 22-0375 Accumulation of Rubbish & Garbage

The General Counsel called cause number **22-0375**. No one appeared, but the Code Enforcement Officer stated that a request was made for an extension. Code Enforcement Officer Sasha James recommended a **10-day extension** to remediate the property. 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. Councilwoman Stewart made a motion give the property owner a **10-day extension** to remediate the property, obtain a building permit expeditiously and show progress of improvement, and that an Order be issued for the property in accordance with Section 21-19-11 of the Mississippi Code, 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) month period. Council Member Greene seconded the motion.

All Council Members voted in favor of the motion.

The motion carried 6/0.

B. Discuss/Approve hiring one (1) Entry-Level Firefighter, pending successful completion of a pre-employment physical exam and drug screen.

Council Member Beard made a motion to approve the request to hire **DALTON COOK** as Entry-Level Firefighter, pending successful completion of a pre-employment physical exam and drug screen.

All Council Members voted in favor of the motion.

The motion carried 6/0.

C. Discuss/Approve request to fill vacant Custodian position, pending successful completion of a pre-employment physical exam and drug screen

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Council Member Beard made a motion to hire **FREDERICK HILL** as Custodian at \$12.50 per hour, pending successful completion of a pre-employment drug screen and physical exam. Council Member Jones seconded the motion.

All Council Members voted in favor of the motion.

The motion carried 6/0.

D. Discuss/Approve request to fill position of City Maintenance Technician, pending successful completion of a pre-employment physical exam and drug screen

Council Member Beard made a motion to approve the request to hire **RICKEY HUDSON** as City Maintenance Technician at \$16.64 per hour, pending successful completion of a pre-employment drug screen and physical exam. Councilwoman Stewart seconded the motion.

All Council Members voted in favor of the motion.

The motion carried 6/0.

E. Discuss/Approve a sixty (60) month lease of one (1) GC-MS-FID

At the request of the COO, Council Member Beard made a motion to table this request. Council Member Jones seconded the motion.

All Council Members voted in favor of the motion.

The motion carried 6/0.

F. Discuss/Approve Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) regarding Lowndes County's purchase of an Agilent Gas Chromatograph-Mass Spectrometer-8890 GC with 5977C MSD with Quick Probe (GCMS) for the use at the Forensic Lab.

Council Member Greene made a motion to approve Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) regarding Lowndes County's purchase of an Agilent Gas Chromatograph-Mass Spectrometer-8890 GC with 5977C MSD with Quick Probe (GCMS) for the use at the Forensic Lab. Council Member Beard seconded the motion.

All Council Members voted in favor of the motion

The motion carried 6/0.

THE MOU FOLLOWS:

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

WHEREAS, the City of Columbus, Mississippi (City) operates a Crime Laboratory for the testing of certain substances that are part of a criminal investigation and,

WHEREAS, the Lowndes County Sheriff's Department and the local drug task force utilizes the services of this laboratory in performing their duties, and

WHEREAS, the City's Crime Laboratory (Lab) is in need of an instrument that will make the process of analyzing substances more efficient,

FOR AND IN CONSIDERATION of the mutual promises and obligations set forth below, the City of Columbus (City) and Lowndes County (County) hereby enter into the following agreement:

(1) County will purchase an Agilent Gas Chromatograph-Mass Spectrometer_8890 GC with 5977C MSD with QuickProbe (GCMS) for the use of the Lab.

(2) County will retain ownership of this GCMS. Possession and use of the instrument will be exclusively that of the Lab.

(3) The Lab shall be wholly responsible for the maintenance of this instrument. The County shall purchase a one-year warranty to begin on the date of purchase of the GCMS.

(4) Upon delivery to the City of the GCMS, the City shall validate the GCMS. Beginning on the date of validation of the GCMS by the City and for a period one year thereafter, the City shall provide the County GCMS Controlled Substances Official Reports not later than six months after delivery by the County to the Lab of the substance to be analyzed.

(5) After the expiration of the one year period from the date of validation, the Lab shall provide Controlled Substances Official Reports to the County not later than four months after delivery by the County to the Lab of the substance to be analyzed.

(6) The Lab shall analyze seized drugs submitted by the County in its usual and customary manner consistent with the Recommendations of the Scientific Working Group for the Analysis of Seized Drugs (SWGDRUG). When a large number of dosage units are submitted from a single seizure, the Lab will test a number of dosage units to determine if the drugs are illegal. If the dosage units tested are found to be illegal, then the Lab will analyze as many dosage units as are required to prove a felony with the highest criminal punishment that might be adjudicated by a Court from the amount of dosage units seized in that seizure. If the Director of the Lab has what is perceived to be a conflict of interest or a concern about potential bias, the Director shall notify the Sheriff of the issue and if the Sheriff still wants the Lab to proceed in the face of the perceived conflict, then the Lab will proceed to test the samples submitted.

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(7) The Lab shall be free to utilize the GCMS for analysis of substances delivered to the Lab by the City and other agencies. The City's Lab shall be free to charge for such GCMS analysis and retain any and all fees and expenses resulting therefrom.

(8) This agreement shall not be modified except in writing and executed by the parties herein.

Agreed to:

CITY OF COLUMBUS

COUNTY OF LOWNDES

BY: _____
It's Mayor

BY: _____
It's Board of Supervisor's President

Date: _____

Date: _____

G. Discuss/Approve Waggoner engineering, Inc. to apply for the Mississippi Municipality and County Water (MCWI) Grant for matching funds using local ARPA fiscal recovery funds.

Emad Al Turk, P.E. for Waggoner Engineering, Inc., came before the Mayor and Council, remarked that the second round of MCWI funding grant application opened December 1, 2022 and will close January 31, 2023 and requested permission to apply for the Mississippi Municipality and County Water (MCWI) Grant for matching funds using local ARPA fiscal recovery funds. Councilwoman Diccio made a motion to grant approval for Waggoner Engineering, Inc. to apply for the Mississippi Municipality and County Water (MCWI) Grant for matching funds using local ARPA fiscal recovery funds. Council Member Mickens seconded the motion.

All Council Members voted in favor of the motion.

The motion carried 6/0.

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 Greene seconded the motion.

All Council Members voted in favor of the motion.

The motion carried 6/0.

All members of the public, with the exception of the Mayor, the Council, the General Counsel, the COO, the CFO, and the HR Director, exited the meeting.

Mayor Gaskin apprised the Council of four (4) Personnel matters and one (1) Prospective sell of Municipal property and remarked that these matters warrant being heard in Executive Session.

Councilwoman Stewart made a motion to go in Executive Session to discuss four (4) Personnel matters and one (1) Prospective sell of Municipal property. Council Member Greene seconded the motion.

All Council Members voted in favor of the motion.

The motion carried 6/0.

The COO announced to the general public outside the Council Chambers that the Council was going into Executive Session to discuss four (4) Personnel matters and one (1) Prospective sell of Municipal property.

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ADJOURNMENT:

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

Approved by: _____
Keith Gaskin, Mayor

James "Jim" Brigham
CFO/Secretary-Treasurer/City Clerk