MEETING OF
THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF COLUMBUS, MS
September 17, 2024

The Mayor and City Council met in Regular Session on Tuesday, September 17, 2024 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, Police Chief, HR Director, and all other Department Heads.

I. CALL TO ORDER AND INVOCATION:

Mayor Gaskin called the meeting to order and called on Rev. Leonardo Dismukes to offer the Invocation.

II. CONFIRMATION OF/OR AMENDMENTS TO THE AGENDA:

Councilwoman DiCicco requested to move Item “P” on the Consent Agenda to the Policy Agenda as Item “J.” Councilwoman Stewart made a motion to approve the agenda as amended. Councilwoman DiCicco seconded the motion.

All Council Members voted in favor of the motion.

The motion carried 6/0.

III. APPROVE MINUTES FOR MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 3, 2024, THE MEETING OF THE 1st HEARING/SPECIAL MEETING OF AUGUST 15, 2024, SPECIAL MEETINGS OF SEPTEMBER 9 AND 12, 2024.

Councilwoman DiCicco made a motion to approve the Minutes for the Meeting of September 3, 2024, Minutes of the 1st Hearing/Special Meeting of August 15, 2024, and Minutes of Special Meetings of September 9 and 12, 2024. 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 Fire and Rescue Firefighter, Robert Dinsmore, effective September 17, 2024 and approve compensation of any unused vacation leave.

B. Approve request for the Code Enforcement Director, Sasha Jaynes, to attend the Keep Mississippi Beautiful State Conference to be held in Ocean Springs, MS on November 4 & 5, 2024 and approve payment of registration, lodging, and reimbursement of meal expenses in the estimated total cost of $448.08.

C. Approve request for Fire and Rescue personnel, Landon Hill, to attend "NFPA 1002 Driver/Operator" class to be held in Jackson, MS, and approve payment of registration, lodging, travel and reimbursement of meals in the estimated total cost of $225.00.

D. Approve request for Fire and Rescue personnel, Baron McKee, to attend "Vehicle Extrication and Rescue Technician" to be held in Jackson, MS and approve payment of registration, use of a city vehicle and reimbursement of meal expenses in the estimated total cost of $680.00.

E. Approve request for Fire and Rescue personnel, Kameron Pearson, to attend "Fire Service Instructor" to be held in Jackson, MS and approve payment of registration, lodging, use of a city vehicle and reimbursement of meal expenses in the estimated total cost of $1,075.00.

F. Approve request for Fire and Rescue personnel: James Dunnam, Victoria Culpepper and Christian Thomas to attend "NFPA 1001-Basic Firefighter" to be held in Jackson, MS, and approve payment of registration, lodging, use of a city vehicle, any other required expenses and reimbursement of meal expenses in the estimated total cost of $5,800.00.

G. Approve request for CPD Captain, Terence Ware, to attend two (2) session of the "FMINAA Leadership Certification Program" to be held in Southaven, MS and approve payment of registration, lodging, use of city vehicle, books and reimbursement of meal expenses in the estimated total cost of $1,455.00.

H. Approve permit request submitted by Shane Cruse, on behalf of Victory Tabernacle Church, to host a "Fall Fest Block Party" to be held on October 27, 2024 from 4:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m. at 324 5th Street South. *See attached map.*

I. Approve permit request submitted by Rosalyn Merchant on behalf of First Methodist Church Early Learning Center, to host a "Boo Parade" to be held on October 31, 2024 from 10:00 a.m. until 11:15 a.m. *See attached map.*

J. Approve permit request submitted by Craig Chapman, on behalf of the Columbus Municipal School District, to host a “Parade and Assembly to Celebrate Districts’ 2023 – 2024 accountability Rating” to be held on October 17, 2024 from 6:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m., starting at the Columbus Police Department and proceed to the corner of Bank of Commerce on Main Street. A stage will be set up at the intersection of Main Street and 5th Street.

K. Approve permit request submitted by Rosalyn Merchant, on behalf of First Methodist Church, Annunciation Catholic Church and St. Paul Episcopal Church, to host a “Fall Festival” to be held on October 27, 2024 from 4:00 p.m. until 6:30 p.m. *See attached map.*

L. Ratify permit request submitted by Keith Brooks, on behalf of the Hodges Family, to host a “Memorial/Homegoing Celebration” that was held on September 14, 2024 from 5:00 p.m. until 10:00 p.m., blocking Ash Street at 11th Avenue North and 12th Avenue North.

M. Approve request to renew Notary Commission for Rogena Bonner, Director of Trotter Convention Center and approve payment of necessary notary supplies in the estimated cost of $400.00.

N. Approve payment in the amount of $10,800.00 to Falcon Contracting for the repair of the 5th Street void.

O. Approve payment of aging invoice for pre-employment physicals for two (2) Public Works employees to Baptist Urgent Care in the amount of $330.00.

P. MOVED TO POLICY AGENDA

Councilwoman Stewart made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as amended. Council Member Jones seconded the motion. The Mayor called for discussion, and there being none, all Council Members voted in favor of same, with a unanimous vote from those present, 6/0.

V. APPROVE DOCKET OF CLAIMS:

Council Member Greene made a motion to approve the Docket of Claims for September 17, 2024, in the amount of $628,239.50. Councilwoman Stewart seconded the motion.

All Council Members present voted in favor of the motion, except Councilwoman DiCicco, who opposed.

The motion carried 5/1.

VI. REPORTS, PROCLAMATIONS, RECOGNITIONS AGENDA:

A. Mayor Gaskin asked members of the Council if they had any announcements.

- Mayor Gaskin Congratulated the Columbus Municipal School District for attaining a “B” Rating.

- Mayor Gaskin announced that September 17 – 23, 2024 is Constitution Week, which is a week-long observance in the United States that honors the adoption of the Constitution and the rights of citizenship. He proceeded to read a Proclamation in recognition of the event.

- REMINDER: October 7, 2024 is the deadline date to register to vote for the upcoming November 5th Election.

- The City is a sponsor of “Thunder Over Columbus” at CAFB and encouraged the public to attend this event.

Mayor Gaskin asked the Council if they had questions about the Department Heads’ Monthly Reports.

B. Building Inspection – August 2024 Monthly Report

The Monthly Report from the Building Inspection Department for August 2024 was presented. No action was taken.

C. Community Outreach – August 2024 Monthly Report

The Monthly Report from the Community Outreach for August 2024 was presented. No action was taken.

D. Columbus Police Department – August 2024 Monthly Report

The Monthly Report from the Columbus Police Department for August 2024 was presented. No action was taken.

E. Garage - August 2024 Monthly Report

The Monthly Report from the James M. Trotter Convention Center/Friendship Cemetery for May 2024 was presented. No action was taken.

F. James M. Trotter Convention Center – Friendship/Sandfield Cemeteries – August 2024 Monthly Report

The Monthly Report from the James M. Trotter Convention Center – Friendship/Sandfield Cemeteries – August 2024 Monthly Report was presented. No action was taken.

G. Office of Planning and Community Development Department – August 2024 Monthly Report

The Monthly Report from the Office of Planning and Community Development Department for August 2024 was presented. No action was taken.

H. Code Enforcement Department – August 2024 Monthly Report

The Monthly Report from the Code Enforcement Department for August 2024 was presented. No action was taken.

I. Columbus Fire and Rescue Department – August 2024 Monthly Report

The Monthly Report from the Columbus Fire and Rescue Department for August 2024 was presented. No action was taken.

J. Columbus Recreation Department – August 2024 Monthly Report

The Monthly Report from the Columbus Recreation Department for August 2024 was presented. No action was taken.

K. Human Resources – August 2024 Monthly Report

The Monthly Report from the Human Resources Department for August 2024 was presented. No action was taken.

L. Public Works Department – August 2024 Monthly Report

The Monthly Report from the Public Works Department for August 2024 was presented. No action was taken.

M. Municipal Court – August 2024 Monthly Report

The Monthly Report from the Municipal Court for August 2024 was presented. A question was directed to the Municipal Court Administrator about the increase in fines. She responded that CPD has a Traffic Officer who is writing more tickets, which accounts for the increase, plus the court is permitting offenders to pay what they can on fines.

N. Finance – May 2024 Monthly Report

Jim Brigham, CFO, distributed the Monthly Financial Report for August 2024, that includes the General Fund cash balance of $9,719,694.28, which is an increase of $1,316,873.32 compared to the same time last year. The Sales Tax Receipts for August are $919,334.00, which is an increase of $4,720.00 compared to the previous year. No action was taken.

O. Board Vacancies

Jammie Garrett, COO announced vacancies on various boards, as follows:

REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY BOARD
1 Vacancy, 5-Year Term, Dennis Erby's Term expires October 15, 2024.
Appointment will be made October 15, 2024.

APPLICANT:
Dennis Erby

COLUMBUS-LOWNDES LIBRARY BOARD
1 Vacancy, 5-Year Term, Hillary Richardson's Term expires October 1, 2024.
Appointment will be made October 1, 2024.

APPLICANTS:
Anita Pintado
Elizabeth (Libby) Robertson

GOLDEN TRIANGLE LINK DEVELOPMENT BOARD
1 Vacancy, 3-Year Term, Bill West's Term expires September 30, 2024.
Appointment will be made October 1, 2024.

APPLICANT:
Bill West

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
1 Vacancy, 4-Year Term, Robert Ivy's Term expires September 20, 2024.
Appointment will be made September 17, 2024.

APPLICANT:
Robert Ivy

Council Member Beard made a motion to reappoint Robert Ivy to the Historic Preservation Commission for a 4-Year Term, until September 20, 2028. Councilwoman Stewart seconded the motion.

All Council Members voted in favor of the motion.

The motion carried 6/0.

VII. CITIZENS INPUT AGENDA:

VIII. POLICY AGENDA:

A. ITEM "A" WAS DISCUSSED ABOVE IN EXECUTIVE SESSION.

B. Discuss/Approve Derelict Property Docket

PORTER HILL / AUGUSTA HILL
1602 22nd Street North
CASE NUMBER: 24-0261 Burned / Dilapidated Structure

The General Counsel called cause number **24-0261**. 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 Beard 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

SECRETARY OF THE U.S. DEPARTMENT
OF HOUSING & URBAN DEVELOPMENT
514 Forrest Lane
CASE NUMBER: 24-0263 Burned / Dilapidated Structure

The General Counsel called cause number **24-0263**. 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 Beard 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

$250.00 OR LESS CASES:

Code Enforcement Officer, Sasha James, presented two (2) cases, $250.00 or less for adjudication. Councilwoman Stewart made a motion to accept the notices for property clean-up of properties $250.00 and less to be adjudicated according to statute. Council Member Greene seconded the motion.

All Council Members present voted in favor of the motion.

The motion carried 6/0.

THE LIST FOLLOWS:

$250 OR LESS Derelict Properties for September 17, 2024 Mayor and City Council Meeting

Case # and Violation	Ward	Name and Address	Notes
24-0266 *Overgrown Lot*	1	RAVEN PORTER **1922 4th Avenue South**	
24-0267 *Overgrown Lot*	5	KAMAL KARRIEM d/b/a ISAIAH 61 MINISTRIES **804 15th Street North**	

NUISANCE PROPERTY NOTICE TO OWNER - PURSUANT TO SECTION 21-19-11(2) OF THE MISSISSIPPI CODE (Effective 7/1/2022)

BENNETT DEMETRIUS J
709 FORREST BLVD
COLUMBUS, MS 39702

RE: CHERRY ST
APN: 61W06-03-08800
Case No: CE-24-0182
Officer: Sasha James - Ward: 4

Date: May 29, 2024

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that the Mayor and City Council of the City of Columbus (the "Governing Authority"), having a population over one thousand five hundred (1500), has authorized the City of Columbus Code Enforcement Director and/or her assistant to determine whether the property or parcel of land is in such a state of uncleanliness as to be a menace to the public health, safety and welfare of the community when the fee or cost to clean property or a parcel of land that is one (1) acre or less does not exceed Two Hundred Fifty Dollars ($250.00), excluding administrative costs.

The particular condition(s) as determined by the authorized municipal employee existing as of the date of this notice is/are one or more of the following:

[X] The presence of overgrowth of weeds, grass or other vegetation
[ ] The presence of rubbish/garbage and other debris
[ ] The presence of abandoned building
[ ] The presence of abandoned or dilapidated fence(s)
[ ] The presence of burned structure
[ ] The presence of dilapidated building(s), slabs or personal property
[ ] The presence of property maintenance code violation
[ ] The presence of standing water in cesspools
[ ] The presence of cistern(s), standing water and cesspools

You are hereby advised that by this correspondence a determination has been made that the condition of property or parcel of land as described is a menace to the public health, safety and welfare of the community, and as such the governing authority of the City of Columbus, if the owner does not do so himself, on or before the 5th day of June, 2024, shall proceed to clean the land, by the use of municipal employees or by contract, by cutting grass and weeds, filling cisterns, removing rubbish, abandoned or dilapidated fences, outside toilets, abandoned or dilapidated buildings, slabs, personal property, which removal of personal property shall not be subject to the provisions of Section 21-39-21, and other debris; and draining cesspools and standing water therefrom.

YOU ARE ADVISED THAT A FINDING BY THE MUNICIPAL OFFICIAL THAT THE PROPERTY OR PRACEL OF LAND IS IN NEED OF CLEANING WILL AUTHORIZE THE MUNICIPALITY TO REENTER THE PROPERTY OR PARCEL OF LAND FOR A PERIOD OF TWO (2) YEARS AFTER THE MUNICIPAL OFFICIAL'S DETERMINATION WITHOUT ANY FURTHER HEARING OR ACTION IF NOTICE IS POSTED ON THE PROPERTY OR PARCEL OF LAND AND AT CITY HALL OR ANOTHER PLACE IN THE MUNICIPALITY WHERE SUCH NOTICES ARE GENERALLY POSTED AT LEAST SEVEN (7) DAYS BEFORE THE PROPERTY OR PARCEL OF LAND IS REENTERED FOR CLEANING. A COPY OF THE REQUIRED NOTICE MAILED AND POSTED AS REQUIRED BY MCA SECTION 21-19-11(2) (a)&(b) SHALL BE RECORDED IN THE MINUTES OF THE GOVERNING AUTHORITY IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE HEARING REQUIRED BY SAID SECTION.

Thereafter, the governing authority shall by resolution adjudicate the actual cost of cleaning the property under this provision, provided the same does not exceed Two Hundred Fifty Dollars ($250.00) and may also impose a penalty not to exceed One Hundred Dollars ($100.00) or one hundred percent (100%) of the actual cost of cleaning the property, whichever is more.

The cost and any penalty imposed may become a civil debt against the property owner, and/or, at the option of the governing authority, an assessment against the property. The "cost assessed against the property" means either the cost to the municipality of using its own employees to do the work or the cost to the municipality of any contract executed by the municipality to have the work done, and additionally may include administrative costs of the municipality not to exceed Fifty Dollars ($50.00). For subsequent cleaning within the one-year period, upon seven (7) days' notice posted both on the property or parcel of land adjudicated in need of cleaning and at city hall or another place in the municipality where such notices are generally posted, and consistent with the municipal official's determination as authorized, a municipality may reenter the property or parcel of land to maintain cleanliness without further notice or hearing no more than six (6) times in any twelve-month period with respect to removing abandoned or dilapidated buildings, slabs, dilapidated fences and outside toilets, and no more than twelve (12) times in any twenty-four-month period with respect to cutting grass and weeds and removing rubbish, personal property and other debris on the land, and the expense of cleaning of the property shall not exceed an aggregate amount of One Thousand Dollars ($1,000.00) per year. The governing authority may assess the same actual costs, administrative costs, and penalty for each time the property or land is cleaned as otherwise provided. The penalty provided herein shall not be assessed against the State of Mississippi upon request for reimbursement under Section 29-1-145, nor shall a municipality clean a parcel owned by the State of Mississippi without first giving notice. Upon written authority from the Secretary of State's office, for state-owned properties, a municipality may forgo the notification process that is prescribed in this subsection and proceed to clean the properties and assess costs as prescribed in this subsection, except that, penalties shall not be assessed against the State of Mississippi. A determination made by an appropriate municipal employee under this subsection (2) that the state or condition of property or a parcel of land is a menace to the public health, safety and welfare of the community shall not subsequently be used to replace a hearing if Section 21-19-11(1) is later utilized by a municipality when the prerequisites of Section 21-19-11(2) are not satisfied.

An appeal of this decision may be made to the Governing Authority of the City of Columbus and such appeal shall be in writing, state the basis for the appeal and be filed with the city clerk no later than seven (7) days from the latest date of notice required under MCA 21-19-11(2).

For any questions, please call Sasha James, the Code Enforcement Director for the City of Columbus at 662-245-5063 or 662-245-5070.

This the 29th day of May, 2024.
Sasha James,
City of Columbus Director of Code Enforcement

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A copy of this notice shall be recorded in the minutes of the governing authority in conjunction with MCA Section 21-19-11 (2).

At least seven (7) days before the date of cleaning, this notice is required to be posted on the property or parcel of land identified herein AND at city hall or such other place in the municipality where such notices are posted AND is required to be mailed, via United States Mail, postage prepaid, to the address of the property or parcel of land identified herein except where the land or structure(s) is apparently vacant, AND to the address where the ad valorem tax notice for the property or parcel of land identified herein is sent by the office charged with collecting ad valorem taxes for the subject property or parcel of land identified herein.

This Notice was posted on the subject property on: May 29, 2024

By: Sasha James, City of Columbus Director of Code Enforcement

This Notice was posted at the City Building Inspection Office on: May 29, 2024

By: Sasha James, City of Columbus Director of Code Enforcement

This Notice was mailed via United States Mail, postage prepaid, to each address identified above on: May 29, 2024

By: Sasha James, City of Columbus Director of Code Enforcement

NUISANCE PROPERTY NOTICE TO OWNER - PURSUANT TO SECTION 21-19-11(2) OF THE MISSISSIPPI CODE (Effective 7/1/2022)

CARTER JEFFREY W
P O BOX 8774
COLUMBUS, MS 39705

RE: 1425 7TH St S
APN: 61W180112000
Case No: CE-24-0183
Officer: Sasha James - Ward: 1

Date: June 6, 2024

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that the Mayor and City Council of the City of Columbus (the "Governing Authority"), having a population over one thousand five hundred (1500), has authorized the City of Columbus Code Enforcement Director and/or her assistant to determine whether the property or parcel of land is in such a state of uncleanliness as to be a menace to the public health, safety and welfare of the community when the fee or cost to clean property or a parcel of land that is one (1) acre or less does not exceed Two Hundred Fifty Dollars ($250.00), excluding administrative costs.

The particular condition(s) as determined by the authorized municipal employee existing as of the date of this notice is/are one or more of the following:

[X] The presence of overgrowth of weeds, grass or other vegetation
[ ] The presence of rubbish/garbage and other debris
[ ] The presence of abandoned building
[ ] The presence of abandoned or dilapidated fence(s)
[ ] The presence of burned structure
[ ] The presence of dilapidated building(s), slabs or personal property
[ ] The presence of property maintenance code violation
[ ] The presence of standing water in cesspools
[ ] The presence of cistern(s), standing water and cesspools

You are hereby advised that by this correspondence a determination has been made that the condition of property or parcel of land as described is a menace to the public health, safety and welfare of the community, and as such the governing authority of the City of Columbus, if the owner does not do so himself, on or before the 18th day of June, 2026, shall proceed to clean the land, by the use of municipal employees or by contract, by cutting grass and weeds, filling cisterns, removing rubbish, abandoned or dilapidated fences, outside toilets, abandoned or dilapidated buildings, slabs, personal property, which removal of personal property shall not be subject to the provisions of Section 21-39-21, and other debris; and draining cesspools and standing water therefrom.

Code Section:	Corrective Action:	Compliance Date:
302.4 - Overgrown Lot	Cut, trim, and maintain overgrown grass, hedges,shrubs, trees, and other vegetation.	June 18, 2026

YOU ARE ADVISED THAT A FINDING BY THE MUNICIPAL OFFICIAL THAT THE PROPERTY OR PRACEL OF LAND IS IN NEED OF CLEANING WILL AUTHORIZE THE MUNICIPALITY TO REENTER THE PROPERTY OR PARCEL OF LAND FOR A PERIOD OF TWO (2) YEARS AFTER THE MUNICIPAL OFFICIAL'S DETERMINATION WITHOUT ANY FURTHER HEARING OR ACTION IF NOTICE IS POSTED ON THE PROPERTY OR PARCEL OF LAND AND AT CITY HALL OR ANOTHER PLACE IN THE MUNICIPALITY WHERE SUCH NOTICES ARE GENERALLY POSTED AT LEAST SEVEN (7) DAYS BEFORE THE PROPERTY OR PARCEL OF LAND IS REENTERED FOR CLEANING. A COPY OF THE REQUIRED NOTICE MAILED AND POSTED AS REQUIRED BY MCA SECTION 21-19-11(2) (a)&(b) SHALL BE RECORDED IN THE MINUTES OF THE GOVERNING AUTHORITY IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE HEARING REQUIRED BY SAID SECTION.

Thereafter, the governing authority shall by resolution adjudicate the actual cost of cleaning the property under this provision, provided the same does not exceed Two Hundred Fifty Dollars ($250.00) and may also impose a penalty not to exceed One Hundred Dollars ($100.00) or one hundred percent (100%) of the actual cost of cleaning the property, whichever is more.

The cost and any penalty imposed may become a civil debt against the property owner, and/or, at the option of the governing authority, an assessment against the property. The "cost assessed against the property" means either the cost to the municipality of using its own employees to do the work or the cost to the municipality of any contract executed by the municipality to have the work done, and additionally may include administrative costs of the municipality not to exceed Fifty Dollars ($50.00). For subsequent cleaning within the one-year period, upon seven (7) days' notice posted both on the property or parcel of land adjudicated in need of cleaning and at city hall or another place in the municipality where such notices are generally posted, and consistent with the municipal official's determination as authorized, a municipality may reenter the property or parcel of land to maintain cleanliness without further notice or hearing no more than six (6) times in any twelve-month period with respect to removing abandoned or dilapidated buildings, slabs, dilapidated fences and outside toilets, and no more than twelve (12) times in any twenty-four-month period with respect to cutting grass and weeds and removing rubbish, personal property and other debris on the land, and the expense of cleaning of the property shall not exceed an aggregate amount of One Thousand Dollars ($1,000.00) per year. The governing authority may assess the same actual costs, administrative costs, and penalty for each time the property or land is cleaned as otherwise provided. The penalty provided herein shall not be assessed against the State of Mississippi upon request for reimbursement under Section 29-1-145, nor shall a municipality clean a parcel owned by the State of Mississippi without first giving notice. Upon written authority from the Secretary of State's office, for state-owned properties, a municipality may forgo the notification process that is prescribed in this subsection and proceed to clean the properties and assess costs as prescribed in this subsection, except that, penalties shall not be assessed against the State of Mississippi. A determination made by an appropriate municipal employee under this subsection (2) that the state or condition of property or a parcel of land is a menace to the public health, safety and welfare of the community shall not subsequently be used to replace a hearing if Section 21-19-11(1) is later utilized by a municipality when the prerequisites of Section 21-19-11(2) are not satisfied.

An appeal of this decision may be made to the Governing Authority of the City of Columbus and such appeal shall be in writing, state the basis for the appeal and be filed with the city clerk no later than seven (7) days from the latest date of notice required under MCA 21-19-11(2).

For any questions, please call Sasha James, the Code Enforcement Director for the City of Columbus at 662-245-5063 or 662-245-5070.

This the 6th day of June, 2024.
Sasha James,
City of Columbus Director of Code Enforcement

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A copy of this notice shall be recorded in the minutes of the governing authority in conjunction with MCA Section 21-19-11 (2).

At least seven (7) days before the date of cleaning, this notice is required to be posted on the property or parcel of land identified herein AND at city hall or such other place in the municipality where such notices are posted AND is required to be mailed, via United States Mail, postage prepaid, to the address of the property or parcel of land identified herein except where the land or structure(s) is apparently vacant, AND to the address where the ad valorem tax notice for the property or parcel of land identified herein is sent by the office charged with collecting ad valorem taxes for the subject property or parcel of land identified herein.

This Notice was posted on the subject property on: June 6, 2024

By: Sasha James, City of Columbus Director of Code Enforcement

This Notice was posted at the City Building Inspection Office on: June 6, 2024

By: Sasha James, City of Columbus Director of Code Enforcement

This Notice was mailed via United States Mail, postage prepaid, to each address identified above on: June 6, 2024

By: Sasha James, City of Columbus Director of Code Enforcement

C. Discuss/Approve recommendations from the September 9, 2024 Planning Commission Meeting.

<u>Rezoning Case No. 24-03</u>

Jeremy Jantz, Property Owner / Represented by Earl Harris
900 block of Highway 45 North
Tax Parcel 61W08-00-05803
R-1 Single Family Residential District

A request to rezone the property from R-1 Single Family Residential to C-3 Highway Commercial

The Planning Commission voted unanimously to recommend denial of the request.

The Commission based their decision on a public outcry opposing the request; a lack of change in the character of the neighborhood, and an unproven public need.

Council Member Jones 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 deny *the request to rezone the property from R-1 Single Family Residential to C-3 Highway Commercial be approved.* Council Member Beard seconded the motion. Building Official, Kenney Wiegel, stated that there was a public outcry in objection 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.

The motion carried 6/0.

D. Discuss/Approve paving Cooper Road at Burford Electric Service, Inc.

Kevin Stafford, dba Neel-Schaffer, Inc., came forward and stated that the estimate to pave Cooper Road at Burford Election Service, Inc. will be much less if the road can be paved using the current bid numbers, plus a 10% contingency out of the remaining $800K. The Council then discussed other crucial roads that are in dire need of paving and offered several suggestions on dividing the $800K up for this purpose. Following discussion, Council Member Greene made a motion to pave Cooper Road at Burford Electric Service, Inc. Councilwoman DiCicco seconded the motion.

All Council Members voted in favor of the motion.

The motion carried 6/0.

E. Discuss/Approve Awarding Engineering Services for Safe Streets for All Grant.

Council Member Jones made a motion to award the Engineering Contract to Neel-Schaffer, Inc. for the Safe Streets for All Grant. Council Member Beard seconded the motion.

All Council Members voted in favor of the motion.

The motion carried 6/0.

F. Discuss/Approve Grant Accounting Policies and Procedures

Councilwoman DiCicco made a motion to approve the Grant Accounting Policies and Procedures policy. Councilwoman Stewart seconded the motion.

All Council Members voted in favor of the motion.

The motion carried 6/0.

THE GRANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES POLICY FOLLOWS:

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CITY OF COLUMBUS

GRANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

I. Overview

The City of Columbus Finance Department processes the financial transactions of grants and contracts that have been awarded. The funds are referred to as "Restricted Fund" accounts because they have been awarded for a specific purpose, with a restricted budget. They are governed by a variety of laws, regulations, and local guidelines.

In addition, sponsoring agencies develop their own rules and regulations. These regulations range from zero governance by certain private sponsors to very complex regulations such as those described in the U.S. Office of Management and Budget Uniform Guidance Title 2 CFR Part 200 which are implemented according to the dictates of several federal granting agencies.

The Grant Writer/Administrator will maintain a spreadsheet containing specific information on all open grants so that the Mayor and Council have current information on grant progress. All grant applications must be approved by the City Council prior to grant submission, regardless of match requirements.

II. Project Startup

After a grant is formally accepted by the City Council, grant contracts will be reviewed and approved using the Acceptance of Grant Form by the Grant Administrator and Chief Financial Officer (CFO) before the application or contract is given to the Mayor for signature.

All approved/awarded grants must be forwarded to the Finance Department and then presented to the Mayor and City Council for approval and acceptance. The Grant Administrator will need the following documents:

- Copy of Notice of Award
- Copy of Grant Application
- Any other relevant information

Upon approval/award and acceptance the Finance Department will take the following steps:

- Review the grant documents to determine funding source, start and end date of grant, amount of funding, cost share requirement, indirect costs %, etc.
- Coordinate an initial meeting with Department Head and related parties to review financial requirements of the grant and establish the operational budget.
- Obtain Department and object codes from CFO.
- Prepare Budget Adjustment form to be approved by the City Council.
- Ensure there is no Co-mingling of funds.
- Ensure City funds are not transferred to the grant to increase the grant budget.
- Ensure that Grant funds are not transferred to the City's budget.

III. **Contracted Services**

A contracted service arrangement occurs when an independent third-party vendor, such as a consultant, is used to perform grant-funded work. Contracted services do not include the use of part-time or full-time City employees. In order to utilize a contracted service, the following procedures should be followed for persons requesting contracted service.

- Contact the Purchasing Manager
- Follow grant procurement procedures and advertise for bids for the contracted service.
- Assemble a bid committee to review bids received and recommend a contractor.
- Submit bids, information on contractors bidding on project, scoring sheets, and recommendation for contractor selection to the City Council for approval.
- Submit contract for review to Purchasing Manager
- Obtain a purchase order issued and approved by the City before the contractor may start work
- Require the contractor to submit invoices for payment
- Ensure the contractor invoices are paid through the City's Accounts Payable Department.

IV **Purchasing/Procurement**

All Purchases will adhere to City of Columbus purchasing policies. This includes, but is not limited to, a required purchase order, with appropriate approval for all purchases. All purchases will be subject to the allowable, allocable, reasonable and necessary requirements. The City of Columbus will adhere to all grant specific requirements as they relate to purchasing and procurement. Where one or more policies can be applied, the more stringent of policies will prevail.

V. **Program Income**

Program income is revenue related to the project financed in whole or in part with grant funds. In order to determine which method to follow refer to the awarding agency regulation or OMB 2 CFR Part 200.80.

If the method is not specified by the awarding agency, the addition method will automatically apply (except when otherwise specified by the program).

- Addition Method - Revenue generated is added to project funds committed to the project and used to further eligible project/program objectives
- Subtraction Method – The amount of program income revenues generated to reduce the amount of funds. Must be spent in accordance with the original approved budget
- Other Method – Revenues are used to finance the non-federal share of the project/program.

VI. **Debarment and Suspension**

All vendors, contractors and sub-awardees who receive grant funds for goods and services who fail to remain in good standing with applicable grant regulations are subject to Debarment and Suspension.

Section 200.213 of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) 2 CFR Part 200.213 requires federal awarding agencies and recipients to comply with federal agency regulations. Under those regulations, certain parties who are debarred, suspended or otherwise excluded may not be participants or principals in Federal assistance awards and sub awards, and in certain contracts under those awards and sub-awards.

Procedures:
The Purchasing Manager will verify vendors, contractors and sub awardees. The CFO will approve the purchase order requesting goods or services to be purchased with grant funds.

VII. Cost-Sharing

Cost-Share and matching funds are contributions made to an award from other funds. The contributions must be for expenses that are necessary and reasonable to support the objectives of the award. Cost-share may be from non-federal funds, must be allowable by federal regulations, cannot be used by more than one project, and must be auditable.

Cost-share and matching expenses that are included in proposals become "required" cost- share/matching and must be tracked and verified. All cost-share must occur during the project period.

Documenting cost-share is an effort that involves both the CFO and Grant Administrator. The Department Head will provide the necessary information so the Grant Administrator can document the cost-share as necessary, if requested by the awarding agency or auditors.

The main authority for cost sharing is OMB 2CFR Part 200, section 200.306.

VIII. Supplementing Versus Supplanting

Grant awards made under programs that prohibit supplanting by law must ensure grant funds supplement (increase the level of services) and not supplant (take the place of) federal, state, and local funds. Federal fund grants that prohibit supplanting cannot be used to pay for services, staff, programs, or materials that would otherwise be paid for with state or local funds.

Each year during the City operating budget process each Department Head submits departmental budget requests to the CFO for supplies, equipment and payroll expenses. The CFO, Chief Operating Officer (COO) and the Mayor work together to determine the best use of City funds based on historical data and budget requests for the upcoming fiscal year. When grant budgets are prepared the City operating budget is considered to ensure grant funds that prohibit supplanting are not being used for items budgeted in the City's operating budget.

During the fiscal year, the Grant Administrator performs reconciliations of the general ledger reports with the grant financial/budget reports to ensure accurate reporting. Reconciliations are prepared and reviewed when grant financial reports are due. The grant financial reports are normally completed on a monthly, quarterly, or annual basis. If an expense is disallowed due to supplanting in error, a journal entry is processed to remove the expense from the grant general ledger accounts and included in the appropriate City account.

Procedures:
If a program or activity cost was funded with non-federal funds in one year and with federal or state grant funds the next year, an auditor would most likely make a presumption of supplanting. For a decision to allocate grant funds in this way, there must be two types of documented evidence to supports its action:

1. Evidence of an actual reduction in state and/or local support and/or other non-federal support.
2. Proof that the activity/program would be discontinued without the benefit of grant funds.

IX. Indirect Costs

Indirect Costs are also known as Facilities and Administrative costs (F&A costs).

Indirect Costs are actual costs incurred to conduct normal business activities of an organization that cannot be identified with, or directly charged to, a specific project or activity. Indirect cost rates are used to partially recover the indirect cost of a sponsored project.

City of Columbus' indirect costs are developed under the requirement of the Information Systems office of Management and Budget Management and 2 CFR Part 200, section 200.56.

Indirect costs are recovered by applying the applicable indirect costs rate (10%) to the direct cost expenditures incurred on each project.

The calculated indirect cost amount is charged to each project by the Finance Department.

X. Payroll

The Grant accountant function in the payroll process is to verify valid start and end dates and ensure salaries are an allowable cost to the grant. All grant salaries are contingent upon grant funding.

The Department Head over the personnel drawing salaries allowed by the grant is responsible for contacting Human Resources and the Grant accountant regarding any new hires and reassigned employees. A reassigned employee is an existing employee to be paid by a grant. The employee's salary and related benefits should be charged to the grant account. This requires a payroll change that must be completed through Human Resources.

XI. Effort Reporting

Federal Grants

Purpose:
OMB 2CFR Part 200.430 requires documentation of time and effort that reasonably reflects the employee's total activity, represents all federal and other activities compensated, supports the distribution of salary or wage amount for specific activities, or cost objectives of employee working on more than one award or activity, or are contributing effort to be designated as cost share. To ensure compliance with the federal requirements, reports that reflect activities of employees' compensation by grants and contracts must be reviewed and authorized by individuals who have first-hand knowledge or a suitable means of verification of the work performed.

Policy:
Federal regulations require all employees of the City working on federally funded grants to report and certify their effort. Employees receiving salaries and wages from, or contributing effort as cost share to a grant/contract are required to document effort.

Procedures:
Effort documentation records the percentage of effort reported for the period to substantiate the salaries and wages charged to federal grants.

Effort Reporting Policy and Procedure for federal funded grants will apply to federal pass-through grant/contracts that are state administered grants/contracts.

Effort documentation is based on 100% of activities and not a 40-hour work week. Effort must be reported even if not paid for by the funding agency. Grant funded effort must be activities that are allowable for the grant.

Documentation forms must be completed and signed by the employee. The form must also be signed by a responsible Department Head having first-hand knowledge of work performed (typically the Department Head).

Effort reports are to be prepared each month by employees. The Grant Administrator will compare actual payroll costs to effort reports each month and promptly adjust significant differences at least quarterly. If budget and actual costs are 2% or greater, adjustments will be calculated and recorded.

Procedures to Certify Effort:
The Department Head is responsible and accountable for compliance with federal regulations associated with the grant awarded, including, the following activities:

1. Grant Administrator will inform the Department Head of all employees charged directly to his/her accounts.
2. The Department Head is responsible for forwarding appropriate form to employees.
3. Each employee is responsible for certification of his/her own effort.
4. Each employee shall complete top portion of effort form (name, name of grant, time period, etc.)
5. Effort forms are to be completed monthly. One effort form for each month (ex: Jan 1 – Jan 31).
6. Individual Department Head verifies actual effort worked for each grant.
7. List broad categories of activities performed during the period for grant.
8. Confirm effort by signing the report.

10. Forward to the Department Head (or supervisor if the Department Head is completing the form as a staff employee).
11. Department Head (or supervisor if the Department Head is completing the form as a staff employee) will certify based on first-hand knowledge that the information reported is correct by signing the form. The Department Head is responsible for ensuring accuracy of the report.
12. All completed original signed effort forms will be returned to the Grant Administrator's office within 7 working days after the end of the month.

State, Private or Local Grants

If effort documentation is a requirement of state, private or local funded grants, the Effort Reporting Policy and Procedure for federal funded grants will apply.

XII. <u>Fringe Benefits</u>

Fringe benefits are the employer and employee portion of Social Security and Medicare taxes, Workman's Compensation, retirement and health insurance. Fringe benefits are charged in accordance to 2 CFR Part 200.431 and to the respective grant by the Finance Department via journal entry. The entries are calculated using payroll distribution reports, and applicable rates and percentages applied against the salary or wage amounts charged to the grant.

XIII. <u>Cost Transfers for Grants</u>

Costs transfers are reassignments of costs involving a grant account. All transfers must be in compliance with the requirements contained in federal regulations and sponsoring entity guidelines.

The Department Head on any grant/contract is responsible to ensure that only allowable, allocable, reasonable and necessary costs are charged to his/her grant/contract. Costs should be charged to the appropriate grant when first incurred. However, there may be circumstances that require transferring expenditures to a grant/contract subsequent to the initial recording of the expense.

Transfer costs either into or out of a grant account require monitoring for compliance with federal regulations, grant specific guidelines and the cost principles that underlie fiscal activities on grants.

To promptly identify costs that have been erroneously posted to a sponsored account, a designated Finance Department support staff should review expenses at least on a monthly basis. Timely review of expenditures will help to correct errors and limit the number of cost transfers.

Cost transfers should be requested within 90 days after the month in which the cost was originally posted. Any request received after the 90-day period will require review and approval by the Grant Administrator and may possibly be disallowed. If an unallowable expenditure is discovered on any grant, it must be removed regardless of any time limit. Cost transfers must be completed no later than 30 days after the grant terminates. This is necessary to promptly charge the grant and not delay submission of final financial reports. Transfer requests on terminated grants will be reviewed by the Grant Administrator on a case-by-case basis and may be unapproved.

Transfers to reduce overruns, to spend unused balances or for other reasons of convenience are prohibited.

Retroactive payroll adjustments may affect previously submitted effort reports and will require re-certification and submission of a new effort report reflecting the change.

Procedures for Cost Transfers:

1. Department Head are to submit request to the Grant Administrator for review.
2. Requests must contain explanation and supporting documents to justify cost transfer.
3. Grant Administrator will promptly review each request.
4. If further justification is needed or the request is denied, the Grant Administrator will notify the Department Head.
5. If a cost transfer approved:
   a. Accounting staff will prepare journal entry for approval by CFO.
   b. CFO will review and approve journal entry.
   c. CFO will give journal entry to Accountant for entry into the City accounting system.
   d. Accountant will enter the cost transfer into the City accounting system.
6. Grant Administrator will maintain copies of journal entry and supporting documentation.

XIV. Reconciliation of Grant Accounts

Reconciliations of the general ledger reports to the grant financial reports are necessary to ensure accurate reporting. Reconciliations are to be done when grant financial reports are due. The grant financial reports are normally due monthly, quarterly or annually.

Procedures for Reconciliation:

1. Review the Notice of Grant Award (NOGA). The NOGA provides the report due dates for each grant.
2. Review the expense general ledger report to ensure the budget matches the grant. All budget adjustments must be approved using a Budget Adjustment Form. A copy of the budget adjustment form must be kept in the grant binder. Make budget changes as necessary.
3. Review the expense report to ensure the expenses are allowable, allocable, reasonable and necessary (AARN) for the grant.

   a. If any expense is a concern for AARN, review the invoice. If an expense is disallowed, a journal entry must be processed to remove the expense from the grant general ledger accounts and included in to the City's accounts.
   b. The CFO must approve all journal entries
4. Once the reconciliation is complete, report the expenses to the Grantor for reimbursement or reporting purposes.
   a. Each Grantor has different reporting procedures. Refer to the grant contract.

XV. Reporting

Financial Reporting

Grant Administrator is responsible for submitting invoices to and filing the various financial reports with the grantor. These reports vary according to grantor requirements.

Reporting due dates also vary according to grantor requirements: monthly, quarterly, semi-annually, or annually.

Invoices

Some grants require reports detailing expenditures and some require summary information. Payment is also varied for the grantor. Some are reimbursed by electronic fund transfer (EFT), some by wire transfers and others by check.

It is the Grant Administrator's responsibility to ensure revenue is received and properly recorded to correct accounts receivable/grant account.

Schedule of Expenditures of Federal Awards
The City's CFO is responsible for reviewing the grant reconciliations and preparing, and updating the Schedule of Expenditures of Federal Awards (SEFA). The purpose of this Schedule is to summarize federal award expenditures as a basis for planning and conducting the single audit. It also serves to provide assurance to those agencies that award federal financial assistance that their programs were included in the audit. It is important to prepare this schedule carefully to ensure that it is accurate and complete. The SEFA will be reviewed and approved by the Mayor on a quarterly basis and prior to sending to the outside auditors.

Payment
The Grant Administrator will submit requests to the Grantor for reimbursement within seven business days after the City Council approves invoices for payment. The time elapsing between the transfer of funds from the grantor and the issuance of funds to recipients shall be minimal. Payment methods shall be consistent with the Federal government's Cash Management Improvement Act (CMIA).

Refund to Sponsor
Funds remaining at the end of a cost-reimbursement project need to be returned to the Grantor, unless otherwise directed by Grantor.

Inventory
Inventory of supplies and equipment must be made and the results reconciled at least every two years (except when required more frequently by individual grant policy). Review the grant contract as requirements vary according to the grantor requirements.

When equipment is not needed for the original project or program, equipment may be used in connection with other federally sponsored activities with a priority for those activities sponsored by the federal awarding agency that funded the original project. Use of equipment purchased with federal funds on other projects or programs that are not federally funded is permissible if it will not interfere with work on a project or program under which the equipment originally was acquired.

A copy of the inventory report must be maintained by the Department Head and a copy forwarded to the Grant Administrator.

XVI. Project Completion

The closeout of the grant is important in the overall management of the grant project. It is imperative the Department Head arrange a meeting with the Grant Administrator 90 days prior to the end of the project to discuss close out procedures. The close out guidelines below should help facilitate the process. However, please refer to the grant contract for close out procedures as instructions may vary according to grantor requirements.

Procedures for Closeout:
Department Head shall:

- Schedule meeting with Grant Administrator 90 days prior to the end of grant.
- Review account activity and encumbrances for closeout. Contact Purchasing to liquidate encumbrances, if necessary.
- All goods and services must be received/completed prior to the end of the grant date.
- Complete termination paperwork for staff and/or payroll changes for staff assigned to other departments or grant accounts.
- Take inventory of all equipment and review disposition instructions.
- Prepare and submit final program report.
- Review and file all documentation pertaining to the grant. Records will need to be stored for a specific time period as noted in the grant agreement and local policies.

Grant Administrator shall:

- Run reports for review.
- Review activity after grant end date for compliance and prepare needed closing adjustments.
- Assess formal indirect costs.
- Review equipment dispositions instructions and take necessary action.
- Return unexpended funds to grant if needed. Refer to grant contract for instructions.
- Prepare and submit final financial report. Forward a copy to the CFO.
- Review folder for all documents related to the grant.

APPROVAL: Keith Gaskin ______________________ DATE: Sept. 17, 2024
Keith Gaskin, Mayor

APPROVAL: ______________________
James Brigham, Chief Financial Officer/Treasurer

CITY OF COLUMBUS
MISSISSIPPI

G. Discuss/Approve the repair or demolition of the property located at 161 Maple Street.

The Mayor and Council engaged in discussion of the feasibility of repairing this building or demolishing it. Kenny Wiegel, Building Official, was asked to come forward and give his professional opinion of the structure and an estimate of the cost if the City chose to repair this structure. Mr. Wiegel remarked that the roof only will cost between $18,000 and $20,000 and an estimate cost to renovate is $220,000.00. Council Member Greene made a motion to demolish the City-owned structure located at 161 Maple Street. Council Member Mickens seconded the motion.

Council Members Stewart, Mickens, Greene and DiCicco voted in favor of the motion to demolish structure. Council Members Beard and Jones opposed the motion.

The motion carried 4/2

H. Discuss/Approve Healthy Workplace Health Fair Incentive of not more than twelve (12) hours with pay to be taken by December 31, 2024 for employees who participate in the Health Screening.

Councilwoman Stewart made a motion to approve the Healthy Workplace Health Fair Incentive of not more than twelve (12) hours with pay to be taken by December 31, 2024 for employees who participate in the Health Screening. Council Member Beard seconded the motion.

All Council Members voted in favor of the motion.

The motion carried 6/0.

I. Discuss/Approve applying for the Department of Justice’s Byrne Equipment Grant in the amount of $1,873,500.00.

Council Member Jones made a motion to approve the request to apply for the Department of Justice’s Byrne Equipment Grant in the amount of $1,873,500.00 and requires no matching funds. Councilwoman Stewart seconded the motion.

All Council Members voted in favor of this motion.

The Motion carried 6/0.

Item “J” was moved from the Consent Agenda:

J. **Approve request for City Council Members to attend *"NLC 100 Years – 1924 – 2024: A Century of Strengthening Cities"* to be held in Tampa Bay, Florida on November 12 – 16, 2024 and approve payment of registration, lodging, travel, meal expenses and any other expenses in the total estimated cost of $2,855.00 each.**

Council Member Beard made a motion to approve the request for City Council Members to attend *"NLC 100 Years – 1924 – 2024: A Century of Strengthening Cities"* to be held in Tampa Bay, Florida on November 12 – 16, 2024 and approve payment of registration, lodging, travel, meal expenses and any other expenses in the total estimated cost of $2,855.00 each. Councilwoman Stewart seconded the motion.

Council Members Stewart, Mickens, Beard and Jones voted in favor of the motion. Council Members Greene and DiCicco opposed the motion.

The motion carried 4/2.

ADJOURNMENT:

The Mayor then asked if there was any other business to come before the Mayor and City Council. There being none, the Mayor announced that the meeting was ADJOURNED.

Approved by: ______________________________ ______________________________

Keith Gaskin, Mayor

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

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