

**REGULAR BOARD MEETING
CITY HALL BOARD ROOM
MARCH 17, 2020
5:00 P.M.**

BE IT REMEMBERED THAT THE MAYOR AND BOARD OF ALDERMEN MET IN THE CITY HALL BOARD ROOM WITH THE FOLLOWING MEMBERS PRESENT:

MAYOR MAURICE HOWARD, ALDERMAN ALONZO SYKES, ALDERMAN DOUG STONE, ALDERMAN DAVID EWING, ALDERWOMAN CAROLYN ODOM, AND ALDERMAN JIM BUFFINGTON; JACKIE BENSON, CITY CLERK; AND ROBERT FAULKS, CITY ATTORNEY.

Invocation: Alderman Alonzo Sykes.

A motion was made by Alderman Sykes, seconded by Alderman Stone to approve the proposed Minutes dated March 3, 2020. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderman Buffington, seconded by Alderman Sykes to pay all bills submitted by proper vendors as recorded on the Docket of Claims dated March 17, 2020. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

Gail Dalrymple on behalf of the Aberdeen Pilgrimage advised that due to the Covid-19 virus the Aberdeen Pilgrimage has been postponed until further notice.

A motion was made by Alderman Sykes, seconded by Alderman Stone to authorize a Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) Agreement with the Mississippi Department of Education, Office of Child Nutrition. The Board authorizes the submission of a SFSP application by the City of Aberdeen to be a Sponsor of a Summer Food Service Program, the attendance of designated administrative and site personnel to attend training as required, the supervision of the staff and volunteers by the City of Aberdeen Park and Recreation Department Director, the arrangement for meals to be prepared and/or delivered at the City Park and Recreation Department site, the monitoring of the site by the City Park and Recreation Department Director, the preparation of claims for reimbursement, and the City acceptance of final financial and administrative responsibility for which SFSP reimbursement is contingent upon the availability of federal funds. The SFSP reimburses approved sponsors for serving meals that meet the nutritional guidelines. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderman Sykes, seconded by Alderwoman Odom to authorize the following City employees/officials to attend the following meetings or classes, and pay all necessary expenses according to state guidelines: Roy Haynes - Building Official Conference - Gulfport, MS 6/8-12, 2020, and Flood Plain Management - 5/25-29, 2020; Tina Robbins - Mississippi Tourism - Cleveland, MS - 4/14-16, 2020, and Southeast Tourism - Dahlenega, GA 7/26-3/20; Tamanda Griffin - CSA Training - Tupelo, MS - 4/8/20; and Karen Crump - Accounting Conference 4/22-24/20. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

Alderman Buffington departed from the Board room.

A motion was made by Alderman Sykes, seconded by Alderman Stone to approve an APPLICATION FOR AD VALOREM TAX EXEMPTION TO AXIAL, LLC (A WESTLAKE COMPANY) for an expansion of property valued at \$8,468,149.00. The Application is to be forwarded to the Mississippi Department of Revenue for approval and certification. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye", except Alderman Buffington who was not present during discussion or the vote and had recused himself.

Alderman Buffington returned to the Board room.

A motion was made by Alderman Stone, seconded by Alderwoman Odom to authorize the annual general services engineering contract with Neel-Schaffer, Inc. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderman Buffington, seconded by Alderwoman Odom to authorize City Attorney Faulks to draft and mail a letter listing the breaches of contract by GE regarding the "GE Grid IQ Connect Services Agreement" by and between "GE Energy Management Services, Inc. and City of Aberdeen Electric Department". On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

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A motion was made by Alderman Buffington, seconded by Alderwoman Odom to adopt a Proclamation of the Existence of an Local Emergency, that there are conditions of extreme peril to the safety of persons and property due to the COVID 19 virus, that the aforesaid conditions of extreme peril warrant and necessitate the Proclamation in order to provide for the health and safety of City citizens and their property, that pursuant to Mississippi Code 33-15-17 this Proclamation shall be reviewed every 30 days until such emergency no longer exists, that all City departments shall render all assistance and discharge their emergency responsibilities as set forth in the City Emergency Operations Plan, and that the City Clerk is designated to be authorized to receive, process and coordinate all inquiries and requirements necessary to obtain available State and Federal assistance. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderman Sykes, seconded by Alderman Ewing to adopt the Mississippi Public Service Commission Order temporarily suspending disconnection of certain utility services due to the Covid-19 as follows.

"IT IS ORDERED that no utility shall disconnect any water, sewer, gas, or electricity service to any customer unless there exists a threat to public safety unrelated to nonpayment for services for a period of sixty (60) days from the date of this order.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that this order does not eliminate the requirement that utility customers continue to pay utility bills during this temporary suspension. Customers should continue paying their bills and understand that they will ultimately be responsible for utility services accrued during this suspension."

On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

Citizens appearing before the Board but not on the printed Agenda:

- Toni Reese stated that she was giving out sack lunches to all children that needed it.
- Joyce Vasser stated that she had some concerns about the COVID 19 virus and gatherings of more than 10 people.

Alderman Sykes stated that he still has concerns about Randle Street. He also asked about the status of a proposed name change of the Highway to Martin Luther King Street.

A motion was made by Alderman Sykes, seconded by Alderman Ewing to authorize a request to the Mississippi legislature to rename a section of the Highway to Martin Luther King Street. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderman Buffington, seconded by Alderman Sykes to authorize the two easements to Bellsouth Telecommunications LLC d/b/a AT&T Mississippi. The communications systems are to be situated in surveyed areas at or near the intersection of North Matubba and West Canal Streets. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderman Stone, seconded by Alderman Ewing to enter into a closed determination to determine whether to go into Executive Session. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderwoman Odom, seconded by Alderman Stone to go into Executive Session to discuss a personnel issue concerning Aberdeen Street Department employee Germako Shaw and Aberdeen Police Department employee Amy Kumar. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

The Mayor and Board announced to the public that the Board was entering into Executive Session to discuss personnel issues concerning Aberdeen Street Department employee Germako Shaw and Aberdeen Police Department employee Amy Kumar.

A motion was made by Alderman Stone, seconded by Alderman Sykes to come out of Executive Session. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

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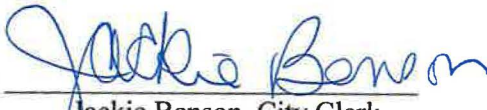
A motion was made by Alderman Buffington, seconded by Alderman Stone to terminate the employment of Gemarko Shaw for violation of the City personnel policy. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye", except Alderman Sykes who voted "Nay".

A motion was made by Alderwoman Odom, seconded by Alderman Buffington to terminate the employment of Aberdeen Police Officer Amy Kumar for her failure to complete the required Police Academy. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderman Sykes, seconded by Alderman Stone to employ James Pargo as a fulltime employee in the Aberdeen Street Department at the wage of \$10.00 per hour and to employ Alinzo McMillian as a fulltime driver in the Aberdeen Street Department at the wage of \$12.00 per hour. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderman Buffington, seconded by Alderwoman Odom to adjourn until the April 7, 2020. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".


Maurice Howard, Mayor

ATTEST: 
Jackie Benson, City Clerk