

## REGULAR BOARD MEETING

## CITY HALL BOARD ROOM

November 3, 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 NICHOLAS HOLLIDAY, ALDERWOMAN LADY B. GARTH, ALDERMAN EDWARD HAYNES, ALDERWOMAN CAROLYN ODOM, ALDERMAN JOHN ALLEN; CITY ATTORNEY WALTER H. ZINN, JR., MELSSA MOORE, CITY CLERK AND BARBARA VASSER, DEPUTY CITY CLERK.

Invocation: Alderman John Allen

## ROLL CALL

A motion was made by Alderwoman Garth, seconded by Alderman Haynes to approve minutes dated October 20, 2020. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderwoman Garth, seconded by Alderman Holliday to pay bills to proper vendors. On a roll call vote, Alderman Allen voted "Aye" with the exception of M & J Lawn Service cutting private property with City monies. Alderman Haynes, Alderwoman Garth and Alderman Holliday voted "Aye" and Alderwoman Odom voted "Nay" for the same reason stated by Alderman Allen.

A motion was made by Alderwoman Garth, seconded by Alderman Holliday to approve Monroe County Chamber of Commerce Christmas Parade Permit. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderwoman Garth, seconded by Alderman Holliday to approve Public Works Vehicle. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderwoman Garth, seconded by Alderman Holliday to approve the lease agreement for the vehicle purchase for Public Works. The lease approved amount was for 60 months at \$520.85 monthly. BancorpSouth offered the best interest rate at 2.34%. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderman Allen, seconded by Alderwoman Garth to approve the \$100,000 bond for James Bell for the Subdivision. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderman Holliday, seconded by Alderwoman Garth to accept the Proclamation from Governor Tate Reeves, **IN ADDITION** authorizing to close all offices of the State of Mississippi on Friday, November 27, 2020, in further observance of the Thanksgiving holiday, on Thursday, December 24, 2020, in further observance of Christmas and on Thursday, December 31, 2020, in further observance of New Year's Day. On a roll call vote, Alderman Holliday, Alderwoman Garth, Alderman Haynes and Alderwoman Odom voted "Aye". Alderman Allen voted "Nay".

A motion was made by Alderwoman Garth, seconded by Alderman Haynes to approve the Employee Enhancement: 2021 Mid-Winter Legislative Conference, Jackson, MS on January 12-13, 2020 for Mayor Maurice Howard, Aldermen Holliday, Haynes and Allen, Alderwomen Garth and Odom and City Clerk Melissa Moore. On a roll call vote, Alderman Holliday, Alderman Haynes and Alderwoman Garth voted "Aye" and Alderwoman Odom and Alderman Allen voted "Nay". Alderwoman Odom said she didn't need to attend the training due to already being certified.

A motion was made by Alderman Holliday, seconded by Alderwoman Garth to approve the UDAG Loan Application for TVG Body Shop in the amount of \$60,000 with the equivalent amount in collateral. On a roll call vote, Alderman Holliday, Alderwoman Garth, Alderman Haynes and Alderman Allen voted "Aye" and Alderwoman Odom voted "Nay".

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Larry Darty, Morgan Landing Manager voiced his concern about the certified letter he received giving him 30 days to vacate the premises. Mr. Darty said he need more time to move his double-wide mobile home, and see if the Board will be lenient and give him another opportunity to complete the job and give him proper utensils and resources needed to do the job and put him back on site. Alderman Haynes asked Mr. Darty if it can be fixed, he said yes. Alderwoman Odom is disappointed in Mr. Darty because he hasn't kept his end of the deal in keeping Morgan's Landing clean. A motion was made by Alderman Holliday, seconded by Alderwoman Garth to discuss this more in Executive Session. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

Lisa Wise addressed the issue about the complaints of having Rescue Dogs in the neighborhood. Mayor Howard told Mrs. Wise there have been several complaints from the community regarding the number of dogs she has at her residence. Mayor Howard asked the Board to address this issue. Alderman Haynes asked Mrs. Wise what can she do to stop his phone from ringing about the dogs. Mrs. Wise told the Board I cannot stop the dogs from barking, but Alderman Haynes told Mrs. Wise the residents are entitled to the quietness in their neighborhood. Mrs. Wise shared with the Board that she listen to noises from neighbors' homes that sounds worse than dogs. I listen to parties, streets are blocked with parties and I don't complain, but that's life. Things happen at everyone house that's their business and I don't involve myself in it. Alderwoman Odom asked Mrs. Wise if there's not a limit to how many dogs you can have at your residence; can you continue to put dogs on top of dogs. The problem is how many dogs you have in the home. Alderwoman Odom asked Mrs. Wise has every dog been vaccinated, spaded and neutered. She said yes. Alderwoman Odom told Mrs. Wise this has to be a lot of expenses. She said yes, a very big expense. Alderman Allen commends Mrs. Wise for what she is doing. The problem is the location. Several residents in the community support Mrs. Wise for the wonderful job she is doing in caring for every dog. Pedro Clay told the Board there is nothing in the City Ordinance as to how many dogs a person can have at their residence, and commend her on a great job she is doing on caring for the dogs. Mayor Howard told Mrs. Wise to keep doing the commendable job she is doing.

**Aldermen/Alderwomen Input:**

Alderman Allen had nothing to say at this time.

Alderwoman Odom talked about the cemetery graves. The City lost \$600.00 last weekend. Harold Schrock was not working for the City, and he was sitting there doing nothing and we let someone come in and dig two graves and cost us \$600.00. Barbara Vasser told the Board there was a funeral Monday morning and she received a call from Amory. Mrs. Vasser called Tohona and asked if Harold was doing anything Monday morning, she said no and Harold can dig the grave. Mrs. Vasser went to the cemetery Sunday evening and Tisdale tent was out and they had buried someone, and never said a word to me. Alderwoman Odom said we have to contact the funeral homes and have them call before they dig the graves. Mayor Howard said the City will draft a letter to the funeral homes letting them know they cannot dig graves without our permission.

Alderman Haynes had nothing to say at this time.

Alderwoman Garth had nothing to say at this time.

Alderman Holliday said we have a lot going on in our City and a lot of work that need to be done, please be patient because we're short-handed and people are being shifted around. I'm working with department heads in getting things done with the water, sewerage and lawns as quick as possible. Alderman Holliday said he is younger than what everyone is used to, but please be respectful and give him a chance. I promise I will not let you down. Alderman Holliday asked for a motion to write-off Robert Blanchard electric bill in the amount of \$625.00. A motion was made by Alderwoman Garth, seconded by Alderman Holliday to have Robert Blanchard electric bill written off. Motion died. This matter is under advisement and will be discussed in closed determination.



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Mayor Howard asked for a motion to re-hire Christopher Dobbins being that the Board had to wait until Mr. Dobbins time with PERS had ended. A motion was made by Alderman Holliday, seconded by Alderman Haynes to re-hire Christopher Dobbins as Sergeant for the Aberdeen Police Department with a starting pay at \$16.00 per hour. Chief Randle told the Board the money is allocated in his budget. On a roll call vote, Alderman Allen, Alderman Haynes, Alderwoman Garth and Alderman Holliday voted "Aye", and Alderwoman Odom voted "Nay".

Mayor Howard said he has to very careful with words, and only legally able to say so much. There is an issue that will be discussed in Executive Session concerning an inappropriate relationship during work hours. We will be back in public setting for the Board's decision shortly after Executive Session.

A motion was made by Alderman Holliday, seconded by Alderwoman Garth to enter into closed determination. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderwoman Garth, seconded by Alderman Holliday to come out of closed determination. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderwoman Garth, seconded by Alderman Holliday to go into Executive Session to discuss Personnel Issues and Information about Litigation. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

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

A motion was made by Alderman Allen, seconded by Alderwoman Garth to re-hire Larry Darty back to the City of Aberdeen, same position at the same pay rate of \$8.25 per hour on a 90-day probationary period. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderwoman Garth, seconded by Alderman Holliday to write off an electric bill in the name of Robert D. Blanchard in the amount of \$625.00. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderwoman Garth, seconded by Alderman Holliday giving Brian Sanders an opportunity to resign or be terminated. On a roll call vote, Alderman Allen and Alderwoman Odom voted "Nay" and Alderman Haynes, Alderwoman Garth voted "Aye". Alderman Holliday recused his vote. Being that it was a 2-2 vote, Mayor Howard was asked to vote to break the tie. Mayor Howard voted "Aye".

Mayor Howard asked Brian Sanders if he was going to accept the resignation or be terminated. Brian Sanders said, "With all due respect, I admit to my wrong doing and I'm not ready to resign from my position with the City of Aberdeen. I feel that I can learn from my mistakes and move forward, and at this time I cannot resign." Mayor Howard asked to let the record show that Brian Sanders declined to resign, so therefore according to the minutes and the vote, tonight as of 6:42 p.m., Brian Sanders is now terminated. Mayor Howard asked Brian Sanders to give all City property to Chief Randle. Brian Sanders said he will give it to him tomorrow.

Alderman Haynes asked Attorney Zinn if he did the research on the discussion held at the last Board meeting if he could vote for a church member and he hasn't heard a word two weeks later. Alderwoman Garth told Alderman Haynes that Attorney Zinn told her and she would tell him. Attorney Zinn told Alderman Haynes that I asked Mrs. Garth should I call you personally, and those are the words I gave her, and that's the only reason why. The next day I had an answer to the question. Alderwoman Garth told Alderman Haynes that Attorney Zinn asked for the Mayor also. Alderman Haynes said, "The actual fact is that I can vote on a church member as long as that person is not directly benefiting". Mayor Howard said that is correct. Alderwoman Odom wanted to know why Alderman Holliday recused himself from voting. Attorney Zinn told Alderwoman Odom that she can ask him. Alderwoman Odom asked Alderman Holliday why did he recuse his vote. Alderman Holliday said, "No answer".

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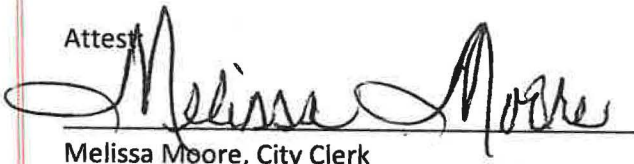
A motion was made by Alderman Haynes, seconded by Alderwoman Garth to post and advertise for the position of General Manager of the Aberdeen Electric Department. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderwoman Garth, seconded by Alderman Holliday to adjourn until the November 17, 2020 Board Meeting. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

Maurice Howard, Mayor



Attest



Melissa Moore, City Clerk