

REGULAR BOARD MEETING

CITY HALL BOARD ROOM

January 19, 2021

5:00 P.M.

BE IT REMEMBERED THAT THE MAYOR AND BOARD OF ALDERMEN/ALDERWOMEN 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 ZINN, JR., MELISSA MOORE, CITY CLERK AND BARBARA VASSER, DEPUTY CITY CLERK.

ATTENDING BY TELEPHONE: ALDERWOMAN LADY B. GARTH AND CITY ATTORNEY WALTER ZINN, JR

Invocation: Alderman Allen

ROLL CALL

A motion was made by Alderman Holliday, seconded by Alderman Haynes to approve minutes dated January 5, 2021. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderman Holliday, seconded by Alderwoman Garth to pay bills to proper vendors. Alderman Haynes inquired about Mayor Howard's fuel expense in the amount of \$159.72. Alderwoman Odom asked Attorney Zinn, Jr. to please submit his itemized invoices on a monthly basis and not all at one time. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderman Allen, seconded by Alderman Haynes to approve to advertise for a part-time dispatcher at a rate of pay at \$9.00 per hour, and a full-time police officer at a rate of pay at \$14.00 per hour. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderman Haynes, seconded by Alderman Holliday to approve hiring William T. Daniels for the Street Department at a rate of pay at \$11.00 per hour. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderwoman Garth, seconded by Alderman Haynes to accept the resignation of Christian Twillie and Chaz Thompson, and the retirement of Melvin Clay. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye". Chief Henry Randle asked the Board to discuss Chaz Thompson in Executive Session.

A motion was made by Alderman Haynes, seconded by Alderman Holliday to approve the tractor purchase for the Public Works Department in the amount of \$58,029.72. Karen Crump informed the Board the City has a grant that will pay 55% which is \$31,000.00. (\$58,029.72 minus \$31,000.00 equals \$27,029.72). Public Works Department allocated \$15,000.00 in their budget, leaving a balance of \$12,029.72. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderman Haynes, seconded by Alderman Allen to approve employee enhancement for Richard Boone (Mike Joyner Public Works Education Conference/Module Five: February 17-18, 2021 / Virtual. The cost is \$295.00. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderman Holliday, seconded by Alderwoman Odom to approve Frederick Young for \$1.00 raise for completing 90-day probation. Alderwoman Garth asked the Board didn't we agree to stop giving the \$1.00 raises for completing probation, and only give raises based on merits and performance. Attorney Zinn, Jr. advised the Board on policy as it relates to raises. Mayor Howard asked Alderwoman Odom how have the Board handled given raises to employees for completing their 90-day probation in the past. Alderwoman Odom said the Board has always given \$1.00 raise once an employee completes their 90-day probation. On a roll call vote, Alderman Allen and Alderman Haynes voted "Nay" and Alderwoman Odom, Alderwoman Garth and Alderman Holliday voted "Aye". Alderwoman Garth stated that if this particular person was extended to him inclusive with his hiring, and it needs to be in the minutes, her vote will be yes. If it is not, her vote will be no.

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A motion was made by Alderman Haynes, seconded by Alderman Allen to approve to extend the COVID19 pay (112 hours) for the calendar year 2021. On a roll call vote, all present votes "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderman Allen, seconded by Alderman Haynes to accept the lowest bid from Grid Structures, Inc. in the amount of \$13,210.00 for metal poles required for Westlake Chemical 13 k V Feeder Improvement Project, Aberdeen, MS. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderman Haynes, seconded by Alderman Holliday to approve 3S Contract in the amount of \$17,958.82, and it will include more than just one building that will consist of The City Hall and Public Utilities. This will be paid by the Cares Act Funds. Alderman Haynes asked if this can be tabled to give local businesses a chance to submit a quote. Mayor Howard asked Alderman Haynes who is the local business, "He said Lann Chemical." Mayor Howard told the Board 3S is the only company he knows that has an air purification system. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderman Allen, seconded by Alderman Holliday to end Aberdeen Curfew (11:00p.m.-4:00a.m.). On a roll call vote, Alderman Allen, Alderwoman Odom and Alderman Holliday voted "Aye" and Alderman Haynes and Alderwoman Garth voted "Nay". Mayor Howard announced that as of 5:49 p.m. on January 19, 2021, the curfew has been lifted.

A motion was made by Alderman Haynes, seconded by Alderman Allen to approve employee enhancement for Mayor Howard, Alderman Holliday, Alderwoman Garth, Alderman Haynes, Alderwoman Odom, Alderman Allen, Melissa Moore, City Clerk, and Attorney Walter Zinn, Jr. to attend the 90th Annual MML Conference, Biloxi, MS. The dates are July 26-28, 2021. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

Attorney Zinn, Jr. provided the Board with an update on the Priority Power Contract.

The terms of the contract – the termination of this agreement should not be effective until the electric supplier contract is terminated. The City cannot terminate this energy management contract.

Exclusively, of course after negotiation that was dropped from the language of the contract. Any party can give a 90-day prior notice. A question was asked, "How much money can be made off savings." Their initial proposal was seventy-five cents (75 cents) on a dollar, and capped at twenty-five cents (25 cents). We narrowed revenue savings to seventy percent (70%) to the City, and thirty percent (30%) to them. They will only receive any monies based off any savings – no savings, no money.

The Community Award was presented by Mayor Howard and Kenyetta Howard (spouse) and given to Men of Vision and Women of Vision for their outstanding contributions to the City of Aberdeen. The recipients were Willie Loggan and Taurus James. They were given a certificate and flowers.

The Philanthropy Award was presented by Mayor Howard and Kenyetta Howard (spouse) and given to Mrs. Katina Holliday-Wiseman for her great works in the City of Aberdeen. She also received a Key to the City of Aberdeen. She was given a plaque, flowers and certificate.

Aldermen/Alderwomen Input:

Alderman Allen asked the Board about extending, keeping or ending the curfew. Alderman Allen received requests and since the holidays are over, I for one would like to end the curfew. Alderman Allen asked Mayor Howard about giving the City employees a snow day. Mayor Howard told the Board he made an Executive decision based on the conditions of the roads and bridges. He put the employees' safety first, even if it means he gets persecuted for it later. That's the decision I made, because it's my job. Alderman Allen said he received calls as to why the Electric Department and Street Department closed. Mayor Howard said the Electric and Street Department were notified to be on stand-by.

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Alderwoman Odom said she is having a real problem with the Morgan Landing Sports Complex, because I believe Mr. Charles Scott has a legitimate contract. Alderwoman Odom said as your first tenure as mayor, you refused to sign paychecks or anything at all. So, the Vice Mayor was appointed to do that because you refused to attend Board Meetings. Mr. Charles Scott is here and would like to speak. Mayor Howard told Alderwoman Odom that maybe 75% of what she said was false. This matter will be discussed in Executive Session.

Alderman Haynes shared with the Board that the Public Works Building is deteriorating. It has loose wires and leaks along with other things. Mr. Stephens is looking to sell the building across from the County Jail if the City is interested. Alderman Haynes would like for the Board to consider, and maybe at next Board Meeting it will be discussed. If the City is going to spend \$200,000.00 to repair the Public Works Building, it would be worth looking into Mr. Stephens building. Alderman Haynes Economic Development ideas will be put on hold because it's not finalized yet. A group is coming and would like to open a business in Aberdeen. True Men Home Goods is looking for a location, and I'm trying to help them find a location here. Also, I received a call from someone about hazardous waste and where we throw our paint buckets, and things of this nature. Alderman Haynes would like to put a dumpster on pad south of City Hall for paint brushes, paint buckets, etc., being that cannot go in our regular trash dumpsters. He would like to ask the citizens to help keep the streets and City clean. Mayor Howard asked Alderman Haynes how much Stephens is selling the building for. He said between \$250,000.00 and \$270,000.00. Mayor Howard asked Alderman Haynes, "What kind of items does True Men Home Goods sell?" He said it's similar to a Wall's Store. Mayor Howard asked they be given his number to call him, so he can join in on the efforts.

Alderwoman Garth shared with the Board that Buzzy Cullum who owns the apartments needs some attention. She has received so many calls on this end about this building. I talked with the Building Inspector and asked him to go over and have conversation with Mr. Cullum, and he assured me he has done that. Also, the ones at the red light to the left, they have mattresses and whatever else thrown out in the back. They're asking for the City to have something done. Alderwoman Garth wondered if those four individuals that tested positive at McDonald's, has it been cleaned, sanitized and disinfected. The place needs to be sanitized. Mayor Howard told the Board, to his knowledge businesses didn't have to but they did because we asked. Alderwoman Garth told Mayor Howard that Robert Tomey needs to have a conversation with him about that, and we should demand better. She asked about the status of the jake brake sign. Mayor Howard said we had to get a break-a-way because it's on the main highway. He will make a call to Robert Tomey.

Alderman Holliday asked the Board do they have any Economic and Financial Development ideas to bring to the Board, because several things presented are being shut down. Alderman Holliday applauded Alderman Haynes for the ideas he shared with the Board, and would like to see the others do the same.

Mayor's Report

In 2021 going forward, it's very important for the City of Aberdeen to be very inclusive among our citizens and recognizing all of their efforts and delivering great contributions to the City and Community.

Mayor Howard will be honoring Melvin Clay with a plaque and certificate for his 26 years of service with the City of Aberdeen on Friday, January 22, 2021 @ 12:00 p.m. Everyone is asked to attend this retirement celebration.

Mayor Howard presented the Community Award to MOV/WOV, and the Philanthropy Award to Mrs. Katina Holliday-Wiseman.

Mayor Howard shared with the Board about a workshop scheduled for Monday, February 1, 2021 at 1:00 p.m. in the Board Room.

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Mayor Howard said Sustainability Partners has two potential projects coming to Aberdeen, MS. On January 28, 2021 at 3:00 p.m. there will be a conference call with Sustainability Partners, and asking the Board to attend. One project will put 300 brand new homes in Ward Four (4), out there at Stinson Field. Sustainability Partners will be here Friday, January 29, 2021 to do an assessment on our street lights and come up with a plan to do a new lighting system for the City of Aberdeen. It will save us maybe 45-50% on our electric bills. The revenue is a 60/40 split. Aberdeen receives sixty percent (60%) and forty percent (40%) to the Consultant Group. This will be coming to the table at the end of February, 1st of March 2021.

Mayor Howard received a letter from the State Auditor's Office talking about the COVID Relief Fund. It is to be used for payroll. It is to be used for things that make us safe at work. Mayor Howard shared with the Board about the 90th Annual MML Conference

A motion was made by Alderman Holliday, seconded by Alderman Haynes to enter into Closed Determination. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderman Holliday, seconded by Alderman Haynes to come out of Closed Determination. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderman Holliday, seconded by Alderman Haynes to enter into Executive Session to discuss personnel issues with the Aberdeen Police Department, Aberdeen Street Department, and Aberdeen Public Works; also, Morgan Landing Sports Complex. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderman Holliday, 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 Holliday, seconded by Alderman Haynes to suspend Officer Chaz Thompson for fourteen days (14) without pay and with an investigation. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

The matter to discuss Richard Boone ten-percent (10%) pay increase is under advisement until a later date.

The matter to discuss the Morgan Landing Sports Complex Contract with Charles Scott is under advisement until a later date.

A motion was made by Alderman Holliday, seconded by Alderman Allen to adjourn until the February 2, 2021 Board Meeting. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

Lady B. Garth, Vice- Mayor



Attest:



Melissa Moore, City Clerk