

## MINUTES, BOARD OF ALDERMEN, BOOK NO. 19

DEMENT-MERIDIAN 61-2994

**REGULAR BOARD MEETING  
CITY HALL BOARD ROOM****June 1, 2021  
5:00 P.M.**

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

**MAYOR CHARLES SCOTT, ALDERMAN ROBERT DEVAULL, ALDERWOMAN LADY B. GARTH, ALDERMAN EDWARD HAYNES, ALDERWOMAN CAROLYN ODOM, ALDERMAN JOHN ALLEN, MELISSA MOORE, CITY CLERK, BARBARA VASSER, DEPUTY CITY CLERK, AND CITY ATTORNEY ROBERT H. FAULKS**

Invocation: Mayor Charles Scott.

**ROLL CALL.**

A motion was made by Alderwoman Odom, seconded by Alderman Allen to approve the proposed Minutes dated May 18, 2021. On a roll call vote, Alderman Devaull, Alderman Allen and Alderwoman Odom voted "Aye". Alderman Haynes and Alderwoman Garth voted "Nay".

A motion was made by Alderwoman Odom, seconded by Alderman Allen to approve the proposed Minutes dated May 25, 2021. On a roll call vote, Alderman Devaull, Alderman Allen and Alderwoman Odom voted "Aye". Alderwoman Garth voted "Nay" and Alderman Haynes voted "Pass".

A motion was made by Alderwoman Odom, seconded by Alderman Allen to pay all bills submitted by proper vendors as recorded on the Docket of Claims dated June 1, 2021. On a roll call vote, Alderwoman Odom voted "Aye". Alderman DeVaul and Alderman Allen voted "Aye" with the exception of the M & J Lawn Service statement. Alderwoman Garth voted "Nay". Alderman Haynes voted "Nay" and stated the overtime is too high. Motion passed with the exception of the M & J Lawn Service billing statement.

A motion was made by Alderwoman Odom, seconded by Alderman Haynes to authorize the purchase of supplies from Irby, 815 Irby Drive, Jackson, MS 39201 in the amount of \$7,133.75 for the Lee's Precast utility expansion project. Lee's Precast will reimburse the Aberdeen Electric Department for this cost after the project is completed. Public Utilities General Manager LaMarcus Thompson presented this request. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderman Allen, seconded by Alderman Devaull to authorize a contract with Magic Touch Landscaping LLC, Aberdeen, MS to mow the grass on the inside and outside of the former Holley's Building and to manicure the hedges on the front. Magic Touch submitted the lowest bid - \$3,000.00. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderwoman Garth, seconded by Alderman Haynes to authorize the purchase of One 2022 Nissan Extended Cabs 4x4 Meter Reading Trucks - \$21,112.00 and One 2022 Ram 2500 Crew Cab 4x4 V8 Hemi - \$48,496.67 from Cannon Motors of Mississippi, Greenwood, MS. Electric Department Manager LaMarkus Thompson advised that the purchase price of each was State Contract pricing. This motion amends the purchase prices authorized at the May 18, 2021 Board Meeting. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderman Allen, seconded by Alderwoman Odom to authorize the change order recommended by the Engineer Dustin Dabbs in the amount of \$720.18, for the waterline replacement at High and Charles Streets. This motion amends the contract authorized at the December 1, 2020 Board Meeting. Nichols Construction, LLC is the project contractor. The contract cost was \$13,968.90, and the new cost is \$14,689.08. On a roll call vote, Alderman Devaull, Alderman Haynes, Alderman Allen and Alderwoman Odom voted "Aye". Alderwoman Garth voted "Nay".



**REGULAR BOARD MEETING****June 1, 2021****PAGE 2**

A motion was made by Alderwoman Odom, seconded by Alderman Devaull to authorize an amendment to the current City Order regarding mask requirements in accordance with CDC COVID-19 Guidelines, effective June 15, 2021. Fully vaccinated persons will not be required to wear masks indoors at public places or businesses, with the exception of the local hospital facility. On a roll call vote, Alderman Devaull, Alderman Haynes, Alderman Allen and Alderwoman Odom voted "Aye". Alderwoman Garth voted "Nay".

A motion was made by Alderwoman Odom, seconded by Alderman Devaull to authorize the reopening of the Aberdeen Park & Recreation facilities and the start of youth leagues in accordance with CDC COVID-19 Guidelines, effective June 21, 2021. On a roll call vote, Alderman Devaull, Alderman Haynes, Alderman Allen, and Alderwoman Odom voted "Aye". Alderwoman Garth voted "Nay".

A motion was made by Alderwoman Odom, seconded by Alderman Devaull to authorize funding (\$1500 to \$2000) and in-kind support for the Southern Best Catfish Tournament in Aberdeen during October 15-16, 2021. On a roll call, Alderman Devaull, Alderman Allen and Alderwoman Odom voted "Aye". Alderwoman Garth voted "Nay". Alderman Haynes voted to "Pass".

A motion was made by Alderwoman Odom, seconded by Alderman Devaull to authorize the reopening of the Aberdeen Sports Complex effective June 19, 2021. On a roll call vote, Alderman Devaull and Alderwoman Odom voted "Aye". Alderwoman Garth and Alderman Haynes voted "Nay". Alderman Allen voted to "Abstain". Mayor Scott voted "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderman Allen, seconded by Alderman Devaull to employ Chasity Trotter as a Cashier / Float for the Aberdeen Electric Department at a rate of pay of \$13.00 per hour. On a roll call vote, Alderman Devaull, Alderwoman Garth, Alderwoman Odom and Alderman Allen voted "Aye". Alderman Haynes voted "Nay".

A motion was made by Alderwoman Odom, seconded by Alderman Allen to employ Richard Lewis as a Mechanic for Aberdeen Public Work at a rate of pay of \$15.00 per hour. On a roll call vote, Alderman Devaull, Alderwoman Garth, Alderwoman Odom and Alderman Allen voted "Aye". Alderman Haynes voted "Nay".

A motion was made by Alderwoman Odom to advertise for applicants interested in being employed as the Mayor's Secretary. No second motion was given. This line item was "Tabled" until the next Board meeting. Alderwoman Odom withdrew her motion.

A motion was made by Alderwoman Garth, seconded by Alderman Haynes 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 - Mississippi Association of Code Enforcement Conference - D'Iberville, MS - August 10-13, 2021. Also the Annual Membership Application Fee: \$75.00. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderman Devaull, seconded by Alderwoman Odom to correct / adjust the cost from \$125.00 to \$595.00 for a fee regarding training for Park & Recreation Director Michelle Stewart - NRPA Annual Conference - September 21-23, 2021. This motion amends the Order at the May 18, 2021 Board Meeting. On a roll call vote, Alderman Devaull, Alderwoman Odom and Alderman Allen voted "Aye". Alderwoman Garth and Alderman Haynes voted "Nay".

A motion was made by Alderwoman Odom, seconded by Alderman Devaull to say "No" to the request of Michael Walker to move a single-wide mobile home to a lot across the street (Peacock Alley) to a lot owned by the Church. The Zoning Commission had previously denied this request as not permitted by City Ordinance. On a roll call vote, Alderman Devaull, Alderman Haynes,

**REGULAR BOARD MEETING****June 1, 2021****PAGE 3**

Alderwoman Odom and Alderman Allen voted "Aye", against the request to move the single wide mobile home. Alderwoman Garth voted to "Abstain".

A motion was made by Alderman Allen, seconded by Alderman Devaull to authorize a Planning and Design Services Proposal submitted by Dabbs Corporation Engineering, Tupelo, MS in the amount of \$7,500.00. On a roll call vote, Alderman Devaull, Alderwoman Garth, Alderwoman Odom and Alderman Allen voted "Aye". Alderman Haynes voted "Nay".

A motion was made by Alderwoman Odom, seconded by Alderman Haynes to employ Jerry Wells as a Machine Operator in Aberdeen Sanitation Department at a rate of pay of \$13.00 per hour. On a roll call vote, all present votes "Aye".

**Mayor Charles Scott's Input:** Mayor Scott discussed the American Rescue Plan (ARP). The funding is expected to be received in the month of June. Mayor Scott asked the Board to please read over the information regarding the American Rescue Plan so they can have a better understanding on how the funds can be spent.

Mayor Scott invited John Allmond to the Board Meeting to give a presentation concerning youth sports facilities and programs, with an emphasis on other local municipalities programs and the City of Aberdeen assets. Mr. Allmond emphasized how important the Sport Complex could be to the City, also stating that youth sports is a \$17,000,000,000.00 industry nationwide, and that the City has a gold mine if it's used right.

Public Utilities General Manager LaMarcus Thompson informed the Mayor and Board regarding the status and features of the new online system, the mobile app and the convenient customer portal that has been installed at the Aberdeen Electric Department. Some of the features that the online system includes are:

- Easy payment options – no fees!
- Pay securely from your phone or tablet – anytime, anywhere
- Monitor your utility usage
- Receive important alerts
- Set up autopay

Manager Thompson stated that there will be training on June 7<sup>th</sup> and June 9<sup>th</sup> at the Electric Department to assist anyone who may have any questions and concerns about the new online system.

Mayor Scott said we have been blessed in our community with some outstanding students that we want to recognize and taking a picture for the local newspaper. Tina Robbins assisted with the presentation.

The following students are:

- AHS Valedictorian – Jamia Johnson
- AHS Salutatorian – Joy Adair
- Harvard Bound – Niyah Lockett

AHS Student Council for the Fine Young Mississippians virtual speaker series:

- India Fears – President
- Caleb Roberson – Secretary
- Makayla Keys
- Jacoby Walker
- Michaela Lenoir



**REGULAR BOARD MEETING****June 1, 2021****PAGE 4**

The 2021 MS Bass Federation State Tournament:

- Drew Gideon
- Blake Duncan

Mayor Scott invited Gary Parsons, Foodservice Sales Representative from PepsiCo Foodservice, Tupelo, MS, to give a presentation to the Board about their programs available for the Aberdeen Sports Complex. Mr. Parsons talked about vending opportunities for the Aberdeen Sports Complex. Mr. Parsons provided the Board with a packet of information with a list of products and pricing for a better understanding on what PepsiCo offers and how the City of Aberdeen can benefit from the products.

Mayor Scott discussed having the grass mowed on the inside and outside of the old Holley's Building, which is solely owned by the City of Aberdeen. Mayor Scott asked City Inspector Roy Haynes to present the three bids received from Independent Contractors to mow the grass one time. Afterwards, Mayor Scott anticipated that Aberdeen Public Works will maintain the up keep of the mowing at the Holley's Building.

The three (3) Contractor Bids were:

- Magic Touch Landscaping LLC - \$3,000.00
- Lenoir Lawn Service Inc. - \$3,500.00
- Country Smokehouse - \$3,800.00

Mayor Scott asked Felecia Cox-Lenoir, R.N., Monroe Regional Hospital, Aberdeen, MS to discuss the Free Mobile Vaccine Event for ages 12 and older on Saturday, June 5, 2021 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Aberdeen Park and Recreation Building, Aberdeen, MS. The following vaccines will be administered: Pfizer Dose #1 and Moderna Dose #1 & #2. Ms. Cox-Lenoir will also be providing a date at a later time when they will administer the 2<sup>nd</sup> vaccine. Ms. Cox-Lenoir asked the public to please bring their vaccination card to be administered the 2<sup>nd</sup> vaccine dose.

Mayor Scott stated that Access Health was at the Aberdeen Park and Recreation Building this morning administering the vaccines, and they will be returning on June 29, 2021 for the 2<sup>nd</sup> vaccination.

**Aldermen/Alderwomen Input:**

**Alderman Devaull:** Alderman Devaull stated he had received several calls from citizens about the high grass along Millennium Drive and Evergreen Drive that needs mowing. Alderman Devaull stated there's a ditch running behind Millennium Drive that needs mowing. Bennett Street, Martin Luther King Street, and Catlee Street have some bushes in the right of ways that need to be attended to and cleaned up.

**Alderwoman Garth:** Alderwoman Garth received a call from one of the administrators at Belle-Shivers School, and was informed that two administrators were attacked by a child at the school. Belle-Shivers Administrators wanted to know whether the City can return the S.R.O.'s (School Resource Officers) back into the schools. Mayor Scott stated that he had discussed this matter with Superintendent Jeff Clay. The Aberdeen School Board has authorized Superintendent Clay to discuss bringing the S. R. O.'s back with both the City and Monroe County. It's currently being negotiated.

Alderwoman Garth asked who's handling the lawsuit filed by Attorney Zinn against Alderman Devaull, Alderman Allen and Alderwoman Odom. Attorney Faulks said the case will be discussed in Executive Session and the Board will make a decision about defense of the lawsuit afterwards.



**REGULAR BOARD MEETING****June 1, 2021****PAGE 5**

Mr. Boone was asked to discuss a sidewalk on 309 West Jefferson Street, Aberdeen, MS that's deplorable and needs immediate attention, noting that a City residents' mother, had fallen and injured herself. Mayor Scott said "we will take a look at it".

**Alderman Haynes:** Alderman Haynes read a letter from a concerned resident of Aberdeen, MS asking the City of Aberdeen to invest in a Splash Park at the park on the north side of town. We shouldn't have to go out of town to patronize other businesses to have fun, when the City can invest in a Splash Park for the children in this City. The concerned citizen wants to know why the park on the south side of town is getting attention and the park on the north side isn't getting any attention. Mayor Scott addressed the concern of the citizen: Mayor Scott stated that prior to the 2017 Administration taking over, there was a \$500,000.00 loan approved to build another pool. Mayor Scott talked with Three Rivers Development and asked what it will take to resurrect that loan. Three Rivers said the Board needs to make a decision whether to go forward due. Alderman Haynes stated that he would like to see some of the things he had on his list from previous Board Meetings actually get done. Other things are taking top priority over things he asked to be done. Sidewalks and curbs are bad and hazardous. We had curbs and sidewalks that were disappearing when I came into office, but have improved because I stayed on top of things in my Ward getting done. There is property that needs mowing that hasn't been done, other things that need to be done that haven't been done. Please give some attention to Ward Three. Alderman Haynes gave a shout out to our Assistant Chief Dobbins; Ward Three is proud of the work you're doing. Keep on keeping on, hold your head up, and let the cards play out the way they play out. Alderman Haynes mentioned to Mayor Scott about a soil sample request when he first came into office. The company sent an email saying they're no longer interested in Aberdeen because we did not provide them with a soil sample. The company was looking to move here to create jobs. We failed. Mayor Scott stated we actually do have soil samples. Alderman Haynes stated that if it's not in their hands it's not doing any good. Mayor Scott replied, "You're right".

**Alderwoman Odom:** Alderwoman Odom commended Public Works employees Mr. Boone, Tohona and the workers for cleaning up Stinson Park for all the citizens of Ward Four and all the people that walk on that walking track. It looks tremendous and they did a great job. You can see the monument when you drive by. Alderwoman Odom stated that Mayor Scott asked her to do a little research on Main Street. She made some notes and shared her findings with the Board. The Main Street was established by the National Trust for Historic Preservation based in Washington, D.C. It deals with declining downtown business districts, and in the past 10 years more than 300 cities with population less than 50,000 have joined in. This program has improved issues such as retail, parking problems, renovating building vacancies, recruiting new businesses, and restructuring existing businesses. The Main Street approach is to strengthen a town total image through organization, promotions, designs and economic restructuring. Alderwoman Odom stated that Aberdeen has a wonderful Main Street. Alderwoman Odom and Mayor Scott have been invited to attend the Mississippi Main Street Association's Annual Awards Luncheon, Jackson, MS on Thursday, June 17, 2021 at 11:30 a.m. Aberdeen Main Street will be receiving two awards.

**Alderman Allen:** Alderman Allen stated that during the Workshop Meeting there was discussion regarding the Walters Drive drainage project that was advertised, but not sure what happened to it after that. Citizens on Walter Drive are asking the City to resurrect that, it happened when we first took office and I remember we had a contractor with a \$28,000.00 bid, and we never did anything with it. The driveways are starting to cave in over there. Alderman Allen stated we need to re-advertise for another bid, because that bid is over a year old. He asked the Board if they wanted to see the specs on it, and if they were familiar with it. Alderman Haynes stated he was familiar with it. Alderman Allen stated it's on Walters Drive, and has been a problem well over two years. Mayor Scott asked if anyone else would like to see the specs on it, or go forward with a motion to re-advertise for bids. Alderman Allen stated that he would feel more comfortable with us bringing it back to the next Board Meeting. The north end of East and



**REGULAR BOARD MEETING****June 1, 2021****PAGE 6**

West Parkway where the circle is, there is a big hole that needs repairing. A big barrel was placed in the hole, and the barrel falls in the hole. Alderman Allen was contacted by Mike Bunch about cutting the hay by the cemetery on Old 8 and Airport area. Mr. Bunch would like to continue doing it twice a year at no cost to the City. The Gas Company goes up to the corner of Thayer and West Commerce, right at the 4-way intersection. Our folks have put down asphalt and the curb gutters are gone. Please have them put the dirt and gutter back and it should be on their dime because they dug it all up.

**Citizen's Input:** Public Works Director Richard Boone addressed the Board on some issues that were said previously concerning reports that were given. Public Works is making the rounds since the weather is becoming a little more consistent. We will be making our way north starting at Commerce and going south. Mr. Boone stated to Alderman Devaull that the department will be headed to Ward One to bush hog, and appreciated the patience of the constituents. Mr. Boone said the only two things that wasn't done on Alderman Haynes' list was the hill on Vine Street. They attempted several times to do it with the sidearm until the steering wheel broke, and we had to get it fixed. Mr. Boone told Alderman Haynes that he appreciates him being patient. Mr. Boone addressed the issues on the water leaks that need attention, but due to backhoe being repaired it has slowed things down. Mr. Boone said nothing is being neglected, they're trying to fight through this time with the equipment being out, and he deeply apologizes to the constituents and Board Persons of the City of Aberdeen. Alderwoman Odom asked Mr. Boone to not forget the ditches on Big John Road. He said I won't forget.

Mrs. Jeanne Ann Jones stated she called and talked about the limbs and trash on the side of the streets that's not getting picked up. Mrs. Jones was told by Mr. Boone that the owner of the property is responsible for the debris they put on the side of the streets. If the City picks up the debris they must pay \$75.00 per load.

Mrs. Jones stated in Ward One, Westlake purchased the property across from her Mother's house on South Matubba Street, and the grass has grown up and needs to be mowed. Alderman Devaull stated that if anything is behind the fence it belongs to Westlake. Mayor Scott stated that it will be addressed as to who owns the property.

Mrs. Jones asked the question, "Did you'll take the Commissioners away that were over the different departments?" Mayor Scott stated that the Commissioners were not appointed by the Board, so therefore it is up to the Mayor's discretion whether to have Commissioners. Alderwoman Garth stated that it's not left up to the Mayor's discretion. He made a statement and no one voted "Aye" or "Nay". He does not have that kind of power. Mrs. Jones stated that her main concern was the property at Westlake and charging the \$75.00. I don't mind paying the \$75.00, but at least tell the citizens about the changes made. Alderwoman Garth stated the \$75.00 was only if it was tow loads. The first load is no charge, but the second load is \$75.00. Mayor Scott stated if you have a private person to come and cut your trees or limbs down, they are responsible for picking that up.

Mrs. Sara Gardner thanked Mayor Scott for having the Ward Meetings. They were very informative and I appreciate you doing them. All participants were well versed on their presentations. Mayor Scott told Mrs. Gardner "thank you."

A motion was made by Alderwoman Odom, seconded by Alderman Allen 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 Alderman Allen, seconded by Alderwoman Garth to go into Executive Session to discuss the Circuit Court litigation filed by Attorney Walter Zinn, Jr. against the City of Aberdeen, and Alderman Devaull, Alderwoman Odom and Alderman Allen. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

**REGULAR BOARD MEETING****June 1, 2021****PAGE 7**

The Mayor and Board announced to the public that the Board was entering into Executive Session to discuss the Circuit Court litigation filed by Attorney Walter Zinn, Jr. against the City of Aberdeen, and Alderman Devaull, Alderwoman Odom and Alderman Allen.

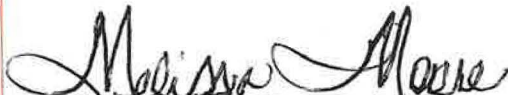
A motion was made by Alderman Allen, seconded by Alderwoman Garth to come out of Executive Session. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderman Allen, seconded by Alderwoman Odom to retain Attorneys Lydia Quarles and Jim Mozingo to act as Special Counsel and to represent the City of Aberdeen, and Alderman Devaull, Alderwoman Odom and Alderman Allen named as Defendants in the Circuit Court litigation filed by Attorney Walter Zinn, Jr. On a roll call vote, Alderman Devaull, Alderwoman Odom and Alderman Allen voted "Aye". Alderwoman Garth voted "Nay". Alderman Haynes voted to "Recuse".

A motion was made by Alderman Allen, seconded by Alderwoman Odom to adjourn until the June 15, 2021 Board Meeting. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

  
Charles Scott, Mayor

Attest:

  
Melissa Moore, City Clerk

  
Barbara Vasser, Deputy City Clerk