

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

DEMENT-MERIDIAN 61-2994

REGULAR BOARD MEETING  
CITY HALL BOARD ROOMAugust 3, 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 FAULKS.**

Invocation: Mayor Charles Scott.

ROLL CALL.

A motion was made by Alderwoman Odom, seconded by Alderman Allen to approve the proposed Minutes dated July 20, 2021. On a roll call vote, Alderman Devaull, Alderman Haynes, Alderwoman Odom and Alderman Allen voted "Aye". Alderwoman Garth voted "Nay".

A motion was made by Alderman Devaull, seconded by Alderwoman Allen to pay all bills submitted by proper vendors as recorded on the Docket of Claims dated August 3, 2021, with the exception of the bill of M & J Lawn Service. On a roll call vote, Alderman Devaull, Alderman Haynes, Alderwoman Odom and Alderman Allen voted "Aye". Alderwoman Garth voted "Nay".

A motion was made by Alderman Devaull, seconded by Alderwoman Odom to award the contract to Wilco Services, LLC for the General Young Park – Custom Shade Structure project which submitted the lowest and best bid in the amount of \$117,700.00. There were 3 bidders and Dabbs Corporation, the project engineer, recommended this award to this contractor. On a roll call vote, Alderman Devaull, Alderwoman Odom and Alderman Allen voted "Aye". Alderman Haynes and Alderwoman Garth voted "Nay".

A motion was made by Alderman Allen, seconded by Alderman Devaull to accept the recommendation from Dustin Dabbs/ Dabbs Corporation to obtain competitive quotes from two concrete contractors for proposed repairs of the sidewalks at the General Young Park. 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 Haynes to table the discussion of renewing the City employee medical insurance plan with BlueCross BlueShield of Mississippi until the next Board Meeting. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderwoman Garth, seconded by Alderman Haynes to appoint Antonio Crosby to the Aberdeen Municipal School Board. Following discussion, Alderman Haynes withdrew his second. Motion died.

A motion was made by Alderman Haynes, seconded by Alderwoman Garth to advertise for persons interested in being appointed to serve on the Aberdeen Municipal School Board, and to consider the appointment at the next City Board Meeting. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderwoman Garth, seconded by Alderman Devaull to employ Titus Eckford as a Machine Operator in the Aberdeen Public Works Department at a rate of pay of \$12.00 per hour. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderwoman Odom, seconded by Alderman Allen to authorize agreements with SKL Investments, Inc. / Avatar LLC and Long Land Investments, Inc., the City to pay the sum of \$3,800.00 and these entities to execute quitclaim deeds conveying their interests in tax parcels PPIN: 32510 and PPIN: 32511 to the City. These are parcels were previously conveyed to Ewing Solar Corporation. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

**REGULAR BOARD MEETING****August 3, 2021****PAGE 2**

A motion was made by Alderman Haynes, seconded by Alderman Allen to pay the 2018, 2019, and 2020 ad valorem property taxes owed on tax parcels PPIN: 32512 and PPIN: 32482. These are parcels also previously conveyed to Ewing Solar Corporation. The City has acquired these tracts through a quitclaim deed earlier this year. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderman Haynes, seconded by Alderman Devaull to pay all past due ad valorem taxes on the aforementioned parcels to be acquired from SKL Investments, Inc. / Avatar LLC and Long Land Investments, Inc. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderman Haynes, seconded by Alderwoman Garth to post and advertise for persons interested in being appointed to serve on the Aberdeen Municipal Election Commission (3 Commissioners). On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderman Devaull, seconded by Alderwoman Odom to employ Janel Davidson as the Aberdeen Municipal Court Clerk at a rate of pay of \$12.00 per hour, and to be trained by Omnicourt. On a roll call vote, Alderman Devaull, Alderwoman Odom and Alderman Allen voted "Aye". Alderwoman Garth voted "Abstain". Alderman Haynes voted "Nay".

A motion was made by Alderman Allen, seconded by Alderwoman Odom to authorize payment of \$28,047.60 to Parks & Parks Water Well Service, Inc., Houston, MS 38851 for emergency work done at the City Prairie Water Well # 5. The delay incident to giving opportunity for competitive bidding following newspaper publication would have been detrimental to the interest of the City. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderman Allen, seconded by Alderman Haynes to schedule the sale of City surplus personal property at a public auction that will be held on August 6, 2021 at the Aberdeen Public Works building and grounds. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

**Mayor Report:** Mayor Scott asked Dustin Dabbs to advise the Board concerning bids received from prospective contractors for the General Young Park – Custom Shade Structure project. Dabbs stated there were three bids that ranged from \$117,700.00 to \$231,222.00. Dabbs recommended that the Board award the contract to Wilco Services LLC, 4052 Kayley Lane, Olive Branch, MS 38654 in the amount of \$117,700.00.

Mayor Scott invited Insurance Agents Homer Braylock and Matthew Brunson to share with the Board proposed premium rate increases for the BlueCross BlueShield of Mississippi employee health insurance plan for the next year 2021-2022.

Mayor Scott asked the Aberdeen Main Street Director Ann Tackett to share with the Board "Points of Interest" within the City of Aberdeen during the years 2019-2021.

Mayor Scott called Aberdeen Municipal School District Superintendent Jeff Clay to discuss a project the Aberdeen School system will embark upon. "It's called the Community Accountability Model that is Educator Led, Evidence Based, Student Centric and Community Minded. It will help shape the schools for the future; not the past, and tell the truth in a language where stakeholders are understanding in a greater depth. The two models are Learning and Doing. Aberdeen School District is using the Doing Model, and we meet once a month".

Mayor Scott commended Public Utilities General Manager LaMarcus Thompson for the Certificate of Completion Thompson received for the Business Portal: New Mobile Service Orders, Time Entry & Outage Management Classes held at the CSA Annual User Education Conference, Perdido Beach Resort, Orange Beach, Alabama.

**REGULAR BOARD MEETING****August 3, 2021****PAGE 3****Aldermen/Alderwomen Input:**

**Alderman Devaull** Alderman Devaull stated: I had a great time at the MML 90<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference, Biloxi, MS. I learned a lot and met a lot of people. Alderman Devaull welcomed the new Police Chief Quinell Schumpert aboard, congratulations to him, and expressed a Happy Birthday to Ms. Barbara Vasser. Alderman Devaull has received complaints from residents about drag racing over by the cemetery, and asked the Chief of Police to take care of it. Alderman Devaull stated that a resident that lives at 102 Evergreen Drive, Aberdeen, MS has complained about the speed bumps in front of her home and requested that the speed bumps be moved further down the street. Alderman Devaull stated that he knows it will take a while for the Aberdeen Police Department to get back up to the speed it needs to be, and I will be the first to congratulate the Aberdeen Police Department to giving every one of the offenders a ticket for speeding and loud music, and to let the Court System do what needs to be done. Alderman Devaull would like to congratulate and thank Mr. Boone and his department for the potholes they have taken time to fill in.

**Alderwoman Garth** stated: I would like to thank the citizens of Aberdeen for allowing me to attend the MML 90<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference, Biloxi, MS. Alderwoman Garth stated she attended every class. The citizens that live in South Aberdeen would like to see a police officer present on Highway 45 to observe the racing, and added that if the racing doesn't stop, someone will be killed. Alderwoman Garth stated that according to an attorney, if School Board member Sandra Peoples has voted on anything from January 2021 to present its "Null and Void". Alderwoman Garth stated that Sandra Peoples' time is up and I would like to motion for Antonio Crosby to assume that position. Alderwoman Garth asked the question, "Has she been re-bonded?" If she has been re-bonded, that's a blatant cover-up, and it's illegal. Attorney Faulks stated if her term is over, then the City Board of Aldermen should make a School Board appointment. Attorney Faulks stated if she's not bonded that's a problem for her personally. The Aberdeen School Board and Superintendent should know whether Peoples is bonded or not. Attorney Faulks recommendation would be to advertise for persons interested in being appointed to serve on the School Board. Attorney Faulks would like for the School to confirm whether Peoples' term is over. Alderwoman Garth asked Mr. Clay, "Is Mrs. Peoples term up?" Mr. Clay answered "yes, and that her term was up in December". Attorney Faulks stated that Peoples could continue to serve until her successor is appointed. I would envision that the Board would make an appointment at the next Board Meeting which is two weeks from now, and run a notice in the newspaper for one week in the meantime. Alderwoman Garth commented that Aberdeen Main Street was mentioned at one of the classes at MML, and pictures were shown of the beautification that Aberdeen Main Street and Ann Tackett have done.

**Alderman Haynes:** Alderman Haynes stated he would also thank the citizens of Aberdeen for allowing me to attend MML 90<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference, Biloxi, MS. I had a great time learning and interacting with other cities officials. Alderman Haynes described tree limbs that were hanging pretty low on the North side of East Vine Street and need to be trimmed. I would like to commend Aberdeen Public Works for the job well done around the school, and taking care of the drains by Evans Memorial Library. Alderman Haynes recommended the cleaning of curbs throughout the City. We awarded Hanna the contract for the construction of City sidewalks but I'm seeing a subcontractor doing the work. Mayor Scott stated the subcontractor is not bonded, but can work under another bonded prime contractor. Alderman Haynes also requested for Public Works to inspect the holes on North Thayer, Canal and Hickory Streets, and the grass growing out of the holes that needs to be attended to.

**Alderwoman Odom:** Alderwoman Odom stated she would like to thank the citizens for the education at MML 90<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference, Biloxi, MS. I enjoyed it. It was very tiring, but informative.

**REGULAR BOARD MEETING****August 3, 2021****PAGE 4**

**Alderman Allen:** Alderman Allen commented: I also enjoyed the trip down to the Coast, and re-established connections with a lot of old friends and attended classes, and noted that they're constantly changing the laws and updates are provided. I also saw a lot of new faces in State level politics. I appreciated the opportunity to go. Regarding the Drake and Ridgeway Streets area, we need the sidearm bush hog to be operated down through there. The bushes have grown out in the street and you have one lane availability. Citizens have complained about the racing on South Thayer, and I hope the police will be able to do something about that. It seems like the same song and dance. It's usually the same folks. Mayor Scott stated he discussed this serious problem with other Chiefs of Police and Mayors. I'm proposing that we put a drag racing ordinance together. Alderwoman Garth asked to have the police to pull the noise ordinance as well. Alderman Allen stated there was a misunderstanding on his part about the travel per diem reimbursement. He was thinking the meals were included in the check the City officials received for the travel down to the Coast. Attorney Faulks stated he had to compliment Melissa to Karen that they're doing it the correct way now. You have to bring in receipts to receive reimbursement up to the per diem limit. There is a difference in the statutory procedure for reimbursement of State Agency employees/ officials and Municipal and County Government employees/ officials. The State Agency employees/ officials are paid travel up to the per diem limit without the receipts. Melissa good job!

**Citizen's Input:** Pastor Denvil Clark asked for installation of a speed bump on Burnett Street in front of his Church to stop the speeding vehicles. I would appreciate it very much if you would do this, and I thank you for your time.

Public Utilities General Manager LaMarcus Thompson asked for a date when the Board and Mayor can have a discussion with representatives of Night Hawk and Adaptiv. They are a metering company. Aberdeen will soon close out the 10 year contract with GE. We're in the 7<sup>th</sup> year of the contract and it's not working the way we need it to. We're supposed to be able to do remote disconnects from the office, but we can't, and we're leasing the meters through GE. When this contract ends the Electric, Water, Sanitation and Public Works Department will have to help remove the meters from the citizens' home. I don't recommend we go back to GE, because their system is on poles and we cannot access the system. Night Hawk has Hub and Lease Meters. They read off each other up to 800 feet. They would like to do a pilot run, and would like to meet with the Board and Mayor to do a presentation.

Mayor Scott updated the Board on the COVID19 Vaccination schedules. The vaccines will be given at the Aberdeen High School on the following days: August 14, 2021, August 20, 2021 and August 21, 2021.

A motion was made by Alderwoman Garth to enter into a closed determination to determine whether to go into Executive Session.

A motion was made by Alderman Haynes, seconded by Alderwoman Garth to go into Executive Session to discuss personnel issues regarding the qualifications of persons interested in being employed in the Aberdeen Police Department, and employee April Spencer. 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 regarding the qualifications of persons interested in being employed in the Aberdeen Police Department, and employee April Spencer.

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

A motion was made by Alderman Haynes to employ Willie Jones, Mary Huggins and Lee Johnson as patrol officers in the Aberdeen Police Department at a rate of pay of \$15.00 per hour. Alderman Haynes withdrew his motion. Motion died.

**REGULAR BOARD MEETING****August 3, 2021****PAGE 5**

A motion was made by Alderman Haynes, seconded by Alderwoman Garth to employ Mary Huggins as a Patrol Officer in the Aberdeen Police Department at a rate of pay at \$15.00 per hour. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderwoman Odom, seconded by Alderman Devaull to employ Lee Johnson as a Patrol Officer in the Aberdeen Police Department at a rate of pay at \$15.00 per hour. On a roll call vote, Alderman Devaull, Alderman Haynes and Alderwoman Odom voted "Aye". Alderwoman Garth and Alderman Allen voted "Nay".

A motion was made by Alderman Haynes, seconded by Alderman Devaull to employ Willie Jones part-time as a Patrol Officer in the Aberdeen Police Department at a rate of pay at \$15.00 per hour. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderman Devaull, seconded by Alderwoman Garth to raise the pay of part-time Patrol Officer Cedric Sykes from \$14.00 to \$15.00 per hour. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

Aberdeen Fire Chief Fred Hodges asked the Board to reassign the daily duty of opening and closing of the Aberdeen Park and Recreation Building and the High Street Community Center back to the Aberdeen Park and Recreation Department. Chief Hodges argued that the Fire Department and the City could be assessed fines or insurance rates could be increased if the Fire Department was short of the required amount of manpower while doing the task of opening/closing the City buildings.

A motion was made by Alderman Haynes, seconded by Alderwoman Garth to move the keys and reassign the duty of opening / closing of the Aberdeen Park and Recreation Building and the High Street Community Center back to the Aberdeen Park and Recreation Department. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderman Allen, seconded by Alderman Devaull to accept the resignation of City Employee Fearyeal Temple. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

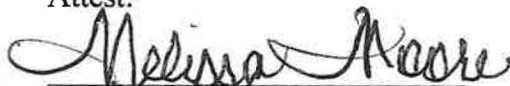
A motion was made by Alderwoman Garth, seconded by Alderman Haynes to confirm the self-termination of employment of April Spencer, upon the department supervisor recommendation. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".


A motion was made by Alderman Allen, seconded by Alderwoman Odom to post and advertise for bids or quotes from contractors for the mowing/ maintenance of the City owned Oddfellows Rest and Oaklawn Cemeteries for the calendar year 2021-2022. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderman Allen, seconded by Alderwoman Garth to adjourn until the August 17, 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