

**REGULAR BOARD MEETING
CITY HALL BOARD ROOM
September 7, 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 FAULKES.

Invocation: Mayor Charles Scott.

ROLL CALL.

A motion was made by Alderwoman Odom, seconded by Alderman Devall to approve the proposed Minutes dated August 17, 2021. On a roll call vote, Alderman Devall, Alderman Haynes, Alderwoman Odom and Alderman Allen voted "Aye". Alderwoman Garth voted "Nay".

A motion was made by Alderman Allen, seconded by Alderman Devall to pay all bills submitted by proper vendors as recorded on the Docket of Claims dated September 7, 2021. On a roll call vote, Alderman Devall, Alderman Haynes, Alderwoman Odom and Alderman Allen voted "Aye". Alderwoman Garth voted "Nay".

A motion was made by Alderwoman Odom, seconded by Alderman Devall to authorize the following City employees/officials to attend the following meetings or classes, and pay all necessary expenses according to state guidelines: FEMA Training - Melissa Moore, Roy Haynes and Richard Boone. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderman Allen, seconded by Alderman Devall to amend a prior motion made during the July 6, 2021 Board Meeting to use funds from the Drug Fund to pay for the purchase of police cars rather than Common City account funds. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderman Allen, seconded by Alderwoman Odom to authorize a FINAL ORDER GRANTING TAX EXEMPTION TO AXIALL, LLC (A WESTLAKE COMPANY) for an expansion of property valued at \$5,690,390.00. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderman Devall, seconded by Alderman Allen to authorize an agreement with former Court Clerk Sharon Edmond to train the new Court Clerk Janel Davidson concerning court procedures and filing. Edmond will be retained as an independent contractor, compensated at \$10.00 per hour. On a roll call vote, Alderman Devall, Alderwoman Odom and Alderman Allen voted "Aye". Alderwoman Garth and Alderman Haynes voted "Nay".

A motion was made by Alderman Allen, seconded by Alderwoman Odom to authorize the non-exclusive franchise renewal for the cable system to MaxxSouth for a ten years term. The Franchise Fee will increase from 4% to 5%. MaxxSouth shall extend the cable service to all persons residing within 500 feet of the cable system. On a roll call vote, Alderman Devall, Alderman Allen and Alderwoman Odom voted "Aye". Alderwoman Garth and Alderman Haynes voted "Nay".

A motion was made by Alderman Allen, seconded by Alderman Devall to approve write-off of a delinquent Heat Pump Loan owed to the Aberdeen Electric Department in the amount of \$7,528.04 and refer the debt to debt collection. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

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A motion was made by Alderman Devaull, seconded by Alderwoman Odom to authorize a loan agreement with BancorpSouth to loan the funds to the City for the lease purchase of three Ford Explorer vehicles for the Aberdeen Police Department. BancorpSouth quoted the lowest interest rate at 2.34%. 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 Alderwoman Odom to authorize a proposed Water Line Extension Infrastructure Project / Shopping Mall on Highway 8, Aberdeen, MS. Motion died for lack of a second. This item was "tabled" until the next Board Meeting.

A motion was made by Alderman Haynes, seconded by Alderwoman Garth to appoint Antonio Crosby to the Aberdeen Municipal School Board. On a roll call vote, Alderman Devaull, Alderwoman Odom and Alderman Allen voted "Nay". Alderwoman Garth and Alderman Haynes voted "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderman Allen, seconded by Alderman Devaull to re-appoint Sandra Peoples to the Aberdeen Municipal School Board. 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 Alderman Haynes, seconded by Alderwoman Garth to authorize an annual agreement for the City Cemetery landscaping service and maintenance to Clean Cut Lawn Care LLC (Richard Caradine) which submitted the lowest bid/ quote in the amount of \$65,000.00. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderman Allen, seconded by Alderman Devaull to authorize the following City employees/officials to attend the following meetings or classes, and pay all necessary expenses according to state guidelines: City Clerk Melissa Moore / 2021 Certified Municipal Clerk Program / September 29 - October 1, 2021 / Oxford, MS. This also includes hotel expenses in the amount of \$323.73. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderman Haynes, seconded by Alderman Allen to authorize an elevator maintenance contract / Gold Service Agreement with TKE, 1650 Shelby Oaks Drive North, Suite 6, Memphis, TN 38134 in the amount of \$200.00 per month. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderman Allen, seconded by Alderman Devaull to authorize the following City employees/officials to attend the following meetings or classes, and pay all necessary expenses according to state guidelines: Court Clerk Janel Davidson/ Municipal Court Clerk Continuing Education Conference / September 22-24, 2021 / Pearl River Resort, Choctaw, MS. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderman Haynes, seconded by Alderman Allen to authorize the following City employees/officials to attend the following meetings or classes, and pay all necessary expenses according to state guidelines: David Young and Frederick Young / MSRWA Water Certification Class / October 4-7, 2021 / Tupelo, MS. Fee: \$352.00 each. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

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Mayor Report: Mayor Scott stated that he has been notified concerning the Multimodal Grant for the Port in the amount of \$450,430.00, and over the next few days they will re-establish the milestone to begin working on the Port. Originally, we were supposed to start working and be completed around June, but due to the receipt of the grant being delayed by 45 days there will be an adjustment. Some of the main areas that will be worked on will be the North Dolphin, Crane Pad, Exceden Pile Wall, upgrading the South Dolphin, Truck Scale, doing a demo on the Work Scale House, and Exceden Operating Control Tower. The grant will pay towards these items.

Mayor Scott recognized Alderwoman Lady B. Garth organizing the "Let's Get Clean Aberdeen" on August 28, 2021, and also thanked the volunteers who helped with cleaning the City and the Cemetery, and those volunteering at Aberdeen Loaves and Fishes Food Pantry. "Great job everyone!"

Mayor Scott reported the work for the General Young Park – renovations project commenced on August 31, 2021. They put the goal poles down, and will be doing other work in the days to come.

Mayor Scott informed the Board of Town Hall Meetings that are scheduled during the month of September at 6:00 p.m., as follows:

Ward 5 September 13, 2021 High Street Community Center, Aberdeen, MS 39730
 Ward 4 September 14, 2021 St. Mark Methodist Church, Aberdeen, MS 39730
 Ward 3 September 15, 2021 Pilgrim Rest M.B. Church, Aberdeen, MS 39730
 Ward 2 September 16, 2021 James Creek Church, Aberdeen, MS 39730
 Ward 1 September 17, 2021 Southside Baptist Church, Aberdeen, MS 39730

Mayor Scott contacted the State of Mississippi, North Mississippi Regional Office and the local Health Department for detailed information regarding the percentage of COVID19 vaccinations, but has not yet received that information. Monroe County, MS is currently reported at a 48% vaccination rate, which is pretty good, but only 40% have the second vaccination. Mayor Scott added: "If I can get the information for the City of Aberdeen that would be great and I will share that information with the City. We had a total of 8 vaccines at the last event, and we're pushing it hard and need everyone's support".

Tina Robbins commented that the Blue Bluff Campground had been voted one of the best RV Parks/Campgrounds in the State of Mississippi, and that the Aberdeen RV Center was voted the best Campers/RV Sales and Rentals in the State of Mississippi.

Several events are scheduled in Aberdeen this week and next week:

1. The 9/11 Remembrance Ceremony on Friday, September 10, 2021 @ 11:00 a.m.
2. Paint the Park at Newburger Park, Saturday, September 11, 2021 @ 8:00 a.m.
3. COVID19 Vaccination Clinic, Saturday, September 11, 2021 @ 12:00 p.m.
4. Constitution Day, Friday, September 17, 2021 @ 3:00 p.m.

Katherine Cunningham advised that FEMA Training that will be held on September 19-23, 2021 at Anniston, Alabama. The following City employees were approved to this training session: Melissa Moore, Richard Boone and Roy Haynes. The FEMA Cabinet will be placed in the Mayor's Office with information relating to FEMA. The training will also consist of the Mask Casual Drill for inclement weather in Monroe County, MS, so that everyone can be prepared and know what to do, how to do it, when to do it, and not to panic, but be prepared when a disaster happens. Robert Devaull, Michelle Stewart, Tohona Larthridge and Jason Roberson have been approved to attend the FEMA Training in the upcoming months. This training will not cost the City of Aberdeen any money. FEMA Training is federally funded.

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Agents Christy Melton and Gwen Jolly, West Central Insurance, Aberdeen, MS shared with City officials procedures that will be required by their Agency concerning Bonds for Public, Elected or Appointed Officials. An application for each Bond will have to be completed and approved before a Bond will be issued to any City Employee, Elected or Appointed Official.

The UDAG Loan request from Harvey Hogan in the amount of \$52,500.00 will be "tabled" until Hogan has approval from the Zoning Commission to operate a restaurant in an area presently zoned as a R1 residential zoning area.

Mayor Scott invited Asst. Police Chief Chris Dobbins to comment regarding the Mississippi Statute 63-3-1215 which prohibits drag racing on public roads and the penalties for violations. The offense is a misdemeanor and, upon conviction, the violator shall be fined not more than One Thousand Dollars (\$1,000.00) or imprisoned not more than six (6) months, or both.

Aldermen/Alderwomen Input:

Alderman Devaull Alderman Devaull thanked everyone who has received COVID19 vaccinations. Alderman Devaull also thanked Mr. Boone, Ms. Tohona and the Crew of the Aberdeen Street Department for cleaning up Peacock Alley. Alderman Devaull has received several calls from residents who thanked him for making sure the cleanup on Peacock Alley was done.

Alderwoman Garth showed some papers to Attorney Faulks and asked whether lawsuits involving the Mayor should be discussed in Executive Session. Attorney Faulks advised Alderwoman Garth that such matters may be raised in Closed Determination, and that lawsuits and litigation may be a proper topic for Executive Session.

Alderwoman Garth wanted to ask Chief Shumpert why two of the Aberdeen police vehicles "were barreling down Meridian Street going 65 or 70 mph just to go to Scale Street" and endangering pedestrians walking along the street about 6:00 a.m. in the morning. "We've wrecked enough cars, and I need Mr. Shumpert to explain that to me. Also, I need to ask Mr. Shumpert if he knew that one of his officers was down at the Park and Recreation Building for at least three days straight sleeping 4 to 4 ½ hours each day inside the Park and Recreation Building".

Alderman Haynes: Alderman Haynes stated I ride through my Ward quite often and noticed grass is growing high in some places. I know we've had some rain that has been part of the cause of that, but the idea is if we can get ... I don't know what the answer is other than just keep trying your best. Public Works, I think you're doing all that you can do with the amount of personnel and equipment that you have on hand. I also sent out the information on the water drain that looks like someone just poured some concrete rocks on top of it. This is located on North Columbus and Washington Street. We need to look at the issues concerning the opening/closing of the gymnasium (Aberdeen Park and Recreation Building) and the High Street Community Center, as to who is responsible for that, and we need to adopt a policy that determines who's doing what and explain that in the job descriptions. Somewhere along the line that has gotten lost.

Alderman Haynes stated that I have received a couple of calls from someone who rented the building and said it wasn't open, and/or getting ready to leave the building and no one was there to lock it. During the last Board Meeting I brought to your attention that the building was left open for a whole weekend with the lights and air left on.

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Alderman Haynes gave a big shout out to Public Works employees for the work in the area around the old Tombigbee Hotel. They kept the sidewalk area cut. Haynes asks the employees to pay more attention to the downtown areas and not allow the grass to grow out of control. Alderman Haynes stated that our public needs to know the City does not pick up tires and shingles from houses left on the side of the street. If you hire a contractor to cut down a tree, it's the contractor responsibility to haul the debris away, and not put the debris on the side of the street for the City to pick up.

Alderman Odom: Alderman Odom stated she's had a number of calls about City workers cutting grass on private property while leaving the City properties unattended to. I would really like this checked into because I have had three calls about it. Mayor Scott asked Alderman Odom for the addresses where this is occurring and he will investigate the complaints. Alderman Odom stated she will make sure that information is provided.

Alderman Allen: Alderman Allen stated there's one correction concerning a Board Order at the July 6, 2021 Board Meeting. Acting Chief Chris Dobbins had proposed to this Board to buy the two cars from the County, with funds from the drug fund. At that time I made the motion to purchase those cars, I did not specify the use of the drug fund. I would make a motion that we authorize the funds from the drug fund to pay for the police cars rather than Common City funds.

Citizen's Input:

City Employee Sophia Jones requested that a personnel matter be discussed in Executive Session.

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

A motion was made by Alderman Haynes, seconded by Alderman Garth to go into Executive Session to discuss personnel issues regarding Aberdeen Park and Recreation Director Michelle Stewart, and City Employee Sophia Jones, and alleged litigation concerning Mayor Charles Scott. 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 Aberdeen Park and Recreation Director Michelle Stewart, and City Employee Sophia Jones, and alleged litigation concerning Mayor Charles Scott. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

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

A motion was made by Alderman Odom, seconded by Alderman Haynes to authorize an Agreement with the Aberdeen Housing Authority for Provision of Additional Police Services to the Housing Authority, and an Agreement with the Aberdeen Separate School District for Provision of School Resource Officers to the Aberdeen Separate School District. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

Attorney Robert Faulks advised the Board that he received a letter from Brad Davis proposing that Davis and the Watkins & Eager law firm be retained to assist the City with submission of the annual continuing disclosure information to the Municipal Securities Board regarding outstanding City of Aberdeen bonds. Alderman Garth asked Attorney Faulks how much does Davis charge? Attorney Faulks stated the letter did not specify the hourly rate.

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Alderman Allen made a motion to retain attorney Brad Davis and the Watkins & Eager law firm to assist the City with submission of the annual continuing disclosure information for the City of Aberdeen. No second was given. Alderman Allen withdrew his motion.

Alderwoman Odom made a motion to retain attorney Brad Davis and the Watkins & Eager law firm be retained to assist the City with submission of the annual continuing disclosure information for the City of Aberdeen. No second was given. Alderwoman Odom withdrew her motion. This matter will be "tabled" for the next Board Meeting.

A motion was made by Alderman Haynes to authorize a \$1.00 per hour pay raise to City employee Sophia Jones. No second was given. Motion died. This matter will be "tabled" for the next Board Meeting.

Mayor Scott informed the Board of the two bids that had been received for the sale of City of Aberdeen Electric Department surplus scrap metal/wire. First Bid: George Dearing (\$1,225.00); Second Bid: Stephen Luker: \$225.00. A motion was made by Alderman Allen, seconded by Alderman Devaull to reject all bids received. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderwoman Garth, seconded by Alderman Haynes to terminate the employment of Aberdeen Police Department employee Anna Hudnall. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderwoman Garth, seconded by Alderman Haynes to post and advertise for persons interested in being employed as Police Officers in the Aberdeen Police Department. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

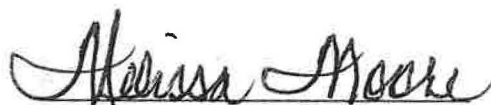
A motion was made by Alderman Haynes, seconded by Alderwoman Garth to suspend City Park and Recreation Director Michelle Stewart for three (3) days with no pay (September 8-10, 2021), and requested Mayor Scott to explain to Michelle Stewart that she should refrain from activities outside the scope of her job description during her regular City work schedule. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".


A motion was made by Alderman Haynes, seconded by Alderwoman Garth to authorize the Aberdeen Electric Department to develop specifications and cost estimates for the construction of the new Aberdeen Electric Department at the Stinson Industrial Park. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderman Allen, seconded by Alderwoman Garth to adjourn until the September 21, 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