

**REGULAR BOARD MEETING
CITY HALL BOARD ROOM**

January 18, 2024

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 NICHOLAS HOLLIDAY, ALDERWOMAN LADY B. GARTH, ALDERMAN EDWARD HAYNES, ALDERWOMAN CAROLYN ODOM, ALDERMAN JOHN CAIN, MELISSA MOORE, CITY CLERK AND WALTER H. ZINN, JR., CITY ATTORNEY.

Invocation: Ms. Kathy Seymour

ROLL CALL

A motion was made by Alderman Cain seconded by Alderwoman Odom to approve the Agenda. On a roll call vote, Alderman Holliday, Alderwoman Garth and Alderman Haynes voted “Nay”. Alderman Cain and Alderwoman Odom voted “Aye”.

A motion was made by Alderman Cain, seconded by Alderwoman Garth to approve the proposed Minutes dated **January 2, 2024**. On a roll call vote, all present voted “Aye”.

A motion was made by Alderman Cain, seconded by Alderwoman Odom to pay all bills submitted by proper vendors as recorded on the Docket of Claims dated **January 18, 2024**. On a roll call vote, all present voted “Aye”., with the exception of the \$778.25 paid to Pepsi Beverage Company per Alderman Haynes.

A motion was made by Alderwoman Garth, seconded by Alderwoman Odom to approve and accept the lowest Bid given by Evans Plumbing and A/C, Inc. in the amount of \$7,014.92 to replace the A/C and Heating Unit at the Magnolia’s. On a roll call vote, all present voted “Aye”.

A motion was made by Alderwoman Odom, seconded by Alderwoman Garth to approve and authorize Ms. Kathy Seymour to apply for the two Certified Local Government Grants. On a roll call vote, all present voted “Aye”.

A motion was made by Alderman Cain, seconded by Alderman Holliday to authorize and give permission to Mayor Charles Scott to apply for the Strategic Multi-Modal Investment Funds. On a roll call vote, all present voted “Aye”.

A motion was made by Alderman Cain, seconded by Alderwoman Odom to approve to pay Phillips Contracting Company, Incorporated, Columbus, MS for their site work at the Aberdeen Port in the amount of \$129,621.56, that’s being paid from the Port Maintenance Fund. On a roll call vote, all present voted “Aye”.

A motion was made by Alderman Cain, seconded by Alderwoman Garth to approve the NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING on February 5, 2024 @ 6:00 PM for the USDA RURAL DEVELOPMENT EQUIPMENT and RADIO GRANT to purchase equipment for the Aberdeen Fire Department. On a roll call vote, all present voted “Aye”.

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A motion was made by Alderman Holliday, seconded by Alderman Haynes to approve the RESOLUTION to accept the USDA Development Radio Grant to buy equipment for the Aberdeen Fire Department. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderwoman Garth, seconded by Alderman Cain to approve and hire Mr. Bobby May as a full-time police officer for the Aberdeen Police Department at a rate of pay of \$15.00 per hour. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderman Holliday, seconded by Alderwoman Garth to approve Employee Enhancement and pay all necessary charges according to state guidelines for City employee Kemar Sims to attend the Emergency Medical Technician / Basic (HYBID) at the Mississippi Fire Academy, Jackson, MS / February 5th thru May 16, 2024. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderwoman Garth, seconded by Alderman Cain to accept City employee Jake Winters resignation with an effective date: January 4, 2024. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderman Holliday, seconded by Alderwoman Garth to accept City employee Justin Posey resignation with an effective date: January 5, 2024, and the cost of the protective vest and Police Academy will be reimbursed by Amory, MS. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderwoman Odom, seconded by Alderman Cain to approve the reassignment of Justin Posey from a full-time to part-time police officer for the Aberdeen Police Department. On a roll call vote, Alderman Holliday, Alderwoman Odom and Alderman Cain voted "Aye". Alderwoman Garth and Alderman Haynes voted "Nay".

A motion was made by Alderman Cain, seconded by Alderman Holliday to adopt a Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) Policy and further include our (City of Aberdeen) own specific information once it has been prepared by City Attorney Walter Zinn, Jr. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderwoman Garth, seconded by Alderman Holliday to approve the Rental Deposit Refund in the amount of \$200.00 for the Aberdeen School District. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderman Haynes, seconded by Alderman Holliday to TABLE and discuss in Closed Determination the discussion of City employee James Lucas to re-take the failed drug test. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderman Haynes, seconded by Alderman Holliday to review the Pepsi Cola Agreement and see the financial numbers on how much the City spent and made with Pepsi Cola. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderman Cain, seconded by Alderman Haynes to approve for Court Clerk Janel Davidson to have a City cellular phone, and the monthly bill will be \$52.21. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderman Haynes, seconded by Alderman Holliday to TABLE and discuss in Closed Determination the issues Mrs. Joann McKinney had with two Aberdeen Police Officers. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

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Mayor Report: Mayor Scott invited Ms. Tina Robbins to share with the Board events happening in the City of Aberdeen. The events planned are: (1). Aberdeen Woman's Club 100+ Years of Service to Aberdeen Public Library / January 28, 2024 from 2-4PM; (2). Aberdeen / Monroe County NAACP Presents Gun Violence Prevention March & Workshop / January 27, 2024 @ 10:00 AM. Ms. Robbins stated Aberdeen Visitor's Bureau is doing the final touches on the launch of the new website. Ms. Robbins shared with the Board an update on the Magnolia Project. Ms. Robbins informed the Board that the A/C and Heating Unit needs to be replaced at the Magnolia's.

Mayor Scott invited Ms. Kathy Seymour to the Board Meeting to share and update information on the Certified Local Government Grants. Mississippi Archives and History asked Ms. Seymour to apply for both of the grants for the two projects. The two projects are: Professional Assessment of the Community Center and Repair for Library on Long Street. Ms. Seymour stated the two grants are due by the end of February 2024, and they will not decide until the end of April 2024 and nothing will happen until the next budget year.

Mayor Scott asked the Board to review the information in their packets on project updates. Mayor Scott stated the funding for the Port Improvement (\$10 million) was moved to fund the Strategic Multi-Modal Investment Fund and increased it by \$20 million making the amount of the grant to be \$30 million. Mayor Scott asked the Board to give him permission to apply for this grant to help with the dredging of the Port.

Mayor Scott shared an update with the Board regarding the water pressure within the City of Aberdeen due to the snow, ice and freezing temperatures. The following water tanks are frozen: Meridian, Prairie, and Stinson Park. The Walker Tank is defected at this time.

Mayor Scott presented a Certificate of Exceptional Service Award to former Ward 5 Alderman Mr. John Allen.

Aldermen/Alderwomen Input:

Alderman Holliday: Alderman Holliday thanked all the City of Aberdeen City Employees (Essential Workers) that remain faithful to their job in making sure the citizens were cared for during the Inclement Weather (snow, sleet and freezing weather). Alderman Holliday thanked the Electric Department for keeping the power on so that everyone was able to keep warm. Alderman Holliday asked that everyone check on family, friends and the elderly in making sure they're keeping warm and staying safe.

Alderwoman Garth: Alderwoman Garth allowed Aberdeen Public Utilities General Manager LaMarcus Thompson to share his request with the Board. Mr. Thompson asked the Board to grant permission for new hire James Lucas that was hired as Cashier for the Aberdeen Electric Department to reschedule the drug screen he failed.

Alderman Haynes: Alderman Haynes addressed the following concerns: the safety of all City employees and citizens during the winter storm, and please be patient if you're having any issues; revisit the agreement with Pepsi Cola and the amount spent and made with Pepsi Cola; the trash issue on Franklin Alley; the City needs to take a serious look at forming a Human Resource Department; a Random Drug Policy for the City of Aberdeen; salt for the City streets and a machine to spread it with a cost of \$500; overtime and call-outs to the Aberdeen Fire Department.

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Alderwoman Odom: Alderwoman Odom didn't have any concern to discuss at this time.

Alderman Cain: Alderman Cain addressed the request made by City Clerk Melissa Moore for Court Clerk Janel Davidson to have a City cell phone. Alderman Cain asked City Attorney Walter Zinn, Jr. about the Solid Waste Ordinance, and would like for him to draft a letter to inform the residents of the trash being left in the streets at Fairfield Apartments.

Citizen's Input:

Mrs. Joann McKinney shared with the Board the rude behavior of two Aberdeen Police Officers.

Ms. Joyce Vasser inquired about homeless people being feed a meal during stormy and cold weather.

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

A motion was made by Alderman Haynes, seconded by Alderwoman Holliday to come out of closed determination and go into Executive Session to discuss personnel issues with General Manager LaMarcus Thompson regarding City employee James Lucas drug screen, Chief Quinell Shumpert rude behavior with Police Officers Tori Ray and Tyler Smith, and Chief Fred Hodges recommendation for City employee William Meaders. 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 with General Manager LaMarcus Thompson regarding City employee James Lucas drug screen, Chief Quinell Shumpert rude behavior with Police Officers Tori Ray and Tyler Smith, and Chief Fred Hodges recommendation for City employee William Meaders.

A motion was made by Alderman Cain, seconded by Alderwoman Garth to come out of Executive Session. On a roll call vote, Alderwoman Garth, Alderman Haynes, Alderwoman Odom, and Alderman Cain voted "Aye". Alderman Holliday voted "Nay".

A motion was made by Alderman Cain, seconded by Alderwoman Garth to terminate City employee William Meaders due to job abandonment. On a roll call vote, Alderman Garth, Alderman Haynes, Alderwoman Odom and Alderman Cain voted "Aye". Alderman Holliday refused to vote,

A motion was made by Alderman Cain, seconded by Alderman Haynes to terminate City employee Daniel James Lucas. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderwoman Odom, seconded by Alderman Holliday to TABLE the discussion on **Miss. Code 25-3-63** (Local government entities and local school districts authorized to grant administration leave with pay to their employees in the event of extreme weather conditions or man-made or natural disasters or emergencies). On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

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A motion was made by Alderman Cain, seconded by Alderwoman Garth to approve for Daniel, Williams & Associates PLLC to represent the City of Aberdeen in Civil Action No: 3:23-cv-01510-BAJ-SDJ at a cost of \$15,000.00. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderman Holliday, seconded by Alderman Cain to terminate City employee Riley James Allen. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderwoman Odom, seconded by Alderwoman Garth to adjourn until the February 6, 2024 Board Meeting. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

Attest:


Melissa Moore, City Clerk


Charles Scott, Mayor