

City of Natchez
Minutes
Mayor and Board of Aldermen
Regular Board Meeting

Tuesday, March 9, 2021

11:00 AM

NATCHEZ CONVENTION CENTER
& VIA TELECONFERENCE

Board Secretary, Sevetrius Dillon

1. Call to Order
2. Prayer by Mayor Dan Gibson
3. Pledge of Allegiance
4. Roll Call by City Clerk:

Present: Mayor Dan Gibson
Alderwoman Valencia Hall
Alderman Billie Joe Frazier
Alderwoman Sarah Carter-Smith
Alderwoman Felicia Bridgewater-Irving
Alderman Benjamin Davis
Alderman Daniel Dillard

Also Present: Bryan Callaway - Attorney
Servia Fortenberry- City Clerk
Sevetrius Dillon – Chief Deputy City Clerk

#84:03/21

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Alderwoman Hall, seconded by Alderwoman Irving to approve the minutes of the Regular Board Meeting held Tuesday, February 23, 2021. **The vote carried unanimously.**

#85:03/21

A motion was made by Alderwoman Smith, seconded by Alderwoman Irving to approve the minutes of the Special Call Board Meeting held Tuesday, February 25, 2021. **The vote carried unanimously.**

Welcome Visitors

Devin Heath- Executive Director of Visit Natchez

- Introduction to Natchez

Linda Smith- Natchez Pilgrimage Tours

- 2021 Spring Pilgrimage; begins on March 17, 2021

Stephen Little

- Discussion of purchase and development of property on 11 Winston Hill

Catherine McPhate

- Discuss April being 'Child Abuse Prevention Month'
- Request permission for pinwheel display on Bluff

#86:03/21

A motion was made by Alderwoman Irving, seconded by Alderman Davis to approve the request to display the pinwheel garden in support of Child Abuse Prevention during the month of April. **The vote carried unanimously.**

Carr Hammond- Silas Simmons

- Update and discussion of fiscal year 2019 audit

Johnny Wahlborg

- Tennis Management Contract

#87:03/21

A motion was made by Alderwoman Hall, seconded by Alderwoman Smith to take under advisement the recommendation of the Tennis Committee and instruct the city attorney to draft a contract to be brought to the board for review and approval. **The vote carried unanimously.**

Frank Klipsch- American Cruise Lines-To be permitted upon arrival

- Cruises resuming on the Mississippi

Unfinished Business: None

County Business: None

Department Director's Reports

James Johnston- Community Development

#88:03/21

Reroofing of Natchez City Hall

Community Heritage Preservation Grant Program

MS Dept. of Archives & History

Staff is requesting a motion to approve the Memorandum of Agreement between the MS Department of Archive and History (MDAH) and the City of Natchez to install a new roofing system atop City Hall. The grant award totals \$157,056.00 plus a local cash match of \$84,568.00. The grant period began on January 22, 2021, and ends on December 1, 2023. **A motion was made by Alderwoman Irving, second by Alderwoman Smith. The vote carried unanimously.**

#89:03/21

Staff is requesting a motion to approve the Preservation & Maintenance Covenant, as required by MDAH, which states the property cannot be altered, destroyed, or impaired without a permit from MDAH that the City has agreed to encumber the property with this covenant and shall maintain the property in a state of good repair for a period of twenty-five (25) years from the grant award date. **A motion was made by Alderwoman Hall, second by Alderwoman Irving. The vote carried unanimously.**

#90:03/21

In addition, the staff is also requesting a motion to approve the professional services contract of Waycaster & Associates to provide architectural services for the city's "Reroofing of Natchez City Hall" for a lump sum contract of \$18,281.00, subject to the review and approval of the MS Department of Archives & History. **A motion was made by Alderwoman Irving, second by Alderwoman Smith. The vote carried unanimously.**

This project has been funded with the assistance of a Community Heritage Preservation Grant from the Mississippi Department of Archives and History under the provisions of House Bill 1730, Laws of Mississippi, 2020.

#91:03/21

North Natchez Drainage Section 592

US Army Corps of Engineers

Staff along with the city's consulting engineer are requesting a motion to approve Change Order #6 that revises the Marblestone drainage design due to retaining wall and grade conflicts (at the Northeast corner of Cemetery Road) and to add sixty-three (63) working days to the contract due to inclement weather. Change Order #6 reduces the W.E. Blain & Sons contract from \$2,858,719.87 to \$2,840,313.32, a reduction of \$18,406.55. The new completion date is estimated to be September 5, 2021, versus June 4, 2021. **A motion was made by Alderwoman Hall, second by Alderwoman Irving. The vote carried unanimously.**

Justin Dollar- Public Works

- Permission to install flags on City-owned light poles for the Euro Car Festival

#92:03/21

A motion was made by Alderwoman Smith, seconded by Alderwoman Hall to approve the request to install flags on City-owned light poles for the Euro Car Festival. **The vote carried unanimously.**

Chief Joseph Daughtry- Natchez Police Department

- Purchase of police cars

#93:03/21

A motion was made by Alderwoman Smith, seconded by Alderwoman Irving to authorize the progression of a contract for lease-purchase agreement for police and fire department vehicles. **The vote carried unanimously.**

City Officials' Reports

Alderwoman Hall

- Thinking of ways of how we can reduce our meeting times to under three (3) hours; we have become relaxed in our discussion and would like for us to return to decorum, respect, and parliamentary procedures.
- We have had two city employees who have had deaths in their families, Rev. Wilsonni Johnson who works in our water department his brother died recently and Mrs. Deason's sister died, I would like to offer condolences to them
- Our Golf Committee will meet within the next week or so to discuss Belinda Stewart's report on her findings at the golf clubhouse at Duncan Park. We will go over those as well as verify suggestions for that.
- The Mayor's Renewal Taskforce will meet this week to review data collected on our city's six parks, we have a lot of compilation of their reports and we are ready to move on with that.
- Finally, there was discussion at the last meeting and actions taken to remove a legal address on W. Stiers Lane, from 528 W. Stiers Lane at an illegal dumpsite to the 500 block of W. Stiers Lane. That is Ward 1. I would like that returned to 528 W. Stiers Lane. I have spoken to Mr. Mayor and Mr. Attorney about that.

#94:03/21

A motion was made by Alderwoman Hall, seconded by Alderman Davis to reverse the deletion of a legal address for an illegal dumpsite in Ward 1 from the minutes of that prior meeting. **The vote carried unanimously.**

Alderman Frazier

- Thanks to the Mayor for signing the proclamation for Mr. Russell Johnson, his service was today. He was an outstanding athlete in the City of Natchez.
- Would like to make a request for the City of Natchez, the President has signed the COVID relief bill for federal funding, would like to research and apply for funds regarding street and sewer funds available since the signing
- The City has a lot of streets that need repairs due to potholes, not only in my ward.
- Would like to request Public Works research the purchase of a limb truck (The Mayor stated that because of our emergency declaration our County has been included on the list for federal disaster assistance. The repair of those potholes will be covered and reimbursable through FEMA. Our lobbyist has been reaching out to us about those funds and the stimulus bill. We may see funds coming to us through our legislators for the cities throughout our State.)

Alderwoman Smith

- Would like to commend the city and staff, Richard Burke for the work done, moving so quickly with the company to remove the limb around our city.
- Request to close the meeting in honor of Cathy Blankenstein who recently passed away.

Alderwoman Irving

- Agrees with recommendations of purchase of a limb truck
- Per conversation with Mr. Dollar, the pothole truck will be out working today; board members and citizens can assist by providing locations of known sites and give them a call
- Asking the board to look at an update, former representative Ronnie Shows came to speak to the previous Board, inquiring about the opiates lawsuit money that Natchez could possibly receive because we were a part of that lawsuit.
- Request proclamation in honor of Mrs. Jessie Lee Proby, she passed away at the age of 97. She was a community mother to all. Funeral arrangements are set for Thursday of this week.

A motion was made by Alderwoman Irving, seconded by Alderwoman Hall to approve a resolution honoring the life of Mrs. Jessie Lee Proby. **The vote carried with the Board voting as follows:**

Alderwoman Hall: Aye

Alderman Frazier: Absent (left meeting room)

Alderwoman Smith: Aye

Alderwoman Irving: Aye

Alderman Davis: Aye

Alderman Dillard: Aye

- They are grateful they've gotten the power restored. Concerns of low power lines in E. Stiers Lane. (Pictures are available). The dangers of live wires are very low and a major concern. Children are on the street, school buses, and backing out of their driveway are all concerns.
- Concerns of a sloped tree at 636 E. Stiers Lane. Two broken poles need to be removed in the area.
- Mr. Rutter was called out to 17 Claiborne Street (think that property has been adjudicated, Mr. Rutter will check with Mrs. Smith), due to the structure leaning towards personal property, it is a major concern.
- Acknowledge building being taken down in its final stage on Sunday, the area looks great. We still have several more, but this is a great start.
- Recognition of Ward 4 Minister, Pastor Dewuan Lewis of Murray Temple Church for organizing water, hand sanitizer, and face masks give-a-way this past weekend.

Alderman Davis

- Receiving lot of calls about debris, advised on the procedure
- Hoping to receive funds for potholes

Alderman Dillard

- Would like to bring focus on accounts as the city approaches the six months of the budget year. Several funds show areas of concern as budgeted amounts are nearly depleted. Independent Auditing and Accounting is one of the most concern as only 10% of the budgeted amount remains. The city should be mindful of spending.
- Mr. Collins' assistance may be limited.
- City Attorney's Professional Services line stands outs.
- Sales dollars are coming in on target and will meet or exceed fiscal year 2019
- Commends City Clerks for changes seen on Budget Status Report.
- Would like to look at Depot Lease Agreement. No updates have been given.
- Review of Belinda Stewart's report from the Duncan Park Golf Clubhouse.

Servia Fortenberry - City Clerk's Report

#96:03/21

A motion was made by Alderwoman Hall, seconded by Alderwoman Smith to approve the **Claims Docket**. **The vote carried with the Board voting as follows:**

Alderwoman Hall: Aye

Alderman Frazier: Aye

Alderwoman Smith: Aye

Alderwoman Irving: Abstain

Alderman Davis: Aye

Alderman Dillard: Nay

#97:03/21

A motion was made by Alderwoman Smith, seconded by Alderwoman Hall to approve the **Mini Claims Docket**. **The vote carried with the Board voting as follows:**

Alderwoman Hall: Aye

Alderman Frazier: Aye

Alderwoman Smith: Aye

Alderwoman Irving: Abstain

Alderman Davis: Aye

Alderman Dillard: Aye

City Attorney's Report

- Notified the board that a third unopened bid from Concordia Bank & Trust was received in a timely manner, but placed in the wrong department mail. The bid will be sent along with others to the MS State Treasury Office for opening due to conflict of interest.

Mayor's Report

- Update on the Winter Storm Cleanup – The State met the 4.5 million dollar threshold for the State to qualify for assistance through FEMA for the expenditures to clean up the city. It also allows homeowners and businesses to apply for FEMA grants to help with repairs from the winter storm. Businesses can also apply for SBA (Small Business Administration) disaster grants and disaster loans. He thanked everyone for being patient as we clean the city from the winter storm. We are getting past the clean-up and looking forward to Spring.
- A food box giveaway is scheduled for this Friday at noon at First Baptist Church. He thanked First Baptist Church and the Seeds of Change Ministry, Dr. Carolyn Myers has done so much for our community.
- Mrs. Irving asked if we could have "Dumpster Day" where we will have large dumpsters placed in different communities throughout the city to allow citizens to come out and big large items. This would help alleviate the illegal dumpsites. The Mayor said he would look into it.
- Mayor Gibson recognizes Mayor Frank Klipsch- former Mayor of Davenport, IW. He has since left politics and now is in the private sector with American Cruise Lines
 - Cruises resuming on the Mississippi River
 - Mayor Klipsch presented a Challenge Coin to Mayor Gibson for the work he has done and for the work he's going to do in Natchez.
- Legislative Update | Resolution for Funding of MS Crime Lab
 - The Board of Supervisors has already completed their resolution; the City will follow with a general resolution showing County and City support for funding the MS Crime Lab.

#98:03/21

A motion was made by Alderman Davis, seconded by Alderwoman Smith to approve a resolution joining with Adams County Board Supervisors showing support for funding of the MS Crime Lab.

The vote carried with the Board voting as follows:

Alderwoman Hall: Aye

Alderman Frazier: Aye

Alderwoman Smith: Aye

Alderwoman Irving: Absent (left room at 1:18 p.m.)

Alderman Davis: Aye

Alderman Dillard: Aye

- Discussion of COVID-19 concerns – our numbers are looking tremendous better throughout our City, the County, and the State. Forbes Magazine has named Natchez one of the best top ten tourist destinations during a pandemic. Activities and restaurants are beginning to open up, he asks everyone to continue to practice safety. The County is still enforcing the mask mandate until the end of the month. The temperature machine and air purifiers have been received and are in use at City Hall. Mrs. Irving thanked the Mayor because she still has symptoms from COVID. She does not want anyone to experience what she has experienced. The Mayor encouraged everyone to schedule their COVID shot. Alderwoman Smith asked about Jefferson Comprehensive Health Center bringing a mobile unit here to Natchez. Alderwoman Irving agreed that this would be great for those that do not have transportation. The Mayor will address it at the next EOC Meeting.
- Discussion of outdoor eating – Natchez restaurants – This has gone through a process that has not been acted upon. He has been asked about it and thinks that it is an answer for some of our restaurants downtown to safely seat individuals who would like to get out and eat again and rather be outdoors. While in Savannah he noticed several restaurants downtown had taken parking spaces and decorated with flowers this allowed for additional seating. Mr. Kent made a very good proposal to the Board a few weeks ago. Ms. Hall reminded the Mayor that they need to contact Mr. Giani, the Mayor responded that he thinks they have. Mr. Callaway will follow up with Mr. Kent and bring information back to the Board.

#99:03/21

A motion was made by Alderman Davis, seconded by Alderwoman Hall to enter into Closed Determination for an Economic Development and Personnel matter. It was determined that the matters warrant Executive Session for an Economic Development, Personnel, and Insurance matter. **The vote carried unanimously.**

#100:03/21

A motion was made by Alderman Davis, seconded by Alderwoman Irving to enter into Executive Session for an Economic Development and Personnel matter. **The vote carried unanimously.**

#101:03/21

A motion was made by Alderman Davis, seconded by Alderwoman Smith to adjourn Executive Session and return to open meeting. **The vote carried unanimously.**

#102:03/21

A motion was made by Alderwoman Hall, seconded by Alderwoman Smith to approve DIP grant funding to assist in the development of a matter discussed in Executive Session. **The vote carried with the Board voting as follows:**

Alderwoman Hall: Aye
Alderman Frazier: Nay
Alderwoman Smith: Aye
Alderwoman Irving: Aye
Alderman Davis: Aye
Alderman Dillard: Aye

#103:03/21

A motion was made by Alderwoman Smith, seconded by Alderman Davis to proclaim March 8 – 13, 2021 as “Girl Scout Week” in the City of Natchez. **The vote carried unanimously.**

Adjourn

#104:03/21

A motion was made by Alderwoman Smith, seconded by Alderman Davis to adjourn the Regular Board Meeting of March 9, 2021, in honor of the late Mrs. Cathy Blankenstein. **The vote carried unanimously.**



DAN M. GIBSON, MAYOR

ATTEST:


SERVIA FORTENBERRY, CITY CLERK