

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

Tuesday, April 27, 2021

6:00 PM

NATCHEZ CONVENTION CENTER
& VIA TELECONFERENCE

Board Secretary, Sevetrius Dillon

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

Present:

- Alderwoman Valencia Hall
- Alderman Billie Joe Frazier
- Alderwoman Sarah Carter-Smith
- Alderwoman Felicia Bridgewater-Irving
- Alderman Benjamin Davis
- Alderman Daniel Dillard

Also Present:

- Attorney, Bryan Callaway
- Servia Fortenberry- City Clerk
- Sevetrius Dillon – Chief Deputy City Clerk

Approval of Minutes:

No minutes for approval

Public Hearing - Property Liens

#177:04/21

A motion was made by Alderman Dillard, seconded by Alderwoman Irving to open the Public Hearing to discuss nuisance properties. **The vote carried unanimously.**

Anita Smith- Code Enforcement Officer

Nuisance Lot Liens

55 Oak Street E, 57 Oak Street, 65 Oak Street, 76 Oak Street, 4 Bailey Avenue, 101 Louisiana, 312 Lumber Street, 35 Elm Street, 1036 Martins Lane, 29 Williams Street, 1234 Watkins Street, 609 Jefferson Street, 204 Creek Street, 95 Aldrich Street, 10 Byrne Street, 13 Claiborne Street, 213 Clifton Avenue, 641 Maple Street, 639 Maple Street, and 645 Maple Street.

- Alderwoman Irving stated that 13 Claiborne Street is very dangerous, she has received calls from constituents and is afraid of it falling down. She also stated that she would like to make a motion to have it torn down. The Mayor advised that her motion would have to be considered when we return to Regular Session.
- Alderman Frazier inquired about Watkins Street, wanted to know if Mrs. Smith had gotten in touch with the owners. Mrs. Smith stated that she had reached out to the owners of 1234 Watkins Street, they live in Hammond, Indiana.
- Alderwoman Hall inquired about 213 Clifton Avenue, the owners are going to embrace the façade until they can begin restoration. Mrs. Smith stated that they will re-work the front of the structure, it has iron underneath that's why it hasn't fallen in. They have renovated the inside, now they will begin to work on the outside.

- Alderman Dillard inquired about 213 Clifton Avenue, clarifying the owner's intention and recommending that it should be removed from the list.

#178:04/21

A motion was made by Alderwoman Irving, seconded by Alderwoman Smith to close the Public Hearing. **The vote carried unanimously.**

#179:04/21

A motion was made by Alderwoman Smith, seconded by Alderwoman Irving to declare properties listed in the staff's memorandum as properties harboring nuisance conditions that violate the Mississippi Code of 1972 and to adopt the Resolutions recommended by the staff to allow the liens to be applied to the property taxes and a copy of the resolution be filed in the County Clerk Office of the Tax Collector, the Circuit Clerk Office, and the Chancery Clerk Office. The motion is to exclude (remove from the list) 645 Maple Street, 35 Elm St, and 213 Clifton. **The vote carried unanimously.**

#180:04/21

A motion was made by Alderwoman Irving, seconded by Alderman Frazier to consider the demolition of 13 Claiborne Street at a later date. **The vote carried unanimously.**

Welcome Visitors

Dr. Swati Kulkarni, Indian Consul General

- Mississippi India Connection greeted the Mayor and Board of Aldermen with a wonderful presentation.

#181:04/21

Riccardo Giani- President of Community Alliance
Recommendation of support for a Disc Golf Course

A motion was made by Alderman Dillard, seconded by Alderwoman Hall to support a Disc Golf Course for the City of Natchez. **The vote carried unanimously.**

Unfinished Business: None

County Business: None

Department Director's Reports

James Johnston- Community Development

#182:04/21

**North Natchez Drainage
USACE Section 592 Program**

Tramone Smith, Project Engineer and staff are recommending approval of Change Order #7, totaling \$1,327.70 due to the need that Marblestone Road was revised do to correct grade conflicts with the existing road initially set to remain. A portion of the road originally set to remain had to be removed and grades were revised to allow for installation of proposed drainage improvements. This increases the Blain & Sons contract from \$2,840,313.32 to \$2,841,641.02, with the completion date still September 5, 2021.

Motion by Alderwoman Hall, second by Alderman Frazier, the vote carried unanimously.

Carried over from 4.13.21 – Fund #329 is getting low on funds. Staff is reminding the mayor & board that on September 24, 2019 the previous board approved borrowing \$450,000.00 to meet project obligations when the contractors bid (and 3 alternates) were accepted. Motion was made by former Alderwoman Mathis, seconded by Alderman Frazier.

Cash Balance 3.31.21	\$	139,175.84
Invoices 4.13.21	\$	(178,181.25)
Balance	\$	(39,005.41)
Transfer 4.14.21	\$	100,000.00
Bal After Transfer	\$	60,994.59
Pending 75% +/- Reimb	\$	133,635.93
Balance After Reimb	\$	194,630.52

Staff requested this issue be tabled until the next board meeting.

#183:04/21

Establishment of Community Gardens

Eddie Burkes, along w/staff, have been working to locate eligible parcels to establish one or more community gardens. Staff is seeking a permission at this time to move forward to establish a community garden at the front left corner of Duncan Park. In addition, staff would like to formally authorize/engage Natchez Water Works to install the needed water meter/tap, etc. at these locations and that the gardens would be available for use for the community gardens at no charge.

Motion by Alderwoman Hall, second by Alderwoman Smith to formally engage Natchez Water Works

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No action taken on proceeding w/garden at Duncan Park.

#184:04/21

Project Silver (Loss Prevention Services, LLC)

Development Infrastructure Program

MS Development Authority

Staff is requesting a motion to pay the following invoice and to allow for the mayor to sign the reimbursement request to MDA –

Stubbs NK Contractors \$161,595.00

Motion by Alderwoman Smith, second by Alderwoman Hall, the vote carried unanimously.

Cleaning of Illegal Dump Site - 1036 Martins Lane

MDEQ Solid Waste Assistance Grant

Staff received the follow quote bids for cleaning this identified illegal dumpsite -

<u>Dump Site</u>	<u>Dozier, Inc</u>	<u>G. Rayborn Contracting</u>
1036 Martins Lane	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 8,000.00
Days to Clean All Sites	10	5

#185:04/21

Staff is recommending the quote from G. Rayborn Contracting be accepted and to issue a PO for this work. *Motion by Alderwoman Irving, second by Alderman Davis, the vote carried unanimously.*

#186:04/21

A motion was made by Alderwoman Hall, seconded by Alderwoman Irving (at the recommendation of Hayden Kaiser that **Weymouth Hall** is in dire need of repairs) to approve **JKS** to continue with the necessary change orders to (**Cemetery Road**) pending approval of grant funds, and pending legality questions being answered by the City Attorney. The original cost of the project was \$185,250 the new cost will be \$455,600. The City match will increase from \$32,400 to \$79,300. **The vote carried unanimously.**

Justin Dollar- Public Works

#187:04/21

A motion was made by Alderman Dillard, seconded by Alderman Frazier to approve the Summer Youth Employment Program for the City of Natchez. **The vote carried unanimously.**

Chief Robert Arrington- Natchez Fire Department

#188:04/21

A motion was made by Alderman Dillard, seconded by Alderwoman Hall to give the Fire Department permission to film a Public Safety documentary about the Rhythm Nightclub Fire and the effects thereafter (proposed by the National Fallen Firefighters Association). **The vote carried unanimously.**

- Alderwoman Irving asked that the public be notified whenever the streets will be closed while filming movies.

City Officials' Reports

Alderwoman Hall – Thanked Chief Daughtry and the men and women of the Police Department. She offered condolences to the family of the individual that was killed in Maryland Heights and to the Grinnell family. She also expressed condolences to her Merit Health family on the death of Renee Clark and to the biological family of Renee Clark. She spoke against violence in our communities. We cannot become numb to violence, we have to continue to speak out against it to bring to justice those who deserves it.

#189:04/21

A motion was made by Alderwoman Hall, seconded by Alderman Frazier to approve a scope of work and cost estimate for a small section of **West Stiers Lane** (beginning of West Stiers Lane to McIntyre) to give drainage and curbs to that area; give it to Jordan Kaiser & Session at a cost of **\$600**. **The vote carried unanimously to Table this item.**

#190:04/21

A motion was made by Alderwoman Hall, seconded by Alderman Davis to approve the repairs to a public right-away on **N. Wall Street** (12 feet X 90 feet) alley way, requires 23 tons of asphalt which will cost **\$3,800**, the base cost of 20 tons is **\$550**, this will include the labor and materials. The total cost of repairing a public right-a-way, that occurred over ten years ago, is approximately **\$4,350** to repair. **The vote carried unanimously to take this item under advisement.**

Alderman Frazier – Thanked Chief Daughtry and the men and women of the Police Department for the wonderful job that they did. It's sad about the murders and that so many people are killing. The Police Chief explained that they are still short of police officers. Thanked the Fire Department for responding to a fire at Mrs. JoAnn Bennett's house at 4:00 a.m. The filming crew of Crooked Letter noticed smoke coming from her house. The Police Department responded also, Mr. Frazier thanked them both.

Alderwoman Smith – Announced that the Police Department and the Sheriff Department had a great press conference and addressed crime and mentioned crime stoppers. The crime stoppers have an anonymous contact number which is 888-442-5001 or use the App: P3tips. She commended the **Jefferson Street Youth Group** for the great job they did during the cleanup at **Watkins cemetery**. There were seven candidates that applied for the NCPC Commissioner position; the committee, comprised of Alderwoman Irving, Alderwoman Hall and Alderwoman Smith, narrowed down the list to three applicants. The Board did chose one today, Mrs. Robbie Cade Furdge, she thanked the committee, congratulated Mrs. Furdge and conveyed her appreciation to all the candidates for their willingness to serve Natchez.

Alderwoman Irving – The Mayor and Board of Aldermen partnered with the Natchez Housing Authority, the Adams County Emergency Management, Adams County Board of Supervisors, the St. Francis Apartments and the Jefferson Comprehensive Health Center to give free Covid-19 vaccines, the second shot will be given May 12, 2021. It was successful, over 30 people were vaccinated. The Community-wide cleanup was a success also. The cleanup needs to continue around the city it will bring our community together. The city parks are one of the most important aspects in the city. Park provide open space they improve physical and mental health; strengthen our communities and make our city and neighborhoods more attractive. It's where we live work and they provide a space for children and families to connect with nature. Parks also increase the value of homes and neighborhoods. There is a dire need for attention to Jack Waite Park. There are piles of limbs and a tree stump that has been there for over nine months. School is about to end and she would hate to see an accident happen in that park. She asked if Public Works could start cleanup in this park. Armstrong Park is open and it could be locked. Since February 18, we have two trees that are down. Again, the concern that I have is that children play, they get injured, the city is going to be liable. There are things that needs to be replaced, the water fountains, the restrooms, there is a leak in the roof, it's not fitted for anyone to use. She would also like for Public Works to clean this park as soon as possible. School will soon be out and children will be looking for things to do.

Alderman Davis - Thanked the Fire Department, they did a wonderful job. Tomorrow, Colin will have a drive through College and Career Job Fair. Would like for James Johnston to check on grants there is supposed to be millions of dollars coming through FEMA for the Fire Department and Police Department. This money can be used for infrastructure among other things.

Alderman Dillard – No report.

Servia Fortenberry - City Clerk's Report

#191:04/21

A motion was made by Alderwoman Hall, seconded by Alderman Davis 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: Out of the room – Not Voting
Alderman Davis: Aye
Alderman Dillard: Nay

#192:04/21

A motion was made by Alderwoman Smith, seconded by Alderman Davis 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: Out of the room – Not Voting
Alderman Davis: Aye
Alderman Dillard: Aye

City Attorney's Report

- Discussion of transcription of board meeting minutes (died for lack of motion).

Mayor's Report

- Legislative Update
- Mud-Bug Festival
- Observe National Travel & Tourism Week (May 2-8) and presentation of Proclamation on April 29th
- Discussion of increase in fine for littering
- Discussion of COVID-19 concerns – after May 1, 2021, we will be under the Governor's order. Natchez does fall under the Adam County, we will follow the County.

#193:04/21

A motion was made by Alderwoman Hall, seconded by Alderman Dillard to provide in-kind service for the **Mud-Bug Festival** (Hank Williams) July 4, 2021 event. **The vote carried unanimously.**

#194:04/21

A motion was made by Alderwoman Smith, seconded by Alderwoman Hall to adopt a proclamation to **Observe National Travel & Tourism Week** (May 2-8, 2021) and the presentation of the Proclamation on April 29, 2021. **The vote carried unanimously.**

#195:04/21

A motion was made by Alderman Dillard, seconded by Alderwoman Smith to approve a **\$500** fee for those that **litter** and to make 20 signs to post around the City. **The vote carried unanimously.**

#196:04/21

A motion was made by Alderwoman Smith, seconded by Alderman Davis to enter into Closed Determination for Personnel matters. It was determined that the matters warrant Executive Session for Personnel matters. **The vote carried unanimously.**

#197:04/21

A motion was made by Alderwoman Smith, seconded by Alderwoman Hall to enter into Executive Session for Personnel matters. **The vote carried unanimously.**

#198:04/21

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

#199:04/21

A motion was made by Alderman Davis, seconded by Alderwoman Hall to restore the Firefighters step pay. **The vote carried unanimously.**

Alderwoman Hall: Aye

Alderman Frazier: Aye

Alderwoman Smith: Aye

Alderwoman Irving: Aye

Alderman Davis: Aye

Alderman Dillard: Aye

#200:04/21

A motion was made by Alderwoman Hall, seconded by Alderman Frazier to approve an 8% pay raise for the office hourly employees in the office of the City Clerk, not to include Servia Fortenberry, Sevetrius Dillon, Caroline Deason and Pamela Patterson. **The vote carried unanimously.**

#201:04/21

A motion was made by Alderwoman Hall, seconded by Alderman Frazier to approve the payment of an insurance bill in the amount of \$506.87 that was not covered under the old insurance plan for Covid-19 related tests. **The vote carried unanimously.**

Adjourn

A motion was made by Alderman Davis, seconded by Alderwoman Hall to adjourn the Regular Board Meeting of April 27, 2021. **The vote carried unanimously.**



DAN M. GIBSON, MAYOR

ATTEST:



SERVIA FORTENBERRY, CITY CLERK