

MAYOR
ROBERT F. SMITH SR.
CITY COUNCIL
TIE TAPSCOTT STATION
1501 MAIN STREET, SUITE 100
COLUMBUS, MISSISSIPPI 39703
STEPHEN J. GIBSON SR.
311 GARDEN

CHIEF OPERATIONS OFFICER
RAY W. ARMSTRONG

CITY OF COLUMBUS

POST OFFICE BOX 1408
COLUMBUS, MISSISSIPPI 39703

CLERK/SECRETARY-TREASURER
DEBRA J. CHAMBERLAIN

POLICE CHIEF
HEBER J. SHELTON

FIRE CHIEF
MARTIN L. ANDERSON

HUMAN RESOURCES DIRECTOR
KATHLEEN M. GILL

INTERIM DIRECTOR OF PLANNING
AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
DEBRA M. HAY

SPECIAL MEETING THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL CITY OF COLUMBUS, MS

**APRIL 28, 2020
10:00 A.M.**

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that the Mayor and City Council of the City of Columbus will have a special meeting.

The meeting will be held at 10:00 A.M., Tuesday, April 28, 2020, at the Municipal Complex Courtroom, located at 1501 Main Street, Columbus, MS, as Ordered by the Mayor and City Council.

The following topics will be discussed:

- A. COVID-19 POTENTIAL SAVINGS
- B. COVID-19 LOCAL ORDINANCE
- C. LOCAL CURFEW

So Ordered, on this the 27th day of April 2020.

As Determined by the Mayor and City Council

**SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING
MINUTES
APRIL 28, 2020**

MAYOR
ROBERT E. SMITH, SR.

CITY COUNCIL
ETHEL TAYLOR STEWART
JOSEPH W. MICKENS, SR.
CHARLIE BOX
PIERRE D. BEARD, SR.
STEPHEN JONES
BILL GAVIN

CHIEF OPERATIONS OFFICER
DAVID ARMSTRONG

City of Columbus

POST OFFICE BOX 1408
COLUMBUS, MISSISSIPPI 39703

CFO/SECRETARY-TREASURER
DELIAH VAUGHN

POLICE CHIEF
FREDERICK SHELTON

FIRE CHIEF
MARTIN ANDREWS

HUMAN RESOURCES DIRECTOR
PATRICIA MITCHELL

INTERIM CITY PLANNING AND
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
GEORGE IRBY

SPECIAL MEETING

**THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF COLUMBUS, MS**

**APRIL 28, 2020
10:00 A.M.**

- | | |
|-------------------|--|
| R. Smith | I. CALL TO ORDER AND INVOCATION |
| M. Andrews | II. DISCUSS/APPROVE HIRING ONE (1) CERTIFIED ENTRY LEVEL FIREFIGHTER TO FILL VACANT POSITION, CONTINGENT UPON SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF PRE-EMPLOYMENT PHYSICAL AND DRUG SCREEN. |
| R. Smith | III. DISCUSS COVID-19 POTENTIAL SAVINGS. |
| R. Smith | IV. DISCUSS COVID-19 LOCAL ORDINANCE. |
| R. Smith | V. DISCUSS LOCAL CURFEW. |
| R. Smith | VI. ADJOURNMENT |

**SPECIAL CALLED MEETING
THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF COLUMBUS, MS**

**APRIL 28, 2020
10:00 A.M.**

The Mayor and City Council met in a Special Called Meeting on Tuesday, April 28, 2020 at 10:00 a.m., proper notice being posted, after having recessed from their last regular meeting of April 21, 2020. The meeting was held in the Court Chambers of the Municipal Complex. Mayor Robert E. Smith, Sr. presided over the meeting and all Council Members were present. Also present were the COO, the General Counsel, the Police Chief & Assistant Chief, and the HR Director.

I. CALL MEETING TO ORDER AND INVOCATION

Mayor Smith called the meeting to order and called upon Council Member Box to offer the Invocation.

II. DISCUSS/APPROVE HIRING ONE (1) CERTIFIED ENTRY-LEVEL FIREFIGHTER TO FILL VACANT POSITION, CONTINGENT ON SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF PRE-EMPLOYMENT MEDICAL EXAM AND DRUG SCREEN

Council Member Jones made a motion to hire **CLAYTON D. ALDRIDGE** as a Certified Entry-Level Firefighter to fill one of the vacant firefighter positions, contingent on successful completion of a pre-employment medical exam and drug screen. Council Member Gavin seconded the motion.

All Council Members voted in favor of the motion.

The motion carried.

III. DISCUSS COVID-19 POTENTIAL SAVINGS.

Mayor Smith began personally thanking the Administration staff for working with him on the potential savings and continued by stating that that he participated in a conference call on April 23, 2020 where they discussed strategies to mitigate losses. Retail stores will reopen later today with 50% of capacity. All businesses must follow CDC guidelines. The Mayor continued by stating that one of the most difficult decisions he's had to make during his tenure as Mayor is to make cuts

**SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING
MINUTES
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with personnel. We are not the only municipality making cuts. I am making a proposal and I welcome your input. 40% of the City's operating budget is from sales taxes. In response to the anticipated lower Sales Tax Revenue as a result of COVID-19, we need to be proactive. I am offering a proposal that will save the City approximately \$1.56 million dollars through three (3) methods:

- A. Immediate freeze on all non-essential spending, except for emergencies and an immediate freeze on all new hiring until December 31, 2020. This measure will save the City \$1,313,234.00.
- B. Reduction in City employees/ hours and payroll from May 4, 2020 until July 31, 2020. All employees, with the exception of Law Enforcement Officers and Firefighters, will work 30 hours per week and retain benefits. The Mayor and Council Members will also be subject to a 25% reduction in pay. These cuts will save the City approximately \$247,609.00. Council Member Gavin made a motion to accept this proposal of four (4) days per week and 30 hours per week. Council Member Stewart seconded the motion.

All Council Members voted in favor of the motion.

The motion carried.

- C. Freeze on travel until July 31, 2020. by stating that currently, there are four (4) cases in Lowndes County, We as the Governing Authority for the City of Columbus, must be proactive and take some measures to protect our citizens and employees.

IV. DISCUSS COVID-10 LOCAL ORDINANCE/RESOLUTION

The Mayor and Council then discussed in detail the COVID-10 Local Ordinance/Resolution of the Mayor and City Council of the City of Columbus, Mississippi, Declaring additional measures for the Control of Contagious and Infectious Diseases and for the Protection of Public Health and Welfare and for Related Purposes. **Section 1:** The City of Columbus hereby adopts the findings and regulations set forth in Executive Order 1477, signed by Governor Tate Reeves on April 24, 2020, to the extent that Order creates requirements as stringent or more stringent than those previously adopted by the City of Columbus. The City fully adopts the broad intent of that Order to prevent the spread of COVID-19. **Section 2:** Except as otherwise provided herein or in Executive Order 1477, all business and non-profit entities operating within the State may remain open or re-open, but shall take all reasonable measures to ensure that such businesses comply with the CDC and the Mississippi Department of Health recommendations and guidance, and shall implement appropriate safeguards to prevent the spread of infectious disease, including but not limited to: mandating social distancing, send home sick employees and actively encouraging sick employees to stay home, separating and sending home

**SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING
MINUTES
APRIL 28, 2020**

employees who appear to have respiratory illness symptoms, emphasizing work-from-home policies where possible, mandating respiratory etiquette and proper hand hygiene with proper hand-washing and personal hygiene protocols and daily screening of employees and volunteers for COVID-19 related symptoms before beginning shift, maintaining clean and sanitary workplaces, cautioning employees regarding travel, and taking all such additional measures to prohibit and/or reduce the spread of infectious disease, and especially COVID-19. Council Members were permitted to ask questions and/or offer comments on each section. Council Member **Gavin** moved for adoption of the Resolution, which motion was seconded by Council Member **Jones**, said Resolution having been introduced in writing at a specially-called meeting of the Mayor and City Council of the City of Columbus, Mississippi, held on April 28th, 2020, which was read, considered, debated and ultimately adopted, paragraph by paragraph, section by section, then as a whole, and the question being put to a vote, the Mayor recorded the votes as follows:

<u>COUNCIL MEMBER:</u>	<u>VOTED</u>	<u>YES</u>	<u>NO</u>
Council Member Taylor-Stewart	voted	<u>✓</u>	_____
Council Member Mickens	voted	<u>✓</u>	_____
Council Member Box	voted	<u>✓</u>	_____
Council Member Beard	voted	<u>✓</u>	_____
Council Member Jones	voted	<u>✓</u>	_____
Council Member Gavin	voted	<u>✓</u>	_____

APPROVED, this the 28th day of May, 2020.

THE RESOLUTION FOLLOWS:

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**SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING
MINUTES
APRIL 28, 2020**

**RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF
COLUMBUS, MISSISSIPPI, DECLARING ADDITIONAL MEASURES FOR THE
CONTROL OF CONTAGIOUS AND INFECTIOUS DISEASES AND FOR THE
PROTECTION OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND WELFARE
AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES**

WHEREAS, on January 31, 2020, United States Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar declared a public health emergency for COVID-19 beginning on January 27, 2020; and

WHEREAS, on March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization characterized COVID-19 as a pandemic; and

WHEREAS, on March 13, 2020, the President of the United States declared a nationwide state of emergency due to the coronavirus COVID-19 pandemic; and

WHEREAS, on March 14, 2020, pursuant to the Constitution of the State of Mississippi and Miss. Code Ann. §33-15-11(b)(17), Governor Tate Reeves declared a State of Emergency existed in the State of Mississippi as a result of the outbreak of COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, on March 11, 2020, the Mississippi State Department of Health confirmed the first presumptive case of COVID-19 in Mississippi, and as of March 30, 2020, there were at least 847 cases in Mississippi of individuals who have tested positive for COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, on March 16, 2020, the President issued federal guidelines for social distancing urging Americans, among other things, to work from home when possible, avoid gatherings of more than ten people, avoid eating inside dining establishments, avoid discretionary travel, shopping trips, and social visits, and listen to and follow the directions of state and local authorities; and

WHEREAS, on March 21, 2020, the Mayor and City Council adopted an ordinance amending Chapter 1 Code of Ordinances of the City of Columbus, Mississippi – General Provisions, which specified penalties for violation of a resolution adopted that same day; and

WHEREAS, on March 23, 2020, Governor Reeves signed Executive Order 1463 which, among other things, imposed certain restrictions on non-essential gatherings and dining establishments and provided for certain essential businesses and operations to remain open; and

WHEREAS, on March 26, 2020, Governor Reeves signed a Supplement to Executive Order 1463 clarifying that emergency measures enacted by political subdivisions in response to the COVID-19 pandemic may continue to be in effect if they are not less restrictive than the measures outlined in the Executive Order and they do not impose restrictions that would prevent any essential business identified in the Executive Order from operating at such a level necessary to provide essential services and functions during the State of Emergency; and

**SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING
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WHEREAS, the City of Columbus has reviewed the restrictions imposed by its resolutions adopted March 21, 2020, as well as the restrictions imposed by this Resolution, and has found those restrictions do not conflict with the terms of Executive Order 1463, except as they relate to the operation of child day-care facilities; and

WHEREAS, on March 30, 2020, the President extended the federal social distancing guidelines through April 30, 2020; and

WHEREAS, on April 1, 2020, Governor Reeves signed Executive Order 1466 implementing a statewide “shelter in place” order, requiring non-essential businesses to cease operations, suspending residential evictions, closing public and private recreational facilities, and empowering local authorities to enforce the terms of the Order, which order was extended until April 27, 2020; and

WHEREAS, on April 24, 2020, Governor Reeves signed Executive Order 1477 implementing a statewide “Safer at Home” order, re-opening certain types of retailers at reduced occupancy, but leaving certain types of businesses and activities off-limits until May 11, 2020, unless rescinded, modified or extended; and

WHEREAS, the emergence and risk of the spread of COVID-19 within Mississippi continue to constitute a public emergency that has resulted in substantial injury or harm to life, health, and property within Mississippi, and in the City of Columbus, and COVID-19 has already been detected in numerous individuals in multiple counties throughout the State, and in several individuals within Lowndes County, Mississippi; and

WHEREAS, the State of Mississippi and the City of Columbus continue to be adversely affected by the outbreak of COVID-19, and there exists a continued threat to the public’s safety, private property and the social and economic welfare of this City, County, and State; and

WHEREAS, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the Mississippi Department of Health guidelines for responding to COVID-19 recommend avoiding crowds or gatherings of more than ten people; and

WHEREAS, the governing authorities of the City of Columbus have reviewed and accept the findings and recommendations of the CDC and the Mississippi Department of Health, and have further received the same findings and recommendations from health professionals within the City of Columbus and Lowndes County and accept those findings and recommendations; and

WHEREAS, the population of the City of Columbus is comprised of college students, substantial numbers of nurses, aides and support staff for physicians, employees and staff of a regional hospital and several long term care facilities, and contains significant populations of both older, at-risk individuals and individuals who travel broadly and frequently, including active duty military personnel, and the City of Columbus is a location frequently visited by individuals from surrounding counties, towns, and cities; and

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WHEREAS, Section 45-17-3 of the Mississippi Code allows the City to proclaim a civil emergency if it determines that a natural disaster which has caused death or injury has occurred, which the City has done; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and City Council continue to find that COVID-19 is a natural disaster which has caused and will continue to cause injury, illness and/or death to persons to such an extent that additional extraordinary measures must be taken to protect the public health, safety, and welfare of citizens and visitors to the City of Columbus; and

WHEREAS, Section 45-17-7 of the Mississippi Code allows the Mayor and City Council of the City of Columbus, after declaration of a civil emergency and in the interest of the public safety and welfare, to issue such orders as are necessary for the protection of life of citizens and visitors to the City; and

WHEREAS, Section 21-19-29 of the Mississippi Code allows the Mayor and City Council to regulate the entrances to public halls and buildings, and the way of ingress and egress to and from the same; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and City Council of the City of Columbus readopt and reincorporate the findings made in their resolutions of March 21, 2020 and April 8, 2020;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE MAYOR CITY COUNCIL of the City of Columbus, that the City hereby adopts the following additional emergency measures that shall take effect and expire at the times provided in Executive Order 1466 unless further action is taken by the governmental authority of the City of Columbus, to protect the public health, safety, and welfare of the community from the spread of a contagious or infectious disease and to eliminate or limit injuries or deaths that may occur in the absence of such measures:

Section 1: Adoption of Executive Order 1477. The City of Columbus hereby adopts the findings and regulations set forth in Executive Order 1477, signed by Governor Tate Reeves on April 24, 2020, to the extent that Order creates requirements as stringent or more stringent than those previously adopted by the City of Columbus. The City fully adopts the broad intent of that Order to prevent the spread of Covid-19.

Section 2: Continued Safeguards Business Entities. Except as otherwise provided herein or in Executive Order 1477, all business and non-profit entities operating within the State may remain open or re-open but shall take all reasonable measures to ensure that such businesses comply with the CDC and the Mississippi Department of Health recommendations and guidance, and shall implement appropriate safeguards to prevent the spread of infectious disease, including but not limited to: mandating social distancing, sending home sick employees and actively encouraging sick employees to stay home, separating and sending home employees who appear to have respiratory illness symptoms, emphasizing work-from-home policies where possible, mandating respiratory etiquette and proper hand hygiene with proper hand-washing and personal hygiene protocols and daily screening of employees and

**SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING
MINUTES
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volunteers for Covid-19 related symptoms before beginning shift, maintaining clean and sanitary workplaces, cautioning employees regarding travel, and taking all such additional measures to prohibit and/or reduce the spread of infectious disease, and especially COVID-19.

Section 3: *Additional Safeguards Required.* To the extent any business remains open or re-opens to serve customers inside the business' facilities, such business must take appropriate actions to minimize close person-to-person contact and enforce appropriate social distancing, to include the following where applicable:

- a) Prominent signs at every entrance informing customers they must stay 6 feet away from other customers who did not accompany them to the store;
- b) For businesses with existing public-address systems, regular announcements instructing customers to stay six feet away from each other;
- c) Markers on floors and signage measuring six-foot intervals and instructing people where to stand in checkout lanes and other lines;
- d) Employees specifically tasked to enforce social distancing among customers, and employees specifically dedicated to that task in the case of large retail establishments such as grocery stores whose publicly-accessible areas cannot be viewed at once;
- e) For businesses that utilize such technology, signage encouraging cashless purchases, online ordering and pickup, and use of self-service checkout stations.
- f) Employers of all operating businesses shall require employees to wear masks that completely cover the nose and mouth. Note! Masks lessen the chance of exposure. Even with a mask, employers shall insist on 6 foot minimum social distancing.

Section 4: *50% Occupant Load for Retailers.* All retail businesses shall adopt the measures described therein to reduce the chance of spread, including limiting the number of customers in their stores at one time to no greater than 50% of the City's Fire Code occupancy limit in order to ensure compliance with social distancing protocols, and frequent cleaning of high-contact surfaces such as retail counters, door handles and credit or debit card machines. They shall also be required to make hand sanitizer available to their customers upon entry of their stores and shall follow all requirements set forth in Paragraph 1(h) of Executive Order 1477.

Section 5: *Restaurants and Bars - Curbside or Delivery Only.* Restaurants and bars will remain open but are limited to drive-thru, curbside, and/or delivery service.

Section 6: *Recreation Activities - Limited.*

(a) General. Except as permitted in Executive Order 1473 and below, all places of amusement and recreation, whether indoors or outdoors, including but not limited amusement parks and rides, museums, playgrounds, children's party and play facilities, all

**SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING
MINUTES
APRIL 28, 2020**

parks including beaches, lakes and reservoirs (but not walking trails), movie theaters, bowling alleys and social clubs shall remain closed to the public.

(b) Golf and Tennis.

(i) Golf. Golf courses, but not indoor facilities, may open, subject to at a minimum facility regulations that prohibit touching flag poles, removal of rakes from sandpits, single riders to one golf-cart, donuts to keep the golf ball from going all the way down, six foot distancing.

(ii) Tennis. Tennis is permitted, but facilities and participants shall comply with the United States Tennis Association recommendations on safe Covid-19 prevention, which recommendations may be found at <https://www.usta.com/en/home/stay-current/national/usta-statement-on-safety-of-playing-tennis-during-the-covid-19-v.html>.

Section 7: *Gyms and other Business- open Only for drive thru, curbside or delivery retail sales of products.* Fitness and exercise gyms, dance studios, clubs, tattoo parlors, spas, salons, barber shops, and other personal care and personal grooming facilities shall remain closed to the public but may continue Minimum Operations limited to retail sales by drive-thru, curbside and/or deliver services pursuant to Paragraph I9d)(ii) of Executive Order 1466, as amended by Paragraph I9a) of Executive Order 1473.

Section 8: *Shelter in Place - Still in Effect for Vulnerable and Elderly.* All vulnerable individuals, including elderly individuals (age 65 or older per CDC guidelines) and individuals with serious underlying health conditions, including high blood pressure, chronic lung disease, diabetes, obesity, asthma, and those whose immune systems are compromised as such by chemotherapy for cancer or any other condition requiring such therapy, are encouraged to continue the shelter in place pursuant to Executive Order 1466, as extended and amended by Executive order 1473.

Section 9: *Child-care facilities.* All child-care facilities are permitted to be open, provided that they:

- a) have all licenses required by the State of Mississippi;
- b) Wash childrens' hands with soap and water regularly;
- c) Take all reasonable measures to prevent children from touching their eyes, noses or mouths;
- d) Limit children from coming within six feet of one another and stopping any person-to-person contact between children;
- e) Limit the occupancy of any space to a maximum of ten people, including support staff;

**SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING
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- f) Ensure that children who cough or sneeze cover their mouths with tissues or sleeves and segregate such children from the rest until they may be removed by the parents or legal guardians;
- g) Check temperature daily of all support staff to ensure that no staff personnel are actively infected;
- h) Require parents to acknowledge in writing that they will not drop off a sick child and that they will report to the facility any positive tests for Covid-19 in the households to which their child lives;
- i) Follow other regulations and guidance from the Mississippi Department of Health and the CDC about safe-distancing and operations of child day care operations; and
- j) Require employees to wear, at a minimum, cloth face masks and if possible to attain, face shields and gloves when employees are reasonably expected to be within six feet of a child
- k) If keeping children in multiple spaces at any one facility, not allow children or employees to migrate from one space to another space where other children are cared for. Further, children shall be kept in the same groups and same spaces day to day until the expiration of this order.

Section 10: General Curfew. Effective at 10:00 p.m. on April 28, 2020, and continuing until May 11, 2020, unless rescinded, modified or extended, there is in effect a general curfew from 10:00 p.m. until 6:00 a.m. except for essential travel and/or essential activities by those over the age of 18 years.

Section 11: The Mayor may issue such other orders as are necessary for the protection of life and liberty. The Mayor is also empowered and authorized to interpret the terms of this Resolution and any executive order incorporated and referenced herein to the extent necessary to enforce this resolution or any such order.

Section 12: The penalties for violation of this adopted resolution shall be the same as those listed in the ordinance amending Chapter 1, Code of Ordinances of the City of Columbus, Mississippi – General Provisions, which the City of Columbus adopted on or about March 21, 2020.

Council Member Garin moved for adoption of the Resolution, which motion was seconded by Council Member Jones, said Resolution having been introduced in writing, which was read, considered, debated and ultimately adopted, paragraph by paragraph, section by section, then as a whole, and the question being put to a vote, the Mayor recorded the votes as follows:

**SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING
MINUTES
APRIL 28, 2020**

Yes or No

Council Member Taylor-Stewart:

yes

Council Member Mickens:

yes

Council Member Box

yes

Council Member Beard:

yes

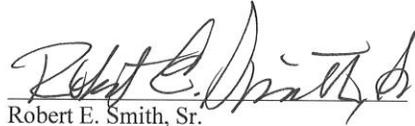
Council Member Jones:

yes

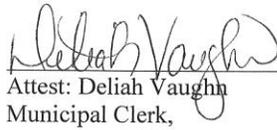
Council Member Gavin:

yes

This the 28th Day of April, 2020.



Robert E. Smith, Sr.
Mayor of the City of Columbus, Mississippi



Attest: Deliah Vaughn
Municipal Clerk,

**SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING
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APRIL 28, 2020**

V. DISCUSS LOCAL CURFEW

The Mayor and Council discuss the local Curfew and the Mayor remarked that the local Curfew will remain 10:00 p.m. – 6:00 a.m., Citizens will continue to Shelter-in-Place until May 11, 2020. No action taken on this matter.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Smith then asked if there was any other business to come before the Mayor and City Council. There being none, Council Member Mickens made a motion that the meeting adjourn. Upon second by Council Member Jones and unanimous vote, the Mayor announced that the meeting was ADJOURNED.

APPROVED BY:

Robert E. Smith, Sr., Mayor

Deliah Vaughn
CFO/Secretary-Treasurer

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