

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

**MAY 5, 2020
5:00 P.M.**

The Mayor and City Council met in Regular Session on Tuesday, May 5, 2020 at 5:00 p.m. 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, CFO, General Counsel, Police Chief, Assistant Police Chief and HR Director. All other Department Heads participated via teleconference.

I. CALL TO ORDER AND INVOCATION

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

II. APPROVE MINUTES FOR THE MEETINGS OF APRIL 21 & 28, 2020

Council Member Gavin made a motion to approve the Minutes from the Meetings of April 21 & 28, 2020. Council Member Stewart seconded the motion.

All Council Members voted in favor of the motion.

The motion carried.

III. APPROVE DOCKET OF CLAIMS

Council Member Box made a motion to approve the Docket of Claims for May 5, 2020, in the amount of \$551,099.93. Council Member Gavin seconded the motion.

All Council Members voted in favor of the motion.

The motion carried.

IV. CONFIRMATION OF/OR AMENDMENTS TO THE AGENDA

CONSENT AGENDA:

There are no changes in the Consent Agenda.

POLICY AGENDA:

There were no changes in the Policy Agenda.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Add one (1) Executive Session matter.

Council Member Beard made a motion to approve the Agenda as presented, with the above amendments. Council Member Jones seconded the motion. The Mayor called for discussion, and there being none, all Council Members voted in favor of same, with a unanimous vote.

V. CONSENT AGENDA:

There were no Consent Agenda Items to approve.

VI. REPORTS, PROCLAMATIONS, RECOGNITIONS AGENDA:

A. General Comments from the Mayor and Council Members

Council Member Box announced that National Day of Prayer will be held on May 7, 2020 at 12:00 noon virtually on Facebook.com/Columbus National Day of Prayer.

Mayor Smith then discussed Governor Tate Reeves' Executive Order No. 1478 section by section, and remarked that this Order will go into effect May 7, 2020. No action was taken.

B. Board Vacancies:

REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY BOARD

- 1 Vacancy, Remainder of John Acker's unexpired 5-Year Term, expires 9/15/2020.
- John Acker passed away on Tuesday, March 31, 2020.
- Appointment will be made May 19, 2020.
- No applicants at this time

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CITY UTILITIES COMMISSION

- 1 Vacancy, Brandy Gardner's 5-Year Term Expires 6/16/2020.
- Appointment will be made June 16, 2020
- No applicants at this time

COLUMBUS HOUSING AUTHORITY

- 1 Vacancy, Vivian Irby's 5-Year Term Expires 7/7/2020.
- Appointment will be made July 7, 2020.
- No applicants at this time

CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION

- 1 Vacancy, Major General Thomas Moore's 4-Year Term Expires 8/16/2020.
- Appointment will be made August 18, 2020.
- No applicants at this time

VII. CITIZENS INPUT AGENDA:

A. Jason Spears – Current Economic Update

Jason Spears, President of JDS Wealth Strategies, came before the Mayor and City Council and discussed the current Economic situation as a result of COVID-19. Spears cautioned the Mayor and Council on spending because this pandemic will be around for a while.

VIII. POLICY AGENDA:

A. Re-adopt Proclamation of Existence of a Local Emergency.

Council Member Jones made a motion to approve the Proclamation of Existence of a Local Emergency caused by Coronavirus (COVID-19). Council Member Gavin seconded the motion. The vote was recorded as follows:

COUNCIL MEMBER ETHEL STEWART	<u>YES</u>
COUNCIL MEMBER JOSEPH MICKENS	<u>YES</u>
COUNCIL MEMBER CHARLIE BOX	<u>YES</u>
COUNCIL MEMBER PIERRE BEARD	<u>YES</u>
COUNCIL MEMBER STEPHEN JONES	<u>YES</u>
COUNCIL MEMBER BILL GAVIN	<u>YES</u>

THE PROCLAMATION FOLLOWS:

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PROCLAMATION OF EXISTENCE OF A LOCAL EMERGENCY
(by City Council or County Board of Supervisors)

WHEREAS, City of Columbus - the City Council ~~or Board of Supervisors~~
does hereby find that conditions of extreme peril to the safety of persons and property have arisen
within said City / ~~County~~, caused by Coronavirus (COVID-19)
(Severe storm, tornado, damaging winds, flash flooding, river flooding
drought, wildland fire, structural fire, hail, hazardous material incident, epidemic, hurricane, earthquake, other)

commencing on or about 3:00 AM PM on the 16th day of March, 2020;
and

WHEREAS, the aforesaid conditions of extreme peril warrant and necessitate the
proclamation of the existence of a local emergency in order to provide for the health and safety of
the citizens and the protection of their property within the affected jurisdiction;

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY PROCLAIMED that in accordance with Section
33-15-17(d), Mississippi Code of 1972, as amended, a local emergency now exists throughout said
City / ~~County~~; and shall be reviewed every seven (7) days until such local emergency is no longer
in effect and proclaimed terminated by the City Council / ~~Board of Supervisors~~ of the City /
~~County~~ of Columbus, State of Mississippi.

IT IS FURTHER PROCLAIMED AND ORDERED that all City / ~~County~~ agencies and
departments shall render all possible assistance and discharge their emergency responsibilities as set
forth in the City / ~~County~~ Emergency Operations Plan.

DATE: 3/16/2020

Robert E. Dumas
Mayor / ~~President of Board of Supervisors~~

ATTEST:

~~Clerk of City / Chancery~~
~~Clerk for Board of Supervisors~~

[Signature]
Councilperson / ~~Supervisor~~

[Signature]
Councilperson / ~~Supervisor~~

[Signature]
Councilperson / ~~Supervisor~~

[Signature]
Councilperson / ~~Supervisor~~

[Signature]

Columbus
City / ~~or County~~, State of MS

JW Mickens SR

B. Discuss/Approve Renewal of Curfew Order.

Council Member Box made a motion to renew the Curfew Order with the hours of 10:00 p.m. – 6:00 a.m., until further notice. Council Member Gavin seconded the motion.

All Council Members voted in favor of the motion.

The motion carried.

C. Discuss/Approve Resolution of the Mayor and City Council of the City of Columbus, Mississippi, urging Direct Federal Funding to all Municipalities in Mississippi to help fight COVID-19.

Council Member Mickens made a motion to approve the Resolution of the Mayor and City Council of the City of Columbus, Mississippi, urging the United States Congress to support Direct Federal Funding to all Municipalities in Mississippi to help fight COVID-19 and protect local citizens from the effects of the Novel Coronavirus and give Mayor authority to sign the Resolution. Council Member Beard seconded the motion for its adoption. The Mayor put the question to a vote, as follows:

COUNCIL MEMBER ETHEL STEWART	<u>YES</u>
COUNCIL MEMBER JOSEPH MICKENS	<u>YES</u>
COUNCIL MEMBER CHARLIE BOX	<u>YES</u>
COUNCIL MEMBER PIERRE BEARD	<u>YES</u>
COUNCIL MEMBER STEPHEN JONES	<u>YES</u>
COUNCIL MEMBER BILL GAVIN	<u>YES</u>

The motion having received the unanimous affirmative vote of the City Council of the City of Columbus, Mississippi, the Mayor declared the motion carried and the Resolution adopted, on this the 5th day of May, 2020.

THE RESOLUTION FOLLOWS:

VIII. C.

RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF COLUMBUS, MISSISSIPPI, URGING THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS TO SUPPORT DIRECT FEDERAL FUNDING TO ALL MUNICIPALITIES IN MISSISSIPPI TO HELP FIGHT COVID-19 AND PROTECT LOCAL CITIZENS FROM THE EFFECTS OF THE NOVEL CORONAVIRUS.

WHEREAS, on January 31, 2020, the United States Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar declared a public health emergency for COVID-19 beginning on January 27, 2020; on March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization characterized COVID-19 as a pandemic; and 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 April 5, 2020, the President of the United States declared the State of Mississippi a "major disaster area," and on April 1, 2020, the Governor of the State of Mississippi declared a Shelter in Place Order pursuant to Executive Order No. 1466, which was extended on April 17, 2020 via Executive Order No. 1473; and

WHEREAS, on March 27, 2020 the President of the United States signed into law the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (the "CARES Act"), which created the Coronavirus Relief Fund; and

WHEREAS, only municipalities of more than 500,000 residents were eligible to receive direct funding from the Coronavirus Relief Fund, which represents only 0.5% of municipalities nationwide and only 14% of the country's total population; and

WHEREAS, only 36 of 19,000 American cities, towns and villages have populations over 500,000; and

WHEREAS, no Mississippi municipality qualified for direct funding from the Coronavirus Relief Fund, and the CARES Act did not mandate that state governments share their portion of the revenue received from the fund; and

WHEREAS, 96% of all municipalities nationwide report that budget shortfalls are the result of unanticipated revenue declines that will negatively impact the important services municipalities provided to their citizens, including fire and police protection; and

WHEREAS, municipal leaders are best positioned to make emergency management decisions related to allocation of resources because they understand the needs of their citizens; and

WHEREAS, Mississippi's municipal leaders need the flexibility to use any federal funding that might be provided to not only address unbudgeted expenses, but also losses in revenue.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF COLUMBUS, MS, AS FOLLOWS:

1. That the United States Congress must act to ensure every municipality impacted by this pandemic – regardless of size – has direct access to federal emergency funding.
2. That the City Council of Columbus, Mississippi, hereby respectfully requests that the United States Congress support direct federal funding to all municipalities in Mississippi to help us fight COVID-19 and to alleviate budget shortfall in order to protect local citizens from the effects of the coronavirus.

Following the reading of the foregoing resolution, Councilman Mickens made the motion for its adoption, followed by Councilman Beard seconding the motion for its adoption. The Mayor put the question to a vote, and the members voted unanimously to adopt the Resolution. The motion having received the unanimous affirmative vote of the City Council of the City of Columbus, Mississippi, the Mayor declared the motion carried and the resolution adopted, on this the 5th day of May, 2020.

D. Discuss FEMA Update and Good News Columbus

Joe Dillon, the City's Public Information Officer, came forth and updated the Mayor and Council on various projects:

- **LED LIGHT FIXTURES**

There were 4,275 light fixtures to be replaced throughout the City limits. All have been replaced except 78.

- **FEMA SHELTERS**

Additional funds are available for FEMA Shelters. Joe Dillon requested permission to apply for a grant for twenty-four (24) additional shelters. FEMA will be responsible for 75% and the City's share will be 25%. Council Member Gavin authorized the application process for twenty-four (24) additional shelters. Council Member Jones seconded the motion.

All Council Members voted in favor of the motion.

The motion carried.

- **PLYMOUTH ROAD**

Kevin Stafford, dba Neel-Schaffer, Inc., came forward and remarked that the City has been working to increase the drainage on Plymouth Road. A study is needed and the City is required to pay H & H \$14,836.00 (12.5%), which is the City's portion for this study to determine the full scope for this project to remediate the problem. Council member Jones made a motion to proceed with the study. Council Member Beard seconded the motion.

All Council Members voted in favor of the motion.

The motion carried.

E. Discuss/approve promotion of the Assistant Garage Superintendent to Garage Superintendent, effective immediately.

Human Resources Director, Pat Mitchell, reported that the vacant position of Garage Superintendent was advertised and six (6) applications were received. Since the City is working reduced hours and since the internal applicant has served as the Assistant Garage Superintendent, it is recommended that he be promoted to the Garage Superintendent position with an increase to \$48,000.00 immediately and increase to \$50,923.00 in six (6) months. Council Member Gavin made a motion to promote Willie Langford

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to the position of Garage Superintendent, with an increase to \$48,000.00 immediately and increase to \$50,923.00 in six (6) months. Council Member Jones seconded the motion.

All Council Members voted in favor of the motion.

The motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT:

The Mayor then asked if there was any other business to come before the Mayor and City Council. There being none, Council Member Beard moved that the meeting be adjourned. 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 T. Vaughn
CFO- Secretary-Treasurer