REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING, TUESDAY, AUGUST 6, 2013 AT 9:00 A.M.

Meeting called to order by Council President Thomas.

Present: Thomas, Markham, Henson, Houston, Hammon.

Absent: None.

The meeting was opened with prayer by Parks & Recreation Director Mark Naylor and followed by the Pledge to the Flag.

Motion was made by Councilwoman Houston duly seconded by Councilwoman Henson and unanimously passed by the Council to confirm the agenda for this meeting with an amendment to add as P-4 a presentation by the Meridian High School Band Boosters; add as R-5 a presentation by Jay Pearson with the Mayor’s Youth Council; move the Presentation Agenda to before the Consent Agenda.

At this time Community Development Director John McClure and Kevin Locke appeared before the Council to make a presentation on the city’s urban forestry program. Kevin went over this program from the establishment of a tree commission, a tree ordinance, and goals.

Mrs. Melba Clark appeared on behalf of the NAACP to invite everyone to a roast and toast reception for Jesse E. Palmer, Sr. for his 24 years of services as a City Councilman. This will be held on August 17th at 7:30 p.m. at the Boys & Girls Club.

At this time Jay Pearson with the Mississippi School of Protocol and Etiquette appeared regarding the Mayor’s Youth Council. Registration starts on September 4th for two age groups: 7 – 12 years old and 13 – 18 years old. The groups will meet every Monday. The younger group will meet from 4:30 to 5:30 and the older group will meet from 6:30 to 7:30. A meet and greet with local officials will be held on September 30th.

President Thomas called on Mayor Bland for his report. He thanked the residents of the city for coming to the meetings. Battalion Chief Danny Ivy was recognized on his retirement from the Fire Department after serving 27 years. Chief Anthony Clayton advised that the new pumper fire truck was on the front lawn of City Hall. Mayor Bland discussed the partnership between the Meridian Housing Authority and Greater Meridian Health Clinic as well as the City of Meridian. Greater Meridian has been providing health services for Meridian Housing residents. There is the possibility of being approved for a $30 million grant for the East End revitalization project. The city will have to look at transportation as a part of applying for this grant as well.
as other services. This is a competitive grant and we will all have to work together. The city will have to prioritize what is important to us. This is a once in a lifetime grant and the city needs to do whatever it takes to obtain this grant. He advised that there is a See Something – Say Something Campaign starting for residents to call the police department when something suspicious is going on in their communities. He stated that the city will be working with the public school system and MCC to give the students the opportunity to compete in creating a new symbol for the city. They are continuing to work on a health care comprehensive plan. He has been meeting with Governor Bryant and other officials in Jackson regarding health care. Acting CAO Goldacker stated that they are receiving a lot of calls in the mayor’s office from citizens regarding complaints. Communication is the key in getting these complaints taken care of. There was an efficiency meeting with a member of the City Council, him, Mayor Bland, and two Supervisors this past Monday. These will be held the first Monday of each month. The first public works report was issued Monday outlining what they have been doing. Other departments will soon be issuing reports on their activities. Homeland Security plans to hold training sessions for all city employees. Budget meetings have been taking place for the last few weeks. They are in the process of reviewing all the contracts the city has in order to try to save the city money. They are working on a 12 – 16 year plan for the city. Mayor Bland advised that they are looking at the city’s comprehensive plan. The training facility will be a major money maker for the city. He and his wife had lunch this past Saturday with Representative Greg Harper. Next Sunday through Tuesday he will be meeting with congressmen and representatives for the state. He hopes that communications between the departments, the city council and the public will continue to improve. Police Chief Lee promised that they would try to make a difference. There are new programs that include police officers in the communities, getting out of their patrol cars and knocking on doors. They want the public to meet the police officers. Their goal is to protect and serve. He commented on the See Something – Say Something Campaign. They are looking at costs involved in setting up a 311 call system for citizens to use in this campaign.

Motion was made by Councilwoman Henson duly seconded by Councilwoman Houston and unanimously passed by the Council to approve the minutes dated July 23, 2013.

Councilwoman Henson offered and moved the adoption and passage of the following Order:

ORDER #15478 ORDER DECLARING EQUIPMENT SURPLUS AND NO LONGER NEEDED BY THE CITY OF MERIDIAN AND AUTHORIZING THE SALE OF SAID SURPLUS EQUIPMENT

And, Councilwoman Houston seconded the motion, whereupon said Order was discussed, passed and adopted by the Council by a vote as follows:

Yea: Thomas, Markham, Henson, Houston, Hammon.
Nay: None.
Councilwoman Henson offered and moved the adoption and passage of the following Order:
ORDER #15479 ORDER DECLARING 2008 FORD CROWN VICTORIA, SERIAL NO. 2FAFP1V98X131178, CONTROL NO. 153-90 SURPLUS, REMOVED FROM SERVICE, KEPT FOR SALVAGE AND TITLE TURNED OVER TO TRAVELERS INSURANCE

And, Councilwoman Houston seconded the motion, whereupon said Order was discussed, passed and adopted by the Council by a vote as follows:
Yea: Thomas, Markham, Henson, Houston, Hammon.
Nay: None.

Councilwoman Henson offered and moved the adoption and passage of the following Order:
ORDER #15480 ORDER AUTHORIZING INSTALLATION OF STREET LIGHTS ON 10TH AVENUE BETWEEN 23RD STREET AND 24TH STREET AND AT 2220 46TH AVENUE

And, Councilwoman Houston seconded the motion, whereupon said Order was discussed, passed and adopted by the Council by a vote as follows:
Yea: Thomas, Markham, Henson, Houston, Hammon.
Nay: None.

Councilman Hammon offered and moved the adoption and passage of the following Resolution:
RESO. #5846 RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF MERIDIAN, MISSISSIPPI, GRANTING TAX EXEMPTION FROM AD VALOREM TAXES TO MERIDIAN COMMUNITY COLLEGE AS AUTHORIZED BY SECTION 27-31-1(b) AND (e) OF THE MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, AS AMENDED

And, Councilman Markham seconded the motion, whereupon said Resolution was discussed, passed and adopted by the Council by a vote as follows:
Yea: Thomas, Markham, Henson, Houston, Hammon.
Nay: None.

Councilwoman Henson offered and moved the adoption and passage of the following Resolution:
RESO. #5847 RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF
MERIDIAN, MISSISSIPPI, GRANTING EXEMPTION FROM AD VALOREM TAXES FOR A FIVE-YEAR PERIOD TO VAN ZYVERDEN, INC. AS AUTHORIZED BY SECTION 27-31-105 ET SEQ., OF THE MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, AS AMENDED

And, Councilwoman Houston seconded the motion, whereupon said Resolution was discussed, passed and adopted by the Council by a vote as follows:

Yea: Thomas, Markham, Henson, Houston, Hammon.
Nay: None.

Councilwoman Henson offered and moved the adoption and passage of the following Order:

ORDER #15481 ORDER ACKNOWLEDGING AND AUTHORIZING THE EMERGENCY REPAIR OF THE 24” SEWER PIPE IN THE NORFOLK SOUTHERN YARD OFF 3RD STREET, MERIDIAN, MS IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 31-7-13(K), MISSISSIPPI CODE ANNOTATED

And, Councilman Markham seconded the motion, whereupon said Order was discussed, passed and adopted by the Council by a vote as follows:

Yea: Thomas, Markham, Henson, Houston, Hammon.
Nay: None.

Councilwoman Houston offered and moved the adoption and passage of the following Order:

ORDER #15482 ORDER AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTION OF MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES MARSHALS SERVICE AND THE CITY OF MERIDIAN (REGIONAL FUGITIVE TASK FORCE)

And, Councilwoman Henson seconded the motion, whereupon said Order was discussed, passed and adopted by the Council by a vote as follows:

Yea: Thomas, Markham, Henson, Houston, Hammon.
Nay: None.

Motion was made by Councilwoman Henson duly seconded by Councilman Markham and unanimously passed by the Council to approve the claims docket dated August 1, 2013 in the amount of $3,046,185.67.
President Thomas called for council comments. Various comments were made. Councilman Markham asked City Attorney Goggans to bring clarity to the city’s new weapon ordinance as far as statutes and Supreme Court cases are involved. Attorney Goggans advised that the weapon ordinance only addresses open carry of weapons. The concealed carry and enhanced concealed carry are covered by two State Statutes 97-37-7 and 45-9-101 which place restrictions on what areas are off limits for those. Their constitutional rights are being protected under those Statutes and this ordinances does not impact those rights. He stated that Councilman Markham mentioned a couple of Supreme Court cases that are informative. One is McDonald vs. Chicago and one is DC vs. Heller. In the United States Supreme court case of the District of Columbia v. Heller, 128 S. Ct. 2783 (2008), that case discusses constitutional limits on municipalities restricting the use of weapons. It made it very clear that no municipality can interfere with the rights of individuals to bear weapons in their homes and protect themselves. It did make it clear that municipalities can limit weapons in certain situations such as sensitive places which can include schools and public buildings. Our ordinance is crafted around sensitive places and defines why they are sensitive.

There being no further business to come before the Council at this time, the meeting was adjourned. Sine die.

Respectfully submitted,

Pam McInnis, Clerk of Council