Meeting called to order by Council President Houston.

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

Absent: None.

The meeting was opened with prayer by Co-Pastor Linda Willis, of Agape Storehouse and followed by the pledge to the flag.

Motion was made by Councilman Thomas duly seconded by Councilman Markham and unanimously passed by the Council to confirm the agenda order for this meeting.

Motion was made by Councilman Thomas duly seconded by Councilwoman Henson and unanimously passed by the Council to approve the minutes dated February 07, 2017.

Councilman Thomas offered and moved the adoption and passage of the following Order:

ORDER #16289   ORDER AUTHORIZING FACILITIES USE AGREEMENT FOR THE PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT

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.

Councilman Thomas offered and moved the adoption and passage of the following Order:

ORDER #16290   ORDER AUTHORIZING INSTALLATION OF A 90 WATT LED STREET LIGHT AT 3411 69TH AVENUE

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.
Councilman Thomas offered and moved the adoption and passage of the following Ordinance:

ORDI. #4480          ORDINANCE ADOPTING THE 2017 NATIONAL ELECTRICAL CODE

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

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

Councilman Thomas offered and moved the adoption and passage of the following Resolution:

RESO. #6098          RESOLUTION APPOINTING DEPUTY COURT CLERKS OF THE MUNICIPAL COURT

And, Councilwoman Henson 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.

Councilman Thomas offered and moved the adoption and passage of the following Order:

ORDER #16291          ORDER APPROVING TAXI PERMIT FOR ROBIN C. JOHNSON

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.

Councilman Thomas offered and moved the adoption and passage of the following Resolution:

RESO. #6099          RESOLUTION CALLING HEARING TO DETERMINE WHETHER OR NOT CERTAIN PARCELS OF LAND ARE IN SUCH A STATE
OF UNCLEANLINESS AS TO BE A MENACE TO THE PUBLIC
HEALTH AND SAFETY OF THE COMMUNITY

And, Councilwoman Henson 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 #16292 IN THE MATTER OF APPROVING AND ADOPTING NORTH
WOODS SUBDIVISION, A RESIDENTIAL SUBDIVISION
OF THE CITY OF MERIDIAN

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 Henson offered and moved the adoption and passage of the following
Ordinance:

ORDI. #4481 ORDINANCE AMENDING THE CITY’S ZONING ORDINANCE
NO. 3966 SO AS TO RECLASSIFY CERTAIN LANDS IN THE
CITY OF MERIDIAN FROM DISTRICT R-1 TO CONDITIONAL
DISTRICT B-1, (PROPERTY ADDRESSED 3527 HWY 145 NORTH)
INCLUDING AMENDING THE OFFICIAL ZONING MAP OF THE
CITY OF MERIDIAN

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

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

Councilman Markham offered and moved the adoption and passage of the following
Ordinance:

ORDI. #4482 ORDINANCE AMENDING THE CITY’S ZONING ORDINANCE
NO. 3966 SO AS TO RECLASSIFY CERTAIN LANDS IN THE CITY
OF MERIDIAN FROM R-2 TWO-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT
TO CONDITIONAL INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT INCLUDING AMENDING
THE OFFICIAL ZONING MAP OF THE CITY OF MERIDIAN

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

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

Councilman Thomas offered and moved the adoption and passage of the following Resolution:

RESO. #6100 RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF
THE CITY OF MERIDIAN, MISSISSIPPI (THE “CITY”),
AUTHORIZING THE EMPLOYMENT OF CERTAIN
PROFESSIONALS IN CONNECTION WITH THE
PREPARATION OF A TAX INCREMENT FINANCE PLAN,
DEVELOPMENT AND REIMBURSEMENT AGREEMENT,
RELATED DOCUMENTS TO FORMALIZE LAUDERDALE
COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI’S (THE “COUNTY”) PARTICIPATION
IN THE TAX INCREMENT FINANCE PROJECT AND THE
ISSUANCE OF TAX INCREMENT LIMITED OBLIGATION
BONDS (THE MERIDIAN CROSSROADS PROJECT PHASE
II) OF SAID CITY FOR THE PURPOSE OF PROVIDING
FUNDS FOR CERTAIN SITE AND INFRASTRUCTURE
IMPROVEMENTS RELATING TO THE MERIDIAN
CROSSROADS PROJECT PHASE II; AND FOR RELATED
PURPOSES

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.

Councilman Markham offered and moved the adoption and passage of the following Order:

ORDER. #16293 ORDER AUTHORIZING CONTRIBUTION IN THE AMOUNT
OF $21,456.00 TO THE WECHSLER FOUNDATION
And, Councilman Thomas seconded the motion, whereupon said Order was discussed, passed and adopted by the Council by a vote as follows:

Yea: Thomas, Markham, Henson, Houston.
Nay: Hammon.

Councilman Markham offered and moved the adoption and passage of the following Order:

ORDER #16294    ORDER ACTIVATING THE ONE YEAR EXTENTION OPTION ON THE BID FOR HERBICIDE/SOWASHEE CREEK FROM PROGRESSIVE SOLUTIONS, NEWTON, MS IN THE AMOUNT OF $7,250.40

And, Councilman Thomas 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 #16295    ORDER AUTHORIZING CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS WITH LPK ARCHITECTS FOR ARCHITECTURAL SERVICES FOR FIRE STATION #2

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

Yea: Thomas, Henson, Houston.
Nay: Markham, Hammon.

Agenda item R-8 (Order authorizing agreement with Election Systems & Software (ESS) for city municipal election $50,927.00 +) was not addressed, no action was taken.

Councilman Thomas offered and moved the adoption and passage of the following Resolution:
RESOLVED, that Resolution #6101, RESOLUTION APPROVING AND ADOPTING THE AMENDED BUDGET FOR THE CITY OF MERIDIAN FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2017, AND DIRECTING THE CITY CLERK IN REFERENCE THERETO

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.

Motion was made by Councilman Markham duly seconded by Councilwoman Henson and passed by a majority vote of the Council to approve the claims docket dated February 16, 2017 in the amount of $3,695,011.10. Voting yea: Thomas, Markham, Henson, Houston. Voting nay: Hammon.

President Houston called on Mayor Bland for his report: Mayor Bland offered condolences to the family of the four member family found murdered today in Toomsuba. Mayor Bland then thanked the City Council for the approval on the purchase of the new fire truck for Station #3. He said if anyone wants to see it, it’s parked in front of city hall right now. The original fire truck was destroyed in an accident. Also the LED lighting program on Hwy 39 and other areas in the city are moving along. I’d like to remind the citizens that our paving program is ongoing, some streets are blocked and people are turned around, but this is one of the few inconveniences we must allow when improving the streets. And we want the public to be aware that the 7.5 million we are now using for this paving project will not fix every pot hole or pave every street in Meridian that needs paving. We will eventually return to the Council for additional funds to continue the paving that needs to be done. We now have a retirement certificate to present to Mr. Charles ‘Chuck’ Overby. Mr. Overby has retired from the City of Meridian position of Labor Supervisor, in the Public Works Department. He has worked for the city for 34 years! Mr. Overby said, “I am grateful to have served the citizens of Meridian for 34 years. There was more to this job, more than just a paycheck; it was my mission for a long time. Those of you that know me know that I am a pastor, and I am also ‘Chuckles the Gospel Clown’. Now days as ‘Chuckles the Gospel Clown’ I have to call the police department to let them know I’m headed to a birthday party. But they have been very good to me. I just want to say thank you, it has been my honor and deep pleasure to serve the citizens of Meridian for the 34 years I was here. And I will still serve them in any way I can, and if there is anything you need from me from now on, let me know, I am still part of the team.” Councilman Thomas said, “And you are an Election Commissioner too.” Mr. Overby replied, “Yes sir, I am an Election Commissioner”. Mayor Bland thanked Mr. Overby once more for his service to the City of Meridian. Mayor Bland reminded everyone about the Mardi Gras Parade and activities going on Saturday, February 25, 2017. Laura Carmichael said the festivities will
kick off this Friday night with getting the bar-b-que competition ready, a lot of family friendly activities; we encourage everyone to come and enjoy. There will also be a ‘Dr. Seuss’ Silly Birthday’ celebration going on at the Meridian Public Library on Saturday, February 25, 2017 from 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

President Houston called for citizens comments.
 a) Allen Shute – spoke
 b) Nathan Harding – spoke
 c) Carvan Breaziel – spoke
 d) Barbara Ivy - cancelled

President Houston called for Council comments:

Councilman Hammon said, “I would like to get an update from Code Enforcement as to where we are in comparison to when we started and also an update on the Environmental Court, how many people have been through it, and the results. I would like to know where we are with our equipment and tearing down condemned structures. I’d like an overall update; we have been working on this for three years. I would also like to know about our paving; about 1.5 million of the bond was used to purchase equipment so we can do some of it ourselves. I know it’s not enough to take care of every tax payer, but it’s for all the taxpayers, not just for some. I get a lot of calls from citizens asking about paving as it relates to them. Concerning this upcoming election, I do agree with Barbara, we got very little information about this election, but we are getting used to getting little information.”

Councilman Markham said, “I thank you all for coming to the Council Meeting and for watching the meeting. I ask the media to get the correct story as it relates to the election. Speak to people to get the correct information, not opinions from those trying to create bias and conflict. I am asking that the City Administration take the time to contact the Lauderdale County Election Commission. And the Lauderdale County Election Commission takes the time to provide us with the proposed precinct changes and all the services provided during an election process. So we can look at the quote and see the services offered. I think it’s understood by the Council and the Administration, that regardless of their price to some extent, they have the expertise and experience that cannot be replaced, plus they provide a lot of services that ESS does not supply. So we need to let them know that. Also they have a more stringent absentee ballot process in which they evaluate an absentee ballot very thoroughly before it’s counted.” Councilman Hammon spoke up saying, “There is no difference in cost; I want everyone to know it’s not a cost issue.” Councilman Markham said he would like to speak with Hugh Smith after the meeting on a problem a citizen had concerning an erosion issue.

President Houston said, “Thank you all for coming out tonight. I want to thank Mr. McGruder and the Mayor for listening to me ride you both about James Chaney Park. I appreciate the hard work in securing that grant; it looks really good over there. The
Community appreciates what we are doing with that patch of grass and now it’s becoming something great for our children. I want to acknowledge Pastor and First Lady Willis, wonderful people; thank you for coming out tonight and blessing us with prayer and your presence. Take time to do what you can to inspire a young person this week to be great. Every single day that you can, if you have a young person come in contact with you be intentional about inspiring them to be great. Encourage them not to buy into all the distractions around, not to focus on troubles and failures, but inspire them to be great. If we can begin to do that we will see our city become greater than we ever thought possible. God Bless you, thank you for coming out tonight.”

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

Respectfully submitted,

Jo Ann Clark, Clerk of Council