Meeting called to order by Council President Houston.

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

Absent: None.

The meeting was opened with prayer by Pastor Odell Hopkins, of West Mt. Moriah Baptist Church and followed by the pledge to the flag.

Motion was made by Councilman Markham duly seconded by Councilman Thomas and unanimously passed by the Council to confirm the agenda with amendments: Removal of R-1 and R-2, amend the claims docket, and the possibility of an Executive Session for economic development with action to follow.

The hour of 5:00 p.m. having arrived, the hearing as called for in Resolution #6102 determining the necessity to amend the Meridian Crossroads Project Phase II - Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Plan of 2006, was opened with motion by Councilman Thomas duly seconded by Councilwoman Henson and unanimously passed by the Council. Tray Hairston of Butler Snow, LLP was present to represent the city and explain the financing plan and the restrictions on the property with it being sixteen section land, and representatives of Collett & Associates, LLC were also here to put on a slide presentation showing the type of businesses they hope to bring in after the additional infrastructure of the Crossroads Phase II Plan is complete. Clay Hamilton, of Meridian Today spoke at the meeting to ask the total amount of the financing plan and the length of time of the financing. Mr. Hairston said the term of the TIF is up to twenty years, whatever the market dictates, if we get a really good interest rate it could be ten to fifteen years. Bill Heidelberg spoke to voice his protest of the resolution for the Meridian Crossroads Project and offered a copy of a letter on which he based his protest. Motion was made by Councilman Thomas duly seconded by Councilman Markham and unanimously passed by the Council to close the hearing.

The hour of 5:15 p.m. having arrived, the hearing as called for in Resolution #6099 regarding unclean property was opened with motion by Councilman Thomas duly seconded by Councilman Markham and unanimously passed by the Council. Jimmy Trotter for the property at 2628 State Blvd: Mr. Trotter said he has already lost the property and has no interest. Shonda Lewis spoke concerning the property at 3404 13th Street, she is no relation to the owner, and no one else connected with the property appeared. The property at 1405 23rd Street owned by L. C. Thedford was represented by his two daughters, Angela Millbrook and Bridget Fowler. Code Enforcement Officer, Wiley Quinn presented a slide presentation of each property on the list of eighteen (18) properties. Each person that appeared to represent their property of concern was given an opportunity to speak. Code Enforcement Officer, Wiley Quinn advised
that all the properties were still unclean and a menace to the health and safety of the community. Motion was made by Councilman Thomas duly seconded by Councilman Markham and unanimously passed by the Council to close the hearing.

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

RESO. #6103 RESOLUTION ADJUDICATING PARCELS OF LAND TO BE A MENACE TO THE PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY OF THE COMMUNITY

And, Councilman Hammon 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 Thomas duly seconded by Councilman Markham and unanimously passed by the Council to approve the minutes dated March 07, 2017.

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

ORDER #16302 ORDER DESIGNATING HYDRA-STOP AS THE SOLE SOURCE SUPPLIER FOR LINE STOPPING EQUIPMENT FOR USE WITH THE LINE STOP SYSTEM CURRENTLY USED BY THE MERIDIAN PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

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.

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

ORDER #16303 ORDER DESIGNATING METAL TREATMENT TECHNOLOGIES, LLC (MTZ) AS THE SOLE SOURCE SUPPLIER FOR REMOVAL OF HAZARDOUS MATERIAL FROM TRAINING FACILITY
PISTOL RANGE

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.

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

ORDER #16304 ORDER AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTION OF VENUE USE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CITY OF MERIDIAN AND THE STATE GAMES OF MISSISSIPPI, INC.

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 Order:

ORDER #16305 ORDER AUTHORIZING ACCEPTING A MONETARY DONATION GENERATED BY THE YOLANDA ADAMS CONCERT FOR THE REBUILD OF PLANET PLAYGROUND FUND

And, Councilman Thomas 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 #16306 IN THE MATTER OF: THE RE-APPOINTMENT BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF KYLE TEMPLE TO THE LAUDERDALE COUNTY TOURISM COMMISSION
And, Councilman Hammon 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 #16307 IN THE MATTER OF: THE CONFIRMATION OF THE RE-APPOINTMENT BY THE MAYOR OF DUANE MAUST TO THE MERIDIAN MUNICIPAL SEPARATE SCHOOL DISTRICT

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.

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

ORDER #16308 ORDER AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTION AND SUBMISSION OF GRANT APPLICATION TO THE OFFICE OF JUVENILE JUSTICE AND DELINQUENCY PREVENTION

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

ORDER #16309 ORDER ACCEPTING HOLD HARMLESS AGREEMENT FROM SOUTHERN OUTDOOR INVESTMENTS, LLC FOR ENTRY ACROSS PRIVATE PROPERTY AT 1400 26TH PLACE SOUTH TO REMOVE SILT FROM CITY OWNED EASEMENT TO
ALLEVIATE FLOODING OF COMMERCIAL PROPERTIES IN THE AREA

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. #6104 RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF MERIDIAN, MISSISSIPPI, GRANTING TAX EXEMPTION FROM AD VALOREM TAXES TO FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF MERIDIAN (2306 9TH STREET) AS AUTHORIZED BY SECTIONS 27-31-1 (D) AND 79-11-33 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.

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

RESO. #6105 RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF MERIDIAN, MISSISSIPPI, GRANTING TAX EXEMPTION FROM AD VALOREM TAXES TO HAVEN CHAPEL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH (1622 23RD STREET) AS AUTHORIZED BY SECTIONS 27-31-1 (D) AND 79-11-33 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.
Councilman Thomas offered and moved the adoption and passage of the following Resolution:

RESO. #6106 RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF MERIDIAN, MISSISSIPPI, GRANTING TAX EXEMPTION FROM AD VALOREM TAXES TO JUBILEE MENNONITE CHURCH (815 28TH AVENUE) AS AUTHORIZED BY SECTIONS 27-31-1 (D) AND 79-11-33 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.

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

RESO. #6107 RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF MERIDIAN, MISSISSIPPI, GRANTING TAX EXEMPTION FROM AD VALOREM TAXES TO MERIDIAN COMMUNITY COLLEGE FOUNDATION AS AUTHORIZED BY SECTION 27-31-1 (B) AND (E) OF THE MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, AS AMENDED (PPIN #10880)

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

RESO. #6108 RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF MERIDIAN, MISSISSIPPI, GRANTING TAX EXEMPTION FROM AD VALOREM TAXES TO MERIDIAN COMMUNITY COLLEGE FOUNDATION AS AUTHORIZED BY SECTION
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 Thomas offered and moved the adoption and passage of the following Resolution:

RESO. #6109  RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE FINANCE & RECORDS DEPARTMENT TO APPLY CREDIT TO CERTAINTEED’S MONTHLY WATER AND SEWER BILLS UNTIL REFUND IS SATISFIED

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 Resolution:

RESO. #6110  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 Councilman Hammon and passed by a unanimous vote of the Council to approve the claims docket dated March 16, 2017 in the amount of $3,794,229.23 with amendments of $979.00 and $40,000.00, bringing the total
amount to $3,835,208.32. Voting yea: Thomas, Markham, Henson, Houston, Hammon. Voting nay: None.

President Houston called on Mayor Bland for his report:

Mayor Bland called up Carolyn Smith with State Games of Mississippi. Ms. Smith said she wanted to thank the Council for working with State Games, and State Games could not do it without the support of the City and County. She said the City is very important and the people who come into Meridian for these games appreciate everything that the Mayor and Council do to make these games a great success, thank you all. The Mayor said he would like to mention that the Mississippi Arts and Entertainment Experience will have an induction ceremony for fifteen people, Thursday, March 23, 1917; it will start at 10:30 a.m. Mayor Bland said he would like to give special congratulations to the Meridian High School Boys Basketball Team; they won the State Championship 68-59 against Murrah High School in the Jackson Coliseum on Friday, March 10, 2017. We will try to have a parade for the boys’ basketball team and the academic team for the Meridian School District on Thursday, March 30, 2017. The parade will start at the Meridian School District Central Office. On April 01, 2017 we will have our Threefoot Arts Festival and our Earth’s Bounty weekend on the City Hall lawn. I want to thank the Council for approving the unclean property resolution. Our inspection staff have a hard job going out checking the neighborhoods for these properties that are a danger to our community. One of the things we are doing now is training our staff to better communicate externally and internally, with citizens out in the field and with each other. These are tough situations to be in for our inspectors when they are communicating the issues that must be addressed on these hazardous properties to bring them up to code. A lot of people don’t like this but we can’t continue to have properties in the conditions that you have seen in this presentation, it gets to a point where action has to be taken. No one wants to live with these types of blighted structures on their block.

President Houston called for citizens comments.

a) Allen Shute – spoke

President Houston called for Council comments:

Councilman Hammon said the escalation of crime is due to the lack of enforcement of our rules, regulations and laws. Councilman Hammon also expressed his disappointment that the administration and council have not done more to address the issues of concern within the last year or more. Councilman Hammon said that he feels as a whole, we are not doing our jobs.

Councilman Markham said that anything put before the council that is not in the best interest of the city will not pass. We have to be truthful and educate our citizens. Councilman Markham feels the Crossroads will be a great thing for the city if we can get it done. He
congratulated the Meridian Boys Basketball team on the championship win against Murrah in Jackson. Our boys were outstanding and they worked really hard for this championship.

Councilman Thomas said we have problems, but we have a lot of good things. Infrastructure repairs, park improvements that will help the quality of life for citizens, education opportunities are phenomenal, one of the few communities that offer education from pre-school to doctoral degree. The pavement projects going on developers ready to come and invest in our community, life is happening here. Problems are a part of life and we deal with them as best we can. Overall, we have good things here in Meridian and things are good for most of us. Meridian has a lot to offer, we just need to participate in what is out there.

President Houston said we thank everyone for coming out tonight. It’s good to be the leaders we are called to be and we must be respectful of each other. We need to set good examples, if we call ourselves Christians we need to behave as Christians. We ask all to be respectful, the council and citizens as we give our comments. Leadership is a two way street. Ward 4 community meeting will be held at 6:00 p.m. March 23, 2017 at Bethel Baptist Church 301 46th Avenue. We thank you for coming.

An executive session was requested regarding economic development with possible action to follow. Motion was made by Councilman Thomas duly seconded by Councilman Markham and unanimously passed by the Council to close the meeting to determine whether to declare an executive session. (Councilman Hammon left the meeting) Motion was made by Councilman Thomas duly seconded by Councilwoman Houston and unanimously passed by the Council to declare an executive session in order to discuss economic development with possible to follow. The Council then went into executive session.

Motion was made by Councilman Thomas duly seconded by Councilwoman Henson and unanimously passed by the Council to go out of executive session.

President Houston called the regular meeting back to order. No action was taken regarding the executive session.

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