REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING, TUESDAY, MARCH 07, 2017 AT 9:00 A.M.

Meeting called to order by Council President Houston.

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

Absent: None.

The meeting was opened with prayer by Pastor Gary Houston, of New Hope Blackwater Baptist Church and followed by the pledge to the flag.

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

Motion was made by Councilman Thomas duly seconded by Councilman Markham and unanimously passed by the Council to approve the minutes dated February 21, 2017.

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

ORDER #16296 ORDER DETERMINING THAT CERTAIN POLICE VEHICLES ARE USED FOR CRIME DETECTION AND UNDERCOVER WORK AND SHOULD NOT BE MARKED SO AS TO BE IDENTIFIABLE AS CITY VEHICLES

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 #16297 ORDER DECLARING VEHICLE SURPLUS AND NO LONGER NEEDED BY THE CITY OF MERIDIAN AND AUTHORIZING THE SALE OF SAID SURPLUS VEHICLE

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 #16298 ORDER AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTION OF MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE CITY OF MERIDIAN POLICE DEPARTMENT AND THE LEARNING FOR LIFE PROGRAM

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 #16299 ORDER GRANTING APPROVAL FOR THE PLACEMENT OF MALL SIGNAGE ON A PORTION OF THE CITY’S SIXTEENTH SECTION LEASE AT BONITA LAKES AND THE ACCEPTANCE OF AN INDEMNIFICATION AND RELEASE AGREEMENT FOR SAME

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.
Nay: Hammon.

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

RESO. #6102 RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF MERIDIAN, MISSISSIPPI (THE “CITY”) DETERMINING THE NECESSITY FOR AMENDING THE AMENDED AND RESTATED TAX INCREMENT FINANCING PLAN OF 20063 (MERIDIAN CROSSROADS PROJECT); PROVIDING THAT A PUBLIC HEARING BE CONDUCTED IN CONNECTION WITH THE PROPOSED AMENDMENT; PROVIDING FOR PUBLICATION OF NOTICE OF SAID PUBLIC HEARING; 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 #16300  ORDER AUTHORIZING EXECUTION OF PROPOSAL FOR 2017 CITY OF MERIDIAN MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS FOR MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS FROM THE LAUDERDALE COUNTY ELECTION COMMISSION

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 Ordinance:

ORDI. #4483  ORDINANCE AMENDING ARTICLE 1, CHAPTER 8 OF THE CODE OF ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF MERIDIAN, MS, TO REVISE CERTAIN POLLING PLACES

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

ORDER #16301  ORDER DECLARING EMERGENCY CONDITION AND AUTHORIZING EMERGENCY REPAIRS TO BRIDGES OVER GALLAGHER CREEK ON 35TH AVENUE AND ON 40TH STREET IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE
PROVISIONS OF § 31-7-13(K)

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.

Motion was made by Councilman Hammon duly seconded by Councilman Markham and passed by a majority vote of the Council to approve the claims docket dated March 02, 2017 in the amount of $2,971,854.54. Voting yea: Thomas, Markham, Henson, Houston. Voting nay: Hammon.

President Houston called on Mayor Bland for his report: Mayor Bland thanked the City Council for the approval of the cadet program with the Meridian Police Department. This allows the young people to see what the police do in our community and it gives them the opportunity to see if being a police officer is a career path they would like to follow later in life. Mayor Bland said the LED lighting on Hwy 39 is ready to go as soon as MDOT approves the plan; Mississippi Power is ready to start the lighting installations. The Mayor invited everyone out to support the boys’ basketball team’s final game; these are two of the best basketball teams in the state, they will be playing in the Jackson Coliseum tomorrow night, Wednesday at 8:30 p.m., please come out and support them. Today at the Meridian Regional Airport, we have a big announcement that will be made at 1:00 in regards to travel here in Meridian. This is something Tom Williams at the Meridian Airport, has been working on for some time, and I think the public will be pleased to hear about it. And we are very proud of this announcement.

President Houston called for citizens comments.

a) Allen Shute – did not appear

President Houston called for Council comments:

Councilman Markham reiterated that the Meridian Wildcats will play tomorrow night, 8:30 p.m. at the Jackson Coliseum and he urged everyone to attend and support them. This should be a really good game, so go over to Jackson and support the kids. Councilman Markham said that in the spirit of Wildcat enthusiasm, March Madness and tournament playoffs right around the corner, he will have via Facebook, a live political bracketology on his Facebook page between 7:30 and 8:00 tonight.
Councilman Thomas said there are a lot of local teams, football, baseball, softball, track team, etc., a lot of local things at Meridian High School, St. Patrick, Lamar, Russell, Northeast and others, a lot of local teams we can support, we don’t only have to go to Jackson to support our kids, we also need to show our support locally. The schools are about to reach another semester, I guess we’re half way through. Most schools struggle for lack of public support. The public are the ones that make the public schools function, so when you get a chance you’ve got to support the youngsters and teachers out there. Without public support there are no public schools, so get out and support them, they need all the support they can get. The teachers work extremely hard under some regulations that none of them want, but they have to go by them, a lot of us think it’s detrimental to the school district to have to go by those, but its things our Justice Department wants doing. Again, get out there and do all you can to help the teachers, kids and administrators. Please drive down some of these newly paved streets, they feel a little different.

President Houston said, “Good morning everybody, thank you all for coming out. I want to thank Mr. McGruder, the Mayor, and everybody for the work you’ve done at the James Chaney Memorial Ball Field. We will have the dedication this Friday at 3:30 p.m. The kids have been having a great time over there, I appreciate you all working with me to try to get that park on the map. As Dr. Thomas said, we have lot of good activities going on. I want to give a shout out to Carver School Track Team, they have a competition going on, and all of the Meridian Public Schools track teams are working hard and doing a fantastic job. We are going to work on putting some community gardens in, one at Multi-County and one also at T. J. Harris, we are looking at a couple of other spots. So, if you would like to be actively involved in that plan, please contact me, so we can make sure we keep it moving. I appreciate you all. Mayor and all of you guys, when I call about the trash, you send someone right away to take care of the problem. The people over there really appreciate it. So, thank you. Read, mentor, and volunteer in the Meridian Public School District, they need us! I am going to let Dr. Thomas have the last couple of words.

Dr. Thomas said, “About Planet Playground, I want to thank Northeast School District, they put on a fund raiser for Planet Playground. The elementary, middle and high school all came together to support that public playground. So, I want to particularly thank them for doing that, it was a big effort. The next Council Meeting we will have a person here to make a donation to Planet Playground based on the ticket sales they had at the Yolanda Adams concert at the Temple Theatre last weekend.”

Councilwoman Houston said it was a fantastic concert, really, really good. And again, we thank you all for coming out.

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