REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING, TUESDAY, JANUARY 15, 2019 AT 5:00 P.M.

Meeting called to order by Council President, Tyrone Johnson.

Present: Thomas, T. Johnson, F. Johnson, Houston, Lindemann.

Absent: None.

The meeting was opened with prayer by Shon Willis, Agape Storehouse Church and followed by the pledge to the flag.

Motion was made by Councilman Thomas duly seconded by Councilwoman F. Johnson and passed by a unanimous vote of the Council to confirm the agenda with the following amendments: Remove R-2 (Order confirming the appointment of Edwin Smith to the Meridian Tree Commission.) Add R-6 (Order authorizing donation of room at union Station for Mission Mississippi for luncheon.) Add (Executive Session: Personnel performance.) Voting yea: Thomas, T. Johnson, F. Johnson, Houston, Lindemann. Voting nay: None.

Motion made by Councilman Thomas duly seconded by Councilwoman F. Johnson and passed by a unanimous vote of the Council to approve the minutes dated December 21, 2018 and January 02, 2019. Voting yea: Thomas, T. Johnson, F. Johnson, Houston, Lindemann. Voting nay: None.

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

ORDER #16691 ORDER AUTHORIZING THE SOLE SOURCE PURCHASE OF HYDRA-STOP SYSTEM PIPE MAINTENANCE AND REPAIR EQUIPMENT FROM HYDRA-STOP COMPANY ON A NON-COMPETITIVE BASIS

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

Yea: Thomas, T. Johnson, T. Johnson, Houston, Lindemann.
Nay: None.

Councilwoman F. Johnson offered and moved the adoption and passage of the following Ordinance:

ORDI. #4506 ORDINANCE AMENDING ORDINANCE NO. 4505 RELATED TO THE CLOSING SWEET GUM BOTTOM ROAD AND ESTABLISHING A NEW PUBLIC ROAD
And, Councilman Lindemann seconded the motion, whereupon said Ordinance was discussed, passed and adopted by the Council by a vote as follows:

Yea: T. Johnson, F. Johnson, Houston, Lindemann.
Nay: Thomas.

Councilwoman F. Johnson offered and moved the adoption and passage of the following Order:

ORDER #16692 ORDER AUTHORIZING EXECUTION OF AGREEMENT TO INSTRUCT A VIRTUAL SEARCH PLANNING COURSE FOR THE CITY OF MERIDIAN BY PAUL M. BURKE

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

Yea: Thomas, T. Johnson, F. Johnson, Houston, Lindemann.
Nay: None.

Councilwoman F. Johnson offered and moved the adoption and passage of the following Ordinance:

ORDI. #4507 ORDINANCE SETTING RATE OF PAY FOR EIGHT (8) EMPLOYEES OUTSIDE UPDATED PAY BANDS

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

Yea: Thomas, T. Johnson, F. Johnson, Houston, Lindemann.
Nay: None.

Motion was made by Councilwoman F. Johnson duly seconded by Councilman T. Johnson and passed by a majority vote of the Council to approve the claims docket dated January 10, 2019 in the amount of $2,908,048.83. Voting yea: Thomas, T. Johnson, F. Johnson, Houston. Voting nay: Lindemann.

Councilwoman F. Johnson offered and moved the adoption and passage of the following Order:

ORDER #16693 ORDER AUTHORIZING DONATION OF THE USE OF
UNION STATION’S NEW ORLEANS ROOM FOR LUNCHEON (JANUARY 29, 2019) FOR THE MISSION MISSISSIPPI-MERIDIAN CHAPTER

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

Yea: Thomas, T. Johnson, F. Johnson, Houston, Lindemann.
Nay: None.

President Johnson advised of the notification of legal advertisement for the following:

a) Highway 11/80 Sidewalk Construction

President Johnson called for the Mayor’s Report:

Mayor Bland said he wanted to remind everyone about the Annual Governor’s Job Fair where the city partners with MCC and a host of other businesses and vendors. The job fair will be Tuesday, February 5th from 9:00 to 1:00 at the MCC Tommy Dulaney Center.

Chief Dubose and Lieutenant Rita Jack has given me information and a telephone number for anyone in your wards and communities that want to expand or form a community watch group, the number to call is 601-513-6916.

We have with us tonight Ms. Christy Hicks from the U.S. Census Bureau to give us an update on the 2020 Census. Ms. Hicks said thank you Mayor, I am a Partnership Specialist with the Census Bureau and I am here to discuss the census and recruiting in the Lauderdale County area. What we do as a partnership specialist is come together to partner with municipalities and civic organizations to form a volunteer complete count committee, with trusted voices within the communities to strategize on ways to increase the numbers of self-responding households. The Census date is April 1, 2020 and this is the first census that will be online. Residents are encouraged to fill out the census online, if they don’t have internet access we will have an 800 number for them to call to do their census or they can call to request the paper copy to fill it out and mail back to the bureau. We will ask the Mayor and the Complete Count Committee to appoint a chairperson, and that chairperson and I will work to decide who will be a part of the count committee so we can target the area that has the lowest response rate. In 2010 the response rate was 70% and in 2000 the response rate was 73%; so the response rate dropped by 3% from 2000 to 2010, we want to increase the response numbers. In 2000 and 2010 Mississippi fell under the Dallas Region, but in 2015 a restructuring was done, and Mississippi has now fallen under the Atlanta Region. Atlanta really doesn’t know much about Mississippi, so they are pretty much relying on the residents of Mississippi to bring up the numbers. As you all know, the way the numbers come in will determine government funding for SNAP, Hud, Nutrition for the school system, Hospice Care and other services. We also face redistricting if the numbers come in lower, and that would start in 2021. In 2000 we lost a congressional seat when the census numbers came in lower. In 2010 our numbers stayed
the same. The way I always encourage our people when they ask what will we get out of helping with the census; I tell them that the government has already allocated 675 billion dollars toward federal funding of programs and the money follows the people. Those people in the states that fill out the census are the states that will receive the funding; and the states that come back with lower numbers their funding will be lower. Today I ask the Mayor to give me a go to person that can help me form a committee to start complete count. We are recruiting workers in the Lauderdale County area and I was here last month and gave out flyers. I have flyers here tonight, as well as slot cards that explain the job opportunities plus phone numbers for those interested in these job opportunities. Please commit to putting this information on the city’s website, face book page, etc. to let the residents of Lauderdale County know that jobs are available for them and they start at $15.50 an hour minimum and higher depending on the job.

President Johnson called for citizen comments:

a) Ruth Jones – spoke
b) Gregory Lane – spoke
c) Melinda Vinson Northam - spoke

President Johnson called for Council comments:

Various comments were made.

An executive session was requested regarding personnel performance. Motion was made by Councilman Thomas duly seconded by Councilwoman F. Johnson and unanimously passed by the Council to close the meeting to determine whether to declare an executive session. Motion was made by Councilman Thomas duly seconded by Councilwoman F. Johnson and unanimously passed by the Council to declare an executive session in order to discuss personnel performance. The Council then went into executive session. Motion was made by Councilman Thomas duly seconded by Councilwoman F. Johnson and unanimously passed by the Council to go out of executive session with the following actions taken:

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

ORDI. #4508 ORDINANCE SETTING RATE OF PAY FOR CHRISTOPHER CLARK, FIRE EQUIPMENT TECHNICIAN

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

Yea: Thomas, T. Johnson, F. Johnson, Houston, Lindemann.
Nay: None.
Councilman Thomas offered and moved the adoption and passage of the following Ordinance:

ORDI. #4509  ORDINANCE SETTING RATE OF PAY FOR TERRANCE DAVIS, BUILDING INSPECTOR

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

Yea: Thomas, T. Johnson, F. Johnson, Houston, Lindemann.
Nay: None.

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

ORDI. #4510  ORDINANCE SETTING RATE OF PAY FOR THERESA M. JOYNER, COURT COLLECTION SPECIALIST

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

Yea: Thomas, T. Johnson, F. Johnson, Houston, Lindemann.
Nay: None.

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

ORDI. #4511  ORDINANCE SETTING RATE OF PAY FOR BARBARA KIDD, EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

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

Yea: Thomas, T. Johnson, F. Johnson, Houston.
Nay: Lindemann.

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

ORDI. #4512  ORDINANCE SETTING RATE OF PAY FOR DAVID NICKLES, EQUIPMENT OPERATOR
And, Councilwoman F. Johnson seconded the motion, whereupon said Ordinance was discussed, passed and adopted by the Council by a vote as follows:

Yea: Thomas, T. Johnson, F. Johnson, Houston, Lindemann.
Nay: None.

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

ORDI. #4513  ORDINANCE SETTING RATE OF PAY FOR TIMOTHY ROBERTS, MAINTENANCE WORKER SENIOR

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

Yea: Thomas, T. Johnson, F. Johnson, Houston, Lindemann.
Nay: None.

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

ORDI. #4514  ORDINANCE SETTING RATE OF PAY FOR DAREADELL T. THOMPSON, BUILDING INSPECTOR

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

Yea: Thomas, T. Johnson, F. Johnson, Houston.
Nay: Lindemann.

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

ORDI. #4515  ORDINANCE SETTING RATE OF PAY FOR STACEY THOMPSON, EQUAL OPPORTUNITY OFFICER

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

Yea: Thomas, T. Johnson, F. Johnson.
Nay: Houston, Lindemann.
Councilman Thomas offered and moved the adoption and passage of the following Ordinance:

ORDI. #4516  ORDINANCE SETTING RATE OF PAY FOR HENRY WALK, CUSTODIAL SUPERVISOR

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

Yea: Thomas, T. Johnson, F. Johnson, Houston, Lindemann.
Nay: None.

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