REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING, TUESDAY, MAY 21, 2019 AT 9:00 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 Pastor Gary Morris, of Life 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: Add R-11 (Order authorizing waiving of fees at Highland Park Splash Pad. Add R-12 (Resolution authorizing Council Investigation.) Add R-13 (Order concerning maintenance of Velma Young and Highland Park Pools.) Add (Executive Session – economic development.) 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 May 07 19, 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 #16749 ORDER AMENDING ORDER NO. 16728 ENTITLED “ORDER AUTHORIZING EXECUTION OF PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERING SERVICES AGREEMENT BETWEEN WAGGONER ENGINEERING, INC., AND THE CITY OF MERIDIAN (OLD HIGHWAY 80 BRIDGE REPLACEMENT)”

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, F. Johnson, Houston, Lindemann.
Nay: None.

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

ORDER #16750 IN THE MATTER OF: THE CONFIRMATION OF THE RE-APPOINTMENT BY THE MAYOR OF JAMIE BULLOCK CATER TO THE TRUSTEES OF
THE MERIDIAN COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT

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, F. Johnson, Houston, Lindemann.
Nay: None.

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

ORDI. #4521 AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ARTICLE 1, CHAPTER 8 OF THE CODE OF ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF MERIDIAN, MS, TO REVISE CERTAIN POLLING PLACES

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.

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

ORDER #16751 ORDER AUTHORIZING EXECUTION OF MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE CITY OF MERIDIAN POLICE DEPARTMENT AND THE MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH’S BUREAU OF BEHAVIORAL HEALTH/ADDICTIVE SERVICES (MEDICATION DROP BOX)

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

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

The Representatives for The MS Band of Choctaw Indians, said the first year we started at three days a week, we are now at a five days a week operation. We went up to 8000 in ridership. Most of our riders are dialysis patients. The fare will remain the same for passengers; they will still be able to call in for a pickup. We have hired someone from Meridian to be a driver for us. This brings the total drivers to three persons. There is an average of about 100 passengers per day.
Councilwoman F. Johnson offered and moved the adoption and passage of the following Order:

ORDER #16752 ORDER AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTION OF MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE CITY OF MERIDIAN AND ITS GOVERNING AUTHORITIES AND THE MISSISSIPPI BAND OF CHOCTAW INDIANS FOR TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

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.

The hour of 5:15 p.m. having arrived, the hearing as called for in Resolution No. 6216 regarding the appeal of Re-zoning-RZ-19-04; 29.95 acres on Knight-Parker Road. Morgan and Massey Properties, LLC made application to the City to reclassify or rezone property from R-1 Single Family Residential and Agricultural District to B-2 Neighborhood Business District. This rezoning was granted, and the residents on this road are appealing the rezoning.

Motion was made by Councilman Thomas duly seconded by Councilwoman F. Johnson and passed by a unanimous vote to go into public hearing concerning the rezoning appeal of the 29.95 acres on Knight-Parker Road. Council President T. Johnson called for anyone that would like to speak and haven’t signed in to do so now.

1. Geraldine Knight said the road was named after her husband and they are a kind of forgotten community, we help each other and don’t complain. Knight-Parker Road is right off Highway 11 & 80 and the land owner that wants this property rezoned has 40 acres on Highway 11 & 80 of commercial property. Knight-Parker Road is a narrow community road with no lines and the school bus drivers are complaining all the time about the trouble they have on this road because someone has to go into the ditch when meeting. We are still on the very old water lines, several years ago we were without water for four days and we had no sewerage. We are asking for help today because we don’t feel that this clinic should be placed in this little residential neighborhood. We want growth but why put this clinic in the neighborhood when there is already commercial property on the highway that can be used.

2. Ms. Linda Brashear was standing at the podium with Ms. Knight.

3. Johnny Morgan said he is here representing his dad Ralph Morgan. My dad and Ronnie Massey have owned the property since 1996. This property was always zoned B-4 at the time of the acquisition it was zoned B-4. Sometime since then a portion of this
Property was changed to residential zoning that was unknown to us until we had this prospective buyer come along recently and put them under contract to put a clinic on. That was the first time we found out there was a zoning issue to start with. We came before the Planning Commission a few weeks ago and they approved our request for rezoning and we met all the requirements for rezoning and there was really no issue not to rezone this, basically the only issue was the neighbors just don’t want anything brought in, they don’t want any additional traffic on that road, whether residential, incidental, business or any other kind. This whole area zoned residential has not had any new development since the time of the rezoning. And probably won’t have any new residential developments in the foreseeable future. This is the first potential client we have had interested in this piece of property. This property will be off Highway 80 several hundred feet. It’s not going to be a high traffic type clinic and its impact will be minimal. This is the first development we’ve seen in this area and it would be beneficial to the whole area if we get something out there. The Planning Board agreed with us when they approved the rezoning.

Councilman Johnson asked if they had tried to sell to the homeowners out there and Mr. Morgan said a for sale sign has been there for over ten years.

Councilman Johnson asked if the clinic has to be at the top of the hill, with forty acres why not the bottom? Mr. Morgan said they actually have thirty acres and the bottom portion has already been laid out for a large scale commercial type building site. The site on the top of the hill doesn’t lend itself to a large scale commercial site; it is perfect for a small clinic.

Senior Planner, Steven Redd said the Planning Commission didn’t want to do a B-4 because that would be too harsh for the area; any type of business could come in. They thought B-2 could accommodate the improvements such as roads and utilities. Mr. Redd said he is familiar with the practitioner and she runs a small clinic and she prefers relatively private areas within the city in quite locations.

Councilman Johnson said these are lifetime residents out there and if we are going to alter their way of living, there has to be some type of negotiation with them if we are going to start putting businesses in their community.

4. Ronnie Massey said the piece of property that we are talking about and the piece of property the County is spending millions of dollars on right now, all that separate it is Highway 45 Bypass. If the city wants to grow I don’t know how in the world it would hurt anything, it’s right there on the highway. I live four miles from it. Years ago when I bought it it was zoned all commercial. I have a lady who wants to build and as quick as we get this cleared up she can get started. I don’t see where this will hurt anything.

Councilwoman Houston asked Mr. Smith about some idea of the cost for road and improvements should the clinic be located on the subject property. City Attorney, Matt Watson said this is a hearing concerning a rezoning and it is immaterial on the future costs for improvements. Mr. Smith said he does not know off hand what would be needed there he would need to access the area requirements.
Councilman Thomas said there are changes coming to that road regardless if rezoned or not because of the industrial park, there will be more traffic, commercial and residential.

Motion was made by Councilman Thomas duly seconded by Councilwoman F. Johnson to close the hearing with a unanimous vote of the Council with no action taken.

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

**ORDER #16753**  
ORDER AUTHORIZING DONATION OF USE OF THE CITY’S TROLLEY TO TRANSPORT PASSENGERS BETWEEN MCC AND THE TOMMY DULANEY CENTER (JUNE 11, 2019) FOR BOYS AND GIRLS CLUB OF EAST MISSISSIPPI’S CELEBRATION OF EXCELLENCE DINNER

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

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

**ORDER #16754**  
ORDER ACCEPTING HOLD HARMLESS AGREEMENTS FROM BILL GODFREY AND TAYLOR DEAN FOR DRAINAGE REPAIRS ON PROPERTIES AT 14TH AVENUE, MERIDIAN, MISSISSIPPI

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

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

**RESO. #6221**  
RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING AN ADDITIONAL EXPENDITURE OF $10,000 IN SUPPORT OF THE JUNETEENTH HERITAGE FESTIVAL FOR JUNE 2019

And, Councilman T. Johnson seconded the motion, whereupon said Resolution was discussed, passed and adopted by the Council by a vote as follows:
Councilman Thomas offered and moved the adoption and passage of the following Resolution:

RESO. #6222   RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING $15,000 EXPENDITURE TO HOST THE JULY 4TH ANNUAL CELEBRATION FOR 2019

And, Councilman T. Johnson seconded the motion, whereupon said Resolution was discussed, passed and adopted by the Council by a vote as follows:

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

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

RESO. #6223   RESOLUTION TO PROCEED WITH CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT REVOLVING LOAN PROGRAM (CAP LOAN) APPLICATION

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

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

Motion was made by Councilwoman F. Johnson duly seconded by Councilman Thomas and passed by a majority vote of the Council to approve Section (1) Payroll of the claims docket in the amount of $971,918.35. Voting yea: Thomas, T. Johnson, F. Johnson, Houston. Voting nay: Lindemann.

Passed by a majority vote of the Council to approve Section (2) Mandatory & Operational Items of the claims docket in the amount of $2,941,390.45. Voting yea: Thomas, T. Johnson, F. Johnson, Houston. Voting nay: Lindemann.

Total amount approved/passed $3,913,308.80 claims docket dated, May 16, 2019.

Motion was made by Councilwoman Houston duly seconded by Councilman T. Johnson and passed by a unanimous vote of the Council to discuss R-11 (Order authorizing waiving of fees at Highland Park Splash Pad. The matter was discussed when fees at Highland Park in 2017 collection was about $2700 and in 2018 about $2800 after fees were waived/reduced the collection was about $500.

Motion was made by Councilwoman Houston duly seconded by Councilman Lindemann and passed by a unanimous vote to Table the issue.
Councilman Lindemann offered and moved the adoption and passage of the following Order:

ORDER #16755 ORDER OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF MERIDIAN, MISSISSIPPI, INITIATING AN INVESTIGATION INTO HOSTILE WORK ENVIRONMENT PURSUANT TO MISSISSIPPI CODE 521-8-27

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

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

Motion was made by Councilman Lindemann duly seconded by Councilman T. Johnson and passed by a unanimous vote of the Council to discuss R-13 (Order concerning maintenance of Velma Young and Highland Park Pools.) The maintenance issues were discussed and costs associated with getting the Velma Young pool open.

Motion was made by Councilman Thomas duly seconded by Councilman Lindemann and passed by a unanimous vote to Table the issue.

President T. Johnson called for the Mayor’s Report:

City Attorney, Ronnie Walton gave a report on the lawsuit between the Department of Justice and the City of Meridian: The city has been under a consent decree with the Department of Justice for the last three and a half years dealing with the interaction the Police Department has with school based arrests. Basically, the Meridian Police Department has been out of the business of going on campus to make school based arrests since July of 2011. The Department of Justice did not place us on notice of their concern about this until the later part of November 2011. But last Friday I received a call from the Department of Justice informing me that the city has been in sustained substantial compliance with the terms of the consent decree for over a year, which under the terms of the consent decree allows the city to come out from under the consent decree. We are crafting a joint motion that the city and Department of Justice will file in court, hopefully by next week that will confirm that everybody agrees that the city is complying and have been in substantial compliance for over a year and that effect or that will be to dismiss the settlement agreement the city has with the Department of Justice and the lawsuit will be over.

President T. Johnson called for citizen comments:

a) Melinda Vinson Northam - spoke
b) Loretta Bennett – spoke
President T. Johnson called for Council comments:

Various comments were made.

An executive session was requested regarding economic development. Motion was made by Councilwoman Houston 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 Councilman T. Johnson and unanimously passed by the Council to declare an executive session in order to discuss economic development. The Council then went into executive session. Motion was made by Councilwoman F. Johnson duly seconded by Councilwoman Houston and unanimously passed by the Council to go out of 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