

**REGULAR BOARD MEETING  
CITY HALL BOARD ROOM**

**January 3, 2023**

**5:00 P.M.**

**BE IT REMEMBERED THAT THE MAYOR AND BOARD OF ALDERMEN/ALDERWOMEN MET IN THE ABERDEEN CITY HALL BOARD ROOM WITH THE FOLLOWING MEMBERS PRESENT:**

**MAYOR CHARLES SCOTT, ALDERMAN ROBERT DEVAULL, ALDERWOMAN LADY B. GARTH, ALDERMAN EDWARD HAYNES, ALDERWOMAN CAROLYN ODOM, ALDERMAN JOHN ALLEN, MELISSA MOORE, CITY CLERK AND ROBERT FAULK, CITY ATTORNEY.**

Invocation: Mayor Charles Scott.

A motion was made by Alderwoman Odom, seconded by Alderman Allen to approve the proposed Board Meeting Minutes dated December 15, 2022. On a roll call vote, Alderman Devaull, Alderwoman Odom and Alderman Allen voted "Aye". Alderwoman Garth and Alderman Haynes voted "Nay".

A motion was made by Alderman Devaull, seconded by Alderwoman Odom to pay all bills submitted by proper vendors as recorded on the Docket of Claims dated January 3, 2023. On a roll call vote, Alderman Devaull, Alderwoman Odom and Alderman Allen voted "Aye". Alderwoman Garth and Alderman Haynes voted "Nay".

A motion was made by Alderwoman Garth, seconded by Alderman Allen to approve and authorize travel and to pay all necessary expenses according to state guidelines for Visitors Bureau Director Tina Robbins to attend the Ideal Living Trade Show "Welcome Home Mississippi", Stamford, CT on February 3-6, 2023. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderman Allen, seconded by Alderwoman Odom to "table" a decision whether to accept land to be donated to the City of Aberdeen for the Aberdeen Animal Shelter by Deborah Shaw. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderwoman Garth, seconded by Alderman Allen to approve a City donation of \$500.00 to the CREATE Foundation for the benefit of the Monroe County Children's Vision Center (CVC). On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderman Allen, seconded by Alderman Devaull to approve advertisement for vendor bids for pricing for fencing to be purchased and installed at the City property formerly occupied by Holley's. On a roll call vote, Alderman Devaull, Alderman Haynes, Alderwoman Odom and Alderman Allen voted "Aye". Alderwoman Garth voted "Nay".

A motion was made by Alderman Devaull, seconded by Alderman Allen to authorize Mayor Scott to seek investors or businesses to purchase land and construct and operate a truck stop business on City industrial park property in Aberdeen. Proposals will be brought back to the Board. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderman Haynes, seconded by Alderman Garth to approve the use of Maintenance funds in the Parks and Recreation Department Budget to upgrade the slide and merry-go-around at Newberger and Acker Parks. Quotes from vendors for these purchases will be brought back to the Board. On a roll call vote, Alderwoman Garth, Alderman Haynes, Alderwoman Odom and Alderman Allen voted "Aye". Alderman Devaull voted "Nay".

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A motion was made by Alderwoman Odom, seconded by Alderman Devaull to terminate the employment of Fireman Skeeter Busbin due to no-show for work since November 22, 2022. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderman Allen, seconded by Alderman Devaull to employ Brently Kendrick as a full-time Fireman in the Aberdeen Fire Department at a rate of pay of \$10.00 per hour. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderman Allen, seconded by Alderwoman Odom to employ James Allen as a full-time Code Enforcement Officer at a rate of pay of \$14.00 per hour. Alderman Allen withdrew his motion and no vote was taken.

A motion was made by Alderman Devaull, seconded by Alderman Allen to employ Fernando Davis as a full-time Parks and Recreation Department Director at a rate of pay of \$15.97 per hour. On a roll call vote, Alderman Devaull, Alderman Haynes, Alderwoman Odom and Alderman Allen voted "Aye". Alderwoman Garth voted "Nay".

A motion was made by Alderwoman Garth, seconded by Alderman Devaull to accept the resignation of employee Sheraine Davis. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderman Devaull, seconded by Alderwoman Odom to approve a FINAL ORDER / RESOLUTION GRANTING TAX EXEMPTION TO AXIALL, LLC (A Westlake Company) for certain personal property in the amount of \$21,540,769.00 for an exemption period of ten years, commencing January 1, 2022 and expiring December 31, 2031. The Mississippi Department of Revenue issued an Exemption Certification concerning the original application for exemption. On a roll call vote, Alderman Devaull, Alderman Haynes, Alderwoman Odom and Alderman Allen voted "Aye". Alderwoman Garth voted "Nay".

A motion was made by Alderman Allen, seconded by Alderwoman Odom to approve a posting of a draft of a Cemetery Ordinance for public input on the City of Aberdeen website from January 10, 2023 - February 11, 2023. On a roll call vote, Alderman Devaull, Alderwoman Garth, Alderwoman Odom and Alderman Allen voted "Aye". Alderman Haynes voted "Nay".

A motion was made by Alderwoman Garth, seconded by Alderman Devaull to approve and authorize travel and to pay all necessary expenses according to state guidelines for Deputy City Clerk Devonshae Young to attend the 2023 Mid-Winter Legislative Conference, Jackson, MS on January 10-12, 2023. (Alderwoman Carolyn Odom was authorized to travel and attend the Conference but will not attend). On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

**Mayor Report:** Mayor Scott asked Tina Robbins to update the Board on events and activities in the City of Aberdeen. Robbins first shared a Scan Code that enables viewers to launch a travel app and review a video bio of the story of Aberdeen.

Robbins advised that the ARPA Funds status for the Visitors Bureau has changed to "Ready for Approval." Robbins asked the Board to approve her travel to Stamford, CT on February 3-6, 2023 to attend the Ideal Living Trade Show "Welcome Home Mississippi".

Robbins stated that the Polar Express Movie had 250 in attendance. The Muralist for Paradise Alley will be completing that Mural soon. Robbins asked the Board to re-consider re-bidding with a new scope of work to video Board Meetings and "Go Live" for the citizens.

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The Aberdeen / Monroe County NAACP will present the Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday Celebration on January 16, 2023 @ 10:30 a.m. It will be hosted by the Greater Ebenezer Missionary Baptist Church. The Convoy departs from the General Young Park @ 10:00 a.m. The Guest Speaker will be Dr. Stevie McKinney, Pastor, People Community Church, Tupelo, MS.

The Mardi Gras Parade is planned for February 18, 2023, and the Aberdeen Pilgrimage is scheduled for March 31 - April 1, 2023.

Mayor Scott asked Dustin Dabbs to give an update on the Public Utilities Building and City Streets Improvements. Dabbs stated the Aberdeen Public Utilities Building is near completion at the end of the contract period time. Dabbs has received a notification from the metal building supplier that the building has arrived and will be erected this month.

Mayor Scott asked Dabbs about residue left in the curbs. Dabbs stated he has contacted the contractor to return and clean it up. Mayor Scott also asked Dabbs about the shade structure at the General Young Park. Dabbs will contact the vendor Williams by letter and state the shade structure is under warranty and needs to be repaired.

Mayor Scott asked Pedro Clay to discuss a proposal from Deborah Shaw about a plot of land she would like to donate to the City for the Aberdeen Animal Shelter. The PPIN is 7922 and the Parcel Number is 108P-33-001-006.00. Clay stated he cannot do anything with the land due to the location. However, Clay recommended that the City accept the donation and sell the land and use the proceeds to support the Aberdeen Animal Shelter.

Mayor Scott asked LuEllen Childress to present information concerning the CREATE Foundation and the support needed for the Monroe County Children's Vision Center (CVC). Childress asked the Board to authorize a donation toward a CREATE Foundation / CVC remaining invoice balance of \$1,200.00. Childress was asked by Alderman Allen, "Is there a figure in mind?" Childress stated she would like a donation of \$500.00.

Mayor Scott presented the Board with information for economic development, particularly the need for a truck stop business. A truck stop may offer the following services and involve the following economic development costs:

1. Convenience Store with Fuel Stations: \$600,000 - \$1,000,000
2. Restaurant: \$420,000 - \$940,000
3. Mechanic / Service Station: \$115,000 - \$320,000
4. Weigh Station: \$74,000 - \$152,000
5. Parking Station: \$800,000 - \$1,400,000
6. Marketing Plan, Advertise and Promotion: \$45,000 - \$74,000

Mayor Scott would like the Board to upgrade the fencing at the old Holley's Building site, and use the parking lot there as a City parking lot temporarily for truckers, and to "Seek Out" investors or businesses to build and operate a truck stop business on City industrial park property in Aberdeen.

**Aldermen/Alderwomen Input:**

**Alderman Devaull:** Alderman Devaull wished everyone a Happy New Year. Alderman Devaull stated there have been discussions about the shade structure awning at the General Young's Park, and about concerns of 18-wheelers being driven on City streets and then parked on private properties in areas not zoned for such parking. Alderman Devaull has received calls from concerned citizens about the safety issue from the locations of the parking of the owner and employees at the Texaco Food Mart on the corner of Highway 25 and Meridian Street. Alderman Devaull is asking Mayor Scott and Chief Shumpert to talk with the owner of Texaco about employee parking in an area that makes a blind spot for drivers to see what's coming down the highway.

**Alderwoman Garth:** Alderwoman Garth wished everyone a Happy New Year. Alderwoman Garth stated the streets of Aberdeen are filthy. The streets are riddled with paper, trash and leaves everywhere. Alderwoman Garth has received calls and personal visits at her home from City workers being in an uproar because they were told they had to be at work at 7:00 A.M. Alderwoman Garth explained to the City workers that the legislative body sitting at the table decided that the hours had changed and it wasn't published at any Meeting she attended. If the City work time has changed from 6:00 A.M. to 7:00 A.M., you need to let them know. Alderwoman Garth stated she has an employee issue concerning a Public Works person that can be discussed in Executive Session or Open Session, please choose your preference.

Alderwoman Garth stated Aberdeen Police cars were parked in Ward Four, babysitting at someone's house. She received calls regarding this matter. Alderwoman Garth wanted to know why the police cars were babysitting the house, especially when the City does not have enough police cars to patrol the City. Chief Shumpert asked Alderwoman Garth, "Where were the police cars parked?" Alderwoman Garth stated she was told the police cars were parked somewhere in Ward Four. Chief Shumpert said he would look into it.

Alderwoman Garth asked Attorney Faulks where the City stood on a Supreme Court Mandate. Attorney Faulks stated he had not seen anything new as of last week in the Election Contest case appeal, since the Devaull Motion for Rehearing, and he will continue to check the Supreme Court website.

Alderwoman Garth stated that the December 15, 2022 Meeting was not a Special Called Board Meeting, but Attorney Faulks said it was a Special Called Board Meeting, since the Meeting occurred on a Thursday morning unlike Regular Board Meetings which are regularly scheduled on the first and third Tuesday evenings, and the Mayor and the City Clerk used a Special Called Meeting Notice for the December 15 Meeting and the Agenda referred to the December 15 Meeting as Special Called Meeting. Alderwoman Garth stated that the Meeting did not fall up under the definition of a Special Called Meeting. "It was a full blown meeting, and it was called so the Mayor could go out of town on vacation. Alderwoman Garth stated that Special Called Meetings are for emergency situations that has to be addressed for the City".

**Alderman Haynes:** Alderman Haynes stated a sidewalk drain cover on Meridian Street in front of a beauty shop needs to be replaced before someone falls and get hurt. Alderman Haynes stated during these cold months (down time) it's a good time to get the leaves picked up and curbs cleaned before the leaves go into the drains and clogged then up. Alderman Haynes asked that special attention be placed in front of the library by Aberdeen Elementary School, because every time it rains a foot and a half of water stands there. Also, if you go down Canal and James Street, Commerce and Franklin Street, Project and Dr. Woodruff Street, and Long and Dr. Woodruff Street, water stands there after it rains because the drains are blocked with debris.

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Alderman Haynes has received calls from citizens complaining about not being able to walk on sidewalks because the limbs are low and need to be trimmed away, especially on Commerce Street by the old Middle School Building.

Alderman Haynes stated the problem concerning the playground equipment at Acker and Newberger Parks still exists. The merry-go-around and sliding board have holes in them and they are risks for the children playing on the equipment. Alderman Haynes stated if we do nothing, then we have already achieved that. Mayor Scott asked Alderman Haynes if he wanted to put a motion on the table to purchase new equipment.

Alderman Haynes asked if we have money in the budget to replace the equipment. Mayor Scott stated money is in the budget to purchase equipment. Alderman Haynes stated that Comptroller Crump said it was not in the Budget at the beginning of the fiscal year. Mayor Scott stated it's a part of the Maintenance Budget. Alderman Haynes stated if it's a part of the Maintenance Budget, let's use that to replace the playground equipment.

**Alderman Odom:** Alderwoman Odom stated that Mr. Lockett called her again to check on the status of work on the culvert that is deteriorating next to his yard. Lockett lives on Big John Road. Public Works Supervisor Imogene Dancy advised that she and Matt took measurements to price the culvert work. Alderwoman Odom asked Dancy if she had talked with Mr. Lockett today or plans on talking with him tomorrow. Dancy answered yes.

**Alderman Allen:** Alderman Allen asked for updates on the redistricting work and maps from Three Rivers. Mayor Scott said there were no updates, since the last conversation during the last part of November, but we should be the first one on the list of work. Mayor Scott had sent a request to Three Rivers to work on this as soon as possible, but he has not heard back from the ones in charge of the redistricting due to them being on vacation. Alderman Allen stated there are tree limbs over Jett and West Commerce Streets that need to be trimmed. Alderman Allen commented regarding Tina Robbins' suggestions about broadcasting the Meeting, and he has the original estimates and prices. They ran a little high then, and Alderman Allen stated he will be glad to obtain more estimates if the Board would like for him to do so. Mayor Scott's response was yes. Alderman Allen stated he will have the estimates at the next Board Meeting.

**Citizen's Input:**

Derhonda Jones, 103 West Canal Street, Aberdeen, MS 39730. Jones stated for the last 20+ years she has attended several Board Meetings complaining about the water at her address. A few days ago her water service came to a trickle. For years, she has been promised a filter and tap to be put on that line. Jones bought two bottled samples to show the Mayor and Board the trash and debris in her water, and the horrible odor she smells when the water service is turned on. Jones is asking this Board to please do something and fix this problem.

Dean Irvin discussed the Prairie Station Shooting Range in Prairie, MS. The Range has twenty-five lanes. Irvin stated a tournament will be held January 13-14, 2023 at the Range. Irvin stated there will be a shoot every third month for the next year, and one on the fourth month. The community is invited and the RCDC will be cooking and selling hamburgers for the event. The Shooting Range is located at Building One, in Prairie, MS. The name of the Range is Prairie Station. Irvin stated the Shooting Range is for tournaments only. Irvin invites the Mayor and Board to come out and see the Range. Irvin may be contacted at 662-640-1979 if anyone has questions or concerns.

Wilchie Clay came before the Board with signed petitions stating the following: "We, the undersigned citizens of Aberdeen / Monroe County, MS respectfully request that Odd Fellows East Cemetery be adjudicated in order for the City of Aberdeen to maintain the area by cleaning, mowing, weed control, and debris removal, etc".



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Clay is asking the Board to take this into consideration, and adjudicate the East side of the Cemetery. Also, the City needs to show respect to the ones that have passed on and buried there, and had done great things for the City. Clay was speaking of the late Mr. General Young and others.

A motion was made by Alderman Devaull to enter into a closed determination to determine whether to go into Executive Session.

A motion was made by Alderwoman Odom, seconded by Alderman Allen to go into Executive Session to discuss personnel issues regarding Aberdeen Water Department employee Gregory Burton. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

The Mayor and Board announced to the public that the Board was entering into Executive Session to discuss personnel issues regarding Aberdeen Water Department employee Gregory Burton.

A motion was made by Alderwoman Garth, seconded by Alderman Devaull to come out of Executive Session.

A motion was made by Alderwoman Garth, seconded by Alderman Devaull to come out of Executive Session. On a roll call vote, Alderman Devaull, Alderwoman Garth, Alderwoman Odom and Alderman Allen voted "Aye". Alderman Haynes voted "Nay".

A motion was made by Alderman Allen, seconded by Alderwoman Odom to terminate the employment of Tony Walker. On a roll call vote, Alderman Devaull, Alderman Haynes, Alderwoman Odom and Alderman Allen voted "Aye". Alderwoman Garth voted "Recused".

A motion was made by Alderman Allen, seconded by Alderwoman Odom to approve the disciplinary action of a three day suspension without pay for Aberdeen Water Department employee Gregory Burton. On a roll call vote, Alderman Haynes, Alderwoman Odom and Alderman Allen voted "Aye". Alderman Devaull and Alderwoman Garth voted "Recused".

A motion was made by Alderman Allen, seconded by Alderwoman Garth to employ Antarrio McCoy full-time as the Aberdeen Water Department Supervisor at a rate of pay of \$32.50 per hour. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderman Devaull, seconded by Alderman Allen to adjourn until the January 17, 2023 Regular Board Meeting. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

Attest:

  
Melissa Moore, City Clerk

  
Charles Scott, Mayor