

**REGULAR BOARD MEETING  
CITY HALL BOARD ROOM**

**June 4, 2024  
5:00 P.M.**

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

**MAYOR JOHNNY D. STEVENS, ALDERMAN NICHOLAS HOLLIDAY, ALDERWOMAN RHONDA MOORE, ALDERMAN JAMES IVORY, ALDERMAN JEREMY BELLE, ALDERMAN JOHN CAIN, CITY CLERK MELISSA MOORE, AND CITY ATTORNEY WALTER H. ZINN, JR.**

**Invocation:** Mayor Stevens

**ROLL CALL**

A motion was made by Alderman Cain, seconded by Alderman Belle to approve the Agenda in its form, but if any new business came before the Board we're allowed to discuss it in detail and amend the Agenda at that time. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderman Holliday, seconded by Alderman Cain to approve the Board Minutes dated May 7, 2024. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderman Cain, seconded by Alderwoman Moore to approve the Board Minutes dated May 21, 2024. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderman Belle, seconded by Alderman Holliday to pay all bills submitted by proper vendors as recorded on the Docket of Claims dated June 4, 2024. On a roll call vote, Alderman Holliday, Alderwoman Moore, Alderman Ivory and Alderman Belle voted "Aye". Alderman Cain voted "Nay".

A motion was made by Alderman Cain, seconded by Alderman Holliday to approve to advertise the ARPA New Tank and Well Site Improvements Project for Bids contingent upon receiving MSDH approval. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderman Cain, seconded by Alderwoman Moore to approve and give permission to Mr. Neil Palmer to place wreaths on the Veteran graves on December 14, 2024 at Oddfellows Rest Cemetery. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderman Cain, seconded by Alderman Belle to approve Mary G. Walker Tap Refund in the amount of \$945.50. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderman Cain, seconded by Alderman Holliday to TABLE the approval for the Electric Retail Rate Adjustments with an effective date to be October 1, 2024. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderman Holliday, seconded by Alderman Cain to approve ESG Invoice in the amount of \$18,640.17 for labor and materials installing three pumps at the Best Western Lift Station being paid from the Equipment Fund. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderman Holliday, seconded by Alderman Cain to approve Employee Enhancement and pay all necessary charges according to state guidelines for Marcus Collins to attend the 2024 MsRWA Water Certification Class, Biloxi, MS / July 8-12, 2024 / Registration Fee: \$250.00. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

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A motion was made by Alderman Belle, seconded by Alderwoman Moore to approve Elected Officials Enhancement and pay all necessary charges according to state guidelines for Alderman Nicholas Holliday and Alderman John Cain to attend the MsRWA Advanced Board Training, Cadence Bank Arena, Tupelo, MS / October 17, 2024. On a roll call vote, all present voted “Aye”.

A motion was made by Alderman Holliday, seconded by Alderman Cain to approve Elected Officials Enhancement and pay all necessary charges according to state guidelines for Mayor Johnnie D. Stevens, Alderwoman Rhonda Moore, Alderman James Ivory and Alderman Jeremy Belle to attend the MsRWA 2024 Board Member Management Training, Cadence Bank Arena, Tupelo, MS / October 15, 2024. On a roll call vote, all present voted “Aye”.

A motion was made by Alderman Cain, seconded by Alderman Belle to approve City employee Mitchell Finn letter of resignation with an effective date: June 6, 2024. On a roll call vote, all present voted “Aye”.

A motion was made by Alderman Cain, seconded by Alderwoman Moore to TABLE the approval of UDAG Loan for Timothy and Joann McKinney. On a roll call vote, all present voted “Aye”.

A motion was made by Alderman Holliday seconded by Alderman Belle to approve and move forward with the Renewvia Solar Project. On a roll call vote, Alderman Holliday, Alderwoman Moore, Alderman Ivory and Alderman Belle voted “Aye”. Alderman Cain voted “Nay”.

A motion was made by Alderman Holliday, seconded by Alderman Cain to approve hiring of Douglas J. Spratt as a Laborer for the Water Department through TKO Staff Pros, LLC at a rate of pay of \$12.00 per hour. On a roll call vote, all present voted “Aye”.

A motion was made by Alderman Cain, seconded by Alderman Holliday to approve to post and advertise for a Lineman for Aberdeen Public Utilities. On a roll call vote, all present voted “Aye”.

A motion was made by Alderman Cain, seconded by Alderman Ivory to approve for Mayor Johnnie Dwight Stevens to draw the salary put in the Budget in the amount of \$44,054. On a roll call vote, all present voted “Aye”.

A motion was made by Alderwoman Moore seconded by Alderman Holliday to approve to TABLE the two appraisers and declare surplus for PPIN: 8973 / PARCEL ID: 112B-03-001-003.00 & PPIN: 8974 / PARCEL ID: 112B-03-001-004.00. On a roll call vote, all present voted “Aye”.

A motion was made by Alderman Cain, seconded by Alderwoman Moore to accept the PROCLAMATION by Governor Tate Reeves observing Thursday, July 4, 2024, as Independence Day and IN ADDITION authorize Friday, July 5, 2024, in further observance of Independence Day. On a roll call vote, all present voted “Aye”.

A motion was made by Alderman Cain, seconded by Alderman Holliday to approve Elected Officials Enhancement and pay all necessary charges according to state guidelines for Johnnie D. Stevens, Nicholas Holliday, Rhonda Moore, James Ivory, Jeremy Belle and John Cain to attend the Tennessee – Tombigbee Waterway Conference, Point Clear, AL / August 14-16, 2024. On a roll call vote, all present voted “Aye”.

A motion was made by Alderman Cain, seconded by Alderman Holliday to approve to post and advertise for Zoning Board Members. On a roll call vote, all present voted “Aye”.

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**Mayor Report:** Mayor Stevens asked Ms. Tina Robbins to update the Board on events and projects for the City of Aberdeen.

Ms. Robbins shared the following with the Board:

1. Farmers Market
2. Summer Reading Program at Evans Memorial Library
3. Prairie Fun Day
4. Summer Movie Night
5. Residency Program Ribbon Cutting at Monroe Regional Hospital
6. Sip and Shop w/Pierce's Place and S & F Beauty Solutions
7. Rotary Night at the Elkin
8. Book Lunch
9. Summer in Paradise Alley

Mayor Stevens shared the Project Updates provided by Mr. William Sanford, P.E.(Neel-Schaffer) with the Board:

1. Port Rail Spur (MARAD)
2. Port Dock Infrastructure Improvements
3. Dock Wall Failure
4. Port Dredging
5. Drainage Improvements Project (Short/ S. James/ S. Hickory Streets)
6. Walters Drive and Chestnut / Park Drainage Repairs
7. ARPA New Tank and Well Sites
8. CDBG Wastewater Lagoon Improvements

Mayor Stevens invited Mr. Buzzy Cullum to the Board Meeting to share with the Board the repairs needed to Crane Drive, which is by the Cross. Mr. Cullum asked the Board to come and take a look at Crane Drive from where it's connected to Highway 45 on the East end and see if the City and County may work together in paving Crane Drive.

Mayor Stevens invited Ms. Nicole Huff, owner of Wildflower Apothecary to express her concerns about the potholes and mounds of concrete located at the entrance gate of her property and respectfully ask for Crane Drive to be repaved.

Mayor Stevens invited Mr. Neil Palmer to the Board to share information about Wreaths Across America. Mr. Palmer asked the Board permission to place wreaths on Veteran graves on December 14, 2024, at Oddfellows Rest Cemetery. Mr. Palmer stated there is no cost to the City of Aberdeen, and it's another great way to recognize the veterans and families during the Christmas season.

### **Aldermen/Alderwoman Input:**

**Alderman Holliday:** Alderman Holliday stated there has been a discussion for 8-10 months regarding the Solar Project, an asking a vote from the Board to move forward with the Renewvia Project. Attorney Zinn, Jr. shared with the Board the concerns of the PPA Term Sheet Comments and Notes from Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA). Mayor Stevens stated he talked with the Mayor of Water Valley, and they were pleased with the project. Mayor Stevens stated he talked with Mr. Brandon Prestey, and he didn't see anything wrong with the Solar Project; also Mayor Glenn stated they didn't accept the project, but didn't see anything wrong with it.

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**Alderman Moore:** Alderman Moore stated the concerns and problems she's getting calls about is streets with potholes that needs repairing, and the Street Department will be going from street to street in getting them repaired in all Wards. Alderman Moore stated there are several condemned homes with high grass that needs attention. Neighbors are complaining about a condemned home on South Long Street with high grass, and tree branches on the side of the street that needs to be attended to and picked up. Alderman Moore will be discussing her concerns with Mr. Boone. Alderman Moore stated she had several telephone calls regarding the Facebook Livestream being started back with the Board Meetings. Alderman Moore told the citizens in Ward Two that she will discuss their concern with the Aldermen and follow-up with a return call. Alderman Moore received a call from a resident regarding the Pet Ordinance and would like the Board to revisit the Ordinance because the pets are getting out of hand. Please ask the Board to invest in a swear jar and all monies collected will be donated to the Mayor's Youth Council.

**Alderman Ivory:** Alderman Ivory stated he received calls from citizens about garbage not being picked up by Monroe County Solid Waste. Alderman Ivory stated that Mr. Collins addressed the issue of a sinkhole on Hillcrest Drive, and there were some streets that was repaired by the Street Department. Alderman Ivory stated he has some pictures of water issues on Vine Street, and he will get with the Water Department Leadman Marcus Collins and discuss a plan to fix the problems. Alderman Ivory stated he wants the community and citizens to be proud of their City, and he appreciates Ward Three for their patience and understanding.

**Alderman Belle:** Alderman Belle stated he had a water issue on Saturday, and he called Mr. Collins to take care of it. Alderman Belle received a call about some black gloves that was left by the Water Department, but no other information was provided about the gloves. Alderman Belle stated that anytime he calls Mr. Boone (Street Department) and Mr. Collins (Water Department) they always respond to his calls.

**Alderman Cain:** Alderman Cain stated there is some serious flooding and drainage issues in Ward Five on Oakland and Cheryl Drive. Alderman Cain asked the Board will it be okay for Mr. Boone and the Street Department to start working in Ward One and go numerically with the other Wards until everything has been done, but if an emergency arise in your Ward before the Street Department gets to your Ward, please call Mr. Boone and report it. This would be easier for Mr. Boone to address the Wards in this manner instead of being pulled from one location to another. Alderman Cain addressed the concern of Transient Vendors enforcement, and some business owners feel like their being trampled on and not treated fairly.

Alderman Cain invited Ms. Judy Rash from Pierce's Place to share some concerns she has about pop-up vendors, aka Transient Vendors. Ms. Pierce stated all Transient Vendors are required by law to have a License, MS State Sales Tax Number, and a Penal Bond or Surety Bond. Ms. Pierce is asking the Board to help fix this problem and please follow-up with her within 30 days. Alderman Cain asked Attorney Zinn, Jr. for the legal terminology the Board may use to restore the mayor's salary to the amount put in the budget. Alderman Cain asked Attorney Zinn, Jr. if it was lawful for Westlake to have two appraisers done on PPIN: 8973 / PARCEL ID: 112B-03-001-003.00 and PPIN: 8974 / PARCEL ID: 112B-03-001-004.00. Mr. Jim Autry proposed the following appraisers: Chester Patterson (Aberdeen) -- \$2500 & Mitchell Appraiser Service (Amory) -- \$3000 (via Lee Construction). Alderman Moore asked if this can be Tabled until a later date.

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### **Citizen Input (2 minutes)**

Ms. Lashanda McFarland asked to go into Closed Determination to discuss a personnel issue.

Ms. Elizabeth Blanchard has concerns of the trash and traffic at Henry's Bar & Grill.

Mr. Mitchell Davis and Mrs. Hannah Davis complain of the trash and loud music coming from Henry's Bar & Grill, and the hours of operation. No cooperation from the Aberdeen Police Dept

Mrs. Faye Walker complains about the noise and traffic at Henry's Bar & Grill.

Mr. Henry Danner, owner of Henry's Bar & Grill, stated he's trying to keep the trash picked up, maintain the noise and traffic.

Ms. Cassandra Payne inquired about the lighting at Woodruff Manor Apartments.

Mr. Albert Barker expresses his concerns about the rate increase with the electric bills and the Port of Aberdeen.

A motion was made by Alderman Cain, second by Alderwoman Moore to enter in Closed Determination to ascertain whether or not if we need to go into Executive Session. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderman Holliday, seconded by Alderman Cain to come out of Closed Determination. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderman Holliday, seconded by Alderman Cain to go into Executive Session to discuss personnel issues involving Court Clerk Janel Davidson, Litigations involving previous Mayor Charles Scott, and EEOC and U.S. Department of Labor Claims involving Barry McMillian. 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 involving Court Clerk Janel Davidson, Litigations involving previous Mayor Charles Scott, and EEOC and U.S. Department of Labor Claims involving Barry McMillian.

A motion was made by Alderman Holliday, seconded by Alderwoman Moore to come out of Executive Session. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderman Holliday, seconded by Alderman Cain giving City Clerk Melissa Moore permission to give a write up to Court Clerk Janel Davidson due to personnel issues and misconduct. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

A motion was made by Alderman Cain, second by Alderman Holliday giving Attorney Zinn, Jr. permission to create a Resolution for the Board concerning the Livestreaming / Videoing the Board Meetings and receive the information from Attorney Zinn, Jr. at the next regular scheduled Board Meeting and vote at that time. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

Attorney Zinn, Jr. shared with the Board the Open Meetings Act (MS State Statute 25-41-7) states that a Public Body may hold an Executive Session for one or more of the following reasons: a transaction of business in discussion of personnel matter related to job performance or some type of physical and mental health issues.

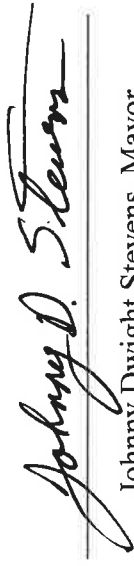
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Mayor Stevens asked Ms. Lashandra McFarland to explain her concern regarding her electric bill. Ms. McFarland shared with the Board that she discussed her high electric bills with LaMarcus Thompson, and he promised he would investigate her bills and get back with her. Ms. McFarland stated that Mr. Thompson told her not to pay anything on her bill until further notice. Ms. McFarland stated she was given a new meter, and a TVA Representative was asked to check her meter for deficiencies. Nothing was found to be wrong because the faulty meter was replaced with a new meter. Ms. McFarland stated she received an electric bill totaling \$900+ and was told by Mr. Thompson that it was nothing he could do, and she had to pay the bill or be disconnected. Ms. McFarland told the Board she doesn't have the money to pay the electric bill, and it bothered her that Mr. Thompson didn't keep his word. The Board guaranteed Ms. McFarland that her electricity wasn't going to be disconnected, and they would have a talk with Mr. Thompson about her electric bills.

A motion was made by Alderman Holliday, seconded by Alderwoman Moore to adjourn until the June 18, 2024, Board Meeting. On a roll call vote, all present voted "Aye".

  
Johnny Dwight Stevens, Mayor

Attest:   
Melissa Moore, City Clerk