

City of Mansfield
MINUTES OF *REGULAR* PUBLIC MEETING
April 12, 2021

In-Person Council Meeting

The Board of Aldermen met in *regular* session on **April 12th**, in Mansfield City Hall located at 705 Polk Street. Mayor John H. Mayweather, Sr. called this meeting to order at **4:30 p.m.**, after which an Invocation was offered by **Alderman Mitchell L. Lewis**. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by **Alderman Kervin D. Campbell**. Following the pledge, the clerk called the roll to record those council members in attendance. The following officials were recorded as **Present**: Hon. John H. Mayweather, Sr., -**Mayor, Christopher S. Thomas** –District **B**, Mitchell L. Lewis –District **C**, and Kervin D. Campbell –District **E**. **Absent**: Mary J. Green –District **A** and Joseph Hall, Jr. –District **D**. **City Hall Personnel, Dept. Heads, & Other City Personnel Present**: Gwendolyn Jones (Deputy Clerk), Billy Locke (Asst. Police Chief), Bryan Ross (Capt. -Fire Dept.), Christopher Samuels (Firefighter –Fire Dept.) . Others Present: Donnette Dunbar (LA Connected), Otis Ellis (LA Connected), and Terri Byrd (Director –DRHS Foundation), **Press Present**: None.

It was MOTIONED by **KERVIN D. CAMPBELL** and SECONDED by **MITCHELL L. LEWIS** to approve the minutes of the **March 22, 2021 *regular*** City Council meeting and dispense with the reading. Motion Passed Unanimously.

It was MOTIONED by **MITCHELL L. LEWIS** and SECONDED by **KERVIN D. CAMPBELL** to approve payment of current outstanding bills for this period. Motion Passed Unanimously.

The City Clerk next opened the floor to hear public comments from those in attendance, to any item outlined on the meeting agenda. When no public comments were offered from any of the participants in this meeting, the **Public Comments Period** was then subsequently closed.

Old Business: -None.

New Business:

Item A: It was MOTIONED by **KERVIN D. CAMPBELL** and SECONDED by **CHRISTOPHER S. THOMAS** to authorize the Mayor to enter into and execute a Maintenance Agreement between the **LA Dept. of Transportation & Development (DOTD)** for **Mowing and Litter Pickup** for the fiscal year beginning **July 1, 2021** and ending **June 30, 2022**. Pursuant to the provisions of LA R.S. 48:193, **DOTD** is directed to repair and to keep in operating condition, at its sole cost and expense, all municipal roads and streets within the State Highway System as it is defined in LA R.S. 48:191. Further, LA R.S. 48:193 authorizes municipalities to request that the repair and maintenance of said State Roadways located within their respective municipalities be performed by the municipality, at the State's expense. **DOTD** lacks sufficient personnel and equipment to perform mowing and litter collection on a routine and continuing basis and wishes to enter into an Agreement with the City. The City shall mow grass and cut or otherwise control mowable vegetation along ditches, around signs, guardrails and bridge ends, trim overhanging grass along curbs, and remove litter and debris within the designated and dedicated or apparent right-of-way. The total mileage to be maintained by the City and for which the City is entitled to

reimbursement by **DOTD** is **8.26 miles**. The total maximum amount for which the City may claim reimbursement is \$8,260.00 annually. Motion Passed Unanimously.

Item B: A presentation was offered by Ms. **Terri Byrd**, Foundation Director for *DeSoto Regional Health System* (DRHS), announcing fundraising events slated for the remainder of **2021**. On Saturday, April 17th, the DRHS Foundation will host a 2-man golf scramble at The Club at Huntington Park Golf Course commencing at 8:30 a.m. The entry fee per team is \$250, and proceeds from this event will be used for the New Hospital Building project. On Saturday, June 26th commencing at 8:00 a.m. the Foundation will host a 5K Run/Walk, a race they've tagged "*DeSoto's Heart & Sole: Improving Life Everyday.*" The race will start at the Helipad next to DRHS and continue through surrounding neighborhoods in Mansfield. Finally, on Saturday, August 28th commencing at 8:00 a.m. at the *Shreveport Gun Club* (4435 Meriwether Road) in Shreveport, LA, the Foundation will host a Sporting Clay Tournament. Ms. Byrd shared with the Mayor and City Council that as director for the DRHS Foundation, she will periodically request appearance on the Council's agenda to announce slated upcoming events included on their annual calendar.

Item C: A presentation was offered by representatives of *Louisiana Connected*, a company offering to assist with facilitating broadband high-speed internet to underserved, rural communities like DeSoto Parish. Ms. **Donnette Dunbar** and Mr. **Otis Ellis** were present at this meeting to act as spokespersons for *Louisiana Connected*. Ms. **Dunbar** began the presentation by stating that in President Joe Biden's current infrastructure bill, \$80 billion had been allocated to assist local governing authorities with bringing high-speed internet to their communities over a fiber optic network. Available to underwrite this endeavor is infrastructure funding and municipal bond financing that would allow every resident and business in Mansfield access to affordable, broadband high speed internet. Mr. **Ellis** stated that the federal and state funding available for this endeavor could potentially make it possible to provide high speed internet to the entire parish within the next 12 months. To initiate negotiations with this company, it would be required of the City (and all other participating entities) to adopt an Ordinance granting authority to our legal counsel to communicate and correspond with this company's in-house attorney, Kelvin Sanders. Following this action, a commission would be formed to include a representative from all the local taxing authorities and other interested organizations to convey what components/equipment/capabilities they'd like to see included in the broadband system package. The intent is to form a public/private partnership arrangement with *Louisiana Connected*. More information will be disseminated at future meetings.

Comments from Mayor Mayweather and/or Council Members: During this period, the Mayor and Council offered no comments. However, Assistant Chief Billy Locke requested the floor to provide an update on the events surrounding the homicide that had occurred earlier in the day. He reported that during the early morning hours, an employee (female) at a local hotel had suffered multiple gunshot wounds at the hands of an assailant, resulting in a fatality. She was pronounced dead at the scene of the incident. In addition, during this same incident, a second

victim (male) was also shot multiple times at the same hotel establishment. Presently that victim was in critical but stable condition, after being airlifted to a hospital in Shreveport, LA. As of this meeting, the gunman had been apprehended and was in police custody. He then thanked all the law enforcement officials and authorities who assisted with search and capture of the assailant. Following Locke's report, Captain Bryan Ross of the Mansfield Fire Department stood to report that one of their female firefighters was scheduled soon to go out on maternity leave. In addition, another firefighter has informed Captain Ross that he will soon be tendering his resignation from the Department. These two departures will result in the department being short-staffed. He went on to state that they are currently seeking two more certified firefighters to join the department so that daily operations can continue. Since this is one of the departments charged with protecting the lives of the citizens who reside in our municipality, management continually strives to make certain they have adequate personnel to do so.

With no further business to discuss, this meeting was declared adjourned at **5:11 p.m.** by MOTION from **MITCHELL L. LEWIS** and was SECONDED by **CHRISTOPHER S. THOMAS**. Motion Passed Unanimously.

John H. Mayweather, Sr., *Mayor*
Marvin R. Jackson, *Clerk*