

City of Mansfield
MINUTES OF REGULAR PUBLIC MEETING
April 14, 2014

The Board of Aldermen met in regular session on **Monday, April 14th**, in Mansfield City Hall, located at 705 Polk Street. Mayor McCoy called the 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 Troy N. Terrell**. Following the pledge, the roll call was suspended; however, the following officials were recorded as **Present**: Hon. Curtis W. McCoy, G. B. Hall III –District A, Troy N. Terrell –District B, and Mitchell L. Lewis –District C. **Absent**: Joseph Hall, Jr. – District D and Kervin D. Campbell –District E. **Other City Personnel Present**: James “Jim” Ruffin (Public Works Director), Brian Phillips (Court Clerk), Richard Johnson, Jr. (City Attorney), Sgt. Joseph Pratt (Mfld. Police Dept.) and Gwendolyn Jones (Deputy Clerk). **Others Present**: A. J. Williams, Jr., Alton James, Fred Lowrey, Joe Morgan, Lane Johnson, Richard Fuller, Ernel Jones, and Norinthian Phillips. **Press Present**: Vickie Welborn (*The Times*).

It was MOTIONED by **G. B. HALL III** and SECONDED by **MITCHELL L. LEWIS** to approve the minutes of the **March 24, 2014 regular** City Council meeting and to dispense with the reading. Motion Passed Unanimously.

It was MOTIONED by **MITCHELL L. LEWIS** and SECONDED by **G. B. HALL III** 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 comments were offered from the floor, the **Public Comments Period** was then closed.

Old Business: None.

New Business:

Item A: The City Clerk announced that at the special City Council meeting scheduled for Tuesday, **May 27, 2014**, at 4:30PM at Mansfield City Hall, the Board of Aldermen will resolve to levy millages on the 2014 tax roll. This announcement is a new requirement of taxing districts mandated by the LA Legislative Auditor’s office. Every taxing authority has to give public notice once in the local municipal journal **and** verbally during the course of a public meeting of the impending millage levy. No action is necessary on this item. At this meeting, public notice of the Council’s intent to adopt the 2014 tax millages by Resolution, simply has to be orally stated.

Item B: It was MOTIONED by **G. B. HALL III** and SECONDED by **MITCHELL L. LEWIS** to approve **Change Order No. 9** (#08035.00) as submitted by **Cecil D. Gassiot, L.L.C.** for the Water Treatment Facility Improvements Project. This is an additive Change Order in the amount of **\$2,760.00**, whereby certain construction activities are added and others deleted from the remaining Scope of Work. This sum is hereby added to the total contract bid price of \$1,922,322.00, necessitating an increase to the contract price to \$1,925,082.00. Further, the time provided for completion of the contract is increased by **14** calendar days. Motion Passed Unanimously.

Item C: It was MOTIONED by **G. B. HALL III** and SECONDED by **MITCHELL L. LEWIS** to approve authorizing the Mayor to enter into and execute a **Collection Agreement** with the **Credit Bureau of Louisiana** to assist with the recovery of numerous past due water accounts. Once all customary policies for collection have been exhausted by the City, accounts which are 60 days or more past due will be turned over to the Credit Bureau for collection. If no payment has been received by the Credit Bureau in 30 days, the past due account will then be reflected on the customer's credit file as a '*collection account*'. The clerk explained that it would be to the City's benefit to promptly turn over aging, past due accounts. The older the accounts are the larger the percentage the Credit Bureau charges to assist with collecting the past due monies owed the City. This measure will potentially help the City recoup some of the revenue lost from non-payment of final billing to the City's former water customers. Motion Passed Unanimously.

Item D: It was MOTIONED by **TROY N. TERRELL** and SECONDED by **MITCHELL L. LEWIS** to approve the introduction of a Proposed Ordinance to amend Chapter 5 titled, "**Animants and Fowl**", Article I titled "**In General**", Section 507 titled, "**Horse Riding After Dark Prohibited**", of the City of Mansfield's Code of Ordinances and authorize advertisement of same in our local municipal journal on April 24th, with a public hearing on this matter set for the City Council's regular meeting scheduled on April 28th. This Ordinance, if adopted, will prohibit the riding or leading of horses, ponies, mules, donkeys, cows, or to drive carriages or wagons drawn or lead by such animals, upon any public property, public street, sidewalk or alleyway located within the City's corporate limits. The Ordinance also sets the maximum fine not to exceed \$300 if any of its provisions are violated. Motion Passed Unanimously.

Item E: It was MOTIONED by **G. B. HALL III** and SECONDED by **MITCHELL L. LEWIS** to approve the introduction of a Proposed Ordinance to Ordinance No. 22 of 2011, Section I-9 titled, "**General Penalties and Court Costs**", of Chapter 1 of the City of Mansfield's Code of Ordinances and authorize advertisement of same in our local municipal journal on April 24th, with a public hearing on this matter set for the City Council's regular meeting scheduled on April 28th. After a recent revision to the City's Schedule of Fines, it was determined that language recited in the current Ordinance may possibly be in conflict with the fine amounts outlined on the Schedule. Motion Passed Unanimously.

Item F: It was MOTIONED by **MITCHELL L. LEWIS** and SECONDED by **TROY N. TERRELL** to approve authorization for the Mayor to enter into and execute a **Cooperative Endeavor Agreement** with the **Desoto Parish Police Jury** for the collection of garbage and the assessment of garbage fees to the residents in Hillsdale Subdivision. Motion Passed Unanimously.

Item G: It was MOTIONED by **G. B. HALL III** and SECONDED by **TROY N. TERRELL** to approve the recommendation of Public Works Director, Jim Ruffin, to offer full-time

employment with the City of Mansfield to **Norinthian v. Phillips**, presently assigned to work at our Water Treatment Plant as an operator. Mr. Phillips was hired on January 7, 2014, and has thus successfully completed the mandatory probationary period. Further, in March 2014, he passed his Class I Certifications with the Dept. of Health & Hospitals in Water Treatment and Water Production. Finally, Mr. Phillips is dependable, hard-working and can be relied on to complete the tasks assigned to him with very little supervision. Motion Passed Unanimously.

Item H: At this time, the floor was opened for discussion of the recent, increased frequency of stopped trains at the railroad crossing on Polk Street. Often times these trains are connecting and disconnecting within the city limits and blocking the tracks while doing so. This occurrence has been on-going for several years. In January and March of 2011, we conveyed our concerns to the Kansas City Southern (KCS) Railway Company, and for a brief time, this situation vastly improved. However, now those same issues are resurfacing. Stopped trains are consistently blocking our railroad crossings for inordinate periods of time. Doing so puts public safety at risk, as stopped trains impede the passage of emergency vehicles (ambulances, fire trucks, etc.) when critically needed. Further, a second risk to public safety is that in these instances, police officers are unable to get to the scene of a crime. Additionally, these frequent stoppages have a negative impact on commerce. Vehicles carrying merchandise for the businesses located in Mansfield and in the DeSoto Parish area are also being delayed. Finally, stopped trains are an inconvenience to the citizens in this city, especially when they cause the residents to be late for work or church. We would suggest that the trains change tracks on the outskirts of the City. All of these concerns were again echoed by the attendants at this Council meeting. Mayor McCoy requested that the City's attorney draft a letter to the KCS Railway Company expressing our position on these issues. Two jurors of the DeSoto Parish Police Jury (DPPJ) were also in attendance at this meeting, namely Mr. Richard Fuller (Dist. 4-A) and Mr. Ernel Jones (Dist. 4-C). Mr. Jones stated that the DPPJ would be willing to adopt a Resolution in support of our continued and growing trepidations. This Resolution would be attached to our letter to further assist in conveying our concerns to the railway company. It was **MOTIONED** by **G. B. HALL III** and **SECONDED** by **TROY N. TERRELL** that the City's attorney be authorized to draft a letter on behalf of the Mayor and forward same to the KCS Railway Company, to voice the concerns of residents of both the City and the Parish on this matter. The Mayor also thanked *The Times* reporter, Vickie Welborn, for her recent article in this publication with regard to the City's continued concern over stopped trains at our railroad crossings. Motion Passed Unanimously.

Item I: No other new business discussed.

During the **Comments Period** for the Mayor and Council Members, Mayor McCoy re-emphasized that each Alderman is responsible for the constituents residing in his or her district. When citizens voice concerns on any issue, the Aldermen are tasked with conveying those concerns to the Mayor. He will then disseminate those concerns to the appropriate Department Head, so that corrective action (s) can be taken to resolve those issues.

With no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at **4:55 p.m.**, by MOTION from **G. B. HALL III** and was SECONDED by **MITCHELL L. LEWIS**. Motion Passed Unanimously.

Curtis W. McCoy, *Mayor*
Marvin R. Jackson, *Clerk*