

City of Mansfield
MINUTES OF *REGULAR* PUBLIC MEETING
December 14, 2020

Via Teleconference

The Board of Aldermen met in *regular* session on **December 14th**, via *teleconference* due to the current State of Emergency as a result of the **COVID-19** pandemic. Mayor John H. Mayweather, Sr. called this meeting to order at **4:30 p.m.**, after which an Invocation was offered by **Alderman Christopher S. Thomas**. 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. Following the pledge, the clerk asked each council member on the *teleconference* to confirm their participation by signifying a verbal ‘present’ as their names were called aloud. The following officials were recorded as **Present**: Hon. John H. Mayweather, Sr., - **Mayor**, Mary J. Green –District **A**, **Christopher S. Thomas** –District **B**, Joseph Hall, Jr. – District **D** and Kervin D. Campbell –District **E**. **Absent**: Mitchell L. Lewis –District **C**. **City Hall Personnel, Dept. Heads, & Other City Personnel Present/Participating on the call**: Gwendolyn Jones (Deputy Clerk), Melony McCarty (Accountant), Annie Blue (Police Chief), Billy Locke (Asst. Police Chief), Latarsha Shelton (Fire Chief), and Capt. Bryan Ross (Fire Dept.). **Press Present/Participating**: None.

It was MOTIONED by **KERVIN D. CAMPBELL** and SECONDED by **CHRISTOPHER S. THOMAS** to approve the minutes of the **November 23, 2020 *regular*** City Council meeting and dispense with the reading. The motion passed with 3 of the 4 council members participating on the conference call voting to approve the November 23rd minutes. Alderman Joseph Hall, Jr. abstained from voting.

It was MOTIONED by **CHRISTOPHER S. THOMAS** and **KERVIN D. CAMPBELL** to approve the payment of current outstanding bills for this period. Alderwoman **Mary J. Green** offered a Nay vote on this matter. However, this item was approved by a vote of 2 to 1 in favor paying the current outstanding bills for this period. Alderman Joseph Hall, Jr. abstained from voting.

The City Clerk next opened the floor to hear public comments from those in attendance/participating to any item outlined on the meeting agenda. Constituents had been invited to participate in the meeting with regard to public comments using the method of either emailing, faxing or phoning in by 4:00 p.m., any public comments they wanted to offer during the Public Comments Period. On the matter of the City’s proposal to increase water current rates, several callers voiced strong opposition to this proposition. The City Clerk explained that presently and for some time, current monthly expenses consistently exceed the revenue collected in Water. With the progressive increase of operational expenses in this area, it has become necessary to pass on those rising costs to the users of our water services. At the conclusion of allowing those requesting to offer comments on the matter of increasing water rates, the **Public Comments Period** was then subsequently closed.

Old Business:

Item A: A public hearing was conducted to hear and discuss any comments related to proposed **Ordinance No. 4 of 2020**, drafted to amend the Code of Ordinances of the City of Mansfield to **increase** sewerage user fees, amending Section 21-46 (*Sewer System Charges*) of Division 2, of Article II in Chapter 21. An **increase** of sewerage user fees was a requirement of the provisions of the 2020/2021 LCDBG Sewer Rehab Improvements grant in order to retain the award amount bestowed upon us. Similar to Water, expenditures in Sewer exceed revenue collected. It is necessary that the Sewer fund is not reliant on other revenue sources/streams for sustainability. When no comments were offered, the public hearing was subsequently closed.

Item B: Proposed **Ordinance No. 5 of 2020**, previously introduced to the Council for consideration, was re-introduced at this meeting for further discussion. This **Ordinance** was drafted to amend the Code of Ordinances of the City of Mansfield to **increase** water rates, amending Section 21-53 (*Water Rates*) of Division 1, of Article III in Chapter 21. Presently, the water rates being charged to our customers are not sufficient to satisfy the expenditures being incurred. Approximately, the City would realize an additional \$11,528.00 monthly and an additional \$138,336.00 annually in water revenue if the minimum monthly charge for each customer was increased by \$4.00. This rate change would mean an increase from \$20.00 to \$22.00 for the 1st 2,000 gallons of water consumed for customers living the city limits. Similarly, for customers residing outside the city limits, the rate would increase from \$22.00 to \$26.00 for the 1st 2,000 gallons of water used. After some discussion, it was MOTIONED by **KERVIN C. CAMPBELL** and SECONDED by **CHRISTOPHER S. THOMAS** to authorize advertisement of the title of the **Ordinance** on 12/24/2020, and to set a public hearing on same for 12/28/2020. Alderwoman opposed this action, leaving the motion to be approved by a vote of 2 to 1 in favor of advertising the **Ordinance** title and setting a public hearing for 12/28/2020. Alderman Joseph Hall, Jr. abstained from voting.

Item C: A public hearing was conducted to hear and discuss any comments related to proposed **Ordinance No. 6 of 2020**, drafted to review and recommend adoption of an Operating Budget of Revenue and Expenditures for the fiscal year beginning January 1, 2021 and ending December 31, 2021. When no comments were offered on this matter, the public hearing was then subsequently closed.

Item D: No other old business discussed.

New Business:

Item A: Proposed **Ordinance No. 7 of 2020** was introduced, drafted to amend the city's Annual Operating Budget for FY **2020** in accordance with the Louisiana Local Government

Budget Act. This amendment represents Budget Amendment No. 2 for **2020**. Several line items for revenue in the overall category of **Corporation** needed amending to satisfy the 5% variance that existed in this company. Following a brief discussion, it was MOTIONED by **CHRISTOPHER S. THOMAS** and SECONDED by **KERVIN D. CAMPBELL** to authorize advertisement of the title of the **Ordinance** on 12/24/2020, and to set a set a public hearing on same for 12/28/2020. Alderwoman opposed this action, leaving the motion to be approved by a vote of 2 to 1 in favor of advertising the **Ordinance** title and setting a public hearing for 12/28/2020. Alderman Joseph Hall, Jr. abstained from voting.

Item B: It was MOTIONED by **KERVIN D. CAMPBELL** and SECONDED by **CHRISTOPHER S. THOMAS** to approve adoption of **Ordinance No. 4 of 2020**, drafted to drafted to amend the Code of Ordinances of the City of Mansfield to **increase** sewerage user fees, amending Section 21-46 (*Sewer System Charges*) of Division 2, of Article II in Chapter 21. The measure passed with 3 of the 4 council members voting to approve this matter. Alderman Joseph Hall, Jr. abstained from voting.

Item C: It was MOTIONED by **CHRISTOPHER S. THOMAS** and SECONDED by **KERVIN D. CAMPBELL** to approve adoption of **Ordinance No. 6 of 2020**, drafted to review and recommend adoption of an Operating Budget of Revenue and Expenditures for the fiscal year beginning January 1, 2021 and ending December 31, 2021. The motion passed with 3 of the 4 members participating in this meeting approving this item. Alderman Joseph Hall, Jr. abstained from voting.

Item D: Under consideration was the renewal of a LA Commercial Lease Agreement between the City of Mansfield and **Allie B. Campbell** d/b/a *Campbell's Soul Café* for an additional 24-month term, commencing from January 1, 2021 and terminating December 31, 2023. Mrs. **Campbell's** current was set to expire on December 31, 2020. Under the current Lease, the lessee (Mrs. Campbell) pays \$100.00 monthly. Some members of the Council felt this amount was too low and that a renegotiation of the rental amount was warranted. Since no agreement on a new rental amount could be decided upon at this meeting, it was MOTIONED by **MARY J. GREEN** and SECONDED by **CHRISTOPHER S. THOMAS** that this matter be tabled and that a conversation be had with the lessee (Mrs. Campbell) to see if she would be amenable to paying a higher lease amount. With 3 of the 4 council members voting to approve the motion, this matter passed, with Joseph Hall, Jr. abstaining to vote.

Item E: No other new business discussed.

Comments from Mayor Mayweather and/or Council Members: During this period, there were no comments offered by either the Mayor or any of the Aldermen.

With no further business to discuss, this meeting was declared adjourned at **5:09 p.m.** by MOTION from **MARY J. GREEN** and was SECONDED by **KERVIN D. CAMPBELL**. The adjournment garnered three yea votes, with Alderman Joseph Hall, Jr. abstaining to vote.

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