

City of Mansfield
MINUTES OF *REGULAR* PUBLIC MEETING
February 24, 2020

The Board of Aldermen met in *regular* session on **February 24th**, 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 Kervin D. Campbell**. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by **Alderman Joseph Hall, Jr.** Following the pledge, the roll call was suspended. However, the following officials were recorded as **Present**: Hon. John H. Mayweather, Sr., -**Mayor**, Mitchell L. Lewis –District **C**, Joseph Hall, Jr. –District **D** and Kervin D. Campbell –District **E**. **Absent**: Mary J. Green –District **A** and Christopher S. Thomas – District **B**. **City Hall Personnel, Dept. Heads, & Other City Personnel Present**: Gwendolyn Jones (Deputy Clerk), Brian Phillips (Court Clerk), Joshua Ryals (Water Operator), LaTarsha Shelton (Fire Chief -MFD), Christopher Samuels (Firefighter –MFD) and Billy Locke (Asst. Police Chief –MPD). **Others Present**: Fran Norwood, Bethany May, Kiim Jenkins, and A. J. Williams, Jr. **Press Present**: None.

It was MOTIONED by **KERVIN D. CAMPBELL** and SECONDED by **MITCHELL L. LEWIS** to approve the minutes of the **February 10, 2020 *regular*** City Council meeting and dispense with the reading. 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. Since no comments were offered from the floor, the **Public Comments Period** was then subsequently closed.

Old Business: None.

New Business:

At this time, the city clerk requested the agenda be amended to receive comments from Mansfield resident, Ms. **Kimberly Jenkins**, regarding the continued blockage of railroad crossings throughout the city by Kansas City Southern (KCS) trains. With no opposition from the floor or from the City Council, it was MOTIONED by **JOSEPH HALL, JR.** and SECONDED by **MITCHELL L. LEWIS** to amend the published agenda to hear and discuss comments from Ms. Jenkins relative to this issue. Ms. Jenkins first appeared before the Mayor and City Council at their February 10th regular meeting where the agenda was amended to receive her concerns. She reminded the attendees of lives lost in the past at various crossings, namely Shane Brown and Anthony Calhoun. The Clerk stated that Louisiana state statutes (LA RS 48:391 and 48:392) existed that prohibit trains from obstructing railroad crossings for more than twenty (20) minutes. Likewise, a city Ordinance exists which addresses this matter. To further address Ms. Jenkins' concerns, Fire Chief LaTarsha Shelton rose to assure her that in emergency, medical cases when the crossings are blocked, the Fire Department is equipped to come to the aid of individuals in distress. She went on to state that the City has two fire stations, on either side of the train crossings that are manned seven days a week, year round. The staff at both stations is capable of administering medical aid to persons in distress, who may be stalled at a crossing. Finally, the Mayor informed Ms. Jenkins that the former Mayor had had in-person conversations with representatives of KCS regarding this issue. Also, in the past he (the former Mayor) had reached

out to congressional leaders to garner their support of the City's concerns. Follow-up conversations with KCS in person and via teleconferences are being considered to hopefully improve this situation and reduce the amount of time trains are blocking the crossings. Ms. Jenkins may possibly be invited to sit in on those conversations.

Item A: The floor was opened to receive presentations by **Fran Norwood** and **Bethany May**, chairman and vice-chairman respectively, of the *Mansfield in Motion* organization on impending plans and on progress made related to the Mansfield Revitalization Initiative. First, Mrs. **Norwood** reported that a total of 35 crepe myrtles had been planted along the Polk Street extension. Secondly, all historical signs had been installed in the downtown district. Third, at the mini park located on the knoll at the corner of Polk and Jefferson Streets, park benches and trash receptacles had been placed on the lawn there. In addition, Mrs. Norwood reported that there are six (6) remaining buildings in the downtown district are in need of being painted. As of this meeting, two of the property owners had consented to allowing their buildings to be painted. Still further, the sports mural discussed in previous meeting should commence in early March. Finally, Mrs. Norwood would like to arrange a Town Hall meeting in the near future to discuss the drafting of a five-year plan for the City, possibly in May of this year. Next, Mrs. **Bethany May** rose to report that to-date, three food truck vendors had been secured to situate near the parish Courthouse on court dates. They will commence with situating near the Courthouse on March 3rd. An ad has been drafted to be published in our local journal (*The Enterprise & Interstate Progress*) on Feb. 28th. However, she (Mrs. May) also encouraged attendees to announce the arrival of the food truck vendors by word-of-mouth. Finally, Mrs. May announced that the Farmer's Market and Maker's Market is scheduled to commence on June 6th. This event will continue every Saturday as long as the vendors have sufficient wares to sell and weather conditions are favorable.

Item B: No other business discussed.

Comments from Mayor Mayweather and/or Council Members: During this period, the Mayor expressed his appreciation to Mrs. Norwood and Mrs. May for their endeavors in bringing new events to the municipality, and of their efforts in helping enhance the aesthetic appeal of our City. The council members present echoed his sentiment.

With no further business to discuss, this meeting was declared adjourned at **5:07 p.m.** by MOTION from **JOSEPH HALL, JR.** and was SECONDED by **MITCHELL L. LEWIS.** Motion Passed Unanimously.

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