

**City of Mansfield**  
**MINUTES OF *REGULAR* PUBLIC MEETING**  
**March 11, 2019**

The Board of Aldermen met in *regular* session on **March 11th**, in Mansfield City Hall located at 705 Polk Street. Mayor Mayweather 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 Christopher S. Thomas**. Following the pledge, the roll call was suspended. However, the following officials were recorded as **Present**: Hon. John Mayweather, Sr., - **Mayor**, Mary J. Green –District **A**, Christopher S. Thomas –District **B**, Mitchell L. Lewis – District **C**, and Joseph Hall, Jr. –District **D**. **Absent**: Kervin D. Campbell –District **E**. **City Hall Personnel & Dept. Heads Present**: Gwendolyn Jones (Deputy Clerk), James “Jim” Ruffin (Public Works Director), Billy Locke (Detective –Mansfield Police Dept.), John Evans (City Attorney). **Press Present**: Martha Rivers (*The Enterprise & Interstate Progress*).

It was MOTIONED by **JOSEPH HALL, JR.** and SECONDED by **MARY J. GREEN** to approve the minutes of the **February 25, 2019 *regular*** City Council meeting and to dispense with the reading. Motion Passed Unanimously.

It was MOTIONED by **JOSEPH HALL, JR.** and SECONDED by **MITCHELL L. LEWIS** to approve the 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. Since no comments were offered from the floor, the **Public Comments Period** was then subsequently closed.

**Old Business:**

Item A: It was MOTIONED by **MARY J. GREEN** and SECONDED by **JOSEPH HALL, JR.** to grant/approve the request of petitioner, Mr. **Isaac Cooper**, to situate a mobile home for residential use on property located in an R-1 District (Single-Family Residence District) bearing a municipal address of **205 Huson Street**. This request was originally presented to the Mansfield Planning & Zoning Commission at their February 20<sup>th</sup> meeting, who did not act on the request, but instead deferred the matter to the Mansfield Board of Aldermen for consideration. The request was discussed at the Aldermen’s regular meeting held on February 25<sup>th</sup>. The petitioner’s request was met with objections at both meetings. Mayor Mayweather asked that all information voiced at these meetings be taken under advisement and further stated that a determination on this request would be rendered at the March 11<sup>th</sup> regular meeting of the City Council. It was noted that there are other mobile homes in the vicinity near the mobile home site. With that confirmation, the Council voted unanimously to grant the petitioner’s request.

Item B: No other old business discussed.

**New Business:**

Item A: It was MOTIONED by **MARY J. GREEN** and SECONDED by **JOSEPH HALL, JR.** to approve the recommendation of Mayor Mayweather to promote Assistant Police Chief **Annette Blue**, to the position of Chief of Police of the Mansfield Police Department. Assistant Chief **Blue** began her now more than 33-year tenure with the Mansfield Police Department on **October 17, 1985** originally in the capacity of part-time radio dispatcher. She was promoted to full-time dispatcher in February 1986. Since that time, she has received a number of promotions from patrol officer in July 1988 to Assistant Chief of Police in 2016. She has proven her dedication and commitment to the City and to the Police Department and has established a professional rapport with her colleagues and the citizens of Mansfield. In acknowledgement of this promotion and the accomplishments achieved during her career with the Police Department, she was presented a Certificate of Achievement from the Mayor and Board of Aldermen. After that presentation, an Oath of Office was administered by DeSoto Parish Clerk of Court, Mr. Jeremy Evans. Photos were then taken with the Mayor and the Alderman in her district. Motion Passed Unanimously.

Item B: It was MOTIONED by **JOSEPH HALL, JR.** and SECONDED by **MITCHELL L. LEWIS** to approve the recommendation of Mayor Mayweather to promote Lieutenant **Billy D. Locke**, to the position of Assistant Chief of Police of the Mansfield Police Department. Lieutenant **Locke** began employment with the Mansfield Police Department on **January 28, 2009** as a patrol officer. He was promoted from patrol officer to detective with the Department in May 2010. Several promotions would follow during his tenure with the Department, with the most recent promotion as Lieutenant in March 2016. In similar fashion as Chief Blue, Lieutenant **Locke** was presented a Certificate of Achievement from the Mayor and Board of Aldermen. As with Chief Blue, Lieutenant Locke's Oath of Office was administered by Mr. Jeremy Evans as Clerk of Court of DeSoto Parish and photos were then taken. Motion Passed Unanimously.

Item C: At this time, Mansfield resident and local business owner, Mrs. **Betty Carter** was given the floor to address the Mayor and City Council. She rose to inquire about a couple of matters that were of particular concern to her, namely a budget allocation in the **2019** budget and the City's intentions for cleanup of abandoned/blighted properties in our municipality. She inquired as to whether any allocation had been made in the City's **2019 Financial Budget** for the purchase of a new fire truck to replace the truck declared a total loss in the fall of 2017. The Council directed the City Clerk to respond to her inquiry. The City Clerk (Marvin Jackson) stated to Mrs. **Carter** that no allocation had been made in the **2019 Budget** for the purchase of a new fire truck. With this confirmation, Mrs. **Carter** voiced apprehension as to how non-replacement of the fire truck lost might impact the City's Public Fire Protection Classification. Every four (4) years the Property Insurance Association of Louisiana (P.I.A.L.) evaluates/reviews the City's Fire Department and the water supply system that is available for

fire suppression in the City. Last reviewed in 2014, the City's classification improved from a Class 5 to a Class 4 for residential and commercial properties. The City Clerk shared with Mrs. **Carter** that he had contacted several of the better-known insurance carriers (*State Farm Insurance, Allstate Insurance, and Shelter Insurance*) to inquire as to what degree might a lower classification (class 5) impact fire insurance premiums for residential and commercial property owners. Representatives from all the above named insurance providers commented that if the Classification changes to a Class 5, the impact is not expected to be very significant. Mrs. **Carter** then moved on to her next concern, abandoned and blighted properties. For those structures that have deteriorated beyond repair and have become 'eyesores,' she wanted to know the City's plan for clearing such structures. To field this inquiry, the City's attorney, Mr. John Evans was asked to elaborate. He stated that currently on the books is a City ordinance (Ch. 10, Art. II, Div. 3) for the abatement of weeds and noxious growths and for garbage removal. However, this Ordinance does not specifically address the steps to be taken to remedy abandoned and blighted properties. To address this issue, it will be necessary to adopt a separate Ordinance (Blighted & Abandoned Property Ordinance). This Ordinance would provide the procedures to take toward helping to remedy this type issue when it occurs. Mr. Evans requested permission from the Mayor and Council to pursue the measures appropriate for drafting a *Blighted Ordinance*. It was MOTIONED by **JOSEPH HALL, JR.** and SECONDED by **MARY J. GREEN** to authorize the Mayor to have the city attorney (John Evans) pursue the drafting of an Ordinance that definitively focuses on how to handle blighted and abandoned properties. Motion Passed Unanimously.

Item D: No other new business discussed.

**Comments from Mayor Mayweather and/or Council Members:** During this period, the Mayor asked Mrs. **Carter** if she would consider chairing a committee whose primary function would be to facilitate cleanup efforts throughout the City. Mrs. **Carter** retorted that presently the demands of her schedule would not allow her to chair the committee, but she would consent to being a member of such a committee.

With no further business to discuss, this meeting was declared adjourned at **5:10 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**