

City of Mansfield
MINUTES OF *REGULAR* PUBLIC MEETING
October 10, 2016

The Board of Aldermen met in regular session on **Monday, October 10th** in Mansfield City Hall located at 705 Polk Street. Mayor Curtis McCoy called the meeting to order at **4:30 p.m.**, after which an Invocation was offered by **Alderman Mary L. Green**. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by **Alderman Brenda H. Hall**. Following the pledge, the roll call was suspended. However, the following officials were recorded as **Present**: Hon. Curtis W. McCoy, **Mayor**, Mary L. Green –District **A**, Brenda H. Hall –District **B**, Mitchell L. Lewis –District **C**, Joseph Hall, Jr. –District **D**, and Kervin D. Campbell –District **E**. **Absent**: None. **Absent due to suspension**: Roy R. Jones –District **B**. **Other City Personnel Present**: Gwendolyn Jones (Deputy Clerk), Brian Phillips (Court Clerk), Tommie Crawford (Public Relations Officer), James “**Jim**” Ruffin (Public Works Director), Latarsha Shelton (Mansfield Fire Dept. -Interim Chief), Gary Hobbs (Police Chief), Melony McCarty (City Accountant), and John Evans (City Attorney). **Press Present**: None.

It was MOTIONED by **KERVIN D. CAMPBELL** and SECONDED by **MITCHELL L. LEWIS** to approve the minutes of the **September 26, 2016 *regular*** City Council meeting and to dispense with the reading. Motion Passed Unanimously.

It was MOTIONED by **MITCHELL L. LEWIS** and SECONDED by **MARY L. GREEN** 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. During this time, several attendants expressed that they would appreciate an opportunity to offer their comments regarding whether the sale of alcoholic beverages should be permitted within the City’s incorporated municipal limits. This was one of the issues outlined under ‘*New Business*’ on the meeting agenda. Mayor McCoy opened the forum for receipt of their comments one by one on this issue. First to offer comments was the pastor (**Rev. Larry Pridmore**) of **Southside Baptist Church** here in Mansfield. Before Rev. Pridmore began offering his comments, he distributed to the Mayor and Councilmen propaganda describing the perils of the consumption and abuse of alcohol. He intimated that while he is in favor of the City exploring alternative means of garnering additional revenue, he felt that the City’s governing authority should seek other measures of doing so. Rev. Pridmore continued by stating that he had had conversations with a few other ministers in the community, and they too shared a similar viewpoint. Further, he commented that he also recently had dialogue with the three principals of the schools in the City and they too expressed opposition to the passage of such a measure. Second to offer remarks was Mr. **A. J. Williams, Jr.**, Mansfield resident and Vice-Pres. of the Mansfield Planning and Zoning Commission Board. He began by commenting that he agrees with Rev. Pridmore that the excessive use of alcohol can be detrimental to an individual’s physical well-being. However, that should not be the only deterrent for making alcohol unavailable to the persons that want it. He went on to comment that what we should really be even more concerned about is the use of other illicit drugs (heroin, cocaine, etc.). If passage of this proposition could yield additional revenue for the City, he was in favor of it.

Next to speak of favor of permitting the sale of alcohol in the city's incorporated limits was Mansfield resident, Mrs. **Rita J. Myles**. She inferred that since other revenue streams had shown a steady decline in recent years, the sales taxes collected from alcohol sales could help to boost the City's bottom line. There are liquor stores in all four directions that are within a stone's throw of the city limits. She continued by saying that we have most definitely missed out on having some restaurant establishments and other retailers situate within Mansfield's city limits because the sale of alcohol is prohibited. When no further comments were offered from the floor, the **Public Comments Period** was subsequently closed.

Old Business: None.

New Business:

Item A: At this time, the floor was opened for the receipt of quarterly reports from department heads. First to report was accountant **Melony McCarty**. She began by informing the attendants that the City's financial structure is comprised of three main fundamental categories –Water, Sewer and Corporation. The categories of Water and Sewer were operating '*in the black.*' However, currently the Corporation (includes the Mayor's office, Police Department, Fire Department, and the public works areas of Street and Sanitation) is operating at a deficit. Further, she said that there have been no raises for employees city-wide in four years due largely to a reduction in a host of the City's various revenue streams. In conclusion, she reported that the budget process had begun for preparation of the City's Annual Budget of Revenue and Expenditures for fiscal year 2017. It would again next year be a very conservative budget. Second to report was police chief **Gary Hobbs**. He distributed a written quarterly report to the Mayor and City Council that reflected data such as the number of citations written to-date compared to this time last year. Also reflected on the report were community, outreach type events scheduled, training activities and continuing education opportunities attended this year and those planned for next year. Next to report was interim fire chief **Latarsha Shelton** who, like chief **Hobbs**, distributed a quarterly report in a format similar to his. However, before she had opportunity to orally provide the City Council with the report's highlights, she received a fire call and had to depart from the meeting. Finally to report was public works director **Jim Ruffin**. Mr. Ruffin first reported that daily operations at the city's Water Treatment Plant were going well and that there were no current compliance issues with the LA Office of Public Health (OPH). He went on to state that it is a requirement of the OPH each shift at the Water Treatment Plant is manned by at least twocertified operators. Presently, we are actively seeking to employ one other employee for assignment at the Water Treatment Plant to remain in compliance with this mandate. In addition, he informed the Council that construction activities on the City's existing wastewater collection system should commence by years' end or early 2017. This project will be funded by an award from the 2014/2015 LCDBG program. The scope of work for this project includes extensively work scheduled to the sewer infrastructure on the Oxford Road. Still

further, he informed the Mayor and Council that a 24” culvert will be changed out on Johnson and Jacobs Street soon with a 36” culvert. All emergency personnel will be notified. Also, as a mandate from the LA Dept. of Health and Hospitals, the city has to collect 40 lead and copper samples each year, and the City is on target to have these submitted to this agency by December 31st. Moreover, he mentioned that the mosquito spraying activities and city-wide grass cutting continues. Finally, he reported that AT&T will soon be installing a fiber optic cable near McArthur Drive extending out to near the Mansfield Elementary Middle School. The city may have a 12” water main in the path of construction that will have to be relocated.

Item B: At this time, a presentation was scheduled to be offered from Ms. **Brenda F. Ford**, but Ms. **Ford** had a last minute scheduling conflict and had to cancel her appearance. She is now slated appear at the Council’s October 24th regular meeting. Ms. **Ford** is a candidate for Judge of the 42nd Judicial District, Division A.

Item C: Before adoption of the Resolution ordering and calling to be held in the City on December 10th to authorize the sale of alcohol beverages within the City’s incorporated limits, Alderman **Joseph Hall, Jr.** asked if he could offer a brief statement. He remarked that just like any other vice, the consumption of alcohol is a choice. Simply because it is offered on the menu of a restaurant and available for sale in a retail outlet doesn’t mean you are obligated to consume or purchase it. You always have the option of consuming or buying something else. Passage of this local election option could mean addition revenue for the city that it is in dire need of. Alderman **Mitchell Lewis** and Alderwoman **Mary Green** echoed similar comments. Additionally, when some attendants questioned whether this proposition was required to be on an election ballot, the city’s attorney **John Evans** was called on to come up and explain the legalities of the election ballot process. He stated that when at least 25% of the electorate signs a petition to have a proposition placed on a ballot, then that proposition shall appear on such. In this instance, 30% of the electorate signed the petition circulated by *Texas Petition Strategies* (Budha, TX) on this proposition. Following his comments, It was MOTIONED by **JOSEPH HALL, JR.** and SECONDED by **MITCHELL L. LEWIS** to adopt a **Resolution** ordering and calling a special election to be held in the City of Mansfield, LA on December 10, 2016, to authorize the sale of alcoholic beverages within the City’s incorporated municipal limits, making application to the State Bond Commission in connection therewith, and providing for other matters in connection therewith. Motion Passed Unanimously.

Item D: It was MOTIONED by **MITCHELL L. LEWIS** and SECONDED by **JOSEPH HALL, JR.** to authorize the publishing of the Notice of Special Election in the October 20th edition of the City’s official municipal journal (*The Enterprise & Interstate Progress*), in connection with the special election which will be held on December 10, 2016 as it proposes to permit the sale of alcoholic beverages in the City of Mansfield’s incorporated limits. Motion Passed Unanimously.

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of City of Mansfield, LA
September 26, 2016

At this time, no further comments were offered from the Mayor or Council Members.

Item E: No other new business discussed.

With no further business to discuss, this meeting was declared adjourned at **5:17 p.m.** by MOTION from **JOSEPH HALL, JR.** and was SECONDED by **MARY L. GREEN.** Motion Passed Unanimously.

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