

City of Mansfield
MINUTES OF *REGULAR* PUBLIC MEETING
December 13, 2021

In-Person Council Meeting

The Board of Aldermen met in *regular* session on **December 13th**, 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 **Alderswoman Mary J. Green**. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by **Alderman Kervin D. Cambell** (Alderman Thomas was scheduled to lead the Pledge, but was tardy at this portion of the opening ceremony). Following the pledge, the roll call was suspended. However the following officials were recorded as in attendance at this regular meeting of the city council. **Present:** Hon. John H. Mayweather, Sr., -**Mayor**, Mary J. Green –District **A**, Christopher S. Thomas –District **B**, Mitchell L. Lewis –District **C**, Joseph Hall, Jr. –District **D**, and Kervin D. Campbell –District **E**. **Absent:** None. **City Hall Personnel, Dept. Heads, & Other City Personnel Present:** Tommie Crawford (Public Relations Officer), Melony McCarty (Accountant), Gwendolyn Jones (Deputy Clerk), Joshua Ryals (Public Works Director), Billy Locke (Asst. Police Chief), and John Evans (City Attorney). **Press Present:** None.

It was MOTIONED by **KERVIN D. CAMPBELL** and SECONDED by **JOSEPH HALL, JR.** to approve the minutes of the **November 22, 2021 *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. On this agenda was the introduction of **Ordinance No. 7 of 2021** which was drafted and presented to the Aldermen for their review and consideration to adopt an Operating Budget of Revenue and Expenditures for the ensuing fiscal year (**2022**). Contained within the proposed budget for **2022** was a salary increase for all full-time city employees. Specifically, the budget outlined an increase of \$2.17 per hour for police patrol officers (excluding police dispatchers), an increase of \$2.10 per hour for firefighters, and an hourly wage increase of \$1.44 for all other full-time city employees. A rate increase of \$2.17 for police department personnel (exclusive of police dispatchers) would result in an annual increase of \$4,739.28. A rate increase of \$2.10 for fire department personnel would result in an annual of \$5,241.60. Finally, the \$1.44 per hour increase for all other city employees would result in an annual increase of \$2,995.20. The annualized salary for Fire Department personnel was greater than that of Police Department personnel due to the fact that firefighters are scheduled to work more hours per pay period than patrol officers (96 hours for firefighters and 84 hours for patrol officers). Assistant Police Chief Billy Locke contended that police dispatchers should receive the same hourly increase as police officers, since in his opinion they too are regarded as 1st responders. The city's attorney, John Evans, at this point interjected that in his professional opinion police dispatchers are not considered 1st responders. It should be noted that management in the Police Department initially requested an hourly wage increase of \$3.00 for all personnel in that department. However, the city's accountant maintained that the city's budget would not support an increase of this amount for the ensuing fiscal year. It was the contention of some council members that personnel in the police and fire departments were deserving of a greater

rate of increase than other city employees due to the nature of their daily activities. In the opinion of Alderman Joseph Hall and Alderwoman Mary Green, police officers and firefighters are at greater risk of physical harm or injury due to their charge of protecting the lives of the citizens who reside in our municipality. They also intimated that the high turnover rate in these departments could be attributed to the salaries not being comparable to those in other surrounding areas. However, Public Works Director Joshua Ryals argued that personnel in the areas of water, sewer, street, and sanitation are also susceptible to physical harm while performing their daily tasks. He was clearly not in agreement with offering a greater rate increase to police and fire personnel over any of the other city employees. It was stated by the accountant that initially the Mayor favored offering to compensate all full-time employees with a lump sum payment of \$4,000. However, he also requested that the accountant, calculate rate increase projections using several options. Both Alderman Joseph Hall and Alderwoman Mary Green were dogged in their contention that patrol officers (including dispatchers) and firefighters should receive greater compensation than all other city employees for the reason mentioned earlier. At times their comments became decidedly hostile, almost combative when making statements to support their arguments. This was especially evident when Deputy Clerk Gwen Jones attempted to offer her opinion on this matter. She was met with unwelcoming and antagonistic comments from Alderman Hall. When no further public comments were offered from any of the attendees at this meeting, the **Public Comments Period** was then subsequently closed and the meeting was unexpectedly adjourned.

Old Business:

Item A: Re-introduction of **Ordinance No. 6 of 2021** drafted to redistrict the Mansfield Board of Aldermen's districts as needed for population changes documented by the **2020** U. S. Decennial Census, authorize advertisement the title of the Ordinance on 12/16/2021, and set a public hearing on same for 12/27/2021. **NO ACTION TAKEN ON THIS ITEM –TABLED UNTIL A FUTURE COUNCIL MEETING.**

New Business:

Item A: Introduction of proposed **Ordinance No. 7 of 2021** drafted to offer review and a consideration to adopt an Operating Budget of Revenue and Expenditures for the fiscal year beginning January 1, 2022 and ending December 31, 2022, authorize advertisement of the title of the **Ordinance** on 12/23/2021, and set a public hearing on same for 12/27/2021. **NO ACTION TAKEN ON THIS ITEM –TABLED UNTIL A FUTURE COUNCIL MEETING.**

With no further business to discuss, this meeting was declared adjourned at **5:32 p.m.** by MOTION from **JOSEPH HALL, JR.** and was SECONDED by **MARY J. GREEN.** Motion Passed Unanimously.

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