

City of Mansfield
MINUTES OF *REGULAR* PUBLIC MEETING
January 25, 2021

Via Teleconference and/or Video Conference

The Board of Aldermen met in *regular* session on **January 25th**, via a ZOOM *teleconference and video conference* 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 Mitchell L. Lewis**. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by **Alderman Christopher S. Thomas**. 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’ if they joined the meeting via telephone as their names were called aloud. Those participating via their computers or other electronic devices, could be seen onscreen as evidence of their presence. The following officials were recorded as **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/Participating on the call**: Annie Blue (Police Chief), Billy Locke (Asst. Police Chief), Latarsha Shelton (Fire Chief), Tommie Crawford (Public Relations Officer/Water Billing Clerk), and James “Jim” Ruffin (Public Works Director). **Press Present/Participating**: None.

It was MOTIONED by **KERVIN D. CAMPBELL** and SECONDED by **CHRISTOPHER S. THOMAS** to approve the minutes of the **December 14, 2020 *regular*** City Council meeting and dispense with the reading. The City Clerk mentioned that a typographical error was reflected on the meeting agenda with regard to the date of the last meeting minutes. The agenda reflected that the last minutes were those from December 11th. However, that was incorrect. The minutes included in the Council’s agenda package were those from their December 14th regular meeting. The Clerk also noted that this was the Council’s first regular meeting of 2021. The meetings scheduled for December 28, 2020 and January 11, 2021 were both cancelled. The former due to deaths in the Clerk’s immediate family, and the latter due to a inclement, hazardous weather conditions (a snowstorm) resulting in the closure of City Hall. Motion Passed Unanimously.

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. Several participants spoke in opposition to select items on the meeting agenda. On Item E, a petition from **Sharon Jones** to situate a mobile home for

residential use on property bearing a municipal address of **226 Division Street**, a caller (Mr. **Henry Holden**) spoke in opposition to the petitioner's request. Mr. **Holden** alleged that he was the legal owner of the property (**226 Division Street**) where the mobile home was situated, and had been for the past 26 years. However, other than his verbal contention that he was the owner of the property, he offered the Mayor and City Council no concrete evidence of this allegation. Until further research could be performed on Mr. **Holden's** claim, it was MOTIONED by **Mitchell L. Lewis** and SECONDED by **Christopher S. Thomas** that this matter be tabled until the next regular meeting of the Council. Motion Passed Unanimously. On item F, Ms. **Delmar Derry** presented a petition to the Zoning Commission to convert the existing structure at **217 Myra Street** into a duplex. Two nearby property owners to the property expressed opposition to this petition. One nearby owner (Ms. **Martha Rivers**) submitted her opposition to Ms. **Derry's** request in writing. The other property owner (Ms. **Carol Love**) in close proximity to the subject property, phoned in her opposition to Ms. **Derry's** request. On Item H, a petition was presented to the Mansfield Planning & Zoning Commission by **Delmar Derry** to change zoning on property bearing a municipal address of **1200 Sample Street**. Ms. **Derry's** intentions were to renovate the existing structure and convert it into a duplex. The Zoning Commission **denied** her petition at their December 16, 2020 meeting. A nearby property owner (Mrs. **Rita Myles**) was participating at this meeting via ZOOM and expressed her opposition to Ms. **Derry's** request, citing her concern that the size of the was not sufficient enough to accommodate the duplex and that the parking for the tenants who would reside there was possibly inadequate. She also voiced that the lot where the structure is situated had not been properly maintained. The grass needed cutting and other debris needed to be removed from the property. At the conclusion of the aforementioned comments, the **Public Comments Period** was then subsequently closed.

Old Business:

Item A: Proposed **Ordinance No. 7 of 2020** was re-introduced, drafted to **amend** the City's Annual Financial Budget for FY **2020**. Advertisement of the title of the Ordinance needed to be authorized and a public hearing on same set. This Ordinance would be Budget Amendment No. 2 of 2020. It was MOTIONED by **Mitchell L. Lewis** and SECONDED by **Christopher S. Thomas** to authorize advertisement of the title of the Ordinance on 02/04/2021 and set a public hearing on same for 02/08/2021. Motion Passed Unanimously.

Item B: It was MOTIONED by **Kervin D. Campbell** and SECONDED by **Christopher S. Thomas** to accept the lowest responsive and responsible bidder for the chemical **Aluminum Sulfate Solution (4,000lb. TOTES)**, for use at the city's Wastewater Treatment Plant on George Hunt Road. Only two bidders submitted bids on the chemical aforementioned. One company, **UNIVAR Solutions USA, Inc.** (Kent, WA) submitted a "No Bid" for this chemical. The second company, **Industrial Research Corporation (IRC)** (Shreveport, LA) submitted a bid of **\$0.47/lb.** for this chemical. IRC's bid will be accepted and this company will be placed under

contract for the bid period of January 1, 2021 through June 30, 2021. They will be notified of this fact and required to carry the adequate liability insurance limits for this purpose. Motion Passed Unanimously.

Item C: No other old business discussed.

New Business:

Item A: It was MOTIONED by **KERVIN D. CAMPBELL** and SECONDED by **MITCHELL L. LEWIS** to approve the city's new Social Media Policy. The purpose of the directive is to establish departmental policy concerning personal web pages or internet sites when referencing the *City of Mansfield* or any department under its control. It is to ensure employees use appropriate discretion in the use of references to the *City of Mansfield* so as not to discredit or disrespect the city. Violation of this policy could result in a written warning, suspension without pay or even termination of employment. Motion Passed Unanimously.

Item B: It was MOTIONED by **CHRISTOPHER S. THOMAS** and SECONDED by **MITCHELL L. LEWIS** to approve the city's newly drafted Cell Phone Policy. This policy offers general guidelines for using personal and company cell phones during work hours. The purpose of this policy is to help the employees get the most out of the advantages cell phones offer the *City of Mansfield* while minimizing distractions, accidents, and frustrations improper cell phone use can cause. Violations of this policy could result in disciplinary action up to and including termination. Motion Passed Unanimously.

Item C: It was MOTIONED by **KERVIN D. CAMPBELL** and SECONDED by **MARY J. GREEN** to approve adoption of a **Resolution** authorizing the Mayor to make application for a **\$50,000** Local Government Assistance Program (**LGAP**) grant administered through the Louisiana Office of Community Development for fiscal year 2020-2021, and to act as Official Signatory in all matters in connection with this grant. If approved, the grant funds will be used to effect improvements to certain city streets and drainage canals to relieve obstructions which are impeding stormwater effluence. Motion Passed Unanimously.

Item D: It was MOTIONED by **MITCHELL L. LEWIS** and SECONDED by **MARY J. GREEN** to approve adoption of a **Resolution** authorizing the Mayor to make application for a **\$50,000** Community Water Enrichment Fund (**CWEF**) grant administered through the Louisiana Office of Community Development for fiscal year 2020-2021, and to act as Official Signatory in all matters in connection with this grant. If approved, the grant funds will be used to perform improvements to water service lines in identified city neighborhoods/subdivisions in dire need of upgrading to larger lines. The funds will also be used to purchase a needed high-service water pump to be installed at one of the city's water booster stations. Motion Passed Unanimously.

Item E: Petitioner **Sharon Jones** submitted a request to the Mansfield Planning & Zoning Commission to place a mobile home for residential use at **226 Division Street** (in an R-2 District), and was approved at the Commission's December 16, 2020 meeting. However, a caller (Mr. **Henry Holden**) participating in this meeting, alleged that he was the owner of property where Ms. **Jones** has the mobile home situated (**226 Division Street**). Therefore, it was MOTIONED by **Mitchell L. Lewis** and SECONDED by **Christopher S. Thomas** to table discussion and any further action on this matter until additional research could be done to address Mr. **Holden's** allegations and to determine who the legal owner was. Motion Passed Unanimously.

Item F: It was MOTIONED by **Kervin D. Campbell** and SECONDED by **Joseph Hall, Jr.** to approve the recommendation of the Mansfield Planning & Zoning Commission **denying** the request of petitioner **Delmar Derry** to change zoning on property located in an R-1 District (Single-Family Residence District) to an R-2 District (Multi-Family Residence District), bearing a municipal address of **217 Myra Street**. Ms. **Derry** proposed converting the existing residential structure into a one to two bedroom duplex. Her petition was met with opposition both at the Zoning Commission's December 16, 2020 meeting and at this meeting. Motion Passed Unanimously.

Item G: It was MOTIONED by **Christopher S. Thomas** and SECONDED by **Mitchell L. Lewis** to approve the recommendation of the Mansfield Planning & Zoning Commission **approving** the request of petitioner **Delmar Derry** to change zoning on property currently zoned as an R-1 District (Single-Family Residence District) to a B-1 District (Buffer Business District), bearing a municipal address of **310 Monroe Street**. Ms. **Derry's** intent is to convert the existing structure on the property into a duplex. Motion Passed Unanimously.

Item H: It was MOTIONED by **Kervin D. Campbell** and SECONDED by **Mitchell L. Lewis** to approve the recommendation of the Mansfield Planning & Zoning Commission **denying** the request of petitioner **Delmar Derry** to change zoning on property currently zoned as in an R-1 District (Single-Family Residence District) to a B-1 District (Buffer Business District), bearing a municipal address of **1200 Sample**. Ms. **Derry's** request was met with opposition at the Zoning Commission's meeting and at this meeting. Nearby property owners were concerned that the structure was too small for the duplex conversion and that parking would not be adequate for the tenants who would reside there. Motion Passed Unanimously.

Item I: Before the meeting commenced, Mr. **Clarence Davis** withdrew his petition to rezone the property at **614 Willard Street** from an R-2 District (Multi-Family Residence District) to an O-R District (Open Space and Recreation District). It should be noted that the Mansfield Planning & Zoning Commission **denied** his petition at their December 16, 2020 meeting.

Comments from Mayor Mayweather and/or Council Members: During this period, Public Works Director, **Jim Ruffin**, announced to the Mayor, City Council and all participants at this meeting that after 30 years (Jan. 1991 –Jan. 2021) of dedicated and devoted service to the *City of Mansfield*, he would be retiring. He also mentioned that water operator, Joshua Ryals had been shadowing him for the past year as his potential successor. Mr. Ryals’ employment with the City began approximately two years ago, and he came to us with state-issued certifications in both Water and Sewer operations. Mr. Ruffin remarked that he has appreciated the opportunity to work for the city and that the knowledge he gained of utility operations had been very beneficial in his position of Director of Public Works. The Mayor and all five Aldermen expressed well wishes to Mr. Ruffin on his retirement and on the next chapter of his life.

With no further business to discuss, this meeting was declared adjourned at **5:21 p.m.** by MOTION from **MITCHELL L. LEWIS** and was SECONDED by **CHRISTOPHER S. THOMAS**. Motion Passed Unanimously.

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