

City of Mansfield
MINUTES OF *REGULAR* PUBLIC MEETING
July 25, 2022

The Board of Aldermen met in *regular* session on **July 25th**, in Mansfield City Hall located at 705 Polk Street. Mayor Thomas Jones, Jr. 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 **Alderswoman Mary J. Green**. 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. Thomas Jones, Jr., -**Mayor**, Mary J. Green –District **A**, Christopher S. Thomas – District **B**, Victoria W. Jackson –District **C**, and Rita J. Myles –District **E**. **Absent:** Antonio G. Washington. –District **D**. **City Hall Personnel, Dept. Heads, & Other City Personnel Present:** Gwendolyn Jones (Deputy Clerk), Melony McCarty (Accountant), Annette Blue (Police Chief), Billy Locke (Asst. Police Chief), Bryan Ross (Fire Chief), Kadarius Youngblood (Fire Dept.), Zayvier Jones (Fire Dept.), Gwenda Taylor (Fire Dept.), Christopher Samuels (Fire Dept.), Joshua Ryals (Public Works Director), and Ronnie Morris –Code Enforcement Officer). **Others Present:** 10 guests. **Press Present:** None.

It was MOTIONED by **VICTORIA W. JACKSON** and SECONDED by **RITA J. MYLES** to approve the minutes of the **July 11, 2022 *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. When no comments were voiced from any of the attendees at this meeting, the **Public Comments Period** was then subsequently closed.

Old Business: None.

New Business:

Item A: Prior to taking action on Item A, the city’s zoning clerk (Gwen Jones) informed the Mayor and council members that the date reflected at the top of the Zoning Commission minutes and included in their agenda packages was incorrect. The minutes provided in the agenda packages sent out reflected a date of April 20, 2022, but should have been dated July 20, 2022. A corrected copy of those minutes was handed out at this meeting, prior to the meeting commencing. It was MOTIONED by **MARY J. GREEN** and SECONDED by **ANTONIO G. WASHINGTON** to approve the recommendation offered by the Mansfield Planning & Zoning Commission **granting** the request of petitioner ***Morning Dew Properties, L.L.C.*** (represented by Sonya Stutts) to situate a mobile home for **residential use** on property located in an R-1 District (Single-Family Residence District) and bearing a municipal address of **759 Oxford Road**. The petitioner intends to classify the mobile home as rental property. It should be noted that there were no objections voiced to this request at the Commission’s July 20th meeting, as there are other mobile homes in the vicinity. Motion Passed Unanimously.

Item B: It was MOTIONED by **MARY J. GREEN** and SECONDED by **RITA J. MYLES** to authorize the receipt and opening of **ALL** sealed public bids submitted and to accept the lowest

responsible bidder providing the bid (s) received meets all specifications for the purchase of a new **2022 Chevrolet C-1500 Silverado ½-Ton 4WD Pickup Truck** for use in the Fire Department. The only sealed bid received was from *Marketplace Chevrolet-Buick* (Stonewall, LA) in the amount of **\$41,917.00**. After opening the sealed bid, the clerk stated that the bid appeared to meet all the city's required specifications. However, if upon further inspection the bid fails to meet one or more of the required specifications, the city reserves the right to reject the bid received. An \$80,000 allocation had been provided for in the city's 2022 annual budget for the purchase of a new vehicle for the Fire Department. Since all of the allocation was not used for this purchase, it may be possible to use the balance of the allocation for purchasing other needed equipment or supplies. The Fire Chief (Bryan Ross) chimed in to state that a few needed accessories would be installed on the new truck after the purchase, estimated to cost less than \$2,500. Finally, Chief Ross stated that the new truck would be used as a quick response vehicle, in answer to medical calls and other emergencies. Motion Passed Unanimously.

Item C: The Mayor requested acknowledgement by the Board of his appointment of **Ronnie Morris, Sr.** as the city's new Code Enforcement Officer. This appointment was tabled at the July 11th council meeting since it was unclear whether or not the Mayor was within his authority to hire a municipal employee without confirmation by the Board and whether or not the budget provided the funds for full-time employment. The Mayor intimated that upon researching this issue, he was advised that he had authority to hire and set the compensation of such an employee, as long as the budget provided the funds for the position. Further, the Mayor stated that he reached out to a 20-year legal consultant, Dr. Dorothy Farnell of Shreveport, LA, to assist in training Mr. Morris in the performance of his duties. With regard to blighted properties, Alderwoman **Rita Myles** reported that on Saturday, July 22nd, Mr. Morris assisted her and other volunteers with a cleanup initiative in her district. Later, Mr. Morris commented that he has knowledge of certain federal grants available to qualified cities to assist with cleanup initiatives. Additionally, he stated that he will later pursue those grants and with the assistance of his wife, Detries Morris, would initiate applying for same. In particular, he mentioned that in the fall of this year, application for a \$450,000 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) would be available to assist with municipal cleanup initiatives. In conclusion, the Mayor commented that he intends to host a monthly, city-wide cleanup initiative, utilizing community service workers and inmate labor.

Item D: At this time Mr. **William C. Bradford, Jr.** was introduced to the Council as a candidate being considered for appointment as the city's new municipal attorney. Mr. **Bradford** is one of four managing partners of the law firm *Blanchard, Walker, O'Quin & Roberts*, more commonly known as *Blanchard Walker*. This law firm is the oldest, continuously active firms in Caddo Parish, established in 1917. Mr. **Bradford** is a 2006 graduate of Dillard University in New Orleans and a 2009 graduate of the Southern University Law Center in Baton Rouge. After

graduating from law school in 2009, he accepted a position with a Shreveport area law firm and later joined the *Malone Law Firm* in 2012, serving there until January 2015. From February 2015 until December 2018, he served as the chief legal officer for the City of Shreveport during Mayor Ollie S. Tyler's administration. He also serves as legal counsel for the Town of Blanchard, LA. After given a platform to present himself to the Council, Mr. **Bradford** appeared well-spoken and very compassionate about his work in the legal community. On the topic of cleanup initiatives, Mr. **Bradford** commented that potential businesses are more likely to situate in cities that are clean and well preserved. Clean cities lead to more businesses desiring to situate in that type of environment and more businesses lead to more sales tax and property tax revenue. Following his presentation, the Mayor called for a vote on Mr. **Bradford's** appointment as the city's new municipal attorney. Three (Mary Green, Rita Myles and Victoria Jackson) of the four council members present voted to confirm the Mayor's appointment. It was MOTIONED by **MARY J. GREEN** and SECONDED by **RITA J. MYLES** to confirm the Mayor's appointment of Mr. **Bradford** as the city's new municipal attorney. Alderwoman Victoria Jackson also voted in favor of the appointment by a show of hand. Alderman **Christopher Thomas** abstained from voting and intimated that he was under the impression there were other candidates being considered for city attorney that had yet to be interviewed and vetted. The Mayor stated that he had spoken with several other attorneys who were under consideration for this appointment, but was proposing the appointment of Mr. **Bradford** as city attorney. Alderman **Thomas** commented that he believed the Council would have more input into this process before a decision was made to appoint a municipal attorney for the City.

Item E: No other new business discussed.

With no further business to discuss, this meeting was declared adjourned at **4:52 p.m.** by MOTION from **MARY J. GREEN** and was SECONDED by **VICTORIA W. JACKSON**. Motion Passed Unanimously.

Thomas Jones, Jr., Mayor
Marvin R. Jackson, Clerk