

Published Agenda

**Monday, February 7, 2022
4:00 PM**

**City Council
Monday Meeting Agenda**

**Council Chambers
200 Forrest Street**

Call to Order**Agenda Review****Work Session**

1. **2022-57** Excel by Five Presentation - requested by Councilman Dave Ware
2. **2022-81** Tax Abatements, presented by Alex Pickle
3. **2022-74** Jail contract with Forrest County, requested by Councilwoman Deborah Delgado
4. **2022-75** Employee Raises, requested by Councilwoman Deborah Delgado
5. **2022-76** Executive Orders, requested by Councilwoman Deborah Delgado

Citizens' Forum**Meeting Recess**

Call to Order

BE IT REMEMBERED that the **proposed Agenda Review meeting of the Hattiesburg City Council** was held at 4:00 p.m. Monday, February 7, 2022, in Council Chambers at City Hall for the purpose of reviewing the proposed agenda for February 8, 2022, Council meeting; same being from an adjourned meeting held on January 18, 2022.

Those present included members of the City Council Jeffrey George, Ward 1; Deborah Delgado, Ward 2; Carter Carroll, Ward 3; Dave Ware, Ward 4; and Nicholas Brown, Ward 5. Others in attendance included Director of Administration/City Clerk, Kermas Eaton; City Attorney, Randy Pope; Clerk of Council, Ronda S. Kennedy; Deputy Clerk of Council, Lisa Luu Jolly; City staff members; media; and the public. Absent: Mayor Toby Barker.

Council President Carroll Called the meeting to order.

Agenda Adjustments

The Clerk of Council read aloud the Agenda Adjustments.

Add Policy Items #15 and #16 at the request of the Administration as follows:

15. **2022-83** Adopt an Ordinance amending Ordinance No. 2845, adopted June 8, 2004, by establishing new ward boundary lines for the Council Election Districts for the City of Hattiesburg, Mississippi.
16. **2022-82** Acknowledge receipt of bids opened February 3, 2022 for the Elaine Circle Retaining Wall Repair Project and accept the bid from Walker Construction, LLC in the amount of \$148,120.00; and authorize the Mayor to execute contracts upon preparation.

Agenda Review

Council President Carroll proceeded with the Agenda Review.

Following discussion of agenda items, Council President Carroll closed the Agenda Review.

Work Session

1. 2022-57 Excel by Five Presentation - requested by Councilman Dave Ware

 Attachments: Overview About Excel by 5 – Presented by Kathy Young
2. 2022-81 Tax Abatements, presented by Josh Sullivan
3. 2022-74 Jail contract with Forrest County, requested by Councilwoman Deborah Delgado

Council member Delgado made the following comments for the record:

- I requested a copy of the Jail contract and have been given one that took effect October 1, 2012. Paragraph 14 of the agreement provides that the agreement "...shall continue in force for one (1) year through and including September 30, 2013, unless altered or modified by agreement of the parties or unless earlier terminated..." As I am told there is no other agreement between the City and the County concerning the housing of prisoners.
- The agreement is general in nature and provides for the City being responsible for the cost of medical care, transporting prisoners for medical treatment, daily cost for housing each prisoner and a maximum water and sewer bill for the jail of \$1,000 per month, among other things. It also provides that prisoners may be use as a part of the workforce for both the jail and the City.
- While nothing in the agreement specifically addresses the treatment of such prisoners, and such facilities are required to provide for the health and safety of prisoners, I would encourage the City to propose an updated agreement specifically addressing the health and safety of prisoners.
- In recent times I have received a number of calls from family members of persons being held in the jail ranging from bad treatment in general and beatings and failure to administer medication as directed and needed, no phone access after release if the release is after 5 PM; inmates who work off fines and are release do not have transportation at night and are forced to walk down Hwy 49 (one was killed walking up 49 a few years ago).
- Recently, there was a video shared with me where a seated, handcuffed inmate was tazed. There were at least 5 or 6 officers in the room. The officer who tazed the inmate still works at the jail. Persons who work in the jail should be required to wear body cams for the protection of both inmates and all employees who have contact with inmates. If the officer had tazed an animal on the premises I would venture to say that she would have been fired.
- The cost of calls from the Jail is outrageous. A 3-minute call from the jail by an inmate is approximately \$15.00. That cost is entirely unreasonable and should be eliminated. If calls are to be allowed inmates there should be no cost. There may be a call limit placed on individuals and a limited amount of time for each call as well.
- The purpose of this presentation is the protection of persons who are inmates of the City of Hattiesburg. Any cost resulting from injury to such persons may be that of the Sheriff but as elected officials we have a responsibility to do all within our power to protect health and safely.

4. 2022-75 Employee Raises, requested by Councilwoman Deborah Delgado

Council member Delgado made the following comments for the record:

- During late summer and early fall of 2021, the City announced employee raises.
- Since the beginning of the current fiscal year I am constantly asked by different City employees when they will get those raises. Some have been told that the raises will not be given until the summer of 2022.
- If that is the case, it means that certain employees will not get their raises until we are preparing the 2022 – 2023 budget.
- For almost an entire year employee and their families must wait for a raise announced with great fanfare by the City back in the fall, 2021.
- While employees are happy to get raises, it is concerning that raises for the coming fiscal year are announced but will not be awarded until near the end of that year. If the announcement of the raises includes an explanation of when the raises will be actually received and why raises will not be awarded until that time, there would likely be fewer questions and complaints from employees.
- When I direct employees to talk to the Administration, they express concern about possible retribution.
- It would be helpful if the administration would communicate the rationale for the delay in time for raises to be given. Our hard-working employees, the City's greatest asset, deserve an explanation.

- In addition, The Treasury Department recently published that Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds may be used to provide premium pay for essential workers, offering additional support to those who have and will bear the greatest health risks because of their service in critical sectors. The final rule provides a definition for premium pay along with a list of eligible workers. The City has many workers who fit within the given categories. It is time we get excited about the people who work for the City and venture to pay them equitably. Here is our opportunity.

5. 2022-76 Executive Orders, requested by Councilwoman Deborah Delgado

Council member Delgado asked the Work Session item #5 be moved to March.

Citizens' Forum

Council Vice President George proceeded with the Citizens' Forum.

He stated the procedures and invited members of the public to speak.

The following citizens addressed the Council:

There were no citizens present who wished to address the Council.

Council Vice President George closed the Citizen Forum.

Meeting Recess

Council President Carroll declared **the meeting recessed at 4:40 p.m., this 7th day of February, 2022,** by unanimous consent, until the 8th day of February, 2022.

ATTEST:

APPROVE:



Clerk of Council



Council President

ATTEST AND CERTIFY:

APPROVE:



City Clerk



Mayor