
THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE MAYOR AND BOARD OF ALDERPERSONS

The regular meeting of the Mayor and Board of Alderpersons was held in the Courtroom at City Hall at 6:06 p.m. on Thursday, March 13, 2025. Mayor Betty Alford-Olive presided.

Roll call was as follows:

Present: Angela Tappin (District A) Charles Bradford (District B), Darry Green, (District D)

Absent: James Green (District C), Howard Loche (District E)

The Invocation was given by Mr. Bradford. Mr. D. Green led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. J. Green and Mr. Loche were introduced to the meeting at 6:08 p.m. on a motion by Mr. D. Green.

The Rules of Order were suspended to address Mr. Bradford's items on the Speaker's Agenda in the order of the Track Program, Clarification of ARPA funding, an ordinance regarding solar panels, an update on the forensic audit request and the 2024 audit report, on a motion by Mr. Bradford, seconded by Mr. D. Green, followed by a unanimous vote.

The Council discussed the Track Program. The discussion of the Track Program was tabled on a motion by Mr. D. Green, seconded by Mr. Bradford, followed by a unanimous vote.

The Council discussed clarification on ARPA funds with request to have Ms. Laura Hartt appear. Mr. Henry Doaty, 746 Ludlum Street, asked why Ms. Hartt was requested to attend the meeting. Mr. Bradford explained he wanted her present because she helped prepare the ARPA documents. Mayor Alford-Olive told the Council a letter from Ms. Hartt was provided in each member's packet and emails were sent to explain the process of how present and former employees were chosen to receive payment. Ms. Chastity Kennedy, 9147 Redwood Drive, commented that the letters and emails were given to the Council by her. Mr. Bradford suggested identifying which former employees were owed the money and using the general fund to pay them. Mr. Bradford made a motion that Mr. D. Green meet with the Mayor to determine who is owed payment. The motion failed due to lack of a second. Attorney Jones reminded the Council once the ARPA funds were obligated it cannot be redirected. He said the funds would have to come from the general fund, which cannot be used for that purpose.

Ms. Carolyn Harris, 521 Oliver Avenue, commented that she was an employee of the City of Bastrop during the time accounted for the ARPA funds, but was told the money went to those who remained employed with the City.

Ms. Joann Bradford, 1320 South Washington Street, commented if the former employees are eligible, they should receive the funds.

Mr. J. Green commented that solar panel production takes up space from revenue-producing businesses that could locate in Bastrop. Mr. Loche commented the Council does not want to say “no” to economic development.

Mr. Maurice Norman, representative of Clear Stream Solar, commented the company owns the previous International Paper property, which is a brownfield site and can only be used for certain purposes.

The Council discussed the role the City Council should play in deciding whether or not to approve Special Use Permit applications.

The Rules of Order were suspended to discuss ambulance service issues and contract services including the Quality Board and action regarding creation and membership and addendum to the services contract on a motion by Ms. Tappin, seconded by Mr. D. Green, followed by a unanimous vote.

Ms. Kelcey Peacock, ER Director at Morehouse General Hospital (MGH), said assistance is needed with obtaining transportation for psych patients due to the limited availability of ambulance services.

The Council discussed whether it should consider amending the City’s contract with Pafford Emergency Medical Services, LLC, to allow for additional transportation options for MGH.

Mr. J. Green asked for clarity regarding the proposed call center initially planned to be located at the South Sassafras solar panel site. He commented the center was meant to offer eighty jobs while the solar plant has twelve.

Mr. D. Green commented the zoning approvals went through the proper process and the Council approval may need to become a part of the process.

Mr. Bradford made a motion that Attorney Jones prepare an ordinance to prevent all solar panel businesses from locating inside the City limits of Bastrop. The motion failed due to lack of a second.

During discussion, Mr. D. Green left the meeting at 8:00 p.m.

The Council discussed its request for a forensic audit. Mr. Jones informed the Council he forwarded the request to the Inspector General and is waiting for a response.

The Council discussed the 2024 audit report. The Mayor informed the Council that a change in the City's health insurance carrier has caused the audit report to be delayed.

Ms. Tappin announced a town hall meeting will be at 5:30 p.m. March 20, 2025 at the MGH Walnut Room.

Mr. Bradford stated the Council needed to appoint a member to the Blight Committee.

Mr. D. Green returned to the meeting at 8:13 p.m.

Mr. J. Green stated the Mayor used the P.E.E.P. grant to have a food truck at a local event. The Mayor stated, for the record, the funds were not used for a food truck but were used to sponsor a public safety event with the approval of Representative Adrian Fisher. She said the food trucks that were there were on their own.

Mr. D. Green said the grant was for Dotson Park.

The minutes for the Regular Meeting February 13, 2025 and the Special Meeting February 25, 2025 were approved with the correction that the minutes did not mention food trucks, on a motion by Mr. Bradford, seconded by Mr. Loche, followed by a unanimous vote.

The Finance Committee Report, Bills and Claims for the month of February 2025, was presented to the Council.

Mr. D. Green asked for an update of the citations Ms. Tappin has requested for several months. Code Enforcement Officer "Bubba" McDuffie reported three letters were sent in the previous month and several in that week alone.

Attorney Jones explained the process of requiring property owners in violation to appear in Environmental Court.

During discussion Mayor Alford-Olive left the meeting at 8:35 p.m. and returned at 8:40 p.m.

The Council discussed businesses with properties that have code violations. Attorney Jones stated the City can revoke or refuse to renew a license of a business that is in violation.

Ms. Tappin said there are properties in states of emergency and the owners should be present at the next meeting. The Council discussed introducing an ordinance to amend the procedures for issuing occupational licenses.

During discussion Mayor Alford-Olive left the meeting at 8:43 p.m. and returned at 8:45 p.m.

The meeting recessed at 8:46 p.m.

The meeting reconvened at 8:56 p.m.

Resolution 25-2902, amending previously adopted consolidated budget adoption resolution for revenues and expenditures for the fiscal year July 1, 2024 and ending June 30, 2025 was tabled during earlier discussion of the Track Program.

The Council discussed ARPA funds for District A, CEA for demolition of houses located at 806, 808, and 816 North Marable Street. Ms. Tappin commented she was elated something was being done. Mr. D. Green agreed.

Mr. J. Green made a motion and Mr. D. Green, seconded approving ARPA funds for District A, CEA for repairs at 853 Forrest Avenue.

Mr. D. Green stated District D will have a dumpster day 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. March 22, 2025 for residents of the district.

Ms. Latetao Hutchinson, 307 Louise Street, announced Keep Louisiana Beautiful Love the Boot week is scheduled April 5-13, 2025. A community cleanup kickoff event is scheduled Saturday, April 5, 2025 at the Robinson Williams Restoration of Hope Community Center. A closeout event is scheduled Saturday, April 12, 2025 featuring various community youth groups.

The meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m. on a motion by Mr. J. Green, seconded by Mr. D. Green, followed by a unanimous vote.