



**Town of Mason  
Mayor & Board of Aldermen  
Board Meeting Minutes  
Monday, July 20, 2020, 7:18PM Via Zoom**

**CALL TO ORDER:** Mayor Emmitt Gooden

**OPENING PRAYER:** Alderwoman Virginia Rivers

**ROLL CALL:** Mayor Emmitt Gooden, Alderwoman Virginia Rivers, Alderwoman Keneko Claybon, Alderwoman Carolyn Catron, Alderman Sylvester Harvey, Vice Mayor Eddie Noeman, (Alderman Carl Somerville was absent), and Town Recorder Lureatha Harris

**Others in Attendance:** Norma Davis, Assistant to the Mayor; Ronda and Cortez Hughey, Finance; Michele Scott, HR; Reva Marshall, Finance; Matalée Hall, Public Works Director; Tanner Jenkins, Deputy Fire Chief; James Tyus, Fire Code Inspector; and Rick Jewell Police Department

Adoption of the Board Meeting Minutes of June 15, 2020

A motion was made by Alderwoman Claybon to adopt the Board Meeting Minutes of June 15, 2020, and the motion was 2<sup>nd</sup> by Alderwoman Rivers: vote passed 4-1 (Alderman Noeman voted no)

Adoption of the Special Call Board Meeting Minutes of June 22, 2020

A motion was made by Alderwoman Catron to adopt the Board Meeting Minutes of June 22, 2020, and the motion was 2<sup>nd</sup> by Alderwoman Rivers: vote passed 3-2 (Alderwoman Claybon and Alderman Noeman voted no)

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**1. Discussion on Richard Jones Contract for Street Paving**

Waiting on a response from Attorney Grice.

**2. Black Diamond Professional Paving & Sealing Contract**

Alderwoman Claybon stated Attorney Grice approved this on last month, she received an email to move forward. A motion was made by Alderwoman Rivers to approve Black Diamond Professional Paving & Sealing Contract, and the motion was 2<sup>nd</sup> by Alderman Harvey: vote passed 4-1 (Alderman Noeman voted no)

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**1. Certified Tax Rate for Mason City Tax, (1.3230) Tax Year 2020**

The reassessed tax rate from the City has been submitted to the state based upon what the Board approved upon 1.4635. The budget has been approved for the new fiscal year, and we will go with that tax rate, per Ronda and Cortez Hughey. An Ordinance would need to be put in place. Ms. Harris will contact Lisa at Tipton County to inform of this.

**2. Town Planning Advisory Services Agreement**

Ms. Marshall said the Attorney was comfortable with the language on both contracts and read the letter aloud from Attorney Grice. A motion was made by Alderwoman Catron to accept the Town Planning Advisory Services Agreement, and the motion was 2<sup>nd</sup> by Alderwoman Rivers: vote passed 3-2 (Alderman Noeman, and Alderman Harvey voted no).



### **3. Contract with Hughey's Debits & Credits, LLC (HDC)**

A motion was made by Alderwoman Catron to accept the Contract with Hughey's Debits & Credits, LLC (HDC), and the motion was 2<sup>nd</sup> by Alderman Harvey: vote passed 3-2 (Alderwoman Claybon and Alderman Noeman voted no).

### **4. Resolution Mason, Tennessee for Energy Services**

A motion was made by Alderwoman Claybon to accept a Resolution Mason, Tennessee for Energy Services, and the motion was 2<sup>nd</sup> by Alderwoman Catron: vote passed 5-0 The contract will need to be submitted to the State for approval. Three constituents applied for the Housing Grant and were approved.

**City Attorney:** Chasity Grice, Esq. City Attorney (Not available)

### **Economic & Community Development**

Norma Davis, Assistant to the Mayor

#### **Census**

Census 2020 is here! Please fill out your form and be counted!

You may go on the website to [my 2020census.gov](https://www.2020census.gov) or call: 1-844-330-2020 (English)  
1-844-468-2020 (Spanish)

October 31, 2020 is the possible deadline for completing the Census. The information will possibly go to the President of the United States in April, 2021. These dates may change due to COVID-19.

Census Report Response Rates as of July 16, 2020

National Self Response Rate = 62.1%

State of Tennessee Self Response Rate = 61.5%

Tipton County Self Response Rate = 67.0%

Mason Self Response Rate = 53.5%

(Final 2010 Self-Response Rate = 59.4% for Mason)

**THANKS TO EVERYONE AND PLEASE ENCOURAGE OTHERS TO BE COUNTED!**

A motion was made by Alderwoman Rivers to accept the Economic & Community Development Report, and the motion was 2<sup>nd</sup> by Alderman Harvey: vote passed 5-0

### **HR Department**

Michele Scott, HR Manager

Resignation of Interim Chief Donald Bond, last date of work July 18, 2020.

Mayor Gooden appointed Richard Jewell as Chief of Police. Ms. Scott informed that Mr. Jewell has over 40 years of experience and is familiar with law enforcement. He has worked for the cities of Gallaway, Oakland, Bartlett, Rossville, Millington, and West Memphis Arkansas. Mr. Jewell is accredited through the State of Tennessee to receive benefits. He is familiar with the area and law enforcement and will provide community policing.

Mr. Jewell introduced himself to the Board. He spoke about experience and job knowledge to run a professional law enforcement organization that the Town and citizens would be proud of with Help, Support, and Prayers.

His first order would be accreditation through the State with MTASK, and liability issues.



### Disrespect

Alderswoman Rivers spoke about disrespect from Mayor Gooden and Mr. Jewell. Ms. Rivers said this should have been brought before the Board, before Mr. Jewell was sent to Covington to be sworn in. Ms. Scott said the background check and psych evaluation has been done. Ms. Scott read page C-6 of the Charter,

The Mayor with ratification shall appoint positions as the Mayor deems necessary for the proper and efficient administration of government for the Town of Mason. Ms. Scott said that TBI performed the background check. Alderswoman Rivers said that TBI has no record of Mr. Jewell background check. Ms. Scott said that was contrary because she has it.

Alderswoman Rivers stated this was not done correctly, a person introducing himself as Chief of Police for Mason. Mayor Gooden said the Charter states the Mayor is allowed to appoint but Alderswoman Rivers said it has to come before the Board. Alderman Noeman said the process is wrong how it was handled. Alderman Noeman said he spoke with Ronnie Neill, which informed him that, you work for the pleasure of the Mayor, but you also work for the pleasure of the Board. Alderswoman Rivers said this is nothing personal against Mr. Jewell. Alderswoman Rivers said she was the Chairman of the Police Department and was not made aware of this.

### Resignation

Alderswoman Claybon said there was no official means of information given on the resignation of Interim Chief Bonds. Ms. Scott stated that his resignation was sent to Mayor Gooden, Norma Davis, and Alderswoman Rivers. Alderswoman Claybon said that Interim Chief Jewell came in the same way as the previous Chief and how did the process happen so quickly. Ms. Scott said that when Chief Barken left it was posted on the website for 2 weeks. June 15, 2020, Interim Chief Bonds was appointed, but continued to ask for his psych evaluation. Ms. Scott said Interim Chief Bonds only put in a week resignation notice and was looking for other employment.

### Introduction

Alderswoman Catron asked the Mayor from this day forward, July 20, 2020, to introduce the person to the Board, so they would know who they are hiring in the Town of Mason, this is an embarrassment.

Ms. Scott stated this was his first day, and he has not been on the streets. Deputy Chief Tanner (Fire Dept.) said the position to fill as Interim Chief was needed in 24 hours, to be filled immediately. Alderswoman Claybon stated Interim Chief versus Temporary Chief, need to look at the pay rate, voting someone in for necessity versus looking at the complete package. Mayor Gooden said this would be moved to a Special Call Meeting. A motion was made by Alderswoman Catron to accept the HR Department Report, but since there was **no 2<sup>nd</sup>** motion, the Mayor asked the Board to **hold** on this.

### **Finance and Administration Department**

Reva Marshall, Financial Officer

There will be a year-end report and a June report to discuss Finances at a Special Call Meeting on Friday August 7, 2020 at 7:00pm, via Zoom. A motion was made by Alderswoman Rivers to accept the Special Call Meeting, and the motion was 2<sup>nd</sup> by Alderswoman Claybon: vote passed 5-0

The 2017, Audit is complete, Ms. Marshall presented the ATA Letter from the Comptroller's Office.

The 2018, Audit should be completed by August 30, 2020. The 2019, Audit time frame for completion is November 30, 2020. Eleven findings were disputed and five were forgiven and corrected, ten were cleared from the previous twenty-five. Mrs. Hughey would like to see **clean opinion unmodified**, from



the Auditors findings. Finance was unable to locate payroll for 2016, they have 2018, and 2019. Time sheets were moved to the electronic system.

### **Waste Pro**

There are complaints and a log of constituents' names, phone numbers, and dates submitted regarding no garbage pickup from Waste Pro. Waste Pro has been contacted repeatedly about the problem. Ms. Marshall submitted the information to Attorney Grice, asking for a legal opinion. Ms. Marshall recommendation to the Board is to look for another servicer. Mayor Gooden said he spoke with someone at Waste Pro about the dates of pickup and the dissatisfaction with service. There were problems with employees that were out with the COVID-19 Virus. Drivers were coming when they got ready and picking up at certain locations stated the Mayor. There was an entire week of no garbage pickup in Richland Hills, and Finde Naifeh. Ms. Marshall said there has been a call log of complaints with Waste Pro since November 2019. Ms. Marshall recommend seeking other services, get legal advice, and vacate the contract. Mayor Gooden would like to receive Attorney Grice advice to proceed. Ms. Marshall submitted the contract to Attorney Grice for her review and a response. The contract is ongoing through 2023, there is a lack of service and irresponsibility. Mayor Gooden will reach out to Attorney Grice on July 21<sup>st</sup>.

### **Vendor List**

The Finance Department is looking into starting a vendor list. This would apply to vendors for specific services for the Town. This would allow keeping more of a handle on the Budget. The Finance Team would generate a list of vendors and the Departments would know who those vendors are. If cost exceeds over \$2,500.00 it must be bid out. Mr. Hughey will have an **approved** list of vendors for day to day operations for the Town of Mason.

### **June Financials**

Alderwoman Claybon questioned when the June Financials would be received. Mr. Hughey stated that the June Financials would be received prior to the meeting on August 7, 2020. Mrs. Hughey want to close out the year with all appropriate Financial Statements, she does not want to have any adjustments. June Financial Statements will have year-end totals. Ms. Marshall has asked if Mr. Woods, the Auditor could attend the Special Call Meeting on August 7, 2020, to answer any questions pertaining to the 2017 Audit findings. A motion was made by Alderman Harvey to accept the Finance and Administration Department Report, and the motion was 2<sup>nd</sup> by Alderwoman Rivers: vote passed 4-1 (Alderwoman Claybon voted no).

### **Fire Department**

Tanner Jenkins, Deputy Fire Chief

#### **July 2020 Committee Report**

1. For the month of June, Mason Fire Department responded to a total of 28 incidents with a 100% response rate. Those incidents include:
  1. 24 EMS Calls
  2. 2 EMS Calls-Tipton County
  3. 2 Automatic Fire Alarm
  
2. The department has completed a shift in policy requiring volunteer personnel to complete a minimum of 12 hours of staffing per month and 12 hours of department hosted training to increase available personnel and further meet ISO training requirements for effected personnel.



3. In the last month, one firefighter has completed the Tipton County School of Firemanship for over 300 hours of training for commission HAZMAT and Firefighter 1 & 2 national certifications. Graduation will be on July 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2020. Four other fire personnel received state required intro certifications qualifying them to begin responding under supervision to emergencies and one firefighter has completed certification testing for the Advanced Emergency Medical Technician (AEMT) certification.
4. Currently, there is no working air conditioning at the fire department. Firefighters have begun staffing in the evening hours due to high heat conditions for safety concerns. The department is currently seeking quotes to replace an existing AC/heat unit inside the office.  
**As of today, 7-20-2020, Keeling Baptist Church will be donating a unit.**
5. Final pricing has continued with a third vendor completing a quote for structural turnout gear maintaining the \$60,000 spending limit. Quotes have been received by Safe Industries, Emergency Vehicle Specialists, and Municipal Emergency Services for Globe and Fire Dex brand turnouts. Each quote is generated with minimum 5-year financing options in order to maintain an affordable balance in general fund budgeting. Due to the cost in replacing the department's current PPE, it is recommended that the town advertise open bidding for a set amount of time to allow opportunities for other vendors to provide pricing.
6. The department's engine 2 is still undergoing repairs at G&W Diesel in Memphis and is near completion. Expected final costs of labor are unknown at this time and an estimated \$3,500 in parts were replaced. Once completed, the engine will be fully prepared to enter service as a first due engine allowing the Mason Fire District to be protected so the department's other apparatus can be tested annually per NFPA and ISO standards.
7. The F350 rescue truck has been listed on Brindlee Mountain Fire Apparatus for the price of \$40,000 per the board's request and is now available for purchase. If purchased, the Town will be responsible for a 10% sellers fee to Brindlee Mountain for advertising and sale returning \$36,000 to the town compensating for the potential purchase of the desired ladder truck. The department has also revived an existing GovDeals account in order to list the vehicle and others approved for sale by the board in online auction.
8. Through approval by the Board, the department has continued in efforts to purchase the 1996 Saulsbury Simon-Duplex 55' Telesquirt as the town's first ladder truck from Syracuse, New York. The department was able to obtain a quote for a loan through Community Leasing Partners for the whole expected total of the purchasing project for \$35,000. The approved quote has either a \$7,000 or \$5,000 down payment option financing a total of \$30,000 on a fixed interest rate on a 3-year financing plan. There are no further fees associated with and completed agreement. With the anticipated sale of the rescue truck to return a value of \$36,000 , the approval of the loan would allow the immediate purchase of the ladder truck and complete funding of transport and



annual required testing with the current owner's testing vendors ensuring that it will be ready to respond immediately once arrived.

**Ms. Marshall said this should have been brought before Finance prior to the Board Meeting.**

**Mayor Gooden stated that he may have to request a Special Call Meeting on this one. The Finance Team will review the leasing agreement for funding and get back with the Mayor.**

**Ms. Marshall stated that Deputy Chief Tanner would be contacted via a conference call.**

**Deputy Chief Tanner said he would table the conversation.**

9. At this time, all fire hydrants located in the Town of Mason's municipal limits and county areas need of flow testing, flushing, painting, and mapping to ensure compliance with NFPA and AWWA standards. This compliance is also 40% worth the Town's overall ISO scoring for its Public Protection Classification affecting insurance rates. Roger's Hydrant Service located in Atwood, Tennessee (the same vendor who services the City of Covington's hydrant system) has provided a pricing of a complete revamp of the Town's hydrant system as part of a required three year contract for a total of \$65.66 per hydrant per year cost for flush/flow testing with mapping and \$75.00 per hydrant to be correctly painted to NFPA and AWWA standards identifying flow capacities for fire department operations. It would be the department's recommendation to consider this as an alternative service to return to compliance. A representative would be available to answer any questions that the Town will have.

**The water system would be responsible for the maintenance of the hydrants.**

**Alderwoman Claybon questioned additional bids for hydrants, the Budget expense would come under the water department. Deputy Chief Tanner said this was brought up for awareness. Mayor Gooden said that he would speak with Deputy Chief Tanner, and Mr. Hall regarding this before the next Board Meeting.**

A motion was made by Alderwoman Claybon to accept the Fire Department Report, and the motion was 2<sup>nd</sup> by Alderman Harvey: vote passed 5-0

#### **Fire Code Inspector/Code Enforcement Officer**

James Tyus

From the report for the previous month there have been 7 lots mowed, 1 abandoned structure torn down at 5375 Charleston Mason Road; and the Freeman Property is in the process of being cleaned up. There are 2 lots that require the grass to be cut in Richland Hills. The Old Police Department Building, and the Mason's property located beside it, are both condemned. The Masons were submitted a certified letter for a 30-day Condemnation Notice. The property/land is appraised for \$1,700.00 dollars, and they are requesting \$25,000 dollars for the property. Mark Rhea's brother was mailed a list of people that performs demolitions for the house located on Washington Avenue. Mr. Tyus will contact the property owners, regarding code violations behind the Post Office, and Ole School Café. There are 5 cases scheduled for court on July 21st, which will be held at Mason City Hall.

#### **Town of Mason Permit Fees**

Mr. Tyus spoke about low permit fees, and no changes in fee amounts since 2018.

Mr. Tyus suggested making changes in fees and contacting other agencies for a fee list. Alderwoman Catron stated Mason is not growing, she can see into cleaning up the Town and keeping the grass cut.



Alderwoman Catron said once Mason begin to grow then we could increase permit fees. Mr. Tyus said permit fees can be brought up later. Alderwoman Claybon made a motion to accept the Fire Code Inspector/Code Enforcement Officer Report, and the motion was 2<sup>nd</sup> by Alderman Harvey: vote passed 5-0

### **Parks & Public Works Department**

Matalee Hall, Public Works Director

#### **Item 1. Water**

Consumer Confidence Report (CCR) has been completed and published.

Received reports from Washout on Intown Water Tower. Hill Street Tower need target repaired, it is not reading accurately.

Final Walk through for Grant Lane Water Line Extension Project was held 07/14/2020.

Fire hydrants were added along Highway 14. There was a valve placed at the corner of Grant Lane and Hogan Road.

Replaced window unit AC at water plant office.

#### **Item 2. Gas**

Would like to order heavy duty cover for gas pipe in front of public works building.

We will be replacing 10 old gas meters per month, trying to rid all clock meters from system.

#### **Item 3. Sewer / Sewer Lagoons**

Composite samples for Total Phosphorus and Total Nitrate, ready for 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter testing.

**Alderman Noeman questioned sewer for the Church of Christ, Mr. Hall informed that nothing is approved through the State until the audits are caught up. Mayor Gooden will reach out to Ms. Claire Marshall for the purchasing of her property for a sewer System**

#### **Item 4. Streets**

Do we have an answer from Attorney Grice on Black Diamond Paving Contract?

**This was approved by Attorney Grice, on last month.**

Public Works employees still in question about boot purchase.

**Ms. Marshall will contact Aramark regarding the boots, she set everything up with the finance person.**

#### **Item 5. Park**

Park is still closed.

**The chain is down in the Park**

**Alderman Harvey suggest placing a sign at the Park to display, VIOLATORS WILL BE PROSECUTED! Mr. Hall said signs were there, but he will recheck.**



### Grass Issues

**Mr. Hall will contact CSX regarding the cutting of grass by the railroad tracks due to metal plates located in the grass at the tracks. Alderman Harvey spoke about high grass down Main Street, by the lagoon, and the railroad tracks.**

A motion was made by Alderman Harvey to accept the Parks & Public Works Department Report, and the motion was 2<sup>nd</sup> by Alderwoman Catron: vote passed 5-0

### **Police Department**

Alderwoman Rivers, Chairman of the Police Department made a motion to terminate Officer Marvel Sutton from the Mason PD effective immediately, and the motion was 2<sup>nd</sup> by Alderman Harvey: Vote passed 5-0

### Determining Factors per Alderwoman Rivers

Friday July 10, 2020, Officer Sutton abandoned his post, and submitted an email stating there was no officer on duty, and it was not safe to patrol alone. Alderwoman Rivers said there have been other times when officer Sutton worked by himself. Officer Sutton has been defiant in following orders, and schedules. There were allegations from Officer Sutton against another employee, whereas the case was dismissed. Officer Sutton has exercised bad judgement and loss trust. Alderwoman Claybon suggest placing no rehire in his records. Ms. Marshall will relay this information to HR.

Alderwoman Rivers said there is not enough Police force to cover and get a Chief. Alderwoman Rivers said to close the Police Department down until we can revamp the Department. Mayor Gooden said he would contact Tipton County first thing in the morning July 21, 2020.

Alderman Noeman said when hiring a Chief of Police, they need to be brought before the Board.

Alderwoman Catron said we need to know who is patrolling the Town, and get to know them and they get to know you as a Board member.

### TBI

Alderwoman Rivers questioned if Mayor Gooden had spoken with TBI about a letter. Ms. Scott said TBI has agreed to "back off" because they are familiar with Mr. Jewell's work ethics. Ms. Scott said she has been on the line all day trying to get things in order.

### Salaries, HR, and Office Manager

Alderwoman Claybon asked that Ms. Marshall provide a report for salaries.

Alderwoman Claybon said that it was motioned and approved for Ms. Scott to assume HR Only!

Alderwoman Claybon asked if Ms. Norma Davis was acting as Office Manager. If there was a technicality it happened on other documents. Alderwoman Claybon questioned Ms. Marshall about an employee on Medical Leave and receiving overtime pay. Ms. Marshall said the employee worked over 40 hours that week. Ms. Marshall said the employee was paid what she worked for. Alderwoman Claybon said if it was not physically worked, it should not be paid for. Ms. Marshall will recheck and get back with proper clarification. Alderwoman Claybon asked if Ms. Davis was in charge of day to day operations, we need onsite supervision. Mayor Gooden said he would put something in place. Alderman Noeman questioned who is the person responsible for running the City. Alderman Noeman said he prefer Ms. Davis.

Alderwoman Claybon said there was a vote that was passed some unilaterally (**an action or decision**). Alderwoman Claybon stated to give the Office duties to Ms. Davis. Alderwoman Claybon informed the Mayor that he was picking and choosing which motions to take. Ms. Marshall stated functions and duties are made by the Mayor. Alderwoman Rivers said if the Officials make a decision it should be approved upon. Alderwoman Rivers said to cut the salary of Ms. Scott by 50%. Mayor Gooden questioned additional



pay for Ms. Davis. Alderwoman Claybon said a motion was made to have Ms. Davis as Interim Office Manager and asked if Ms. Scott salary had been reduced. Alderwoman Claybon said salaried individuals pay rates should be revisited. Mayor Gooden said there would be a Special Call Meeting held to review salaries. Alderwoman Rivers questioned why Ms. Scott salary has not been cut by 50%. Ms. Marshall said because she is doing both jobs. Ms. Marshall mentioned that they (meaning) Finance, has taken the City through 3 Audits 2018, 2019, and 2020.

**Documentation**

Alderwoman Claybon said they have no clue as to what Ms. Scott is doing for the Town, because there is no good documentation. Ms. Scott said there are some things that she cannot discuss or document due to the Privacy Law and HIPPA. Ms. Marshall said it is not equitable to take away a person's pay. Alderwoman Rivers said they will have a Special Call Meeting to look at the pay of everyone for a fair and equitable decision. Alderwoman Claybon said other Board Members need to know what is going on. Mayor Gooden stated that all Board Members need to be on this Committee.

**Mayor's Period:** Court will be held on July 21, 2020, at 5:30p.m. at Mason City Hall. Judge Harris recommend bringing Court to Mason City Hall and practicing safe distancing.

**Constituents Comments/Concerns: (2 minutes)**

**ANOUNCEMENTS:**

**CLOSING PRAYER:** Mr. Matalee Hall

**Motion to Adjourn:** A motion was made by Alderman Harvey to adjourn, and the motion was 2<sup>nd</sup> by Alderwoman Catron: vote passed 5-0 Meeting adjourned at 10:40pm

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Emmit Gooden, Mayor

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Date

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Lureatha Harris, Town Recorder