

The regular meeting of the Northport City Council convened at 6:00 p.m. on February 04, 2019, at the Northport City Hall, located at 3500 McFarland Blvd. The invocation was offered by Councilman Hinton. President Logan led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance. Upon roll call, the following were found to be present: President Logan, Councilman Roberts, Councilman Hinton, Councilman Davis, and Councilman Hogg. Also present was Mayor Aaron and City Administrator Bruce Higginbotham.

Motion by Councilman Davis, **Second** by Councilman Roberts to **approve the agenda for February 04, 2019**. Roll call vote was as follows: Councilman Davis, Yes; Councilman Roberts, Yes; President Logan, Yes; Councilman Hinton, Yes; and Councilman Hogg, Yes. **Motion Carried Unanimously.**

Motion by Councilman Hogg, **Second** by Councilman Hinton to **adopt Resolution 19-12 declaring certain items surplus and authorizing their disposal**. Roll call was as follows: Councilman Hogg, Yes; Councilman Hinton, Yes; Councilman Roberts, Yes; President Logan, Yes; and Councilman Davis, Yes. **Motion Carried Unanimously.**

Motion by Councilman Roberts, **Second** by Councilman Hogg to **adopt Resolution 19-13 naming Mrs. Julie Ramm as Interim Planning Director**. Roll call was as follows: Councilman Roberts, Yes; Councilman Hogg, Yes; President Logan, Yes; Councilman Hinton, Yes; and Councilman Davis, Yes. **Motion Carried Unanimously.**

Motion by Councilman Roberts, **Second** by Councilman Davis to **approve the Consent Agenda for the February 04, 2019 Council Meeting**.

Consent Agenda

1. Minutes, January 28, 2019, Regular Meeting,
2. Bill Listing
3. Travel/Training, 1 employee, Commercial Sexual Exploitation, February 12, 2019, Montgomery, AL, \$0-PD
4. Travel/Training, 2 employees, 2019 Chiefs of Police Winter Conference, February 18-21, 2019, Montgomery, AL., \$540.00-PD
5. Travel/Training, 1 employee, TES-250 Detection Workshop, April 16-18, 2019, Decatur, AL., \$825.00-PW
6. PO Requisition, Charlie Shirley Road, Invoice #14, Burk-Kleinpeter, Inc., \$11,502.00-Engineering
7. PO Requisition, MLK, Jr. Blvd Improvements, Invoice # 13, Burk-Kleinpeter, Inc., \$7,973.00- Engineering
8. Travel/Training, 1 employee, ARWA Sustainable Utility Management Training, February 07, 2019, Livingston, AL., \$0-Utilities
9. Travel/Training, 3 employees, ARWA System Check Up and Operator Training, February 21, 2019, Vernon, AL., \$0- Utilities

Roll call vote was as follows: Councilman Roberts, Yes; Councilman Davis, Yes; President Logan, Yes; Councilman Hinton, Yes; and Councilman Hogg, Yes. **Motion Carried Unanimously.**

City Administrator's Business:

City Administrator Higginbotham reminded the Council of the discussion that had taken place during the pre-meeting regarding the proposed idea of hiring a headhunter and putting a cap on the fees of this service.

Motion by Councilman Roberts, **Second** by Councilman Hinton to **adopt Resolution 19-14 approving the HR Department may hire a headhunter to assist in the search for a Planning Director or other recruiting outlets along with normal recruiting processes and the cost will not exceed \$20,000.00**. Roll call was as follows: Councilman Roberts, Yes; Councilman Hinton, Yes; President Logan, Yes; Councilman Davis, Yes; and Councilman Hogg, Yes. **Motion Carried Unanimously.**

Public Comment:

Jody Jobson, 1534 Bellwood Lane, Northport, Alabama 35476, Mr. Jobson addressed the Mayor and Council regarding a brief history of the Civil Service Board. He wanted everyone to be aware of how the Civil Service Board got to be where it is today. 1969 Northport Civic Service Board was created by State Act 1225 and included a 3-member board. In 2005, State Act 2005-280 amended the 69 Act and added what was termed unskilled or semi-skilled workers into the classified service. In May of 2009, State Act 2009-359 added 2 new members to the Civil Service Board and provided for terms. The act specified they live in the City of Northport and not be an elected official. In November 2009, Municipal Ordinance 1717 added classified status for fulltime non-temp positions and no State Act was required for this to take effect. In March 2015, State Act 2015-23 was created to place all City of Northport positions paid out of the General Fund into the classified service. During the December 12, 2016 Northport City Council Meeting two changes were proposed to change the 69 Act: 1) Take City Clerk out of Classified Status and 2) allow residents of Tuscaloosa County to serve on the City of Northport Civil Service Board and not have Northport residents specifically serve. Before this meeting, Mr. Jobson states he had never heard of this proposed change. He went to say, at the last Council Meeting in January the Council appointed a very qualified candidate to the Civil Service Board. However, this person is not a resident of Northport. As it has been said before, if we have 25,000 citizens in our great City and we cannot find one person among us to serve on the Civil Service Board that we must go to Tuscaloosa County then there needs to be a change at the front table, not the back table. In closing, Mr. Jobson advocated to correct the 2017 Civil Service Legislation allowing non-Northport residents to serve on the board. He would like to emphasize to the Council that as City Council they were elected to represent the citizens of Northport, not the citizens of Tuscaloosa County and not the citizens of Tuscaloosa. The Council has reduced the voice of the citizens of Northport regarding Human Resource decisions for the City of Northport and to that he offers his apology. He feels he pushed for the wrong people and voted for the wrong people. He reiterated that there is nowhere else in the state of Alabama where somebody else is telling residents in the City what they can do and what they can't. Mr. Jobson thanked the Mayor and Council for their time and the opportunity to speak.

President Logan responded to Mr. Jobson stating that this was a 5-0 vote and the Council requested this change. This change went through the House of Representatives and then the Governor signed off on it. It was State Act 16-139.

Stephen Schwab, 2520 5th Street, Northport, Alabama, 35476, addressed the Mayor and Council concerning potholes on 26th Avenue and the drinking water in Northport. He is concerned about the quality of the drinking. He has been told that our drinking water comes from Lake Tuscaloosa and the quality is not the best specifically there are areas where cattle graze near the lake and of course there is run off of manure and other waste products. Mr. Schwab also expressed concern for students in schools with glass lined corridors during tornado events. He stated that we lived in a tornado alley. We desperately need designated community shelters.

Dennis Strickland, 4200 Hwy 69 N, Northport, Alabama 35473, stated he was the Executive Director of the West Alabama Regional Commission. He replaced Bon Lake who passed away almost a year ago. Mr. Strickland served as Mayor of Brent, Alabama before taking the position as Director of the West Alabama Regional Commission. He completely understands, firsthand, the role of a public leader, so he extends his appreciation to the Mayor and Council for their service. He also stated that in Brent, Alabama they have very good drinking water. He thanked the Mayor and Council for giving him the time to speak and introduce himself at tonight's meeting. Mr. Lake brought copies of the annual report and pamphlets that state the services the organization they provide. He thanked Mayor Aaron for serving on the Board of Directors for the West Alabama Regional Commission. He extended the offer to the City, if there was anything the Regional Commission could ever do to help the City, please let him know. The Regional Commission serves seven counties and 38 municipalities within those counties. He thanked the Mayor and Council for their time and letting him speak tonight regarding the West Alabama Regional Commission.

Woodrow Washington, 3725 28th Avenue, Northport, Alabama 35473, addressed Mayor and Council regarding the Civil Service appointment that was made at last week's Council Meeting. He thanked Mr. Jody Jobson for bringing the history of the Civil Service Board to the Council as well. Mr. Washington stated that when he ran for Mayor two years ago he had two big things he had in mind for the City of Northport: the Hasson Community Center and the Civil Service Board. He stated his appreciation to everyone that helped get the center up and running. Mr. Washington stated that he had been waiting around for 2 years to possibly be appointed or possibly be discussed for some type of appointment with the City of Northport. He also pointed out was very unclear of the process of being appointed. He called members of the Council to get their insight. Was the position chosen by resume or was it by resume? Mr. Washington stated he was an advocate for the City worker and you have to give everyone the opportunity that they are being treated fair and equal and that everyone has had due process. Mr. Washington stated he felt as though he did not get due process in this situation. He believes and pushed diversity. The last step for a City employee. If that employee leaves feeling he did not get due justice, then the process of the Civil Service Board did not work. That idea goes with hiring, firing, and promotions. He went on to express the process from two weeks ago appointing a member to the Civil Service Board was not fair. Outside looking in as a black man, one would think that this is the good 'ol boys' system. Mr. Washington stated he and Ms. Coleman and anyone else who applied for the position, if their names were not discussed by 5 people then they were done wrong. He feels the City of Northport process is still wrong. He wants the process explained to him and if the City of Northport did it correctly. Personally, he feels as he was treated wrong. He took to social media because everyone else goes to social media. He expressed the necessity for there to be more-diversity in the City, on the Council, City Hall, and the Fire Department. It all starts at the Personnel Board. Two weeks ago, Mr. Washington feels that the City had the opportunity to hire a minority black male and a minority black female but he does not feel it was even talked about. Until the City begins appointing personnel board members that reflect the citizens, there is nothing right about it. There were plenty of Northport residents that were interested in the job. Even if the Council was not interested in picking any of those names, they still must get together and discuss those names- due process. He just encourage the Council and the City to be a little bit better about their processes.

Mayor & Council Member's Business:

Councilman Roberts, District 1, Councilman Roberts requested Ms. Starnes give an update on the recycling program. Ms. Starnes stated, as of Friday, February 01, 2019 there were 900 residents signed up to participate in the recycling program. Ms. Starnes also voiced other information concerning the program. Cardboard, aluminum, paper, and plastics will be accepted for recycling and the City has already started working on the next grant for the program through ADEM.

President Logan, District 2, President Logan called Mr. Chuck Gerdau to give an update on the Bicentennial Committee and an update with Friends of Historic Northport.

Mr. Chuck Gerdau stated they had been in discussions about the management of the Shirley House and that had been going quite well. He also pointed out that work would begin on the Shirley House in a couple of weeks to help clean up the asbestos. The idea of opening a Welcome Center at the Shirley House has been discussed. The Northport Bicentennial Committee is looking to have a Kick-Off Party on April 6, 2019 in Downtown Northport.

Councilman Hinton, District 3, Councilman Hinton announced the Northwood Lake Homeowners Annual Meeting will be held on February 16, 2019 at 4:00 pm at Northwood Hills Baptist Church. He expressed his gratitude for this neighborhood and HOA for doing such a great job at keeping their neighborhood looking great.

Councilman Davis, District 4, None

Councilman Hogg, District 5, Councilman Hogg encouraged all residents to take advantage of the City's recycling program.

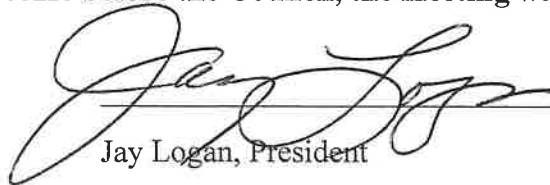
Mayor Aaron, None

Motion by President Logan, **Second** by Councilman Roberts **to adjourn the meeting Executive Session at 6:41 p.m. to discuss proposed retail development and potential litigation.** Roll call was as follows: President Logan, Yes; Councilman Roberts, Yes; Councilman Hinton, Yes; and Councilman Davis, Yes; and Councilman Hogg, Yes. **Motion Carried Unanimously.**

The Council reconvened at 7:36 p.m.

Motion by President Logan, **Second** by Councilman Davis **to adjourn the meeting.** Roll call vote was as follows: President Logan, Yes; Councilman Davis, Yes; Councilman Roberts, Yes; Councilman Hinton, Yes; and Councilman Hogg, Yes. **Motion Carried Unanimously.**

There being no further business to come before the Council, the meeting was adjourned at 7:36 p.m.


Jay Logan, President

ATTEST:


Bruce Higginbotham, City Administrator