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**Special Meeting of The Board of Mayor & Aldermen**  
**Wednesday, September 06, 2023**  
**6:00 pm.**

The Board of Mayor and Aldermen of the City of Waveland, Mississippi, met in Special Session at the Waveland City Hall Boardroom, 301 Coleman Avenue, Waveland, MS. on September 06, 2023 at 6:00 p.m. to take action on the following matters of City business.

**ROLL CALL**

Mayor Trapani noted for the record the presence of Aldermen Gamble, Richardson (via telephone), Lafontaine and Clark along with City Clerk Lisa Planchard and City Attorney Ronnie Artigues.

**BOARD BUSINESS**

- a) Fiscal Year 2024 Budget Workshop of the Board of Mayor and Aldermen  
**(Exhibit A)**

**REVENUE SECTION OF BUDGET:**

**Re: Aldermen Gamble**

- Had no questions or comments for the Revenue portion.

**Re: Aldermen Richardson**

- Inquired about the amount in the line-item for the Sale of the Capital Assets in the General Fund on the two tractors going up for auction. The City Clerk informed Aldermen Richardson that this amount was just for budgeting purposes. Mayor Trapani also added that this is not the amount that the City is asking on the auction site for the Tractors, but what the City is budgeting as projected revenue to be received from their sale.

**Re: Aldermen Lafontaine**

- Inquired about the Cellular South line item in General Fund revenue being at \$0 for the upcoming year. City Clerk, Lisa Planchard informed the Board that this is because Cellular South has removed all their equipment from the Davis Street tower.
- Inquired about which fund the Sale of Capital Assets (2 tractors to be auctioned) will be going into. City Clerk informed him it would be going into the General Fund, Depository bank account; that's where they were purchased from. City Attorney Artigues concurred that it should go into General Fund. Mayor Trapani added that if the City needed these funds for any special projects, it can be transferred to the specific project later.
- Inquired about the Insurance Rebates through the Fire Purposes Fund (261) and asked if it was still being set aside for the new Firetruck. City Clerk Planchard informed him that yes, Gaming and Insurance Rebate monies are going into that fund to assist with payments on the new fire truck once it's built.
- Noted that under Capital Projects, some are highlighted that have been removed. City Clerk Planchard informed Alderman Lafontaine that they were originally built into the Capital Projects Fund on the revenue & expense side, but had to be cut, including the \$625,000 Sidewalk Project from GRPC, the \$1.6M Waveland-Kiln Cutoff, and the \$278,300 for the Outdoor Stewardship Grant from the revenue side as well as the expense side of the Capital Projects Fund. Mayor Trapani explained that these were cut due to no funding. Aldermen Lafontaine asked if this were to be approved, do we have the money in the Trinity Investment Fund? Ms.

Planchard explained that there will be \$2.7M coming from Trinity Investments into a restricted 'City Investment Funds' bank account and that the ARPA monies invested at Trinity Investments will go into the ARPA bank account. Alderman Lafontaine asked if we would sit down at a later date and determine the projects we want to move forward with. Ms. Planchard said, "Yes, we can". Mr. Jerry Rigby said that yes, we can allocate the Trinity reserves to projects, but we wouldn't want to use that all up. Alderman Lafontaine said, "for the match portion". Mr. Rigby said, "If you did every project that's being contemplated, you'd have enough out of the \$2.7M, but I don't think you'd want to use all of it up. It wouldn't use all of it up, but would use a large portion of it if you did every project". Mayor Trapani said the Waveland-Kiln Cutoff project (GCRF) is a large one with a \$400,000 match. He is working with the Board of Supervisors and Congressman Ezell's office to help us out with that match, and because we don't have it yet there's no reason to put it in the budget yet. Alderman Lafontaine asked if reserve funds were considered at all in balancing this budget. Ms. Planchard said that they were not.

- Inquired about the increase of the 'Interest Earned' General Ledger account in the Utility Fund. Mr. Rigby said we were very conservative on most of the Revenue accounts budgeted and we'll probably go over a little bit on most of those, but on Utility Interest revenue, we took the current earned, and almost doubled it because interest rates at the bank have increased so much. He added that it could end up being more than the projected number.

**Re: Aldermen Clark**

- Had no questions for the Revenue portion of the budget noting that his questions had been answered through this discussion process.

**EXPENSES**

**Re: Alderman Gamble**

- Noted that there are certain services that we have to provide that do not generate revenue, but their expense is vital to the city, like the fire department, police department, etc. There are expenses here that the Board needs to take a hard look at and either cut or eliminate. We need to talk about some of our lease issues, especially with the Business Incubator. We are losing over \$26,000 a year that it's costing the taxpayers above and beyond what our revenues are on that building. The city is paying \$18,000/year for employees to have a cellphone; do all these employees need a cellphone and do they need an iPhone? She noted that Waveland is the only city that provides cellphones to employees that require them. Another department that is 'eating our lunch' is the Civic Center. We're losing \$82,000/year on the Civic Center. She explained that what she saying is that the Museum is run by a non-profit and she knows that there are immense grants available for museum's, especially for municipal museums and we need to look into this. "We can't afford \$82,000 a year." She added that employees want raises, departmental budgets increase, and we can't... short of cutting services; these are the only things she saw that could be cut in the budget. Our expenses have gone up, just over the last two years the city's property insurance has gone up 118% from 2021 to 2023, i.e., it went up over \$200,000. In addition to that, the health insurance is going to go up, health is projected to increase 55% (another \$208,000 increase) and we also have GAP insurance. She said that just with those 2 items, we're having to absorb over \$400,000 (just in 2 budget items). That doesn't include all the other things that have gone up. Alderman Lafontaine added, "Fuel, supplies.". Mayor Trapani added... and PERS Employer contribution went up 2%. Alderman Gamble noted that last year the inflation rate was over 7%, this year it's already over 8%. She said that someone mentioned to her to not give raises this year. She replied that she would not consider that, some of our employees are barely over the poverty level now. Alderman Lafontaine said the issue is that we're trying to keep up with the market around us as well, governments as well as retail, and other stores.

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Ms. Gamble noted that we've had to absorb over \$500K over the 18-24 months and it's not going to go down; she is concerned about the money we have in reserves (Investments) and we do live in hurricane alley so we don't use our reserve money for projects; we keep it in reserve in case of a hurricane and anything could happen, and we have to have that money in reserve. Alderman Lafontaine said the Board wanted to have a 2-to-3-month reserve; he delineates between the reserve fund (which is our Invested funds) and a project fund (which a lot of that was 1 time revenue sources that would not be spent on day-to-day operations) which is put in Projects Funds. He explained that whenever he says projects coming out of reserve fund, he means coming out of the Project Fund, not out of the 3-month reserves (i.e., that portion of Invested funds). Ms. Gamble met with Mr. Jimmie Ladner, Tax Collector, today and learned that with a 3.60 mill increase, that's only a \$302,000 net increase in millage revenue over last year and that doesn't even cover the cost of the property and health insurance increases for this upcoming year. Alderman Gamble explained the details regarding the increase. She said with a \$200K house with homestead exemption, you would see about a \$72/year increase; without homestead exemption it would be about \$108/year increase. Alderman Gamble said she does not see any way around this millage increase without cutting services; the Police are already shorthanded. She is also unwilling to cut fire service; she's unwilling to tell the employees that they can't have 'not even a cost-of-living raise'. "These cost increases and inflation are far beyond this Board's control", she said.

**Re: Alderman Richardson**

- Alderman Richardson said he has also heard from his constituents about going up 3.60 mills but they have come to an understanding that the last so many years we have been absorbing the cost increases and we (the city) can not afford to absorb it anymore. To Shane's point, "We want to stay competitive by giving our employees more money; we have to stay competitive. It's a hard pill to swallow, but it's something we have to do." Alderman Richardson said although the St. Joseph sidewalks project was removed from the budget, he doesn't want to see that go to the wayside because we've waited quite a while for the Safe Way School Project. Mayor Trapani said he was staying in contact with Kenneth Yarrow at GRPC about this project. He said that the problem with the project is that it got delayed so long that all the costs went up, so the money they allocated for us won't pay for the project now. He added that there is a mechanism built in that we could possibly get another 20%. He said that until we get those additional monies, there's no point in putting it in the budget right now.

**Re: Alderman Lafontaine**

- Alderman Lafontaine asked that once the budget adoption is over, can we set up a special meeting just to discuss projects, how much we want to allocate of our reserve fund/project fund; setting aside our reserves for however many months as operating costs in the event we have a storm, and how much we want to put toward projects. We don't want to deplete it all the way down, but we also have to look at match monies; we're steadily putting in for all these projects but if we don't really have the match for them, it's pointless to steadily apply for them.

**Re: Aldermen Clark**

- Alderman Clark questioned the salaries total on the first line of the budget for Aldermen's salaries. He noted it appeared to be an error; \$72,800 was budgeted last year. This appeared to be an error and Ms. Planchard said she would look into this and get it corrected. Alderman Clark noted Tidelands funds and there's a lot of money sitting there; we need to determine what we're going to do with that. He also had a question for Bo Humphrey and the boring machine he needs; whether \$3,800 be enough to get what he needs and whether it would last a while. Mayor Trapani noted that Tidelands and GOMESA monies don't have a match; when we have the special meeting we can discuss where we stand on those projects.

Mayor Trapani said he negotiated a deal with the fire department; they asked for some new positions, but instead he gave them a little better pay raise. Inflation is at 8%, but we're giving 3% raises each year which is not meeting the inflationary rate. He added that maybe we can

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look at these additions next year. Mayor Trapani said we're looking at a 5% pay raise across the board. Alderman Gamble said, "Even for department heads". Mayor Trapani said, "Yes". Fire department is also 5%. Alderman Gamble said she does not like across the board percentage raises because the lower end people get a much less raise than the higher end people and that's not always equitable. Mayor Trapani noted that Streets and Utilities got \$1.00/hour raise (because one full-time position was given up by Mr. Humphrey in each of those two departments so the remaining current employees could get that raise), which the Mayor agreed with.

Alderman Gamble said she's heard, "Well, Waveland has a higher millage rate than a lot of other places on the Coast." She said that all mills are not created equal; our millage value (ours is \$83K per mill) is half what Bay St. Louis' is (\$179K per mill) meaning it takes 2 of our mills to do the same thing in Waveland that 1 mill does in Bay St. Louis revenue wise. The Mayor added that Waveland does have a higher number of mills but we bring in the lowest amount of revenue per mill. Alderman Gamble said Waveland's millage is the lowest in Hancock County and the 2<sup>nd</sup> lowest on the Coast. She added that if you look at the three southern counties on the Gulf Coast, Waveland is right in the middle, so of 16 municipalities in those 3 counties, we are ranked #9 in value. The highest # of mills is Poplarville with 59.9 mills, Pascagoula with 54.5, etc.... but all of these higher in # of mills than Waveland also have higher values per mill.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

Mr. Jim Meggett, with Keep Waveland Beautiful for 12 years, came forward to explain all that KWB does for the City and with the money provided them. He was requesting that they be budgeted an additional \$5,000 this year for plans to plant oak trees along several main residential streets in Waveland. Those named were Old Spanish Trail, Waveland Avenue, and Nicholson Avenue, which already has a number of Oak trees south of the RR tracks. After lengthy discussion, the Board agreed that this should be discussed as a project in the project special meeting rather than a budget change at this time. Mr. Bryan Therolf also came forward to tell Board members that Keep Mississippi Beautiful is coming down to Waveland on September 13<sup>th</sup> at the Waveland Library and that they are going to be discussing grants to assist their organization.

**ADJOURN**

**Re: Adjourn the meeting at 7:08 p.m.**

Alderman Gamble moved, seconded by Alderman Lafontaine to adjourn this meeting at 7:08 p.m.

A vote was called for with the following results:

Voting Yea: Gamble, Richardson, Lafontaine and Clark

Voting Nay: None

Absent: None


The foregoing minutes were presented to Mayor Trapani on October 4, 2023.



Lisa Planchard,  
City Clerk

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The Minutes of September 6, 2023 have been read and approved by me on this day the 4th day of October, 2023



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Jay Trapani,  
Mayor