

MINUTES OF THE
SELMA CITY COUNCIL
JANUARY 14, 2020
4:00 P.M.

DRAFT

Call to Order

Invocation: Councilwoman Miah Jackson,
Ward 3

Pledge of Allegiance

The Selma City Council met in a regular session in the Council Chambers of City Hall on Tuesday, January 14, 2020, at 4:30 p.m.

ROLL CALL

The Selma City Council met in a regular session in the Council Chambers of City Hall on Tuesday, January 14, 2020, with the following Council Members present during roll call: Council President Corey D. Bowie, and Council Members, Councilman Carl Bowline, Councilwoman Susan M. Youngblood, Councilwoman Miah Tolbert-Jackson, Councilwoman Angela Benjamin, Councilman Johnnie Leashore, and Councilwoman Jannie Thomas, and Councilman Samuel Randolph. Others present were City Clerk Ivy S. Harrison and Ms. Ronita Wade, City Treasurer. Councilwoman Youngblood was absent during roll call, but arrived at 5:22 p.m. Councilman Bowline, Councilwoman Benjamin, and Councilman Michael Johnson were absent during roll call, but arrived at 5:19 p.m.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

President Bowie stated that, at this point and time, we need to go into Executive Session for about 30 - 45 Minutes, to discuss Legal Matters, and further, the "Chair" would entertain a "motion". A motion was made by Councilman Leashore, and seconded by Councilwoman Jackson, to "Recess" into Executive Session for about 30 - 45 Minutes, to discuss Legal Matters, at 4:05 p.m. A roll call vote was taken and the motion passed by a unanimous vote of the Council Members present.

Following Executive Session, President Bowie called for a "motion" from the "floor", to "Reconvene" the Council Meeting, back into "Session". A motion was made by Councilman Leashore, and seconded by Councilwoman Benjamin, to "Reconvene" back into the Council Meeting at 5:19 p.m. A roll call vote was taken and the motion passed with a unanimous vote of the Council Members present.

*The "Character Trait" for this Month is "Resourcefulness":
Finding Practical Uses for That Which Others Would Overlook or Discard.*

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Council President Bowie stated at this time, the "Chair" will entertain a motion to approve the Agenda, and asked for a "motion" from the "floor". A motion was made by Councilman Johnson, and seconded by Councilman Bowline, to approve the agenda, as written. A roll call vote was taken and the motion passed with a unanimous vote of the Council Members present.

CONSENT AGENDA

Council President Bowie stated to Council that they should have before them, Consent Agenda Items, a Total of Seven (7) Items, but that he is asking that *only* Consent Items 1, 4, and 5, be considered for tonight's Council Meeting. President Bowie further stated to Council that they can remove an Item, or Items, from the Consent Agenda, at any point and time if they would like to, for more discussion of said Item and/or Items, and to vote on separately. Councilman Johnson asked that Consent Agenda Item 6 be "Removed", for now; that the "Contractor" is scheduled to be coming back to work for the City.

President Bowie named the List of Items to be placed on Consent Agenda, as follows:

- (1) To Approve to Replace the Combustion Chamber in the Heating Unit for \$2,000.00 Coming from the Tourism Line Item Budget, #3600057190.
- (2) To Approve to Allow Councilman Randolph and Councilwoman Benjamin to Pay for Potholes and Cave-In Repairs in Their Wards Using Their Individual Oil Lease Funds and Their Individual Gas Tax Funds, for a Combined Total for Both Wards of \$42,350.00.
- (3) To Approve Resolution #R105-19/20, Appointing Kenta Fulford, Chief of Police, and Christopher Graham, Fire Chief.

President Bowie stated, at this point and time, the "Chair" would entertain a "motion" to adopt and approve the above Three (3) Items for Consent Agenda. During discussion, a motion was made by Councilman Bowline, and seconded by Councilman Johnson, to approve and adopt the Three (3) Items on Consent Agenda. A roll call vote was taken and the motion passed by a unanimous vote of the Council.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

After approval of the agenda, Council President Bowie stated to the Council that they should have before them, the November 12, 2019 Council Meeting Minutes. President Bowie stated that it is his hope that Everyone has had an opportunity to peruse the Minutes. President Bowie asked if there were any "corrections"? With there being no "corrections", President Bowie stated that at this time, the "Chair" would entertain a motion to adopt the Minutes of November 12, 2019. A motion was made by Councilman Bowline, and seconded by Councilman Johnson, to approve and adopt the November 12, 2019 Regular Meeting Minutes. A roll call vote was taken and the motion passed by a unanimous vote of the Council.

MAYOR'S REPORT: NO REPORT DURING TONIGHT'S MEETING.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councilman Leashore stated that he has a Petition that has been submitted to him by Residents of Cole Street here in Selma. Councilman Leashore further stated that the Residents are asking the City to approve re-naming Cole Street to the "First African-American Police Chief", Chief Earnest Tate, who served for over 34 years within the Police Department. Councilman Leashore stated to President Bowie, that he is presenting the Petition to the City Clerk for record, and asked that he move forward with it. Councilwoman Youngblood stated, inasmuch as, Chief Tate was one of the "First African-American Police Chiefs" that she would like to recommend waiving the fee of \$1,000.00, for re-naming the street in Chief Tate's Honor. Councilman Leashore stated that he would like to wait for the Public Hearing, and make the decision thereafter. Councilman Leashore also stated that he has "adopted" Selma High School, and that he will be coming and asking for support from his "Fellow" Council Members.

Councilwoman Thomas stated that the "Keep It Clean Campaign" will be "kicking" off on January 28th; "Litter Free, Keep Alabama Beautiful Campaign". Councilwoman Thomas stated that she is working with A.L.D.O.T., and asking all Council Members of each Ward, to be a part of this Campaign. Councilwoman Thomas stated that Commissioner Ruebin is also a part of this "Campaign".

Councilwoman Youngblood stated that she has been working on several Resolutions, and that she has a Resolution as it relates to the Municipal Improvement Act. Councilwoman Youngblood further stated that she will be working with the Planning Commission and other entities who are trying to work and do good things for Selma. Councilwoman Youngblood stated that she will be asking the Council to approve moving forward on that; that we do need to clean up this Town, and make our Town more "livable" so that People will want to come here.

Councilman Johnson "Announced" that there will be "Murah Party" on Maxey Street on this Friday, from 10:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. Councilman Johnson stated that it will be an exciting day for the Kids and the Community.

Councilman Bowline stated that he wanted to "Thank" the Jones Family for their help, and that the Historical Commission has "Recognized" Lorenzo Harrison Memorial Gardens, as a "Historical Site".

CITIZENS' CONCERNS

Mr. Tom Headley
Re: Redistricting of Wards

Rev. Michael Bowman
Re: "MLK" March

FINANCE REPORT

President Bowie asked Ms. Ronita Wade, City Treasurer, to come forward, and address the Council with a Finance Report. Ms. Wade addressed the Council, and stated "For the Month Ending in December, 2019, Sales Tax was reported at \$877,516.00, up from the previous Year by \$75,842.00; Lodging Tax was \$26,643.00, up by \$5,428.00 from the previous Year; Tobacco Tax was \$14,949.00, down by \$2,758.00 from the previous Year; Lodging Surcharge Tax was \$11,868.00, up by \$6,998.00 from the previous Year; One-Half Cent Sales Tax was \$110,939.00, up by \$10,730.00, from the previous Year, and Simplified Seller Use Tax was \$53,867.00, up by \$37,297.00." Councilwoman Benjamin stated to President Bowie that she would like for him to make a written request to have the Tax Collector, Ms. Kim Lewis, here at our next Council Meeting, because she would like to ask some questions, to get answers and clarity on. President Bowie stated that he would follow-up with a request to have Ms. Lewis at our next Council Meeting. During discussion about the Gas Tax, Ms. Wade stated that there is a cash balance of approximately \$112,000.00 in the Gas Tax Fund, since a receipt of about \$17,000.00. Ms. Wade stated to Council that it would be her recommendation that they take about \$13,000.00 and utilize that amount for each Ward. A motion was made by Councilman Leashore, and seconded by Councilwoman Youngblood, to approve to use the balance of the Gas Tax Funds for each Ward, in an approximate amount of \$13,000.00 each, for a total of \$117,000.00. A roll call vote was taken and the motion passed by a unanimous vote of the Council. During roll call, Councilwoman Benjamin stated, "Yes, Ward 4, get ready for the 'face-lift'."

Following said roll call, Ms. Wade stated to Council that she is in receipt of information regarding money funds that are owned to the City of Selma, from the State of Alabama, Treasury Department for the Selma Police Department. Ms. Wade stated to Council, that she is requesting that they give her permission to claim the funds on behalf of the City of Selma. During discussion, a motion was made by Councilman Leashore, and seconded by Councilman Bowline, to give permission to Ms. Ronita Wade, City Treasurer, to claim the funds owed to the City of Selma, Police Department. A roll call vote was taken and the motion passed by a unanimous vote of the Council.

Following the above roll call, Councilwoman Benjamin asked Ms. Wade if there are any positions being paid that were not budgeted for? Ms. Wade answered, and stated that she can give her a complete list on tomorrow, but that the HR Director, and the Chief of Staff position, along with the Recreation Department Director position that is being occupied by Mr. Jackson currently. Ms. Wade further stated that the Captain position that was never budgeted and approved; that she has attempted to follow Council's directives, but the Mayor has usurped her authority. Councilman Leashore stated, "For the record, there are documents on file to support the Captain position." Ms. Wade stated, "It was improperly done." Councilman Leashore stated, "I beg to differ with you. The Council approved the recommendation from the Chief of Police. This Council approved the promotion and how the position would be filled, per the Chief of Police." Ms. Wade stated, "A captain position was created by the Council, but the approval of the individual to take the position was never approved; that action was only to create the 'vacancy' to be filled." Councilman Randolph stated, "I don't recall the Chief ever coming before this Council to 'solicit' this Council; only Councilman Johnson, and Ms. Fowlkes came which was illegal for her to do that. The Chief never came. I don't recall." Councilman Leashore stated, "May I request that we remain 'mum' on this, since there is a Lawsuit pending, and just let it play out in Court." Councilwoman Benjamin stated, "Ms. Wade has attempted to follow Council's 'Orders and Directives' but the Mayor 'usurps' her authority. It's been a common practice." Councilwoman Benjamin asked Ms. Wade, if there are any Employees that have received raises since the layoff, that were not budgeted for? Ms. Wade answered, and stated, that she would check into this for the Council. Councilwoman Benjamin stated that she needs this information as soon as possible, as to whether there are Employees who have been given raises, that are not in the Budget. Ms. Wade stated that she will get that information for her. Ms. Wade further stated that the Audit is complete; that a couple of months ago, they sent something to our City Attorney that was needed. Ms. Wade stated that she spoke with our Attorneys on today, and they assured her that they would be sending that information on to the Auditors. Councilwoman Jackson asked Ms. Wade to be prepared to tell her the status of the "Warrants", by the next Council Meeting. Ms. Wade stated that she would.

RECREATION COMMITTEE – Councilman Michael Johnson, Chairperson

No Report./Made Closing Remarks.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT – Councilwoman Susan Youngblood, Chairperson

Made a report./Made Closing Remarks.
(During her Report, Councilwoman Youngblood presented to Rev. Lawrence Wofford a Resolution, "Racial Unity"; January 21, 2020. Following Presentation, Rev. Wofford "Thanked" the Council, and made "Remarks".)

CAPITAL EQUIPMENT – Councilman Samuel Randolph, Chairperson

No Report./Made Closing Remarks.

ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE – Councilman Carl Bowline, Chairperson

Made a report./Closing Remarks.

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE – Council President Corey D. Bowie, Chairperson

No Report.

PUBLIC WORKS/GENERAL SERVICES COMMITTEE – Councilman Johnnie Leashore, Chairperson

No Report./Closing Remarks.

CHILDREN AND FAMILIES – Councilwoman Miah Jackson, Chairperson

Made a report./Closing Remarks.

SELMA-DALLAS YOUTH AMBASSADORS – Councilman Johnnie Leashore, Chairperson

No Report.

FINANCE COMMITTEE – Council President Corey D. Bowie, Chairperson

Councilwoman Jackson stated that the Finance Committee had met, and that she would like to bring forth a Finance Committee "Recommendation". Councilwoman Jackson stated that the Finance Committee's Recommendation is that the Council be responsible for approving all Accounts' Payables, making sure that payments are made in a timely manner; further, that they need to be abreast of what they're paying on, and what they're paying for. Councilman Bowline stated that he thinks that we need to move forward with this process; that consistency is important here. This would put control on spending that the Council is not aware of. Councilwoman Benjamin asked for clarity in terms of "all payables", and asked what effect would this have on the Finance Department? Councilwoman Benjamin also asked, "Is this including utility bills and other monthly and annual bills, such as that? We need to know how this will affect the Finance Department and their ability to do their functions in that Department. 'All' means appropriations that the Council has taken action on; the Power Bills and bills such as these are our day-to-day responsibilities; so, those may not need to be included in this." Councilwoman Jackson stated that she is asking, and trying to make sure that the Council is being accountable; that the Council is responsible for spending. Ms. Wade stated that she is not opposed to this; that when they look at the Payment Register, and so forth, she needs to know how to move forward on this. Ms. Wade stated that they are also asking if this is going to hold up their process in her Department, but that she will need to know "structurally", where it's not going to affect the work flow. Ms. Wade stated that she needs to know, "What is the plan?" Ms. Wade further stated, "Just to vote on it, without it being thought out, is a concern of mine." Councilman Leashore stated, "I just don't know about this. Is this about money?" Councilwoman Benjamin stated, "There are ways in which we can do this whereby it does not impede the process within the Finance Department." Councilwoman Jackson stated, "The process would be that we vote and take action. Ms. Wade will provide to the Council what is needed to be voted on; this is just another mechanism to put in place to help us, as a Council, to be more accountable. This will help us to 'navigate' during this Administration." Councilman Leashore stated, "I need to know the process, before moving forward." Councilwoman Jackson stated, "Actually the process will be determined by the Council. It is up to this Council as to how we should proceed on this." During discussion, a motion was made by Councilwoman Jackson, and seconded by Councilman Bowline, that the Council be made responsible for approving all Accounts' Payables, in order to make sure that payments are made in a timely manner. A roll call vote was taken and the motion failed for lack of a majority vote of the Council. There were four affirmative votes and five nay votes. President Bowie, Councilwoman Benjamin, Councilman Randolph, Councilman Leashore, and Councilman Johnson cast a nay vote. During roll call, Councilwoman Benjamin stated, "No, I need to know. I have 'questions'."

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4:00 P.M.

During roll call, Councilman Leashore stated, "I prefer the process be shared with me before casting my vote in support. My vote is 'no'."

PUBLIC BUILDINGS COMMITTEE - Councilwoman Jannie Thomas, Chairperson

Made a report./Closing Remarks.

EDUCATIONAL COMMITTEE - Councilwoman Angela Benjamin, Chairperson

No Report./Closing Remarks.

NEW BUSINESS ITEMS:

NEXT CITY COUNCIL MEETING -- January 28, 2019 at 5:00 P.M.

"HAPPY NEW YEAR TO EVERYONE!"

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Council, a motion was made by Councilman Leashore, and seconded by Councilman Johnson, to adjourn, and by unanimous consent of the Council, this meeting adjourned at 7:17 p.m.

COREY D. BOWIE, *Council President*

ATTEST:

APPROVED:

IVY S. HARRISON, *City Clerk*

DARRIO MELTON, *Mayor*