

## **SPECIAL CALL MEETING SEPTEMBER 5, 2019**

Be it remembered that the Mayor and Board of Aldermen of the City of Ocean Springs met in a Special Call meeting at City Hall in the City of Ocean Springs at 6:00 p.m. on September 5, 2019. The Mayor presiding, Aldermen Authement, Cox, Papania, Blackman and Impey were present. Aldermen Gill and Bellmen were absent. Also present were City Clerk Patty Gaston and Deputy City Clerk Vicky Hupe. City Attorney Kevin Melchi attended the meeting by telephone, there was a speakerphone in the meeting room.

Let the minutes reflect that proper notice of the meeting was provided to all Aldermen via email and that the notice was posted at City Hall and online within one hour of the meeting being called.

The Mayor called the meeting to order.

The Special Call Meeting is for the purpose of any and all matters pertaining to adopting Ordinance 2019-17 Granting a Non-Exclusive Franchise to Telepak Networks, Inc. to Lay, Construct, Maintain, Replace, Repair, and Operate Fiber Optic Cable and Appurtenant Telecommunications Facilities In, Under, Over and Across and Along All Streets, Avenues, Alleys, Highways, Roads, Bridges, Viaducts and Public Places in Ocean Springs, MS (Exhibit a); Public Hearing – FY 19-20 Proposed Budget; resolution Fixing Tax Levy for FY 19-20 (Exhibit c); proposed Increase – Resolution Fixing Tax Levy for FY 19-20 (Exhibit d).

Motion was made by Alderman Impey and seconded by Alderman Cox to adopt Ordinance 2019-17 Granting a Non-Exclusive Franchise to Telepak Networks, Inc. to Lay, Construct, Maintain, Replace, Repair, and Operate Fiber Optic Cable and Appurtenant Telecommunications Facilities In, Under, Over and Across and Along All Streets, Avenues, Alleys, Highways, Roads, Bridges, Viaducts and Public Places in Ocean Springs, MS (Exhibit a). The motion carried with a roll call vote as follows:

Alderman Gill	<u>Absent</u>
Alderman Authement	<u>Aye</u>
Alderman Bellman	<u>Absent</u>
Alderman Cox	<u>Aye</u>
Alderman Papania	<u>Aye</u>
Alderman Blackman	<u>Aye</u>
Alderman Impey	<u>Aye</u>

Motion was made by Alderman Cox, seconded by Alderman Blackman and unanimously carried to open the Public Hearing for the FY 19 – 20 proposed budget.

The City Clerk gave a summary of the proposed budget for FY 19 – 20.

The City Clerk explained the 3.09 millage increase advertised in the paper was just to make the two week advertisement guideline and at the time she was unsure of the actual increase needed. She explained the 3.09 millage increase was a worst case scenario but she was able to locate a mistake in the new accounting system which has been corrected. Due to the correction, she now recommends increasing the millage by 1.09 mills; .09 for the library and 1.00 for debt service.

The City Clerk said general fund income is expected to be \$14,012,905 with \$4,120,958.42 from the county in property taxes. The City's sales tax budget is up to \$5.4 million. She said FY 18 – 19 ending balance is expected to be \$659,000 which will be rolled over to FY 19 – 20 to fund the budget.

The City Clerk talked about some changes that were made to the budget. The Board of Aldermen capital improvements ward funds dropped to \$4,000 each. She said that court fine collections have increased since the City hired a company to collect old past due debts. She said she added \$1,500 to try to improve the video and sound equipment in the board room. Human Resources now has \$8,000 in the budget for vehicle insurance deductible payments. The Planning Department added contract services for a Project Manager and grant matches. The gas budgets for the Building Department and Parks Department have been moved to the Police Department gas budget because the new tanks have been installed. Three General Service Officers were added to the Police Department budget. There is a trench box in Public Works Department budget, Alderman Cox asked to look into purchasing a used one. The Parks & Recreation Department has one maintenance employee added to the budget to assist the Parks Assistant Director with construction, repair and maintenance. The FY 19- 20 budget will have a festival fund to account for all of the festivals.

Alderman Cox asked the City Clerk to increase the funds given to the Chamber of Commerce by \$10,000; \$5,000 from both the Hotel tax and Food & Beverage tax funds.

The City Clerk said that the auditors recommended creating an enterprise fund for all of water, sewer and garbage which has been created for the FY 19 – 20 budget. She said the sewer rates from Jackson County Utility Authority (JCUA) have been reduced by \$60,000 for the year. She is recommending removing the automatic 3% sewer increase for FY 19 – 20. She said the water meters are now getting an actual flow rate and reading correctly. She stated that 47% of the enterprise funds are paid to JCUA and Waste Pro. The enterprise fund ending balance is estimated to be between \$1.4 – 1.6 Million.

The City Clerk said she asked the Board to consider adding the 1 mill for debt millage. She explained that without it the City would have no borrowing power for the next year. She also said she verified the funds could be used to pay down current debt. She said that with the 1.09 millage increase, because the schools reduced their millage, the tax payer would have a .71 millage increase or approximately \$17.75 per year on a home valued at \$250,000.00.

Alderman Impey said that over the last few years the City has had huge increases in insurance costs that have been mostly absorbed by the City, PERS contribution increase, and the City is instituting a pay scale and step raises for FY 19 – 20. He said all of these costs are in the budget.

The Mayor & Board's Executive Assistant spoke in favor of the millage increase for the Library. She said that she met with the Director and found out that the Ocean Springs Library is the 2<sup>nd</sup> busiest library in the state. In a normal month they see approximately 7,000 patrons. They offer many different programs including story time, infant story time, senior citizen classes and access to computers. They have a huge selection of E-books that cost not only to purchase but cost again after a specific number of e-check outs. They offer conference rooms for free for citizens. The Ocean Springs Library is an asset to the community and a \$12,000 increase would be well utilized.

Alderman Papania said that the Mayor, Board and Department Heads have done a great job being fiscally responsible for the City.

Alderman Cox requested that the reserve fund be increased, and would like to see \$100,000 from ending balance moved to the reserve fund. He reiterated that the Chamber is running a big campaign with commercials and print ads and would like to increase the funds provided by \$10,000. Alderman Authement agreed on the Chamber increase.

Alderman Cox gave thanks to the Finance Committee and looks forward to next year not being so time constrained.

Alderman Authement asked about moving the reserve fund to a money market account earning interest. Alderman Blackman said he would like to see the reserve account accruing interest as well. The City Clerk said she would check to see if the fund should be moved to a higher earning interest account.

The Mayor asked if anyone in the audience would like to address the Board.

Mary Beckman, 1209 Cove Avenue, said she opposed the millage increase because all of the new construction should increase the City's tax rolls as well as the expected BP funds. She added that she is delighted to hear that the City employees are receiving long overdue raises.

Motion was made by Alderman Impey, seconded by Alderman Authement and unanimously carried to close the Public Hearing.

Motion was made by Alderman Impey, seconded by Alderman Blackman and unanimously carried to adopt the Resolution Fixing the Tax Levy for FY 19-20 (Exhibit d) with the 1.09 millage increase.

Alderman Impey thanked the Finance Committee, the City Clerk, Deputy City Clerk, and City Accountant for their great work getting the budget together despite having issues with the new accounting software system. He also thanked former employee, Ryheen Brown, and the Department Heads for helping as well.

Alderman Impey addressed a comment from the audience about road work and said that during the last quarter of 2019 Ocean Springs should be getting more paving funds from the county.

Motion was made by Alderman Impey, seconded by Alderman Cox and unanimously carried to adjourn the Special Call meeting.

The meeting ended at 7:27 p.m.

Bethany Manton  
City Clerk

10/1/19  
Date

Slima Abasa  
Mayor

10/1/19  
Date

**CITY OF OCEAN SPRINGS  
COUNTY OF JACKSON  
STATE OF MISSISSIPPI**

Amended Notice – Call for a Special Meeting of the Mayor and Board of Aldermen of the City of Ocean Springs, Mississippi.

From: Mayor Dobson

To: Aldermen Cox, Gill, Authement, Bellman, Papania, Blackman, and Impey

You are hereby notified that a Special Call Meeting is called to meet at City Hall at **6:00 p.m., Thursday, September 5, 2019.**

**THE OBJECT OF THE MEETING IS AS FOLLOWS:**

Any and all matters pertaining to:

- a) Adopt Ordinance 2019-17 Granting a Non-Exclusive Franchise to Telepak Networks, Inc. to Lay, Construct, Maintain, Replace, Repair, and Operate Fiber Optic Cable and Appurtenant Telecommunications Facilities In , Under, Over and Across and Along All Streets, Avenues, Alleys, Highways, Roads, Bridges, Viaducts and Public Places in Ocean Springs, MS (Exhibit a)
- b) Public Hearing – FY 19-20 Proposed Budget
- c) Resolution Fixing Tax Levy for FY 19-20 (Exhibit c)
- d) Proposed Increase – Resolution Fixing Tax Levy for FY 19-20 (Exhibit d)

/s/Shea Dobson  
Shea Dobson, Mayor

ATTEST:

/s/Patty Gaston  
Patty Gaston, City Clerk