BUDGET HEARING MINUTES

FOR THE CITY COUNCIL MEETING OF AUGUST 11, 2025

The budget hearing meeting of the Mandeville City Council was called to order at 6:00pm, followed by a moment of silence and the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL- present: Cynthia Strong-Thompson, Kevin Vogeltanz, Jill Lane, Scott Discon, Jason Zuckerman

Absent: 0

Also present: Clay Madden, Mayor; Jessica Farno, Finance Director; Cara Bartholomew, Planning and Development Director; Keith LaGrange, Public Works Director; Buster Lyons, Digital Engineering

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** Julianne Menn, 509 Girod, cited a need for a financial oversight committee, she requested Council delay their vote and that they consider why they ran for office.

Tracy Elsensohn, 1379 Valmont St, expressed concern over Mandeville’s debt, she stated there is spending on 3 new parks that are not needed. Becky Rohrbough, 2525 Lakeshore Dr, said the CLURO revisions are needed but the COLA could be cut, and was sad to be in this financial state. Wren Clark, Carroll St, suggested charging for parking to raise money. Jeanine Esqinance, 2131 Claiborne St, questioned the maintenance on the Harbor and some other things.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

1. Discussion of the FY 2025-2026 Budget- Ms. Farno began the discussion with a detailed statement outlining her obligations as Finance Director, then stated the fund balance is over 3.7 times the GFOA recommended minimum. Council expressed their opinions and concerns about the budget, including: Councilman Discon believed cuts should be made, the America St. Park be defunded, and that Council should not be line-item eliminating things but Administration should make more cuts. Councilwoman Strong-Thompson discussed viewing the windows at Jefferson St and improving the rate of return on investment income. Councilman Vogeltanz pointed out the City had zero debt, reminded people of the restricted fund, and because some citizens requested there be cuts made- he proposed eliminating: Clerk II, City Clerk (Exhibit C) $92,172, 110.26.001 3 MPD Vehicles $255,000, 110.26.005 Windows at 1923 Jefferson $150,000, 10100.435 CLURO Update $150,000, 100.25.001a America St Park $1,100,000, and Employee COLA $185,000 for a total savings of $1,932,172.00. Councilwoman Lane discussed how the salary and benefits got where they are, that the budget is good for this year but future cuts would be necessary, and advised against acting in haste. Councilman Zuckerman agreed with the City’s financial strength analysis, restated the restricted fund issue not being an income problem but that it would need to be reallocated in order to be used and that the budget being proposed already reflected cuts and was not a deficit budget. He stated it is the Council’s responsibility to appropriate (make modifications to) the Mayor’s proposed budget. Also, by cutting projects you increase the cost of deferred maintenance. Councilman Zuckerman ended by commenting that a projected 4.5% growth in expenses and projected 2.5% growth in income will eventually cause the City to run out of money. But that the FY26 budget does not require cuts at this time.

**ADJOURNMENT-** Motion to adjourn at 7:22pm by Councilwoman Strong-Thompson, seconded by Councilman Vogeltanz and approved by all.