

Good Morning and Happy Friday Memphis!



As we look ahead to the end of November, and ultimately to the conclusion of an historic 2020, I am proud of the progress we have achieved as a City despite our challenges.

Do we occasionally possess philosophical differences? *Yes.* Have instances arisen over the last eleven months that led us to encounter fatigue and frustration? *Of course.*

Nonetheless, through it all, have we succumbed to the obstacles that abound? *Never.* Will we continue to champion the needs of every Memphian? *Always.* With that in mind, will we overcome each setback, ultimately growing more resilient in the process? *You better believe it!*

Memphis is unique because it possesses citizens with a diversity of talents and backgrounds. However, the connecting thread binding us all is our passion for the place we call home, and our desire to see this home thrive. Coupled with our trademark perseverance, we cannot, *and will not,* be stopped.

There are 41 days left in the calendar year, all of which encompass the holiday

season. During this time, join me in renewing a pledge to personal safety and respect for others. Remember: Our individual actions inform our collective success.

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This week your Memphis City Council met to discuss measures focused on moving Memphis forward in the areas of economic relief, blight remediation, public safety, and utility services. If you were not able to virtually participate in the meeting via live-stream on the Council website, via YouTube, or via 88.5 FM (WQOX), a full review is provided, [here](#).

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Funding via the Council Emergency Relief Program – Update:

On April 21, the Council passed a resolution creating the Council Emergency Relief Program (CERP). The CERP resolution allocated a total of \$5M for the establishment of a grant program for small businesses, i.e., a paycheck protection program and business stabilization fund, to be administered by the Office of Business Diversity and Compliance (OBDC). Initially, eligible businesses were required to be located in Memphis, and the primary owner was required to “reside in Memphis.”

However, the Council realizes there are situations in which businesses are located in Memphis, *and* primarily owned by persons who reside outside the city limits but within Shelby County. Furthermore, the Council understands that these same businesses provide benefits to the City of Memphis, despite not meeting the CERP resolution’s eligibility requirements.

With that in mind, on October 15, the Council passed a resolution addressing resources and support to such businesses in need during the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result, **after November 15, 2020**, applicants who reside in Shelby County and own an otherwise eligible business located within the City of Memphis may qualify for the grant program administered by OBDC pursuant to the CERP resolution.

As a reminder: We are now past November 15. Therefore, eligibility has been expanded for small businesses seeking CERP-based grant funds. As mentioned, applicants must (1) operate a business located in Memphis, with (2) a primary owner who resides within Shelby County. Preference for grant

awards shall be given to applicants who qualify as a minority or woman-owned business. Grant awards shall be made on a first-come basis.

Additionally: The April 21 Council action establishing CERP also provided grant funds for “Personal Care Professionals” in the amount of \$300 per applicant. Personal Care Professionals include the following: Cosmetologists, Barbers, Nail Technicians, Massage Therapists, Hair Braiders, Personal Trainers, Make-Up Artists, and Aestheticians.

As an update: On Tuesday, the Council approved a resolution increasing the allocation of Personal Care Professional grants from \$300 per applicant to \$1000 per applicant until such time that all funds are expended or December 28, 2020, the earliest action governing.

Please act now! Apply for Personal Care Professional grant funds, [here](#).

Moreover: The April 21 Council action establishing CERP also provided “Welcome to Memphis” grant funds to assist hourly workers in the hospitality industry terminated or furloughed due to COVID-19. Initially, grant awards were available in the amount of \$300 per applicant.

As an update: On Tuesday, the Council approved a resolution increasing the allocation of “Welcome to Memphis” grants from \$300 per applicant to \$1000 per applicant until such time that all funds are expended or December 28, 2020, the earliest action governing.

Again, act now! Apply for Welcome to Memphis grant funds, [here](#).

Addressing Blight Remediation in Sacred Memphis Spaces:

Few locations are more hallowed than our local cemeteries. Therefore, it is incumbent upon us to ensure their upkeep. With that in mind, on Tuesday, the Council took action to address blight remediation at cemeteries located across the City of Memphis. Specifically, \$15,000 was transferred from the Fiscal Year 2021 Commission Contingency Fund to the Division of Public Works, Parks and Neighborhoods Department to fund grass cutting and debris removal within our sacred Memphis cemetery spaces.

Funding for the Division of Police Services:

Public safety remains a key focus for the Council. As such, on Tuesday, the Council approved a resolution to accept and appropriate Federal Fiscal Year 2020 Port Security grant program funds from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security in the amount of \$274,500. The monetary amount will be used for equipment purchases for the Division of Police Services.

2021 MLGW Operations and Capital Budget:

On Tuesday, the Council also addressed public utility services by passing a resolution approving the 2021 budget of the Memphis, Light, Gas and Water Division for operation and maintenance expenses and capital expenditures.

Recognizing World Prematurity Awareness Day – November 17:

Each year approximately 15M babies are born prematurely around the world. On Tuesday, the Council recognized World Prematurity Awareness Day, November 17, to raise awareness for the seriousness of premature birth, and how dangerous it is worldwide. The more we talk about issues such as these, the faster we will reach solutions that reduce the number of early birth-related deaths. Together, we can give every family the best possible start. Thank you to the ladies of Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc. and the March of Dimes for their work to ensure that pregnancies within the Memphis community bring about healthy babies.

Selection of the 2021 Memphis City Council Chair:

As is tradition each year, the Council selects its Chairperson for the upcoming year. With thirteen members, seven single districts, and two super districts representing over 651,000 residents, the role of Council Chair is of utmost importance.

On Tuesday, Councilman Frank Colvett, Jr. was selected as the 2021 Memphis City Council Chairman. Councilman Colvett has served the City of Memphis as the Council Vice Chair, Planning and Zoning Committee Chair, and representative for District 2.

Please join me in congratulating Chairman-Elect Colvett on his selection and honor!

Selection of the 2021 Memphis City Council Vice Chair:

As is also tradition, on Tuesday, the position of Vice Chairperson was selected for the upcoming year.

Councilwoman Jamita Swearengen was selected as the 2021 Memphis City Council Vice Chairwoman. Councilwoman Swearengen has served the City of Memphis as the Public Safety and Homeland Security Committee Chair, and representative for District 4.

Please join me in congratulating Vice Chairwoman-Elect Swearengen on her selection and honor!

I look forward to the continued progress that will be achieved by the Council on behalf of every Memphian in 2021 under Chairman-Elect Colvett's and Vice Chairwoman-Elect Swearengen's leadership.

Protecting Yourself and Others during Thanksgiving 2020:

The holiday season is upon us. Although we may be inclined to relax as it relates to public health protocols, now is the time to heighten our approach to social distancing and use of facial coverings. So, as you celebrate Thanksgiving, do so in a manner that ensures your safety, **as well as that of your loved ones.**

We can do this, Memphis! However, as mentioned earlier, your individual effort is required for our collective success.

Looking Forward:

As we move ahead, I am and will always be honored to serve you each day as part of a thirteen-councilmember team working to transform our great city into a place of opportunity for all. Stay tuned for future Council updates as we keep you informed regarding the activities taking place here at City Hall.

With earnest appreciation,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Patrice J. Robinson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent initial "P".

Patrice Jordan Robinson
Chairwoman, Memphis City Council
District 3