

Giving City Parks a big boost

Greetings, Memphis! Your City Council met on Tuesday, Sept. 27 to take up a raft of Resolutions aimed at helping to improve citizens' quality of life. While our Regular Meeting was relatively short and smooth, the Committee discussions beforehand ranged from the progress of the City's Minority & Women-Owned Business Enterprise (MWBE) program to funding for traffic safety improvements to continued conversation on tackling violent crime. Please continue reading for a rundown of some of the actions of the day.



Council at Work

Funding Heritage - Although Memphis has long been a city in which the majority of the population is African American, until the early 2000s there had been no cohesive effort to spotlight the contributions of that majority to the history and progress of the city. In 2008, the Division of Housing and Community Development began the planning process for the Memphis Heritage Trail. This 20-block, 8.2-mile area of historical and cultural assets in south Memphis encompasses more than 60 sites reflecting the nexus of African American culture, civil rights advocacy, entrepreneurship, intellectualism, and musical innovation in Memphis.

At its September 27 meeting, the City Council accepted and appropriated \$75,000 in grant funds for the Memphis Heritage Trail: Arts Collab. This is an intergenerational arts engagement project that serves as a gateway for African American art and culture in three historic, underserved neighborhoods (Orange Mound, South City and Soulsville). The funding was awarded through a competitive grant process from the National Endowment for the Arts.

Supporting Safety - The Council also approved a resolution to accept nearly \$1.5 million from the State of Tennessee for In-Service Training for the Memphis Police Department. The funds will pay for the training taken by 1,869 Commissioned Officers to update them on policies and procedures and allow them to retain their required State certifications.

Improving Our Parks - The Memphis Parks Division, though, saw the greatest activity at the Council's September 27 meeting. The Council allocated and appropriated more than \$16 million for various projects at parks and community centers around the city. The projects include:

- \$4 million for the replacement of Lester Community Center
- \$4 million for the redesign and construction of the Audubon Golf Course
- \$1.2 million for a Splash Pad in Douglass Park
- \$1 million for improvements to the Wolf River Greenway – Phase 6
- \$500,000 for major maintenance at the Lichterman Nature Center
- \$300,000 for the Ida B. Wells Memorial
- \$250,000 for improvements and major maintenance at the Memphis Zoo; and
- \$2.15 million for miscellaneous other park improvements.

The replacement of the 42-year-old Lester Center and the project to redesign the Audubon Golf Course were part of the \$200 million “Accelerate Memphis Plan” proposed by Mayor Jim Strickland and approved by the Council last year. The Council was pleased to allocate funds to get these two Accelerate projects in the works. We are also glad to fund improvements to our Parks system which is so beneficial to Memphians.

The Bottom Line

I am honored by the opportunity to work with my fellow Council Members to enhance this city we call home. Stay tuned for future Council updates as we keep you informed regarding the activities taking place here at City Hall. As always, for an archive of meeting recordings, you may visit and view our [Council Meetings](#) here.



For Memphis,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Martavius D. Jones". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized initial "J".

Martavius D. Jones,
Chairman, Memphis City Council