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## **Pascagoula FY 2020 Budget Process Underway**

*Pascagoula, MS* (August 14, 2019) - Like all local governments across Mississippi, the City of Pascagoula is in the midst of its annual municipal budget process for the upcoming 2020 fiscal year. In an effort to keep the public informed of the process, please read the information provided herein.

The City Council began the budget process in April 2019 by individually completing a budget survey, which city administrators have used as a preliminary guide based on the compiled answers. Key responses from this budget survey included:

- A strong desire to reduce millage (taxes), as well as not increase utility rates, if possible.
- A willingness to consider capital investment but not to increase debt burden.
- A willingness to further realign staff, if necessary and proven efficient.
- An unwillingness to increase employee health premiums.
- A desire to continue focus on public safety and municipal code enforcement.

Department heads were given their annual department budget request packets and soon thereafter held meetings with city administrators to vet those requests. At the same time, City staff conducted public workshops through a Brown Bag Lunch & Learn series where citizens were invited to learn firsthand about the municipal budgeting process and ongoing municipal projects. Those in attendance were heard and their questions answered.

A draft FY 2020 budget was provided to the City Council for review in early July. Since then the Council has held two budget workshops with department heads and city administrators. Based on input from the Council, city administrators will now prepare a proposed balanced budget.

“The Mayor and City Council have made it clear. They intend to reduce taxes and utility rates as soon as it is fiscally responsible to do so,” said Assistant City Manager Frank Corder, who is facilitating the budget workshops. “Since uncovering and reporting the City’s financial problems, this Council and administration have taken the necessary steps to set a path to financial recovery. We will continue to be fiscally conservative by taking necessary and appropriate actions to secure Pascagoula’s long-term financial future.”

The next City Council meeting will be August 20. At that meeting, the date and time of the third City Council Budget Workshop will be announced. The Council will also schedule and advertise a public hearing on the FY 2020 budget. Final budget adoption will be no later than September 15, 2019.

