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September 12, 2019

City of Pascagoula Adopts FY 2020 Budget and Lowers Taxes

The Pascagoula City Council tonight adopted the FY 2020 Municipal Budget, lowering the millage rate and strategically investing in critical services for the coming year. The budget also continues to cut expenses as the Administration remains fiscally responsible.

Pascagoula's FY 2020 budget reduces the City's millage rate by 2 mils, fulfilling a promise made by the current Mayor and City Council members following the necessary corrective actions taken in 2018 to correct the financial mismanagement of the prior Administration, as detailed by the State Auditor's report released earlier this year.

"One year ago, we were forced into making tough, unpopular decisions to ensure the City of Pascagoula's financial sustainability was restored, something none of us anticipated," Mayor Dane Maxwell said. "But when we discovered the problem, we hit it head on and made the tough calls. We promised to lower the millage rate as soon as was financially feasible. Thanks to the diligence of this Council and Administration, we are able to deliver on our word, showing the citizens our commitment to righting this ship in a manner that is practical, given the expectations placed on City services."

Other highlights of the FY 2020 Pascagoula Municipal Budget include:

- No increase to utility rates.
- ½% COLA for non-merit employees.
- Adds an additional Animal Control Officer, as well as provides for additional seasonal, part-time workers in Beautification and Recreation.
- Provides for five new Police Cars through lease.
- Funds capital repairs at Fire stations.
- Invests into critical capital infrastructure projects.

Since the current Administration took office, annual budgeted expenditures have been reduced by nearly \$15.5 Million, or 25%, while the city's payroll has been reduced by over 20%.

"Despite the challenges we face, the City of Pascagoula is now on the path to financial sustainability," Councilman Stephen Burrow said. "This Council has followed through on its promise to Pascagoula's taxpayers."

"Right-sizing government was a goal of many on this Council when we took office," Mayor Maxwell added. "Unfortunately, circumstances over the past year accelerated those decisions and required perhaps more than was initially thought. However, the Administration and City staff should be commended for how they have each handled the City's business during these trying times working with the City Council to achieve many of our goals in as fiscally conservative a manner as possible."

Pascagoula's FY 2020 Municipal Budget can be found on the City's website (www.cityofpascagoula.com – ROAD TO RECOVERY tab) along with an overview highlighting the key points for the new fiscal year.