

Council allows HPD to auction seized, surplus items

Haskel Burns, American Staff Writer 7:23 p.m. CST January 5, 2016



(Photo: American file photo)

Hattiesburg Police Department will be allowed to auction off several seized and abandoned surplus items, including 761 weapons in HPD's evidence department.

During Tuesday's meeting of Hattiesburg City Council, council members voted 4-1 to allow the sale of the items, which include not only guns but recovered items such as tools, appliances, lawnmowers and bicycles. The auction of the items — which would be done through Jeff Martin Auctioneers of Brooklyn — is expected to bring in about \$100,000, which council stipulated will go to HPD's fines and forfeitures fund, rather than the city's general fund.

"This is a means of income that helps our police department afford the things that they need to be able to protect us, the citizens of Hattiesburg," City Council President Kim Bradley said. "It would be neat if we had big, open coffers to buy everything they need from general fund, but it doesn't work that way.

"We depend on fines and forfeitures — we have for the 11 years I've been involved in the budget process. We've bought vehicles with that, we've bought vests, we've bought other things that otherwise, the general fund wouldn't have been able to afford to do. To destroy an asset of some \$100,000, I think would be irresponsible."

Ward 2 Councilwoman Deborah Delgado provided the only vote against the measure, saying she had too many concerns about the sale of the weapons. Delgado said when she looked at the list of items that would be auctioned, she saw pellet guns and BB guns, which brought to her mind the 2014 shooting of 12-year-old [Tamir Rice](#) in Cleveland, Ohio.

"(He) had a toy gun that was mistaken for a real weapon," she said. "And there are people who have great intentions when it comes to their advocacy of the right ... to bear arms, but things go wrong. Things don't go always according to the ideals that we embrace.

"I think of situations where people get involved in spur-of-the-moment, emotional actions — people who don't have a criminal background, people who will get into domestic situations and use a firearm. The availability of that weapon bothers me."

The issue was brought before City Council on Monday by HPD evidence technician Eric Proulx and HPD Chief [Anthony Parker](#). Proulx told council members that the department brings in about 3,400 pieces of evidence a year, and although HPD officials try their best to match the items back up with their owners, the items are piling up and filling up the evidence room.

As for the guns, those would only be auctioned off to dealers with a [Federal Firearms License](#).

"I am not a fan of guns — I don't like guns at all," Ward 4 Councilwoman Mary Dryden said. "In a perfect world, we wouldn't have any, and I would love it if we could get rid of every one of them.

"But the fact is, there are a lot of people who want to buy guns, and I think we have to stop and look at what we have control of. People are managing to find places to buy guns, so I don't think that disposing of these guns is going to cut down on how many guns are sold. I feel like with the things we have in place, the disposal is being done according to the law, and with as much regulation as there is."

In other action Tuesday, council:

Voted 5-0 to approve final payment to B.W. Sullivan Contracting in the amount of \$178,800 for construction services rendered on Jackie Dole Sherrill [Community Center's](#) foundation repair.

Voted 5-0 to ratify and confirm Mayor [Johnny DuPree's](#) appointment of Anthony Harris to the Hattiesburg Tourism Commission for a three-year term beginning Jan. 5. Harris will succeed the outgoing [James Ratliff](#).



Council members Deborah Delgado and Kim Bradley dicuss on Tuesday whether to allow HPD to auction off surplus inventory, including weapons. Council voted 4-1 to allow the request from the department. Haskel Burns/Hattiesburg American

Read or Share this story: <http://hatne.ws/1R9Z9ct>

Repo Car Auctions \$500

usgovernmentauctions.net

Buy Repos and Seized Autos. 70% off \$1 to search thousands All Makes

Police Auctions Site

policeauctions.com

2500+ Auctions Daily. Free to Bid! Save on Gold, Coins & Jewelry

2015 Blowout Auctions

quibids.com

Must Have New Products are Selling for Next to Nothing on QuiBids.com!

US Tax Shield - BBB A+

ustaxshield.com

Owe the IRS Over \$10K in Back Tax? Call & Talk to the Experts Today.

Franchises under \$10,000

franchise.franchisegator.com

Franchises for less than \$10K. 100's of low cost franchises.

TOP VIDEOS



Obama announces gun actions: We can't wait for Congress 01:56

[\(/videos/news/3559655229001/46864948920\)](/videos/news/3559655229001/46864948920)



Trump appears in purported terrorist recruitment video 01:10

[\(/videos/news/3559655229001/46831208070\)](/videos/news/3559655229001/46831208070)



Best moments from the 5th GOP debate in 3 minutes 02:59

[\(/videos/news/3559655229001/46632132850\)](/videos/news/3559655229001/46632132850)



Trump faces off with Bush as GOP candidates trade jabs 02:45

[\(/videos/news/3559655229001/46632127480\)](/videos/news/3559655229001/46632127480)

MORE STORIES



Carnival season kicks off

[\(/story/news/local/2016/01/05/carnival-season-kicks-off/78300478/\)](/story/news/local/2016/01/05/carnival-season-kicks-off/78300478/)

[\(/story/news/local/2016/01/05/carnival-season-kicks-off/78300478/\)](/story/news/local/2016/01/05/carnival-season-kicks-off/78300478/)

Jan. 5, 2016, 5:29 p.m.



Community Calendar Jan. 6

[\(/story/news/local/2016/01/05/community-calendar-jan/78324226/\)](/story/news/local/2016/01/05/community-calendar-jan/78324226/)

[\(/story/news/local/2016/01/05/community-](/story/news/local/2016/01/05/community-)



**Carey theatre professor
appear in Christian film**
[\(/story/news/2016/01/05/carey-
theatre-professor-appear-
christian-film/78319960/\)](#)

Jan. 5, 2016, 3:49 p.m.

[theatre-
professor-
appear-
christian-
film/78319960/](#)

PEARL RIVER
COMMUNITY
COLLEGE

Spring Registration

Forrest County Center
Jan 6, 2016 9am-4pm
Poplarville Campus
Jan 8, 2016 8am-4pm
Classes begin Jan 11, 2016