



*Office of the Mayor
Toby Barker*

Proclamation

100th Anniversary Commemorating Hattiesburg City Hall

WHEREAS January 19, 2023 marks the 100th anniversary of the Hattiesburg City Hall; and

WHEREAS the story of Hattiesburg's City Hall began in 1920, following the passage of a new bond issue, and Mayor T. E. Batson began discussions for a new municipal building to host city services on one property in the heart of Hattiesburg; and

WHEREAS local architect Robert Lee was tasked with completing plans for the new facility, with a total construction cost of just over \$100,000; and

WHEREAS bids for the newly discussed building were opened on October 6, 1921; and C.O. Eure Construction began work in May of 1922; and

WHEREAS the ground floor primarily serviced the police force with offices, prison cells, lavatories, showers, a kitchen, records vault and garage space for fire engines; and

WHEREAS the first floor proper included accommodations for the mayor and two commissioners and offices for the waterworks department and collections department. It also included sleeping quarters for the fire department and open waiting or working space for the public; and

WHEREAS the top floor was the official space for the new police court, with occupancy for 200 spectators. It also included space for school trustees, offices for the city attorney and city engineer and shared meeting chambers for local organizations; and

WHEREAS on January 19, 1923 an official, ceremonial parade began at 10:00 in the morning following the conclusion of police court, where Ordinance #703 was adopted, designating 200 Forrest Street as the Hattiesburg City Hall; and

WHEREAS Mayor W.S.F. Tatum and Reverend J.A. Davis, of Broad Street Methodist Church, led a procession which included commissioners W.E. Estes and L. McAulay, the Chief of Police, the Fire Chief and many others, from the old courtroom down the street to the courtroom of the new City Hall; and

WHEREAS the ceremony began with a reading of Psalm 91 by Rev. Davis; and

WHEREAS the new municipal building was regarded as "one of the finest city halls in the state," and "an object to which every citizen of Hattiesburg can point as being superior to most and equal to any municipal building in the Magnolia State"; and

WHEREAS Hattiesburg's City Hall - along with the vision, work and collective effort it took to bring it into existence - stand as a testament to the Hattiesburg spirit and legacy of going after great things, and then working together to achieve them;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Toby Barker, Mayor of the City of Hattiesburg, along with the Hattiesburg City Council do hereby commemorate this day, January 19, 2023 as the

100th Anniversary of Hattiesburg City Hall

and encourage all citizens and visitors to honor the contributions of past local leaders, like Mayor Batson, Mayor W.S.F. Tatum and others, who gave the best of their talents and energies to our community; to remember that City Hall is the seat of local government that belongs to all people of Hattiesburg; and to share in the excitement of our beloved city's future, knowing that many chapters in its story remain to be written, for generations and centuries to come.




Mayor Toby Barker