

**OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS OF THE ST. JAMES PARISH COUNCIL,  
STATE OF LOUISIANA, TAKEN AT THE ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING  
HELD ON MONDAY, JANUARY 13, 2020**

The St. James Parish Council met for the purpose of organizing in the Council Chambers at the Parish Courthouse in Vacherie, Louisiana, on Monday, January 13, 2020, at 2 p.m. following the inaugural ceremonies of the Parish President and Parish Council.

Honorable Willy Martin, Sheriff of the Parish of St. James, State of Louisiana, called the meeting to order. He asked Linda Hubbell acting secretary, for a roll call and, upon doing so; the following members were recorded present:

Alvin St. Pierre, Jr. - District 1  
Jason Amato - District 2  
Ryan Louque - District 3  
Mason Bland - District 4  
Clyde Cooper - District 5  
Vondra Etienne-Steib - District 6  
Donald Nash - District 7

Sheriff Martin then called on Councilman Jason Amato for the opening prayer. The pledge of allegiance followed, led by Veteran Mr. Deroche.

In accordance with Article III, Section A, Sub-Section 5-a, of the St. James Parish Home Rule Charter, the first order of business of the Council was the election of a chairman. The Honorable Sheriff Martin then opened the floor for nominations.

The first order of business was the election of a Chairman. Councilman Cooper placed Councilman St. Pierre in nomination for the position of Chairman. Councilman Nash seconded Councilman Cooper's nomination. After no other nominations were forthcoming and after a unanimous roll call vote, Sheriff Martin announced that Councilman St. Pierre had been elected Chairman, handed him the gavel, and asked that he assume the duties of this office.

Chairman St. Pierre began by thanking his fellow councilmen for their vote and then announced that the floor was open for nominations for the office of Vice-Chairman.

The next order of business was the election of a Vice-Chairman. Councilman Bland placed the name of Councilwoman Vondra Etienne-Steib in nomination for Vice-Chairman. Councilman Louque seconded the motion of nomination, and after no other nominations were forthcoming and after a unanimous roll call vote, Chairman St. Pierre declared Councilwoman Etienne-Steib Vice-Chairwoman by acclamation. Chairman St. Pierre stated that she was the first woman to be on the council, now she's the first woman to be Vice-Chair of the Council, adding that she is moving in historical ways. Vice-Chairwoman Etienne-Steib thanked the Council for their vote of confidence.

The next order of business was the appointment of a secretary for the Parish Council. Chairman St. Pierre asked for a motion for the appointment of Linda Hubbell as Parish Council Secretary. Councilman Nash offered the motion and Councilman Bland seconded the motion. On a unanimous roll call vote, **RESOLUTION 20-07, A RESOLUTION APPOINTING LINDA HUBBELL AS SECRETARY FOR THE ST. JAMES PARISH COUNCIL**, was adopted.

The next order of business was the adoption of rules of order to be followed by the Parish Council in the conduct of its meetings. Councilman Amato offered and moved the adoption of **RESOLUTION 20-08, A RESOLUTION APPROVING ROBERT'S RULES OF ORDER TO GOVERN PARLIAMENTARY QUESTIONS AND PROCEDURES FOR THE ST. JAMES PARISH COUNCIL**. Councilman Nash seconded the motion, and, on a unanimous roll call vote, the resolution was adopted.

The next order of business was the naming of depositories and signatories of parish funds. Councilman Louque then offered for adoption **RESOLUTION 20-09, A RESOLUTION NAMING DEPOSITORIES FOR FUNDS OF THE ST. JAMES PARISH COUNCIL AND AUTHORIZING THE SIGNATORIES FOR CHECKS AND/OR WARRANTS DRAWN UPON SAID FUNDS**, which named a local banking institution as depositories and the Parish President and Finance Director as signatories of parish funds, with two additional signatories to be the Controller and the Director of Emergency Preparedness. Councilman Cooper seconded the motion, and on a roll call vote, the resolution unanimously carried.

The next item on the agenda was establishing a time and dates for council meetings. Secretary Hubbell state that the meeting will be every other Wednesday, with the first meeting to be held in Convent, and the second and/or third to be held in Vacherie at 6:30 p.m., she also stated that this schedule will not change the already rescheduled meetings in 2020 that was adopted by a resolution in November 2019. Councilman Louque moved for the adoption of **RESOLUTION 20-10, A RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING THE MEETING DATES AND TIME FOR THE ST. JAMES PARISH**

**COUNCIL.** Councilwoman Etienne-Steib seconded the motion, and the resolution was adopted unanimously on a roll call vote.

The next item on the agenda was the adoption of policies governing parish employees. Councilman Nash offered and moved the adoption of **RESOLUTION 20-11, A RESOLUTION APPROVING AND RE-AFFIRMING THE EXISTING PERSONNEL POLICY GOVERNING PARISH EMPLOYEES.** Councilwoman Etienne-Steib seconded the motion and the resolution carried unanimously on a roll call vote.

Next on the agenda was the setting of policy and procedures to be followed by citizens and constituents who wish to be placed on the council's meeting agenda. Councilman Bland offered and moved the adoption of **RESOLUTION 20-12, A RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING A POLICY ON ADDRESSING THE ST. JAMES PARISH COUNCIL.** The motion was seconded by Councilman Louque and was adopted unanimously on a roll call vote.

The establishing of a policy for the written minutes of the St. James Parish Council was next on the agenda for consideration. Councilman Nash offered and moved for adoption **RESOLUTION 20-13, A RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING A POLICY FOR THE WRITTEN MINUTES OF THE ST. JAMES PARISH COUNCIL.** Councilman Amato offered a second, and the resolution was adopted after a unanimous roll call vote.

Upon the recommendation of President Dufresne, **RESOLUTION 20-14, A RESOLUTION APPROVING AND RATIFYING THE APPOINTMENT OF RICHARD WEBRE AS DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS,** was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Amato. The motion was seconded by Councilman Louque and approved by a unanimous roll call vote.

President Dufresne then recommended that Felix Boughton be appointed as Director of Finance. On a motion offered by Councilwoman Etienne-Steib, seconded by Councilman Nash and approved by a unanimous roll call vote, **RESOLUTION 20-15, A RESOLUTION APPROVING AND RATIFYING THE APPOINTMENT OF FELIX BOUGHTON AS DIRECTOR OF FINANCE,** was adopted.

The next recommendation by President Dufresne was Eric Deroche, as Director of Emergency. Councilman Bland offered a motion that was seconded by Councilman Louque. **RESOLUTION 20-16, A RESOLUTION APPROVING AND RATIFYING THE APPOINTMENT OF ERIC DEROCHE AS DIRECTOR OF EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS,** was approved by a unanimous roll call vote.

Ingrid Leblanc, who is currently serving as Director of Human Resources, was President Dufresne's final appointment of Director of Human Resources. Councilman Cooper then offered and moved for adoption **RESOLUTION 20-17, A RESOLUTION APPROVING AND RATIFYING THE APPOINTMENT OF INGRID LEBLANC AS DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RESOURCES.** The resolution was seconded by Councilman Bland and was adopted after a unanimous roll call vote.

After a round of applause, Chairman St. Pierre said he looks forward to working with everyone. Councilman Bland wished good luck to everyone. He said we made promises to the people that we will work for this Parish, and we have a lot of work to do. President Dufresne thank everyone for the unity and the new level of continuity that they will bring to St. James Parish, ending with "we won't disappoint."

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

**RESOLUTION 20-18, A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING ACH ORIGATION FROM PARISH ACCOUNTS AT FIRST AMERICIAN BANK AND TRUST,** was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Amato and seconded by Councilman Cooper. After a unanimous roll call vote, the resolution was adopted.

**RESOLUTION 20-19, A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE PARISH PRESIDENT AND/OR THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE TO ESTABLISH AND/OR MANAGE CREDIT CARD ACCOUNTS,** was offered and moved for adopted by Councilman Louque and seconded by Councilman Bland. After a unanimous roll call vote, the resolution was adopted.

**RESOLUTION 20-20, A RESOLUTION TO AUTHORIZE CERTAIN PARISH OFFICIALS TO AUTHORIZE TRANSFER OF PAYROLL FUNDS THROUGH WIRE TRANSFER,** was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Nash and seconded by Councilman Louque. After a unanimous roll call vote, the resolution was adopted.

**RESOLUTION 20-21, A RESOLUTION DESIGNATING THE ST. JAMES PARISH GOVERNMENT, DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES AS THE OFFICIAL COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCY FOR FEDERAL FY 2020 AND THE ONLY DEPARTMENT OR AGENCY AUTHORIZED TO APPLY FOR AND ADMINISTER PROGRAMS MADE POSSIBLE BY ANY COMMUNITY SERVICES BLOCK GRANT FUNDS AVAILABLE THROUGH THE LOUISIANA STATE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR,**

was offered and moved or adoption by Councilman Cooper. Councilman Amato offered a second, and the resolution was unanimously adopted.

**RESOLUTION 20-22, A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE PARISH PRESIDENT AND/OR THE DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RESOURCES TO SIGN FUNDING APPLICATIONS SUPPLEMENTS, AND ONE-TIME FUNDING APPLICATIONS FOR ST. JAMES PARISH DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES INCLUDING APPROPRIATE ASSURANCES, AGREEMENTS, CONTRACTS, AMENDMENTS, AND REVISIONS IN ORDER TO OPERATE EXISTING OR NEW PROGRAMS ADMINISTERED BY ST. JAMES PARISH IN THE YEAR 2020**, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Bland. Councilman Cooper offered a second, and the resolution was unanimously adopted.

**RESOLUTION 20-23, A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RESOURCES TO SIGN FUNDING APPLICATIONS SUPPLEMENTS, AND ONE-TIME FUNDING APPLICATIONS FOR ST. JAMES COUNCIL ON AGING (COA) INCLUDING APPROPRIATE ASSURANCES, AGREEMENTS, CONTRACTS, AMENDMENTS, AND REVISIONS IN ORDER TO OPERATE EXISTING OR NEW PROGRAMS ADMINISTERED BY ST JAMES PARISH IN THE YEAR 2020**, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Louque. Councilwoman Etienne-Steib offered a second, and the resolution was unanimously adopted.

#### **CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED**

The letter received from Louisiana Economic Development regarding Praxair, Inc. Board of Commerce and Industry Approval Notice Tax Exemption Application #20190076-ITE, \$227,718,291.00 was read aloud by Secretary Hubbell. Consideration for this item will be placed on the February 5, 2020 agenda on a motion by Councilman Nash and was seconded by Councilman Louque. After a unanimous roll call vote, the motion carried.

#### **COUNCILMEN'S REMARKS**

Councilman Jason Amato – Councilman Amato said he looks forward to working with the Parish President Dufresne, the new administration, the council, and the new parish team, adding it will be a great year. He wished congratulation to the new Speaker of the House, Mr. Clay Schexnayder. He sent a special Thank You to the residents of District 2 for allowing him to represent them for another four years. Go Tigers!!

Councilman Ryan Louque – Councilman Louque gave thanks to the residents in his District for offering him the opportunity to go unopposed in the election to serve for 4 years and looks forward to working with this administration. He thanked the previous council for allowing him to serve as Chairman the last two years.

Councilman Mason Bland – Councilman Bland thanked everyone for their support. He said it was his first time running and he is excited to be here. He looks forward to serving District 4, and St. James Parish as a whole. He said he feels the council needs to work together while working singly to work for each District. He said we are looking for the betterment of the Parish with Pete Dufresne and the newly appointed members and he looks forward to working with everyone.

Councilman Clyde Cooper - Councilman Cooper congratulated Mr. Dufresne and his appointees, and everyone concerning this inauguration. He thanked his supporters in District 5 and then he thanked God for directing him and giving him the insight to run again. He said to serve God is by serving the people. He said he wants to make a difference in the 5th District and throughout the Parish. He said we need to keep God first. He thanked the 5th District for allowing him to serve and represent them.

Councilwoman Vondra Etienne-Steib – Councilwoman Etienne-Steib said she is happy to serve among this group of men. She welcomed Mr. Dufresne, Mason, and Donald, saying she is glad to be working with them. She congratulated the newly appointed directors and said she looks forward to working with them, and they helping the Council to make St. James Parish a better place for the residents. She thanked everyone for attending the meeting. She thanked her husband, her daughter, and her sister, who are with her today.

Councilman Donald Nash – Councilman Nash introduced himself saying that he has been involved with campaigning since 2012. He said even though he didn't win in 2012, he stayed involved in the community. He thanked everyone for joining him today. He gave thanks to God. He thanked his wife, his family and friends, those that couldn't be here today, those that gave him unconditional love and support throughout the years, his mentor, who prepared him for this undertaking, his colleagues in government and parish council, especially his friends in D.C, working families who he has fought for and continue to fight for; the community that makes District 7 what it is. He said he looks forward to serving as Councilman for District 7, a voice for the Parish of St. James.

At this time, Councilwoman Etienne Steib thanked her friend Veda, who attended today.

Chairman Alvin St. Pierre, Jr. - Councilman St. Pierre said he appreciated those that voted for him to make District 1 a better place. He congratulated President Dufresne and the directors, saying he is looking forward to working with them. He said it is important to have someone (Clay Schexnayder)

who represents this part of the country, which is St. James Parish, to be Speaker. He said he will be getting in contact with him soon to discuss projects in St. James Parish. He then requested to have the legal advisor seated next to him in the Council Chambers in Convent, he added that it is done this way in Vacherie. Go Tigers!

At this time, President Dufresne stated that if anyone wanted to view the items that were discussed on the agenda, they can go to [www.stjamela.com/agendacenter](http://www.stjamela.com/agendacenter). He added that he is humble and grateful to serve as Parish President and looking forward to it.

After determining there was no additional business to come before the council, Chairman St. Pierre called for a motion of adjournment. Councilmen Louque and Bland responded by offering and seconding a motion for adjournment. The motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 2:33 p.m.

  
Linda Hubbell, Secretary