

**OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS OF THE
COUNCIL OF THE PARISH OF ST. JAMES, STATE OF LOUISIANA
TAKEN AT A REGULAR MEETING HELD ON MARCH 31, 2021**

The Council of the Parish of St. James, State of Louisiana, met in regular session in the Council Chambers of the Parish Courthouse Annex in Vacherie, Louisiana on Wednesday, March 31, 2021, at 7:15 p.m., immediately following the public hearing.

On roll call, the following were recorded present: Council Members Jason Amato, Ryan Louque, Mason Bland, Clyde Cooper, Vondra Etienne-Steib, Donald Nash. Chairman Alvin St. Pierre, Jr. was absent

Those also in attendance were Linda Hubbell, Secretary; Peter Dufresne, Parish President; Felix Boughton, Finance Director; Richard Webre, Operations Director; Ingrid Leblanc, Human Resources Director; Eric Deroche, Emergency Preparedness Director; and Adam Koenig, Legal Advisor.

Councilman Amato offered the invocation and Councilman Nash led the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Honorable Vondra Etienne-Steib, Vice-Chairwoman, duly convened the Council of the Parish of St. James, State of Louisiana, and stated that the Council was ready for the transaction of business.

MINUTES

On a motion offered by Councilman Louque and seconded by Councilman Amato, the minutes of the March 17, 2021 regular meeting were approved as distributed, and the reading of these minutes dispensed with.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President Dufresne reported that Louisiana residents 16 years of age or older became eligible to receive the Covid-19 vaccination. Tomorrow, April 1st the Louisiana Department of Health will be hosting a vaccine site at the King David Baptist Church in Lutcher. More information about how to register for this event and a full list of vaccine locations in the parish is available on our website at stjamesla.com.

- Yesterday, Governor John Bel Edwards lifted some additional covid-19 restrictions. Most of the limitations on gyms, bars, and restaurants will now be lifted. The statewide mask mandate will remain in effect.
- The St. James Hospital Urgent Care is now servicing all individuals who are 18 years old and over. As of now, the urgent care is only booked 2 days in advance. In order to be placed on the schedule, please call (225) 258-2010 and a scheduling representative from the hospital will place you on the Urgent Care schedule to receive your vaccine.

DHR

- Our Department of Human Resources has prepared over 177 free tax returns through the Capital Area United Way Volunteer Income Tax assistance program for our residents to date. This program will remain available until April 15th.
- As a reminder, our Parish Senior Centers will remain closed until we enter into Phase IV of reopening.
- The ARC is now open and will be expanding its days of operation as more clients and employees are vaccinated.

Recreation

- After extending the registration period for an additional week, our youth baseball league has assigned teams and will be kicking off next month with teams beginning to practice next week.

Personnel

- Our summer college worker program is now available to receive applicants through our employment website which can be found on our homepage.
- The program will begin on Monday, June 7, 2021, and continue for up to 10 weeks. Each student will be paid \$8.00 per hour. In order to be considered for one of the positions, students must:
 - Have completed one or more semesters in an accredited four-year College or University or Community College.
 - Have proof of enrollment in the upcoming semester
 - Supported by and living with one or more parent or guardian.
 - And a resident of St. James Parish.

Operations

- Our operations department has remained busy throughout the first quarter with several projects nearing substantial completion, including the Marquette drive drainage mitigation and Bourbon gas infrastructure improvements.
- Drainage and herbicide crews have begun spraying and cutting ditches and waterways in the parish and will continue on a routine schedule. We ask residents to remain patient as crews work to canvass the entire parish.
- Lastly, a number of recreation projects are in progress and nearing completion. Some of these include the District 5 concession, Playground equipment install at District 4 & 5 parks and task orders have been issued for engineering at the new East Bank recreation facility.
- As a reminder, the parish dump will remain open on easter Sunday and trash pickup will run as normal. St. James Parish Government offices will be closed Friday, April 2nd in observance of the Easter holiday. Normal business hours will resume Monday, April 5th.
- In closing, I'd like to wish everyone a Happy Easter and safe weekend with your families.

PUBLIC COMMENT - No public comments were received on agenda items that required a vote.

PRESENTATIONS - None

APPOINTMENTS TO BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS – None

OLD BUSINESS

- **District 5 Alternate Access Route** – a route hasn't been selected yet and Capital Outlay needs to be completed before the end of the year.
- **Acquisition of Land for Multipurpose Building Update** – there is an item on this agenda. Will defer until after that item.

ORDINANCE 21-03, AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 110 "TRAFFIC AND VEHICLES" OF THE ST. JAMES PARISH CODE OF ORDINANCES TO ADD SECTION 12 "GOLF CARTS" AND 13 "UTILITY TERRAIN VEHICLES" TO PROVIDE FOR THE OPERATION OF THESE VEHICLES UPON PUBLIC STREETS AND ROADS, having undergone the hearing process, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Louque and was seconded by Councilman Bland. After a unanimous roll call vote, with St. Pierre absent, the ordinance was adopted.

NEW BUSINESS

RESOLUTION 21-53, A RESOLUTION TO APPROVE DISBURSEMENT OF PAYROLL FOR THE APRIL 2, 2021 PAYROLL, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Amato and seconded by Councilman Nash. After a unanimous roll call vote, with St. Pierre absent, the resolution was adopted.

RESOLUTION 21-54, A RESOLUTION TO APPROVE DISBURSEMENT OF FUNDS TO PAY PENDING CURRENT INVOICES AND PAYABLES, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Nash and seconded by Councilman Louque. After a unanimous roll call vote, with St. Pierre absent, the resolution was adopted.

RESOLUTION 21-55, A RESOLUTION RESCHEDULING THE MAY 12, 2021 MEETING OF THE ST. JAMES PARISH COUNCIL TO MAY 11, 2021, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Bland and seconded by Councilman Nash. After a unanimous roll call vote, with St. Pierre absent, the resolution was adopted.

RESOLUTION 21-56, A RESOLUTION ACCEPTING CHANGE ORDER #2 FROM BYRON E. TALBOT CONTRACTOR, INC. FOR THE MARQUETTE DRIVE DRAINAGE IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Amato and was seconded by Councilman Nash. After a unanimous roll call vote, with St. Pierre absent, the resolution was adopted.

RESOLUTION 21-57, A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE AREA AGENCY ON AGING DISASTER PLAN TO BE SUBMITTED TO THE GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF ELDERLY AFFAIRS FOR JULY 1, 2021 TO JUNE 30, 2022 PROGRAM YEAR, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Amato and seconded by Councilman Nash. After a unanimous roll call vote, with St. Pierre absent, and the resolution was adopted.

RESOLUTION 21-58, A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE SIGNING OF NEW TITLE III SCHEDULE OF FUNDING BETWEEN THE GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF ELDERLY AFFAIRS AND ST. JAMES PARISH GOVERNMENT, DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES FOR JULY 1, 2021 TO JUNE 30, 2022 PROGRAM YEAR was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Louque and was seconded by Councilman Bland. After a unanimous roll call vote, with St. Pierre absent, the resolution was adopted.

RESOLUTION 21-59, A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE OFFICE OF THE PARISH PRESIDENT TO ADVERTISE AND ACCEPT BIDS FOR THE HIGHWAY 642/HUMBLE STREET DRAINAGE IMPROVEMENTS AND INDUSTRIAL STREET TO SOUTH ANGELLE STREET DRAINAGE IMPROVEMENT PROJECT, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Louque. Councilman Amato offered a second, and the resolution was unanimously adopted.

RESOLUTION 21-60, A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE ST. JAMES PARISH PRESIDENT TO SIGN A CONTRACT WITH CINTAS FOR EMPLOYEE UNIFORM SERVICE, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Louque and was seconded by Councilman Bland. After a unanimous roll call vote, with St. Pierre absent, the resolution was adopted.

RESOLUTION 21-61, A RESOLUTION ACCEPTING A CHANGE ORDER FROM VOLUTE, INC. FOR THE RECONCILIATION OF FEES ASSOCIATED WITH THE MOLAISON COMMUNITY SEWERAGE SYSTEM PROJECT, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Nash and was seconded by Councilman Cooper. After a unanimous roll call vote, with St. Pierre absent, the resolution was adopted.

RESOLUTION 21-62, A RESOLUTION ACCEPTING CHANGE ORDER #1 FROM FELICIANA WELDERS, INC. FOR THE PAULINA GAS LINE INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS PHASE 2 PROJECT, was offered and moved adoption by Councilman Louque and was seconded by Councilman Amato. After a unanimous roll call vote, with St. Pierre absent, resolution was adopted.

RESOLUTION 21-63, A RESOLUTUION AUTHORIZING THE ST. JAMES PARISH PRESIDENT TO SIGN AND EXECUTE A CONTRACT WITH DUPLANTIS DESIGN GROUP TO PROVIDE PROFESSIONAL SERVICES FOR THE WEST BANK RECREATION FACILITY, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Louque and was seconded by Councilman Bland. After a unanimous roll call vote, with St. Pierre absent, the resolution was adopted.

INTRODUCTION OF PROPOSED ORDINANCE 21-04, AN ORDINANCE SETTING AND DESIGNATING THE ADOPTED PROPERTY TAX MILLAGE FOR THE YEAR 2021 LEVIED ON ALL TAXABLE PROPERTY WITHIN THE PARISH OF ST. JAMES, STATE OF LOUISIANA, was introduced on a motion offered by Councilman Nash and was seconded by Councilman Amato. After a unanimous roll call vote, with St. Pierre absent, the ordinance was accepted and ordered filed with the Secretary for public inspection and publication

of Notice of Public Hearing, which was scheduled for Wednesday, April 14, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the Parish Courthouse in Convent.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

FELIX BOUGHTON – employees will get paid a little earlier this week, due to the holiday. Due to the move of the May 12th meeting, you won't have as much time to review payroll for that week. He addressed Mrs. Melancon's comment about giving a credit back to the residents, he said that is what we are doing by not rolling forward with the tax millages.

RICK WEBRE – indicated that the road patch work is extensive, about \$110,000. The preservation mill patch overlay is coming up after that, and 643 will be put back on the radar. Two steamer/warmer serving lines have been ordered for District 6 recreation. District 5 concession stand is about 35%. Mr. Webre indicated that if they would replace the appliances at District 6 then they would need to follow restaurant standards for commercial kitchens. Councilman Bland inquired about asphalt on Canatella Street. Mr. Webre is it will be part of the patchwork project.

INGRID LEBLANC – tax preparation has been extended to the new extended date.

ERIC DEROCHE – wished everyone Happy Easter.

At this time President Dufresne expressed condolence to Shark and family and asked everyone to keep them in their thoughts and prayers.

COUNCIL MEMBER'S REPORT

COUNCILMAN NASH – Councilman Nash inquired about ditch digging/cleaning of the Vacherie and Coteaux Canals. Mr. Webre said he will try pull a crew to take of it.

COUNCILMAN COOPER – Councilman Cooper requested work orders for: ditch cleaning on Pecan St., an abandoned house on Dennis St., and culvert cleaning on Barras and Tribbett Streets. He requested an update on the Mt. Calvary turnaround. Councilman Cooper expressed appreciation for all the work been done. He wished everyone a Blessed Resurrection Day.

COUNCILMAN BLAND – Councilman Bland informed everyone that he, and Councilwoman Etienne-Steib have decided to rename Central Project Drive in District 4 and Project Drive in District 6. He said he spoke with Ms. Dana Groover this week and she is in support. He inquired about the next steps to introduce an ordinance. He requested the status of turning over the Romeville Park. Mr. Webre said there are still a few more things to complete. Councilman Bland expressed condolence to Mr. St. Pierre's family and wished Happy Easter to everyone.

COUNCILMAN LOUQUE – Councilman Louque requested to have the ditch check on the canal behind the houses on Nicole Street. He also expressed condolence to Mr. St. Pierre and his family. He wished everyone Happy Easter.

COUNCILMAN AMATO – Councilman Amato presented positive feedback on the Marquette Dr. drainage project. He asked if we will receive \$4 million from the second stimulus package. President Dufresne indicated he hasn't received confirmation. Councilman Amato inquired about the assessment of the DHR building in Lutchter. Mr. Webre indicated that both pieces of property have been surveyed, waiting on the design. He expressed condolence to Mr. St. Pierre, he said Councilwoman Etienne-Steib did a great job, and wished everyone a Happy and Blessed Easter.

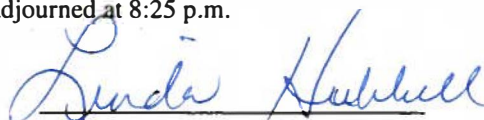
At this time Councilman Cooper inquired if there is a sale for the Shell facility. President Dufresne indicated that the Shell Management team said they have no potential deals on the table at this time.

CHAIRMAN ST. PIERRE – Chairman St. Pierre was absent.

VICE-CHAIRWOMAN ETIENNE-STEIB – Councilwoman Etienne-Steib indicated that, prior to Covid, she reported a leak in the men's restroom at the Magnolia Park and asked if it had been repaired. She said she is working hard to keep the building maintained and recently there were 4-wheelers cutting donuts on the lawn. She asked the residents in the area to help her preserve the building. She said she is concerned about traffic on Church Street, due to the building rentals. She asked the Sheriff to assist because young people will be having parties at the building, and the street needs to remain open, incase of emergencies. She said she would like to begin talking about an evacuation route again. She said another concern is that our small town is becoming citified and residents have been speaking with her about the crime in the community. She asked the Sheriff for his continued support. Sheriff Martin then addressed Councilwoman's concerns, adding that they will soon be launching an app. Councilwoman indicated that she is not anti-bar, she is pro-safety. She asked Mr. Eric to get with them on anything that needs to be done for the name change of the streets. She expressed condolences to Mr. St. Pierre and his family and to Mrs. Dianne Chauvin's family. Councilman Bland indicated that you can sign up with the Sheriff's office to register your home cameras. Councilwoman Etienne-Steib acknowledged Mr. Harry Hymel for always attending the meetings and supporting the Council.

ADJOURNMENT

After determining there was no additional business to come before the council, on a motion offered by Councilman Nash and seconded by Councilman Bland and carried, the meeting adjourned at 8:25 p.m.


Linda Hubbell, Secretary