

Thank you for inviting me today, I have to tell you that I am just as excited today as I was on my first day serving as parish president. So far the transition could not have been any better based off the feedback received from business leaders, employees and members of the community.

Being a public servant is a position that requires us to roll up our sleeves and work hard, but at the end of the day we are working towards the greater good. That is why we as officials take office, because we see better opportunities and envision a brighter future for constituents. We are committed to making a change. Every resident in this parish is affected by the decisions we make.

I often refer to my stint as a councilman as a training ground for this position as parish president. That time enabled me to understand the chain of command to achieve needed results on local, state and federal levels. It was a priority for me to learn and understand the current work flow of each department, employee, board and commission as well as learn the policies and procedures within each department and building intimate relationships with parish employees.

During that process, I've seen the challenges we have overcome and I am fully aware of the obstacles we have to face. Within my term, our team will work to improve and make things better instead of focusing on changes.

Departments-

Human Resources-

- New strong director in place, Michelle Octave brings 18-years of expertise to the parish.
- With decreased funding in most of our programs we, as a team produced amazing results.

YouthBuild- 13 received OSHA cards, 11 achieved GED, and program received 3 awards in for highest wage earned, 90% success rate & supervisor Iris Bause-rising star director.

TWIC Cards- 27 residents

Tuition Assistance-20 residents

Head Start- 231 child with 130 volunteers

Tax Prep Service- 247 residents

Senior Citizens- 12 learned to navigate through the internet and use computer.

Housing Counseling- 94 residents, 15 families found rental, 2 purchased homes.

Emergency Preparedness-

- New communications tower will provide faster connections.

Information Technology-

- Parish becomes more transparent, we want residents to have access to much information as possible.
- Taking steps to redesign parish web page.

Finance-

- Created 2 assistant positions to structure all dept's the same.
- Gearing up for audit.

Operations-

- Created assistant position to structure all dept's the same.

In planning for the future we are applying for federal funding for several parish projects-

Wetland Mitigation-

- Re-dredging of canals to the original design.

Parish-wide sewer system-

- About **3K** residents operate on in-house sewerage systems.

Highway construction-

- **4** lanes needed on **HWY 3127** from St. John to Ascension Parishes.
- **4** lanes needed on **HWY 3125**, Gramercy to **70**, continued from **70** to **I-10**.
- North-South Hurricane Evacuation Route from Houma to Thibodaux to St. James.

Hurricane Protection Levee- East Bank from St. John to Ascension.

St. James Parish Youth and Detention Center-

- Supported by State Senator Jody Amedee's and Troy Brown.
- SB **462** extending timelines to meet licensure requirements.
- SB **456 & 462** passed with **37-0** vote...need House & Jindal's support.

St. James Parish Business and Career Solutions Center-

- Staffed through the Work Force Investment, after a year **1k** residents have received help with resumes, locate jobs, GED training and job placement.
- Helping our unemployed or underemployed residents' get the training or opportunities they need to succeed.

Keep St. James Parish Beautiful Board-

- Newest board currently in **2nd** yr.
- Established with appointees from each councilmen and parish president.

- Supported, (financial) local industries and resident.

Beautification Project- Daffodil planting throughout parish.

Trash Bash- about 200 volunteer's parish wide.

Signs upon entering parish lines, "*Keep St. James Parish Beautiful.*"

Economical Development-

Nustar Energy- 2nd phase, investment \$365-million for a crude oil storage

Nucor Steel- began hiring process, plan to have team hired by Dec; 150 jobs.

St. James Stevedoring- 225 employees, owner of 2 largest and fastest cranes along the Mississippi River.

Do you realize that in St. James Parish, there are about 1K employees on the river behind the levees within various companies?

Shell Pipeline- looks at potential land for a 36-inch pipeline project connecting St. James Parish to Port Arthur, TX.

Union Pacific Railroad- just announced a \$300-million expansion.

St. James Parish Historical Society-

- Plans to relocate museum and cottage to tourist center.
- Best location, high traffic area to better utilize those resources.

Perique Tobacco-

- Unique to parish heritage, strong, powerful & fruity aroma.

- Acadians made their way into this region in 1776, the Choctaw and Chickasaw tribes were cultivating a variety of tobacco with a distinctive flavor.
- A farmer named Pierre Chenet is credited with first turning this local tobacco into what is now known as Perique in 1824 through the technique of **pressure-fermentation**.

Comprehensive Master Plan-

- Currently with the Planning Commission, plans to discuss future parish needs and putting into place.

Employee Task Force-

- Identify challenges or areas that need improvement and solve.
- People who deal or handle day to day issues may have a better strategy and I want to learn about it.
- Consists of 20 parish employees, under the direction of the Assistant Director of Operations.
- March 26th was first meeting.

Small Business Alliance-

- Help mold small or new businesses grow and adapt...
Funding, networking and opportunities.

Business Development Group-

- Event geared to bring business owners, officials and leaders together to better familiarize, make connections and network.

After being sworn in, my focus became helping that employee who longs for career advancement, that tax payer who is curious as to how we use funding, or educating the community about available programs they could benefit from.

Only residents can benefit from deputies, council members, and other local entities banding together. In their time of need, residents must have confidence in the parish government.

We want our residents to rest assured that the parish government will be there when needed. At the end of the day, we are chosen by voters because they believe, as well as we do, that we can make a difference.

We are here to serve the people, within my term we have great things for the future of St. James Parish.

I would like to thank the River Region Chamber of Commerce for coordinating this event as well as members of the parish council and other officials who could attend. I look forward to a prosperous term.

To have a healthy and thriving community, it takes trust from residents, dedication from officials and employees, and the love our parish to see it flourish for a better tomorrow and an even brighter future.