OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS OF THE
COUNCIL OF THE PARISH OF ST. JAMES, STATE OF LOUISIANA
TAKEN AT A REGULAR MEETING HELD ON MARCH 2, 2016

The Council of the Parish of St. James, State of Louisiana, met in regular session in the Council Chambers of the Parish Courthouse in Convent, Louisiana, on Wednesday, March 2, 2016, at 6:30 p.m.

On roll call, the following were recorded present: Councilmen Ryan Louque, Ralph Patin Jr., Clyde Cooper, Edward Kraemer and Chairman Alvin St. Pierre. Councilmen Jason Amato and Kendricks Brass were not in the Chamber on roll call.

Councilman Jason Amato arrived at this time and assumed his seat on the Council.

Those also in attendance were: Linda Hubbell, Council Secretary; Timothy Roussel, Parish President; Michelle Octave, Chief Administrative Officer; Chantal Waguespack, Director of Finance; Eric Deroche, Director of Emergency Preparedness; Bedar Warren, Director of Human Resources; Chantel Waguespack, Director of Finance; Blaise Gravois, Director of Operations; and Bruce Mohon, Legal Advisor.

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

The Honorable Alvin St. Pierre Jr., Chairman, 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 Kraemer and seconded by Councilman Patin, the minutes of the February 17, 2016 council meeting were approved as distributed, and the reading of these minutes dispensed with.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Parish President Roussel provided this report to the council.

I would like to personally thank everyone who took part and continue to take part in our Parish's recovery and relief efforts from the recent tornado and terrible weather conditions in our Parish.

I've heard so many stories of people going the extra mile to assist those in need. It never ceases to amaze me that in the worse of situations, our fellow citizens reach out and render assistance.

Here's a recap of what we know as of today. At approximately 3:30 p.m. on Tuesday, Feb. 23, an EF-3 tornado with max winds of 140 mph touched down in Convent. The debris field from the tornado stretched more than 350 yards along River Road between Water Tower St. and Ester St. and continued all the way to Hwy. 3125.

The tornado ripped through the Sugar Hill RV Park where two people died; Acadian Ambulance transported 31 people to area hospitals with 7 being classified in critical condition at the time. Another 25-50 injured individuals were treated on-site or transported in personal vehicles to area hospitals. Thankfully, all of the injured are doing well and recovering from their injuries.

The Red Cross preliminary damage assessment revealed that 50 residential homes were damaged and six homes were destroyed in the tornado. In addition, 61 mobile homes were damaged and 123 were destroyed. Most of the mobile homes were located in the Sugar Hill RV Park.

Sheriff Martin released the RV Park back to the property owners yesterday.

Entergy restored power to all St. James Parish customers capable of receiving power on Saturday, Feb. 27. At the height of the storm, approximately 900 customers were without power in St. James Parish. Entergy will be coordinating a post-storm patrol to review all streetlights since some lights were blown off during the severe weather.

St. James Parish Government employees observed a moment of silence for the victims of the tornado on Friday, Feb. 26. A group of employees joined Sheriff Willy Martin, Jr., Assessor Glenn Waguespack, and myself in the Council Chambers for a prayer before the moment of silence. The public was encouraged to observe a moment of silence at this time as well.

Earlier this week, I issued an appeal to the community on behalf of the residents affected by the tornado. An account has been opened at Louisiana Federal Credit Union (Account# 126332) to accept donations. Checks may be made payable to "St. James Parish Tornado Relief Fund." In addition, you can also bring donations for the relief fund to my office on the second floor of the Convent Courthouse from 7:30 a.m. until 4:30 p.m.

Our employees have been working hard to get our residents back on their feet following the tornado. During the first hour following the tornado touchdown, our dispatch center processed more than 100 emergency 911 calls.

More than 100 firefighters from 12 different departments in the region assisted with search and rescue efforts.

Parish employees have put in more than 850 hours of overtime during the first five days of responding to this disaster. This does not include the regular hours that have been put in to assist with the recovery and relief efforts.

A total of 54 Operations employees have worked on recovery and relief efforts. On the Tuesday evening following the tornado, six Utilities employees reported to the affected area to check for gas and water leaks.

Currently, a group of about 25 Operations employees are working 10-hour days, seven days a week to clear out and remove all of the debris. So far, they have removed more than 3,400 cubic yard of debris. As of Monday, we're removing about 900 yards of debris per day.

DHR has completed the following activities so far. The numbers I'm about to report are those of DHR only and don't include the on-the-ground assistance provided by the Red Cross, Salvation Army, and Catholic Charities.

- DHR opened a shelter at Lutcher Senior Center so that residents whose homes were damaged or destroyed would have a place to stay.
- 64 pre-assessment forms have been completed on affected streets. These forms are being used to identify the immediate needs of affected residents and to prepare for the long-term assistance that will be needed to support these individuals as they cope with this disaster.
- 5 families have been sponsored with lodging, food and clothing.
- 22 referrals have been made to other assistance programs.
- 17 companies and/or individuals have donated food and/or other items.
- YouthBuild participants have delivered 24 cleaning kits.
- 34 tarps were issued to our residents. The tarps were donated by The Home Depot and Lowe's.

We are working with the USDA's Rural Development Office to host a Community Information Day of Resources for residents affected by the tornado. Rural Development will be on-site to educate the community on potential housing repair and purchase options. The meeting will be held on Thursday, March 10 from 2 to 5 p.m. at Romeville Senior Center.

In other parish news:

- DHR and the Youth Commission hosted a winter formal for residents with special needs on Friday, Feb. 19 at the Lutcher Senior Center.
- On Wednesday, Feb. 24 the Army Corps of Engineers reported that the Mississippi River had fallen below 11 feet at the Carrollton gauge and the Corps has returned to normal levee operations.
- Relay for Life of St. James Parish held a celebrity waiter dinner on Thursday, Feb. 25 at Oak Alley Plantation. There were 12 celebrity waiters and about 120 people in attendance. Relay for Life raised more than $18,500 that night through ticket sales, a 50/50, silent auction, and tips from waiters.
- We, St. James Parish Government, had our Relay for Life gumbo lunch Tuesday, March 1st – we raised $554.00. I would like to thank all who donated items and helped to make it successful.
- Our latest hiring update include the following:
  We are beginning to transition Hollie Zeringue out of the temporary Council Secretary position. She is working only a few days a week to assist Linda in the permanent role. We are planning to keep in touch with Hollie so that in the future when Linda will need to take time off for vacations and such, Hollie can fill in as necessary.
  Holly Poche, who has been working part time in the Permitting and Planning Department has agreed to take on the same role on a full time basis. Permitting and Planning have been quite busy and could use Holly's help more than just a few days. This change takes effect at the beginning of next week.
  We will be scheduling interviews for the vacant Planner position in Emergency Preparedness for some time next week.
- The St. James Parish Chapter of the NAACP hosted a Black History Recognition Program on Saturday, Feb. 27 at the Lutcher Library.
- This morning, parish employees with 10, 15, 20, 25, and 30 years of service were recognized at a breakfast in the council chambers.
- The Economic Development Board is sponsoring a small business seminar on Tuesday, March 15 from 6 to 8 p.m. at the School Board Public Relations Building in Lutcher. The seminar will provide simple steps for starting a business.
- Tomorrow evening, I will be heading to Shreveport to attend the annual Police Jury Association's Convention. Councilmen Cooper and Louque will also be in attendance.

Thank You… May God Bless You and All of St. James Parish! Semper Fi!!!

Councilman Kendricks Brass arrived at this time and assumed his seat on the Council.

PRESENTATIONS AND PUBLIC COMMENT -

Mr. Steve Pavlovich with Mosquito Control Services LLC presented the council with an informative power point presentation on the Zika virus, the types of service they provide to St. James Parish, and their plan to respond to the Zika virus. After the presentation Parish President Roussel inquired if residents can purchase larvicide locally for swimming pools. Mr. Pavlovich responded yes and explained the types of service Mosquito Control Services LLC provides to residents with swimming pools. Mr. Gravois informed the council that mosquito control for the parish will begin on March 14, 2016.

At this time Chairman St. Pierre requested to deviate from the agenda to allow Mr. Mark Anderson with Sugar Hill RV Park to comment on the recent tornado damage. Mr. Amato offered and moved a motion to deviate from the agenda and Councilman Louque seconded. A roll call vote showed all seven councilmen voting in favor of the motion to deviate.

Mr. Mark Anderson, resident of Convent and Co-owner of Sugar Hill RV Park gave an update of the damage to the RV Park. He thanked numerous residents and industry for the manpower and donations. He also thanked the Parish for their assistance with the permit fees.

CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED – None.

APPOINTMENTS TO BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

RESOLUTION 16-64, A RESOLUTION REAPPOINTING ANNA LEE OUBRE TO THE ST. JAMES PARISH AREA AGENCY ON AGING ADVISORY BOARD, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Brass. Councilman Amato offered a second, and the resolution was unanimously adopted.

RESOLUTION 16-65, A RESOLUTION REAPPOINTING ROBBIE LEBLANC TO THE RIVER PARISHES TRANSIT AUTHORITY, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Kraemer. Councilman Cooper offered a second, and the resolution was unanimously adopted.

Councilman Cooper offered and moved for adoption **RESOLUTION 16-66, A RESOLUTION REAPPOINTING MARVIS BROWN AS DISTRICT 5 REPRESENTATIVE TO THE KEEP ST. JAMES BEAUTIFUL BOARD.** Councilman Patin offered a second, and the resolution was unanimously adopted.

Councilman Cooper offered and moved for adoption **RESOLUTION 16-67, A RESOLUTION REAPPOINTING LORRAINE OUBRE DISTRICT 5 REPRESENTATIVE TO THE KEEP ST. JAMES BEAUTIFUL BOARD.** Councilman Patin offered a second, and the resolution was unanimously adopted.

Councilman Brass offered and moved for adoption **RESOLUTION 16-68, A RESOLUTION REAPPOINTING JUDGE JUDE GRAVOIS AS DISTRICT 6 REPRESENTATIVE TO THE KEEP ST. JAMES BEAUTIFUL BOARD.** Councilman Kraemer offered a second, and the resolution was unanimously adopted.

OLD BUSINESS

After a request and explanation from President Roussel, Councilman Kraemer offered a motion to table **A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING ST. JAMES PARISH ADMINISTRATION FOR THE INSTALLATION OF SPEED BUMPS/TRAFFIC CONTROL MEASURES IN ST. JAMES PARISH,** until the second council meeting in June 2016. Councilman Louque offered a second, and the motion to table this resolution was adopted, after a unanimous roll call vote with all seven councilmen voting in favor of the motion. The resolution was then tabled until the second June 2016 council meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

Councilman Brass offered and moved for adoption **RESOLUTION 16-69, A RESOLUTION CONGRATULATING CHRISTIAN LOUQUE ON BEING CROWNED AS THE 2016 INTERNATIONAL JUNIOR MISS LOUISIANA PRETEEN QUEEN.** Councilman Louque offered a second, and the resolution was unanimously adopted.

COUNCILMEN'S REPORT

COUNCILMAN AMATO – Councilman Amato thanked everyone who responded to the tornado damage in Convent. He expressed sincere thanks to Mr. Anderson for his response to the victims affected by the damage. Councilman Amato wished congratulation to the St. James Parish Biddy Basketball for finishing 2nd nationally. Councilman Amato urged the Parish to look into an independent resource to assist with facilitation of the after action review after catastrophic events so that we can become a stronger and model parish in the future.

COUNCILMAN LOUQUE – Councilman Louque also thanked the agencies and entities for their response to the tornado damage and stated they there is still a long way to go and that the parish is moving in the right path for response and recovery.

COUNCILMAN PATIN – Councilman Patin paid gratitude to everyone who assisted his neighbors and constituents during the disaster. Councilman Patin thanked the council for their support and calls. He also thanked the Directors, President Roussel and Administration, Father Vincent and Deacon Albert from St. Michael's Church, Pastor Joseph White, Sr. from Jerimiah Baptist Church, Pastor Cooper from Pilgrim Baptist Church, Pastor Nolan Albert from Evergreen Baptist Church, and several faith-based groups, local and national. Councilman Patin thanked the following for assisting with the clean-up; Mosiac, the Red Cross, and Mr. Kerry Jones from Entergy, Lester Holt and the Nucor Steel Corp employees who assisted every day in every way. He also thanked Sheriff Martin and his deputies for their assistance. Councilman Patin stated that the disaster has changed the community in a positive way. Councilman Patin thanked God and everyone again.

COUNCILMAN COOPER – Councilman Cooper thanked the first responders, parish workers, entities, other parishes, and Entergy who help out during the difficult time. Councilman Cooper expressed resident's concerns regarding the emergency warning system and requested further review for a solution to notify residents of emergencies of this nature. Councilman Cooper stated that he spoke with Mr. Gravois about residents needing additional tarps to protect their homes and belongings and Mr. Gravois is currently working to provide the residents with additional tarps. Councilman Cooper commended Fifth Ward Elementary for raising their school's score 7.1 points with the implementation of a new curriculum. Councilman Cooper provided a hand out to the council from Louisiana Environmental Action Network that he received at a 5th district community meeting in February.

VICE-CHAIRMAN BRASS – Vice-Chairman Brass expressed condolences to the family members who lost loved ones in the tornado disaster. Vice-Chairman Brass thanked the first responders, the sheriff's office and the fire

fighters who responded to the disaster. He also stated that due to the numerous calls received inquiring about providing help to support the residents of Convent/Romeville area a West Bank Day is scheduled for March 12 from 12pm to 3pm at Pleasant Hill Baptist Church whereas the West Bank will be brought over to the Convent/Romeville area to provide meals and supplies. Vice-Chairman Brass reminded everyone about Historical Black College University Expo on March 12 from 9am to 1pm at the First Community Antioch Baptist Church. He also congratulated the Biddy Basketball team for placing 2nd this past weekend at the tournament in Thibodaux and commended the coaching staff and parents for a job well done. Also congratulated the 9 and 10 all stars from the west bank for placing 2nd in the regional tournament and wished them luck at the upcoming national tournament this weekend in Slidell.

COUNCILMAN KRAEMER – Councilman Kraemer expressed his deepest sympathy to the families who lost loved ones and to those who suffered injuries in last week tornado. Councilman Kraemer thanked the parish for their support and the volunteers who responded to the residents of Convent and making St. James Parish a place to be proud of.

CHAIRMAN ST. PIERRE – Chairman St. Pierre thanked the directors and the parish workers, Sheriff's department, industry, the volunteer fire departments, and individuals who showed up to assist with the tornado in Convent. Chairman St. Pierre spoke of how the parish came together to support the victims who were affected.

At this time Parish President Roussel stated that the Parish is building a tornado donor's list and will post it to the tornado link on the Parish website and Facebook page.

LEGAL ADVISOR – None

ADJOURNMENT

After determining there was no additional business to come before the council, on a motion offered by Councilman Amato seconded by Councilman Louque and carried, the meeting adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

Linda Hubbell

Linda Hubbell
Secretary