OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS OF THE
COUNCIL OF THE PARISH OF ST. JAMES, STATE OF LOUISIANA
TAKEN AT A REGULAR MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, MAY 6, 2015

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, May 6, 2015, at 6:30 p.m.

On roll call, the following were recorded present: Councilmen Alvin St. Pierre, Jr., Jason Amato, Terry McCreary, Ralph Patin, Kendricks Brass and Chairman Charles Ketchens. Councilman James Brazan was absent.

Those also in attendance were: Angele Rodrigue, Council Secretary; Timothy P. Roussel, Parish President; Michelle Octave, Chief Administrative Officer; Toby Sandifer, Information Technology; Bedar Warren, Director of Human Resources; Chantal T. Waguespack, Director of Finance; Jody Chenier, Director of Operations; and Bruce Mohon, Legal Advisor.

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

The Honorable Charles Ketchens, 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 Amato and seconded by Councilman Patin, the minutes of the April 15, 2015 council meeting were approved as distributed, and the reading of these minutes were dispensed with.

HEAD START FINANCIAL & ATTENDANCE REPORTS

The Head Start Financial and Attendance Reports for April 2015 were approved on a motion offered by Councilman St. Pierre and seconded by Councilman Patin.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Councilman St. Pierre offered a motion to convene an executive session to discuss Petroplex International LLC, et al v. Parish of St. James, Louisiana et al, United States District Court, Eastern District of Louisiana, Docket No. 15-cv-00140. Councilman McCreary seconded the motion. On a roll call vote with St. Pierre, Amato, McCreary, Patin, Brass, Ketchens voting for and Brazan absent, the motion carried unanimously. Members of the Council, along with President Roussel, Legal Advisor Mohon, Special Counsel Franckiewicz, Operations Director Chenier and Permitting Supervisor Donadieu then withdrew to an adjoining chamber at 6:31 p.m. where an executive session was convened. At 7:11 p.m., all returned and the regular session was reconvened. Chairman Ketchens informed the public that no decision was made.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President Roussel began his report by congratulating Francis Hymel, Assistant Director of Emergency Preparedness, on his election as President of the Louisiana Chapter of the Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials. President Roussel announced that the Office of Head Start in Dallas has informed St. James Parish that the grant funding for the Head Start program will end on June 30, 2015. He commented on the severe weather that passed through St. James Parish last Monday. President Roussel then provided the Council with information and/or updates on the following: April 25 Trash Bash; Relay for Life on May 16 at Lutcher Park; DHR STAR Service Awards Luncheon on May 21; meeting with LDEQ, St. James and St. John officials regarding Noranda mercury issue; Sen. Brown has scheduled a Senate Environmental Committee meeting regarding mercury issue; parish Town Hall meeting on June 4 regarding mercury issue; recent employment offers made and accepted; College Summer Employment program; alert from Louisiana Municipal Gas Authority on a gas transportation rate increase; parish hurricane meeting on May 18 at Lutcher Senior Center at 6:30 pm; VITA tax statistics; Youth Build GED; East Bank intake structure; RFQ's for sewerage line in Paulina for wetlands assimilation program; DOTD resurfacing Hwy 3125; LAPACE conference calls regarding inventory and other tax legislation; and official consolidation of the Lutcher and Paulina-Grand Point-Belmont Volunteer Fire Departments.

PRESENTATIONS AND PUBLIC COMMENT – None.

CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED – None.

APPOINTMENTS TO BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS – None.

OLD BUSINESS

Councilman Amato offered and moved for adoption **RESOLUTION 15-63, A RESOLUTION ACCEPTING THE BID OF SEALEVEL CONSTRUCTION, INC. FOR LUTCHER SEWERAGE POND IMPROVEMENTS.** Councilman McCreary offered a second, and the resolution was adopted.

RESOLUTION 15-64, A RESOLUTION ACCEPTING THE BID OF LA CONTRACTING ENTERPRISE FOR CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW CHLORINATION ROOM AT THE CONVENT WATER TREATMENT PLANT, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman St. Pierre and seconded by Councilman McCreary.

NEW BUSINESS

A discussion took place on the 2015 millage rates. President Roussel and Finance Director Waguespack explained to the Council that the millage for Road Maintenance will be rolled forward from 4.96 mills to 4.97 mills for an increase of 0.01 mills, an additional $5,500. Mrs. Waguespack answered questions from councilmen regarding rolling millages forward. Secretary Rodrigue then publically announced that the St. James Parish Council has scheduled a Public Hearing for Wednesday, July 1, 2015, at 6:15 p.m., in the Council Chambers of the Parish Courthouse in Convent, Louisiana, to consider the property tax millage for the year 2015 levied on all taxable property within the Parish of St. James. The Parish Council will adopt the 2015 property tax millage at the council meeting on July 1, 2015 at 6:30 pm in Convent, LA.

Councilman St. Pierre offered and moved for adoption **RESOLUTION 15-65, A RESOLUTION ACKNOWLEDGING THE SERVICE RENDERED TO ST. JAMES PARISH BY MS. PAM POCHE AS A MEMBER OF AND FOR HER LEADERSHIP ON THE KEEP ST. JAMES BEAUTIFUL BOARD.** Councilman Amato offered a second, and the resolution was adopted. A plaque was then presented to Mrs. Poche.

RESOLUTION 15-66, A RESOLUTION PROCLAIMING THE MONTH OF MAY 2015 AS OLDER AMERICANS MONTH IN ST. JAMES PARISH, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Amato and seconded by Councilman Patin. The resolution was unanimously adopted.

Councilman McCreary offered and moved for adoption **RESOLUTION 15-67, A RESOLUTION DECLARING THE ST. JAMES PARISH YOUTH DETENTION CENTER SURPLUS AND SETTING A PUBLIC HEARING FOR THE SALE OF THE ST. JAMES PARISH YOUTH DETENTION CENTER,** with Councilman St. Pierre offering a second. The resolution was adopted with St. Pierre, Amato, McCreary, Patin, Ketchens voting for, Brass voting against, and Brazan absent. A Public Hearing was then scheduled for Wednesday, May 20, 2015, at 6:15 p.m., in the Council Chambers of the Parish Courthouse Annex in Vacherie.

RESOLUTION 15-68, A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE CONTRACT RENEWAL WITH GUIDRY ASSOCIATES LLC AS THE LEGISLATIVE LIAISON FOR THE RIVER REGION CAUCUS UNDER A TWO YEAR AGREEMENT, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman St. Pierre. Councilman Amato offered a second, and the resolution was unanimously adopted.

COUNCILMEN'S REPORT

COUNCILMAN ST. PIERRE – Councilman St. Pierre congratulated Mrs. Poche. He commented on the rain event last week and the drainage improvements completed over the past year and thanked the parish for their assistance. Councilman St. Pierre thanked Mr. Chenier and crew for their work in Gramercy. Regarding Gramercy Park, Councilman St. Pierre commented on the unopened gate, the parking issue and he will work with the Gramercy Recreation Board in installing parking signs. He suggested to Mr. Deroche that we contact Sheriff Martin for assistance in parking cars at parish baseball events. Councilman St. Pierre shared his comments on the Noranda mercury issue. Upon questioning, President Roussel told Councilman St. Pierre the millage for fire protection expires in 2016.

COUNCILMAN AMATO – Councilman Amato asked Secretary Rodrigue to place a discussion on assisting the Lutcher Bobcat Organization on the June 3 agenda. He thanked the parish staff for their assistance with the fire department consolidation. Councilman Amato commended and thanked Mrs. Poche for her efforts on the Keep St. James Beautiful Board. With the end of Head Start funding, Councilman Amato extended his appreciation to Mrs. Warren and the Head Start staff on providing a great program to the residents of St. James Parish. Councilman Amato was provided with an update on the audit process by President Roussel and Mrs. Waguespack. In closing, Councilman Amato wished a Happy Mother's Day to all moms.

COUNCILMAN MCCREARY – Councilman McCreary shared his comments on the 4-H Achievement Day at Lutcher High School on April 22, which he attended, and he thanked and commended parish students, school staff, Ken Guidry and the Extension Service staff for a great program and Nucor Steel for sponsoring the event. He commented on the Trash Bash, which he took part in, and extended his appreciation to Mrs. Poche for her service to the Keep St. James Beautiful board and he asked all parish residents to help keep St. James Parish beautiful. Councilman McCreary commented on the Acadian Ambulance contract, which expires on December 31, 2015, and he asked Secretary Rodrigue to place a discussion on forming a committee to conduct a formal review of this contract before the contract expiration date on the next council meeting agenda.

COUNCILMAN PATIN – Councilman Patin congratulated Mrs. Poche on a great job. Councilman Patin recognized Housing Authority Board member Yolanda Jones Williams, who was in attendance.

COUNCILMAN BRASS – Councilman Brass informed his fellow councilman and the public that construction of the District 6 Splash Park has begun and he asked Mr. Chenier to schedule the construction of the building and installation of the waterline for the Splash Park. He is receiving calls from residents of Simon Street regarding the grass along the ditch and he asked Mr. Chenier to look at the ditch and identify any issues. Regarding the end of Head Start funding, Councilman Brass asked Mrs. Warren to assist the current Head Start employees in obtaining other employment. Regarding the Youth Detention Center, Councilman Brass pleaded with his fellow councilmen to consider this prime property, which the parish owns, for an affordable housing site for the parish. In closing, Councilman Brass extended Happy Mother's Day wishes to all mothers.

COUNCILMAN BRAZAN – Councilman Brazan was absent.

PRESIDENT ROUSSEL – President Roussel recognized Youth Commission member Victoria Rocquin, who was in attendance. He wished Secretary Rodrigue a very happy birthday today and wished a Happy Mother's Day to all mothers.

CHAIRMAN KETCHENS – Chairman Ketchens extended his appreciation to Mrs. Poche for all she did for St. James Parish as a member and chairman of the Keep St. James Beautiful Board. Chairman Ketchens thanked President Roussel, Mrs. Warren, and Mr. Deroche for assisting the residents of Mill Street during the power outage. Regarding street lights, Chairman Ketchens asked President Roussel and Mr. Chenier to conduct a nighttime survey of the streetlights in District 5 since there are many that are not working and need to be repaired or replaced.

ADJOURNMENT

After determining there was no additional business to come before the council, on a motion offered by Councilman St. Pierre seconded by Councilman Amato and carried, the meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Angele R. Rodrigue, Secretary