

41.

**OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS OF THE
COUNCIL OF THE PARISH OF ST. JAMES, STATE OF LOUISIANA
TAKEN AT A REGULAR MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 3, 2014**

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, September 3, 2014, 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, James Brazan and Chairman Charles Ketchens.

Those also in attendance were: Angele Rodrigue, Council Secretary; Timothy P. Roussel, Parish President; Michelle Octave, Chief Administrative Officer; Eric Deroche, Emergency Preparedness; Bedar Warren, Director of Human Resources; Ashley Poche, Assistant Director of Finance; Blaise Gravois, Assistant Director of Operations; and Legal Advisor Bruce Mohon.

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 St. Pierre and seconded by Councilman Amato, the minutes of the August 20, 2014 council meeting were approved as distributed, and the reading of these minutes dispensed with.

HEAD START FINANCIAL & ATTENDANCE REPORTS

The Head Start Financial and Attendance Reports for August 2014 were approved on a motion offered by Councilman Brazan and seconded by Councilman Patin.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President Roussel began his report by reminding the Council that Joan Louque, Operations Administrative Assistant, is retiring after 28 1/2 years of employment and September 11 will be her last day and he wished her well. With the adoption of the land use plan, President Roussel suggested the Council may want to consider increasing the per diem of the Planning Commission members and explained his reasoning. He informed the Council that he and CAO Octave will not be in attendance at the September 17 council meeting due to their traveling to Washington DC to attend the Corps of Engineers meeting regarding the West Shore Lake Pontchartrain Hurricane Protection project on September 16 and the River Region Chamber DC Fly-In on September 16 & 17. President Roussel then provided the Council with updates and/or information on the following: tentative ribbon cutting for District 3 Splash Park on October 6; the Community Rating System; the EOC warehouse; the safety of water at both East and West Bank water plants; the annual testing of fire hydrants; the positive West Nile mosquito test in the Paulina area; the unveiling of historical Freetown marker on September 4 at noon; and the ribbon cutting for the new St. James High Football Stadium tomorrow at 6:40 pm. Upon questioning, President Roussel told Councilman Brazan the positive mosquito test was along the River Road in Paulina and President Roussel and Mr. Deroche answered his questions regarding the procedure for a positive test in the town of Lutchet.

PRESENTATIONS AND PUBLIC COMMENT

Mark Anderson of Poche Plantation in Convent provided the Council with an update on the Poche Plantation Arts & Crafts Festival being held on October 25 & 26. Mr. Anderson presented a short video on the festival and explained in detail the many activities, booths, cooking contest and parking that will be available during the festival. He also explained that an auction will be held with all proceeds going to the Talaija Dorsey Scholarship Fund. Mr. Anderson informed the Council and the Public that all proceeds of the festival, after expenses, will be distributed to charitable organizations in St. James Parish as determined by the Festival Board. Mr. Anderson then answered questions from Councilman Amato regarding parking for the event.

CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED - None

APPOINTMENTS TO BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

RESOLUTION 14-123, A RESOLUTION REAPPOINTING PHILIP CREEL TO THE DISTRICT 4 RECREATION BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Patin and seconded by Councilman McCreary. The resolution was then adopted unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

After having been tabled at the August 20, 2014 council meeting and some discussion tonight, Councilman McCreary offered a motion to once again table ORDINANCE 14-11, AN ORDINANCE ADOPTING A CROSS-CONNECTION CONTROL PROGRAM FOR ALL ST. JAMES PARISH UTILITY CUSTOMERS AS MANDATED BY THE LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HOSPITALS AND THE U. S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY RULES AND REGULATIONS, so additional information can be gathered and presented to the Council for review before action is taken. Councilman Brass offered a second. Receiving no comment from the Public and after a roll call vote with all voting in favor, the ordinance was tabled until the November 5, 2014 council meeting

Councilman Amato led a discussion on the Drainage & Flood Control Committee charter. Councilman Amato provided a revised version of the Drainage & Flood Protection Committee, as well as information provided by parish resident Richard St. Pierre, an engineer. Councilman Amato reminded the Council that this committee is composed of two task forces, East Bank Task Force and West Bank Task Force, and each task force may approach this issue from a different prospective. Councilman Amato would like to place the introduction of this proposed ordinance on the next agenda. Councilman Brazan expressed his concerns regarding appointing members to this committee, the need for a drainage committee and he would like two public hearings on this issue. President Roussel expressed his concerns with the word "charter", the members appointed to this committee, and he suggested the committee consider flooding from torrential rains and backwater flooding.

NEW BUSINESS

Councilman St. Pierre offered and moved for adoption **RESOLUTION 14-124, A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE ST. JAMES PARISH GOVERNMENT TO ADVERTISE AND RECEIVE BIDS FOR TWO (2) NEW TRANSIT VEHICLES**, with Councilman Amato offering a second. The resolution was then unanimously adopted.

After a very lengthy discussion with President Roussel explaining this resolution and with questions posed by councilmen answered by President Roussel, Mr. Deroche and Mr. Mohon, Councilman McCreary offered a motion to table **A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE RE-ADVERTISEMENT OF THE ST. JAMES PARISH YOUTH CENTER AT FIFTY PERCENT (50%) OF APPRAISED VALUE** until the November 5, 2014 council meeting to allow President Roussel to obtain cost estimates from several commercial real estate companies. Councilman Brazan offered a second. No public comment was received. After a roll call vote showing all in favor, the resolution was tabled until November 5, 2014 to allow President Roussel to gather the information and provide it to the Council for review before any further action is taken on this issue.

Councilman McCreary offered and moved for adoption **RESOLUTION 14-125, A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE OFFICE OF THE PARISH PRESIDENT TO ADVERTISE AND TAKE BIDS FOR ONE (1) 70 KW NATURAL GAS GENERATOR FOR THE EOC WAREHOUSE**, with Councilman Patin offering a second. The resolution was then unanimously adopted.

RESOLUTION 14-126, A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING PARISH PRESIDENT TIMOTHY P. ROUSSEL TO ENTER INTO A COOPERATIVE ENDEAVOR AGREEMENT WITH THE STATE OF LOUISIANA, DIVISION OF ADMINISTRATION, OFFICE OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT'S DISASTER RECOVERY UNIT FOR FUNDING IN THE AMOUNT OF \$150,000.00, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman St. Pierre and seconded by Councilman Amato. The resolution was then adopted unanimously.

COUNCILMEN'S REPORT

COUNCILMAN ST. PIERRE – Councilman St. Pierre thanked the Parish Administration and Operations Department crews for the drainage work done in District 1 and throughout the Parish and positive comments are being received from parish residents. Councilman St. Pierre asked President Roussel that, on his upcoming trip to Washington DC, he express the possibility of using the Parish Canal as a levee.

COUNCILMAN AMATO – Upon questioning, President Roussel told Councilman Amato he can submit his 2015 budget wish list at any time. He extended his appreciation to President Roussel and staff on the parish wide drainage maps and the cleaning of those ditches. Councilman Amato thanked Mr. Deroche and Mr. Hymel for their assistance with the ongoing consolidation of the Lutcher and Paulina-Grand Point-Belmont Volunteer Fire Departments and the Lutcher Volunteer Fire Department will change the fittings on their trucks so fittings are standard throughout the parish.

COUNCILMAN MCCREARY – Councilman McCreary asked President Roussel if he received a petition from the residents of Longview Subdivision requesting natural gas on three streets and President Roussel assured Councilman McCreary that he did receive the petition and this request will be addressed. Upon questioning, Councilman McCreary received an update from President Roussel regarding the cleaning of the culverts under LA 3125. Councilman McCreary is requesting President Roussel schedule a meeting with the Corps of Engineers to discuss a maintenance permit for LAT 4 Canal and to invite the Council once a meeting is scheduled.

COUNCILMAN PATIN – Councilman Patin had no comment.

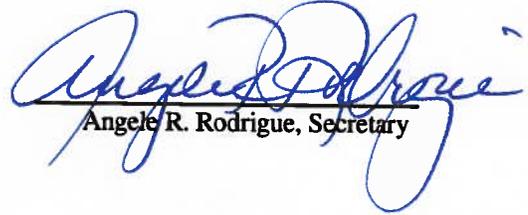
COUNCILMAN BRASS – Councilman Brass thanked Dennis Hymel with T. Baker Smith for taking him along in the fields as Mr. Hymel gathered data for the Vacherie Drainage Study. He informed his fellow councilmen that he met with Mr. Chenier and Mr. Donadieu regarding fence line issues in District 6 and information will be sent to the Council to consider amending the tall grass ordinance to address this issue. Councilman Brass reminded everyone that the first game in the new St. James football stadium is tomorrow night and he wished both St. James and Lutcher successful football seasons.

COUNCILMAN BRAZAN – Councilman Brazan thanked the Operations Department crews for the work in the District 7 Park. He received an update from Mr. Gravois on the culverts for Orange, Acorn and Belle Rue streets. Mr. Gravois informed the Council that the Operations Department is three equipment operators short, interviews are being conducted tomorrow and he assured the Council that as much work is being done as possible with this manpower shortage. Councilman Brazan shared with his fellow councilmen drain cleaning equipment he saw at a recent conference he attended and Councilman Brazan feels this equipment would enable the Parish to clean ditches on a regular basis. Councilman Brazan would like to meet with Chairman Ketchens and Councilman Brass to further discuss the drainage committee and he asked Secretary Rodrigue to send each a message scheduling such a meeting.

CHAIRMAN KETCHENS – Chairman Ketchens extended an opportunity for CAO/Directors comment. Mrs. Octave emailed each councilman a quarterly report, prior to this meeting, which provided updates on activities and tasks at hand. Mr. Gravois provided each councilman with a drainage status map encompassing the last two months of drainage work and a larger map is available for viewing if needed. Chairman Ketchens asked Mr. Gravois to provide an update on the meeting with the engineer and contractor of the District 5 Building, which Mr. Gravois provided explaining the roofing issues and construction is three months behind schedule because of this issue.

ADJOURNMENT

After determining there was no additional business to come before the council, on a motion offered by Councilman Brazan seconded by Councilman McCreary and carried, the meeting adjourned at 7:43 p.m.


Angele R. Rodrigue, Secretary