

**OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS OF THE
COUNCIL OF THE PARISH OF ST. JAMES, STATE OF LOUISIANA
TAKEN AT A REGULAR MEETING HELD ON FEBRUARY 5, 2020**

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, February 5, 2020, at 6:30 p.m.

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

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

Councilman Amato offered the invocation and Councilwoman Etienne-Steib 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 Louque and seconded by Councilman Bland, the minutes of the January 21, 2020 regular meeting were approved as distributed, and the reading of these minutes dispensed with.

FINANCE DEPARTMENT'S MONTHLY REPORT

The Statement of Revenues and Expenditures for December 2019 was approved on a motion offered by Councilman Amato and seconded by Councilwoman Etienne-Steib.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President Dufresne provided this report:

1. First, I want to commend my team of Directors, they have been doing an outstanding job since taking office.
2. The Council and I, along with representatives from the Towns of Gramercy and Lutcher, as well as some of the administration, went to D.C. last week. We had several productive meetings with our Louisiana delegation, discussing major long-term flood protection alternatives for our area.
3. I recently had discussions with Ms. Mary Ellen Pratt from the Hospital. We are moving forward with purchasing the land for the West Bank to construct a multi-purpose building.
4. I've also reached out to Entergy to get a streetlight installed above the new traffic light that was installed at the intersection of Hwy 3127 and 3213. That area is extremely dark at night and I had residents express concerns about their safety.
5. I met with DOTD on some unrelated issues. During our meeting, I was informed by the District Engineer, that DOTD has received all permits required for the LA 20/Bayou Chevreuil Bridge project. Bids will be put out on March 11th.
6. Next week I will be attending the Policy Jury Association Conference in Shreveport.
7. Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program offered by our Department of Human Resources is a free tax preparation program that we offer to our residents. It is ongoing now until April 15th, by appointment only. Please call DHR for more information.
8. Super Tax Day will be on February 12th at the Welcome Senior Center from 10-3, and on February 19th at the Lutcher Senior Center from 10-3.
9. The Elderly Carnival Ball will be held on February 13th at the St. James Parish Reception Hall.
10. The Black History Program will be held on February 20th at the Welcome Senior Center.
11. The Krewe of M.A.C. Parade will roll through Gramercy and Lutcher on Mardi Gras day.
12. The Library recently received a grant permitting them to purchase 13 little free libraries that will be placed throughout the Parish. The grant was awarded hoping it would create a free book exchange program to increase literacy across St. James Parish. The Parish is working on creating flyers and maps to handout for awareness.
13. Good Luck to our All Star Biddy Basketball Team in their upcoming games.
14. Youth baseball registration is now underway until February 24th. You can register online, through the parish website.
15. Upon my administration conducting a Parish wide infrastructure assessment, we immediately identified numerous major drainage channels that are in dire need of attention in order to be able to function properly. As you know, flood protection is a major concern of mine. I'm concerned that these ditches and canals are in such bad shape that severe flooding to our resident's homes and businesses could occur in just an average rain event. My administration intends to declare a State of Emergency for the purposes of immediately removing the impediments to drainage and these major channels while we work toward a long-term solution for gaining access to all of our ditches and canals that need to be maintained for the overall drainage function of St. James Parish.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chairman St. Pierre clarified that Public Comment is for agenda items that require a council vote in accordance with L.S. 42:14.

PRESENTATION - None

CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED

Secretary Hubbell read aloud a summary of the correspondence received from Corinne Van Dalen, Earth Justice regarding FG LA LLC's (Formosa) Land Use Decision. The summary was prepared by Attorney Vic Franckiewicz.

APPOINTMENTS TO BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

RESOLUTION 20-31, A RESOLUTION APPOINTING MEMBERS TO THE ST. JAMES PARISH COASTAL ZONE ADVISORY BOARD, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Bland. Councilman Cooper offered a second, and the resolution was unanimously adopted.

RESOLUTION 20-32, A RESOLUTION AFFIRMING APPOINTMENTS TO THE KEEP ST. JAMES PARISH BEAUTIFUL BOARD, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Bland. Councilman Louque offered a second, and the resolution was unanimously adopted.

Councilman Cooper offered and moved for adoption **RESOLUTION 20-33, A RESOLUTION AFFIRMING APPOINTMENTS TO THE DISTRICT 5 RECREATION BOARD**. Councilwoman Etienne-Steib offered a second, and the resolution was unanimously adopted.

OLD BUSINESS

The following updates were provided:

- District 5 Alternate Access Route – no discussion on this item. Will schedule a meeting with Rep. Brass and Sen. Price to discuss moving forward with this project.

After Secretary Hubbell read aloud **ORDINANCE 20-01, AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 2, ARTICLE II, SECTION 2-36, OF THE ST. JAMES PARISH CODE OF ORDINANCES REVISING THE MEETING TIME OF THE ST. JAMES PARISH COUNCIL**, and having undergone the hearing process, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Bland and was seconded by Councilman Louque. After a roll call showing, Amato, Louque, and Bland in favor, Cooper, Etienne-Steib, and St. Pierre against, and Nash absent, the motion failed.

Councilman Amato offered a motion to take **RESOLUTION 20-34, A RESOLUTION AFFIRMING APPOINTMENTS TO THE LUTCHER RECREATION BOARD** from the table. Councilman Cooper offered a second, and after a unanimous roll call vote, the motion carried. Councilman Amato then offered and moved for adoption the aforesaid resolution. Councilman Louque offered a second, and the resolution was unanimously adopted.

NEW BUSINESS

RESOLUTION 20-35, A RESOLUTION TO APPROVE DISBURSEMENT OF PAYROLL FOR THE FEBRUARY 5, 2020 PAYROLL, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Cooper and seconded by Councilman Louque. After a unanimous roll call vote, with Nash absent, the resolution was adopted.

RESOLUTION 20-36, A RESOLUTION TO APPROVE DISBURSEMENT OF FUNDS TO PAY PENDING CURRENT INVOICES AND PAYABLES, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Bland and seconded by Councilman Amato. After a unanimous roll call vote, with Nash absent, the resolution was adopted.

RESOLUTION 20-37, A RESOLUTION APPOINTING A DEPUTY COUNCIL SECRETARY FOR THE ST. JAMES PARISH COUNCIL IN THE EVENT COUNCIL SECRETARY IS ABSENT AND UNAVAILABLE TO ACT IN THIS CAPACITY, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilwoman Etienne-Steib. Councilman Bland offered a second, and the resolution was unanimously adopted.

RESOLUTION 20-38, A RESOLUTION PROCLAIMING THE MONTH OF FEBRUARY 2020 AS BLACK HISTORY MONTH IN ST. JAMES PARISH, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilwoman Etienne-Steib. Councilman Cooper offered a second, and the resolution was unanimously adopted.

RESOLUTION 20-39, A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE PARISH PRESIDENT TO SIGN A COOPERATIVE ENDEAVOR AGREEMENT AND ANY OTHER DOCUMENTS WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES FOR DISASTER FOOD STAMPS AND RELATED SERVICES, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Bland. Councilwoman Etienne-Steib offered a second, and after a unanimous roll call vote, with Nash absent, the resolution was adopted.

RESOLUTION 20-40, A RESOLUTION OF THE ST. JAMES PARISH COUNCIL DENYING INDUSTRIAL TAX EXEMPTION APPLICATION #20190076-ITE (PRAXAIR, INC.'S STEAM METHANE REFORMER PROJECT) AS PRESENTED BY THE LOUISIANA BOARD OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND APPROVING APPLICATION #20190076-ITE WITH ALTERNATIVE EXEMPTIONS, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Amato and was seconded by Councilman Cooper. After a unanimous roll call vote, with Nash absent, the resolution was adopted.

RESOLUTION 20-41, A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE OFFICE OF THE PARISH PRESIDENT TO ADVERTISE AND TAKE BIDS FOR MULTIPLE MODEL PICKUP TRUCKS FOR ST. JAMES PARISH GOVERNMENT, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Louque. Councilman Bland offered a second, the resolution was unanimously adopted.

RESOLUTION 20-42, A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE ST. JAMES PARISH PRESIDENT TO ENTER INTO A CONTRACT WITH ATTORNEY MARTIN K. MALEY, SR. AND THE LAW FIRM OF MARTIN K. MALEY APLC TO PROVIDE LEGAL SERVICES TO THE PARISH ADMINISTRATION WITH REGARD TO ANY AND ALL MATTERS IN WHICH THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY IS CONFLICTED, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Bland. Councilman Amato offered a second, and after a unanimous roll call vote, with Nash absent, the resolution was adopted.

RESOLUTION 20-43, A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE ST. JAMES PARISH PRESIDENT TO SIGN AND EXECUTE A CONTRACT WITH MOUGEOT ARCHITECTURE, LLC TO PROVIDE ENGINEERING SERVICES TO DEVELOP PLANS AND BID DOCUMENTS FOR RENOVATIONS OF FIRE STATIONS, FOR NEW FIRE STATIONS AND FIRE DEPARTMENT WAREHOUSE BUILDINGS

PARISHWIDE, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Louque. Councilman Cooper offered a second, and after a unanimous roll call vote, with Nash absent, the resolution was adopted.

RESOLUTION 20-44, A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTION OF A COOPERATIVE ENDEAVOR AGREEMENT AND TO DESIGNATE PARISH PRESIDENT PETER A. DUFRESNE TO ACT ON BEHALF OF ST. JAMES PARISH IN THE SIGNING OF ALL DOCUMENTS FOR THE STATE CAPITAL OUTLAY FUNDING PROJECT NO. 50-J47-19-01, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Amato. Councilman Bland offered a second, and after a unanimous roll call vote, with Nash absent, the resolution was adopted.

PROPOSED ORDINANCE 20-02, AN ORDINANCE PROVIDING FOR THE PURCHASE OF NATURAL GAS FROM THE BLACK BELT ENERGY GAS DISTRICT (“BLACK BELT”); PROVIDING FOR THE SALE OF NATURAL GAS BY THE PARISH; APPROVING THE EXECUTION AND DELIVERY OF A GAS SUPPLY AGREEMENT, GAS PURCHASE AND SALE AGREEMENT, AND OTHER AGREEMENTS RELATING TO THE PURCHASE AND/OR SALE OF NATURAL GAS; CONSENTING TO THE ASSIGNMENT OF CERTAIN OBLIGATIONS UNDER THE GAS SUPPLY AGREEMENT AND THE GAS PURCHASE AND SALE CONTRACT IN CONNECTION WITH THE ISSUANCE OF BONDS BY BLACK BELT; AND PROVIDING FOR OTHER MATTERS IN CONNECTION THEREWITH; was introduced on a motion offered by Councilman Louque and seconded by Councilwoman Etienne-Steib. After a unanimous roll call vote, with Nash 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 6:15 p.m., Wednesday, February 19, 2020, in the Council Chambers of the Parish Courthouse Annex in Vacherie.

PROPOSED ORDINANCE 20-03, AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTION OF AMENDATORY DOCUMENTS IN CONNECTION WITH THE CONVERSION OF THE INTEREST RATE ON (i) \$56,200,000 ORIGINAL AGGREGATE PRINCIPAL AMOUNT PARISH OF ST. JAMES, STATE OF LOUISIANA REVENUE BONDS (NUSTAR LOGISTICS, L.P. PROJECT) SERIES 2008, (ii) \$100,000,000 ORIGINAL AGGREGATE PRINCIPAL AMOUNT PARISH OF ST. JAMES, STATE OF LOUISIANA REVENUE BONDS (NUSTAR LOGISTICS, L.P. PROJECT) SERIES 2010, (iii) \$50,000,000 ORIGINAL AGGREGATE PRINCIPAL AMOUNT PARISH OF ST. JAMES, STATE OF LOUISIANA REVENUE BONDS (NUSTAR LOGISTICS, L.P. PROJECT) SERIES 2010A, (iv) \$85,000,000 ORIGINAL AGGREGATE PRINCIPAL AMOUNT PARISH OF ST. JAMES, STATE OF LOUISIANA REVENUE BONDS (NUSTAR LOGISTICS, L.P. PROJECT) SERIES 2010B AND (v) \$75,000,000 ORIGINAL AGGREGATE PRINCIPAL AMOUNT PARISH OF ST. JAMES, STATE OF LOUISIANA REVENUE BONDS (NUSTAR LOGISTICS, L.P. PROJECT) SERIES 2011, APPROVING THE REMARKETING AGENTS, AUTHORIZING THE APPROPRIATE OFFICERS OF THE PARISH TO EXECUTE THE AFOREMENTIONED INSTRUMENTS AND ALL OTHER DOCUMENTS AND CERTIFICATES DEEMED NECESSARY IN CONNECTION THEREWITH; AND PROVIDING FOR OTHER MATTERS WITH RESPECT TO THE FOREGOING, was introduced on a motion offered by Councilman Amato and seconded by Councilman Bland. After a unanimous roll call vote, with Nash 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 6:15 p.m., Wednesday, February 19, 2020, in the Council Chambers of the Parish Courthouse Annex in Vacherie.

COUNCIL MEMBER’S REPORT

COUNCILMAN AMATO – Councilman Amato thanked Mr. Webre for the update of Lucher Park. He said he would submit a work request to replace the missing No Wake Zone signs at the boat launch. He congratulated the team that went to D.C., adding that they did an excellent job representing our Parish and he received positive feedback from others who were in attendance. He said he appreciated the good work everyone is doing with the transition of the administration. He congratulated Representative Brass on his selection as Vice-Chairman on the Transportation Committee. He wished a belated Happy Birthday to President Dufresne.

COUNCILMAN LOUQUE – Councilman Louque expressed his appreciation to President Dufresne for the initiative on the drainage work through the State of Emergency. He thanked Mr. Webre for the detailed operations report. Councilman Louque said drainage is a high priority for all Districts.

COUNCILMAN BLAND – Councilman Bland asked when the budget could be opened for amendments. Chairman St. Pierre said he should prepare a list and submit to Mr. Boughton for review. He asked if any correspondence were received from CN Rail on the two railroad crossings near the bridge and near Occidental. Mr. Mickey Roussel said a meeting is scheduled for February 20th for Belmont so he will bring those up at the meeting. Councilman Bland asked if he could get a status of the culvert that go underneath the CN railroad track. Mr. Webre stated that this will be done with the State of Emergency project. Councilman Bland asked Mr. Webre if he had a chance to speak with DOTD or the Levee Board on the side road scraping. Mr. Webre said they are looking into specialized equipment that can do that and is looking to see what will be in the budget. President Dufresne said he has met with DOTD on two occasions for both Hwy 44 and 18. Councilman Bland requested a map of the State of Emergency. Councilman Bland said Bellevue Lakes drainage is a big concern, especially Bellevue side street. He added that T-Poche Street and LaBoukin Street drain under the track and goes through Bellevue Lakes. He said that drainage is blocked in the pond and he would like to get the drainage study that was approved by the Planning Commission for Bellevue Lakes.

COUNCILMAN COOPER – Councilman Cooper thanked Mr. Webre and Mr. Mickey for the grass cutting on the baseball field at Welcome Park. He asked if the maintenance department can look into the restrooms to ensure they are in working condition. He asked for an update from Mr. Franckiewicz on the presentations from the last council meeting.

COUNCILWOMAN ETIENNE-STEIB – Councilwoman Etienne-Steib thanked Mr. Webre for handling the problem at her house while she was away and asked if he had a chance to look at the procedures for notifying residents when changing out gas meters. Mr. Webre indicated that only the face on the meter was to be replaced not

the entire meter. He said they will coordinate with Homeland Security to use the same programs to notify the public in advance. Councilwoman Etienne-Steib asked the administration to get in touch with Drew Tessler to start moving forward with the culverts that were deemed priority on Magnolia Heights, North Bank Street, and Church Street under the railroad, adding that drainage is a problem on our side as well and would like it to be a priority. President Dufresne said he had a conversation today with the engineering firm who did the drainage study. Mr. Webre said he has his first meeting with that company tomorrow. Councilwoman Etienne-Steib asked for someone to look into the trash in the ditches on Franklin St. and on Old Vacherie Road. She said around January 7th, she received a correspondence from Keranique Jones regarding recreation and the lack of good facilities for the youth and wanted to know what the plan was. She said she was glad to report that she received a call from President Dufresne and Mr. Martin stating that we would be moving forward to secure the land to build the multipurpose building and thanked them for being diligent on that as well. She said the road that goes beyond the track on Church Street needs to be surfaced because when there is a lot of rain, they cannot bring bodies to the cemetery. She indicated that she wanted to vote yes to move the council meeting time to 6:00 p.m. but she did receive calls and said that she hopes that the people who asked for it to remain at 6:30 go to the meetings.

COUNCILMAN NASH – Councilman Nash was absent.

CHAIRMAN ST. PIERRE – Chairman St. Pierre asked Mr. Deroche to check the sound system in the Convent Chambers. He said while in Washington they met Mr. Todd Bromell with CN Rail and Drew Tessler. He said he asked for a meeting to discuss concerns on both the East and West Banks. He said the D.C. meetings were good. He said they spoke about the railroad, Shaun Wilson, Ed Price, and Clay Schexnayder were there and meetings were requested. He said they met with our two Senators and Congressman Richmond, and the proposal put in front of them was very positive. He said they met with the Corps and was very positive about the activity that was in place in front of them. He said they should receive a response by the end of March. He thanked President Dufresne for the State of Emergency. President Dufresne said it was a collaborative effort with his team.

Councilwoman Etienne-Steib said she just received a text that a vacant lot on Collins Street is becoming a junk pile and asked if there is an ordinance that could be enforced. Mr. Webre will investigate it.

Councilman Bland said he had a District 4 Recreation Board meeting and they are planning to tear down the splash pad at the park and move forward to return the property to its original landowner, which is the School Board. They will try to get the splash pad installed on Central Project Street before summertime.

Chairman St. Pierre said DOTD was cleaning the area at the end of 3213 and the I-10 exchange. He thanked the Sheriff and the Mayor of Gramercy for being involved.

President Dufresne said he spoke with Waste Management about replacing the dumpster at the boat launch.

DIRECTOR REPORT

RICK WEBRE – presented a detailed report of ongoing projects.

FELIX BOUGHTON – will present an amendment to the employee handbook at the next meeting. The change is regarding employee travel.

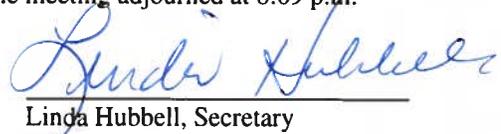
INGRID LEBLANC – encouraged everyone to come out to the senior events this month.

ERIC DEROCHE – they are wrapping up final things related to the Ransomware attack. We received word that none of the data that was encrypted left the custody of the Parish.

President Dufresne thanked members of the administrative team, who were in the audience, for attending the meeting tonight.

ADJOURNMENT

After determining there was no additional business to come before the council, on a motion offered by Councilman Louque and seconded by Councilwoman Etienne-Steib and carried, the meeting adjourned at 8:09 p.m.


Linda Hubbell, Secretary