

**OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS OF THE
COUNCIL OF THE PARISH OF ST. JAMES, STATE OF LOUISIANA
TAKEN AT A REGULAR MEETING HELD ON JUNE 24, 2020**

The Council of the Parish of St. James, State of Louisiana, met in regular session in the Council Chambers of the Parish Courthouse Annex in Vacherie Louisiana, on Wednesday, June 24, 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, Donald Nash, and Chairman Alvin St. Pierre.

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

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

The Honorable Alvin St. Pierre, 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 Councilwoman Etienne-Steib and seconded by Councilman Nash, the minutes of the June 10, 2020 public hearing were approved as distributed, and the reading of these minutes dispensed with.

On a motion offered by Councilman Amato and seconded by Councilman Bland, the minutes of the June 10, 2020 regular meeting were approved as distributed, and the reading of these minutes dispensed with.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President Dufresne presented this report to the council:

- I would like to congratulate our Class of 2020 on their recent graduation and I wish them the best of luck in their future endeavors.
- Last week was Father's Day. I hope everyone enjoyed a safe and relaxing day.
- As we all know, the Governor has extended Phase 2 for 28 more days due to the increase in case numbers. As far as St. James Parish is concerned, our numbers are still low. We have experienced less than a 5% increase in positive cases. We are not seeing any increase in cases that require hospitalization, but we have been receiving an increase in the amount of concern from the public. We can't let our guard down, remember to be mindful that the virus is still very real, and take the necessary precautions to protect yourself and others.
- Reminder: stay prepared for hurricane season. Stock up on essentials, have a game plan in place for your family, not to wait until the storm is upon us to make and start up your plan.
- Early voting started on Saturday and will be held this Saturday to next Saturday from 8:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. at the Convent Courthouse, Vacherie Courthouse, and the Lutcher Machine Warehouse.
- On Wednesday, July 22nd at 6:30 p.m. at the Vacherie Courthouse, St. James Parish Council plan to consider adopting a resolution ordering and calling an election to be held in the Parish of St. James to renew, extend, and rededicate existing ad valorem tax.
- Last week, I was able to check on the progress of the State of Emergency Drainage Project. I want to give a Shout-Out to all the operations crews who have been doing a fantastic job clearing out our drainage canals and right of ways. Please be patient as we work to address all of the drainage issues.
- I would like to commend Council Member Donald Nash for organizing the community cleanup this past Saturday in District 7. Volunteers collected 46 garbage bags of trash, cleaned 5 miles of highway in South Vacherie. The Keep St. James Parish Beautification Board does have pickers, vest, and trash bags for use if any other council member or community member would like to host a cleanup in their District.
- I would like to remind residents to complete the census. It takes just a few minutes to complete. We need St. James Parish to be counted properly.
- The deadline to register for Co-ed Cabbage Ball League is Thursday, July 2nd, you can call 225-562-2337 for more information on registering.
- Activity bags from the Library are available the next two Mondays. Be sure to visit either branch on Monday, June 29th and Monday July 6th to pick up your activity bag. Also, virtual story time takes place every Thursday at 10 a.m., via link posted on the Parish's Facebook page.
- The Hospital has received the capital outlay approval and we have begun the initial design of the multi-purpose facility for the Westbank, which will include indoor basketball courts, a wellness, and an indoor walking track.
- In an effort to improve health care coverage for our parish employees, we've been negotiating with the hospital to include a 3rd tier to the employee's health care plan which would significantly reduce or virtually eliminate the deductibles that our employees would pay when visiting our local hospital to receive services that our hospital provides.
- To touch on a few current events taking place in our operations department:
 - We developed a scope of work for demolition of the Gramercy swimming pool and building which will be the proposed site for the Eastbank indoor basketball facility.
 - My administration participated in valued engineering study from the Corp. to seek an alternative alignment for the Westshore project, that is coming along pretty well.
 - We are just about done with the substantial completion inspection for the Lutcher baseball park. A notice to proceed will be issued within 30 days for the Lutcher Basketball Pavilion.
 - Met with Meyer's Engineering this week to begin drainage improvement on Marquette Dr. in Belle Rue Subdivision.
 - The initial planning meetings have conducted to replace the gas line throughout Bourbon Subdivision.

- The turn lane projects on 3125 and 642 have recently begun.
- Stormwater drainage improvements are being identified for the residential area along 642, which will include North and South Angelle area.
- Along with the gas line replacement in Bourbon Subdivision, we will also replace the gas line down Dr. Samuel Jones Street.
- In addition, a task order has been issued to High Tide Engineering to develop and redesign plans for the District 5 park.
- I, along with Operations Director Mr. Rick Webre, inspected numerous culvert problem areas in District 6. We issued a task order to begin the process which includes replacing the culverts under the tracks in the Magnolia area. Also, in Magnolia, a contractor has drafted and executed a contract for the basketball pavilion.
- The dumpster at the St. James Boat Club has been replaced.
- Our operations crews met with Entergy this week and we are waiting on cost estimates to run power to the weir at the South Vacherie pump station.
- The Molaison sewer project is moving along. We recently did a smoke test on the infrastructure to evaluate its integrity prior to the completion of the project. All segments passed. Sealed bids for the projects were received and opened on July 2nd, MCMC was the low bidder at \$653,000.00.
- St. James Parish Government office will be closed next Friday, July 3rd, in observance of Independence Day. I would like to wish everyone a Safe and Happy 4th of July weekend.

PUBLIC COMMENT - No public comments were received on agenda items that required a vote.

PRESENTATIONS

Mr. Glen Millet, Chairman of the Planning Commission presented the Planning Commission's annual report.

CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED

A summary of the letter received from Pam Spees, Center for Constitutional Rights, was read aloud by the Council Secretary.

Chairman St. Pierre explained that Assessor Glenn Waguespack requested the Board of Review for September 16, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. in Vacherie.

APPOINTMENTS TO BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

Councilwoman Etienne-Steib offered and moved for adoption **RESOLUTION 20-129, A RESOLUTION APPOINTING JUDGE JUDE GRAVOIS AND DANICE PITTMAN AS DISTRICT 6 REPRESENTATIVES TO THE KEEP ST. JAMES PARISH BEAUTIFUL BOARD.** Councilman Nash offered a second, and the resolution was unanimously adopted.

Councilman Nash offered and moved for adoption **RESOLUTION 20-130, A RESOLUTION APPOINTING DANNY SHEPARD AS A DISTRICT 7 REPRESENTATIVE TO THE ST. JAMES PARISH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BOARD.** Councilwoman Etienne-Steib offered a second, and the resolution was unanimously adopted.

Councilman Bland offered and moved for adoption **RESOLUTION 20-131, A RESOLUTION AMENDING THE TERM EXPIRATION DATE TO JEREMY CATOIRE'S APPOINTMENT TO THE ST. JAMES PARISH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BOARD.** Councilman Louque offered a second, and the resolution was unanimously adopted.

RESOLUTION 20-132, A RESOLUTION APPOINTING KERRY BOURGEOIS AND SHANITRA JASMIN AS MEMBERS TO THE RIVER PARISHES TRANSIT AUTHORITY, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Amato. Councilman Bland offered a second, and the resolution was unanimously adopted.

OLD BUSINESS

ORDINANCE 20-07, AN ORDINANCE SETTING AND DESIGNATING THE ADOPTED PROPERTY TAX MILLAGE FOR THE YEAR 2020 LEVIED ON ALL TAXABLE PROPERTY WITHIN THE PARISH OF ST. JAMES, STATE OF LOUISIANA, having undergone the hearing process, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Nash and was seconded by Councilman Cooper. After a unanimous roll call vote, the ordinance was adopted.

NEW BUSINESS

RESOLUTION 20-133, A RESOLUTION TO APPROVE DISBURSEMENT OF PAYROLL FOR THE JUNE 26, 2020 PAYROLL, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Amato and seconded by Councilman Cooper. After a unanimous roll call vote, the resolution was adopted.

RESOLUTION 20-134, 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 Nash. After a unanimous roll call vote, the resolution was adopted.

RESOLUTION 20-135, A RESOLUTION AMENDING SECTION X OF THE ST. JAMES PARISH GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Amato and seconded by Councilman Cooper. After a unanimous roll call vote, the resolution was unanimously adopted.

RESOLUTION 20-136, A RESOLUTION SCHEDULING THE BOARD OF REVIEW FOR SEPTEMBER 16, 2020, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Louque. Councilman Bland offered a second, and the resolution was unanimously adopted.

RESOLUTION 20-137, A RESOLUTION AMENDING THE CONTRACT FOR HIGH TIDE CONSULTANTS, L.L.C., was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Louque and was seconded by Councilman Bland. After a unanimous roll call vote, the resolution was adopted.

RESOLUTION 20-138, A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE ST. JAMES PARISH PRESIDENT TO SIGN A COOPERATIVE ENDEAVOR AGREEMENT WITH PARKVIEW LAND COMPANY L.L.C. FOR THE USE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTY AS A TEMPORARY VEGETATIVE DEBRIS AREA, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Nash and seconded by Councilman Louque. After a unanimous roll call vote, the resolution was adopted.

RESOLUTION 20-139, A RESOLUTION AMENDING CONTRACT WITH TRIO COMMUNITY MEALS PREVIOUSLY KNOWN AS ELIOR NORTH AMERICA'S CORP. D/B/A/ BATEMAN COMMUNITY LIVING FOR FOOD SERVICES TO SENIOR CONGREGATE AND HOMEBOUND MEAL NUTRITION PROGRAM, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Amato and seconded by Councilman Louque. After a unanimous roll call vote, the resolution was adopted.

RESOLUTION 20-140, A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING ST. JAMES PARISH PRESIDENT PETER A. DUFRESNE TO SIGN A COOPERATIVE ENDEAVOR AGREEMENT WITH NEW HOPE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY CENTER TO PROVIDE THE USE OF THE BUILDING TO HOLD THE "KEEP MOVING FOR LIFE" SENIOR EXERCISE PROGRAM FOR THE ST. JAMES PARISH ELDERLY SERVICES PROGRAM, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Nash and seconded by Councilman Cooper. After a unanimous roll call vote, the resolution was adopted.

RESOLUTION 20-141, A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING ST. JAMES PARISH PRESIDENT PETER A. DUFRESNE TO SIGN AN AGREEMENT WITH JULIE GUIDRY TO PROVIDE "KEEP MOVING FOR LIFE" SENIOR EXERCISE PROGRAM FOR ST. JAMES PARISH ELDERLY SERVICES PROGRAM, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Cooper and seconded by Councilman Louque. After a unanimous roll call vote, the resolution was adopted.

RESOLUTION 20-142, A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING ST. JAMES PARISH PRESIDENT PETER A. DUFRESNE TO SIGN AN INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT WITH THE ST. JAMES PARISH FITNESS CENTER TO PROVIDE WELLNESS SERVICES TO THE ST. JAMES PARISH ELDERLY SERVICES PROGRAM, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Amato and seconded by Councilwoman Etienne-Steib. After a unanimous roll call vote, the resolution was adopted.

RESOLUTION 20-143, A RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR THE ACCEPTANCE OF WORK PERFORMED BY FRICKEY BROTHERS CONSTRUCTION, INC. IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CERTIFICATE OF SUBSTANTIAL COMPLETION FOR LUTCHER PARK BASEBALL FIELD ADDITIONS, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Amato and seconded by Councilman Bland. After a unanimous roll call vote, the resolution was adopted.

RESOLUTION 20-144, A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING PARISH PRESIDENT TO SUBMIT AMENDMENT TO THE PARISH'S COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DISASTER RECOVERY PLAN, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilwoman Etienne-Steib and seconded by Councilman Nash. After a unanimous roll call vote, the resolution was adopted.

RESOLUTION 20-145, A RESOLUTION PROCLAIMING THE MONTH OF JUNE 2020 AS HOMEOWNERSHIP MONTH IN ST. JAMES PARISH, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Nash. Councilwoman Etienne-Steib offered a second and the resolution was unanimously adopted.

INTRODUCTION OF PROPOSED ORDINANCE 20-08, AN ORDINANCE TO AUTHORIZE THE LEASE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTY BY THE PARISH OF ST. JAMES, was introduced on a motion offered by Councilman Bland and seconded by Councilman Cooper. After a unanimous roll call vote, 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, July 8, 2020, in the Council Chambers of the Parish Courthouse in Convent.

COUNCIL MEMBER'S REPORT

COUNCILMAN NASH– Councilman Nash asked if there were going to be any changes to the workforce process due to COVID-19. President Dufresne said we will remain status quo. Councilman Nash inquired about digging/clearing drainage canals in South Vacherie. He thanked everyone who came out for the cleanup in South Vacherie, adding it was a great success and said he is looking forward to Phase 2, where they will be able to cover the remainder of South Vacherie in about 2-3 weeks and said everyone is welcome.

COUNCILWOMAN ETIENNE-STEIB – Councilwoman Etienne-Steib said she received several calls about the water in South Vacherie and on Magnolia Heights., due to heavy rain. She said work orders have been submitted to provide relief. She requested condolence letter be sent to the family of Ms. Ida Jasmin and to the family of Ms. Julia Adams. She asked Mr. Webre to investigate the repaving of the graveyard road on Church Street.

COUNCILMAN COOPER – Councilman Cooper inquired about the status of his work orders. Mr. Webre will get with each Council Member to provide access. Councilman Cooper said he received calls about water on Judge Becnel

Street. He thanked Mrs. Ingrid Leblanc for the food delivery to the resident in Sugar Hill. He asked if there were issues with the food delivery, because they closed early. Councilman Cooper also requested a condolence letter be sent to the family of Julia Adams. He said the grass by St. Luke Street needs to be cut and asked how do we address the property owner for not maintaining the grass. Mr. Weber indicated that an official letter should be sent. He asked, concerning Occidental's pipeline, what is the proper distance of a pipeline next to a community. Mr. Deroche said it is regulated by DOTD.

COUNCILMAN BLAND – Councilman Bland said he is excited to get the lease signed with the School Board, and said he spoke with Brent to begin work on the splash park. He said he sent a note to DOTD regarding the road scrapping. He also said that they need to make sure Mr. Martin and the other attorney get the document signed for the road repaving. Councilman Bland said that the Volunteer Fire Department is always looking for volunteers.

COUNCILMAN LOUQUE – Councilman Louque had no comments.

COUNCILMAN AMATO – Councilman Amato thanked the Parish crew for repairing the water leak near First Antioch Baptist Church. He inquired about the CARES Act Funding application. Mr. Boughton said he will provide an update. Councilman Amato thanked everyone for the Lucher Baseball field, adding that it came out nice. He requested an executive session at the next council meeting to receive an update from Mr. Franckiewicz on the Environmental Study. He asked everyone to keep Mr. Michael Barker in your prayers, who passed away, he was a long-time District 2 recreation board member.

CHAIRMAN ST. PIERRE – Chairman St. Pierre thanked Mr. Webre for the intense report. He said Gramercy Recreation is in the process of redoing the sidewalks and tracks. He said there will be a meeting on Friday to move forward with the pool. He said the Mayor and Aldermen have concerns with the issues on 3125 and would like a walk through prior to the completion. He attended a West Shore Strategic Partnership meeting today and he met with PLD regarding other projects going on in the Parish.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

RICK WEBRE – He said everything is in his report.

FELIX BOUGHTON – Completed the CARES Act Funding first request yesterday to the State and will email updates.

ERIC DEROCHE – The department monthly report was uploaded to the folder for review. He indicated that training will soon begin for other department to download documents to the folder.

INGRID LEBLANC – We are now at 51% for census completion. Chairman St. Pierre inquired about going door-to-door, she indicated that it is up to them and she said we need to encourage people to apply for the census jobs. Chairman St. Pierre said it is very important to get correct numbers because this is how we get funding from the Government and/or the State and is used when the Districts get split up.

ADJOURNMENT

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


Linda Hubbell, Secretary