

2022

STATE OF THE PARISH



PARISH PRESIDENT PETER A. DUFRESNE

LETTER FROM THE PARISH PRESIDENT

Dear St. James Parish,

As your Parish President, I want to express my gratitude for the unwavering support and resilience you have shown in the face of unprecedented challenges. Despite the obstacles presented by COVID-19, Hurricane Ida, and a major train derailment, our community has truly come together over the last few years.



PETER A. DUFRESNE

I am proud to report that we have achieved significant milestones in infrastructure development and community services. We have made remarkable progress on the Westshore Levee construction, which will ensure the safety of our residents for generations to come. We opened a new recreation building in Gramercy, and acquired land for a senior center and recreation building in Vacherie. In addition, we addressed many basic infrastructure needs, including implementing and completing 9 major drainage initiatives, which will prevent future flooding. The confirmation of funding for Highway 3127 becoming a 4-lane, as well as the completion of the West Bank natural gas purchase point in South Vacherie in 2023, are just some of the major initiatives we are working on. I am confident that with your support, our community can build on the new infrastructure we have put in place and grow our residential areas. One of my biggest goals was to take politics out of government. I knew our citizens needed to have open access to their elected officials – no matter who you are or where you come from. The Citizen Service Center allows residents to call in work orders and track progress online, empowering YOU to take an active role in shaping our community.

I am humbled and honored to serve as your Parish President, and I hope that this State of the Parish Report highlights the significant progress we have made together over the last three years. Together, we can continue to make a positive impact on our community and create a brighter future for St. James Parish.

Sincerely,
Pete Dufresne

ADMINISTRATION



PETER A. DUFRESNE
Parish President



INGRID BERGERON
Director of Human Resources



COURTNEY TOMLINSON
Executive Assistant



RICK WEBRE
Director of Operations



JAJUAN HICKERSON
Personnel Manager



FELIX BOUGHTON
Director of Finance



VICTORIA ROCQUIN HENRY
Public Information Officer



ERIC DEROCHE
Director of Emergency Operations



PARISH COUNCIL

*Alvin "Shark" St. Pierre - District 1
Jason Amato - District 2
Ryan Louque - District 3
Mason Bland - District 4
Clyde Cooper - District 5
Vondra Etienne-Steib - District 6, Chairwoman
Donald Nash - District 7*

Finance

- Coordinated closely with the Operations Department to ensure budget line items coincide with and identify all outgoing capitol improvement projects
- Coordinated with the Emergency Preparedness department to identify all Federal and State funding available for Hurricane Ida and COVID Pandemic recovery efforts.
- Coordinated with the Parish Presidents office to streamline government spending and avoided budget cuts, despite losing the parish's largest taxpayer.
- Prepared and published an Annual Comprehensive Financial Report for the second time in parish history.

Budget Expenses & Data



Percentages of Actual Spending

*Audited Figures

2021 Revenues - \$ 45,424,639
2021 Expenditures - \$ 43,598,217
2021 Revenue from taxes - 60%

Top 10 Industrial Property Taxpayers

Industry	Taxable Value	Taxes Due
Equilon Enterprises LLC	92,173,757	9,893,185.70
Americas Styrenics LLC	39,536,169	4,324,466.15
Zen-Noh Grain Corporation	35,299,212	3,788,941.07
Mosaic Fertilizer LLC - Faustina	31,407,109	3,435,309.74
Mosaic Fertilizer LLC - Uncle Sam	30,291,809	3,251,220.09
Louisiana Sugar Refining, LLC	22,886,826	2,522,357.11
Shell Trading US Company	22,282,669	2,437,278.34
Nustar Logistics, L.P.	20,978,653	2,294,645.99
Exxon Mobil Oil Corporation	16,707,172	1,827,430.51
Atalco Gramercy LLC	16,352,644	1,802,224.90
Total	327,916,020	35,577,059.60

The Finance Department received the Certificate of Excellence in Financial Reporting, the highest national honor in financial reporting.

Operations

Major projects completed in 2022

- Finished 9 major drainage initiatives including David Plantation & Molossian Drainage Projects
- Replaced North and South Angelle major drainage trunk lines
- Installed concrete liner from Industrial Park Street to St. James Street
- Increased pressure and enhanced gas supply to all residents through new East Bank natural gas purchase point; West bank purchase point in South Vacherie will finish construction in 2023
- Completed major drainage improvements South of Highway 643
- Cleared Oubre #1, Oubre #2 and Baytree Canals
- Opened new Recreation Building providing a location for Biddy basketball, the fitness Center, exercise classes, and more.
- Replaced Bourbon Country gas lines
- Installed new natural gas infrastructure in Longview subdivision

2023 Projects

Convent Clarifier

A new water clarifier will be started on the East Bank **doubling** the water capacity at the Convent Treatment Plant, allowing for **increased capacity** throughout the distribution system.

HWY 3127 Widening

11 millions dollars in capitol outlay funding was granted to enhance and widen Highway 3127 from **Bridge Road to Highway 20**. This much needed project for the West Bank is in design.

5th District Drainage Project

A drainage study is being **conducted** and we are applying for grants for **construction**.

Blind River Boat Launch

The Parish received 1 million dollars in state appropriated funding to reconstruct and enhance the Blind River Boat Launch.

Vacherie Water Tank

A **500,000 gallon** tank is being purchased, which will increase the capacity of available water and allow **consistent pressure** during extreme weather conditions like a drought or a freeze event.

West Bank Enhancements

The parish has made several real estate purchases to **enhance services** to the West Bank of the Parish, including constructing a new **Multipurpose/Recreation Building and Senior Center**



By the Numbers

324
Residential Permits

209
New Residential Permits

12
Commercial Permits

41
Mobile Home Permits

136
New Gas Services

163
Hurricane Ida Permits

6709
Work Orders Closed

233
Code enforcement complaints closed

36,228
Library Visitors

1,502
People attended library events

12,944
Library books checked out

Help us help you: **72 on you**

Help us help you - be prepared for the first 72 hours of a major storm. A 72-Hour Disaster Survival Kit allows your family to have the basic necessities in case of a major storm or disaster. In a major weather event the first 72 hours are up to you.

Supply Checklist

- Food - at least enough for 3 days for every person
- Water - at least one gallon per day per person (3 gallons per person for a three day supply)
- Blankets/Pillows
- Cash
- Clothing - seasonal/rain gear/sturdy shoes
- First Aid Kit (including medicines and prescription drugs)
- Flashlight/Batteries
- Keys - extra set of home and car keys
- Radio - Battery operated and NOAA weather radio
- Important Documents (in a waterproof container) - insurance, medical records, bank account numbers, Social Security card, etc.
- Tools - keep a set with you during the storm
- Toiletries (hygiene items/moisture wipes)
- Toys (books and games)
- Pet care items
 - Proper identification/immunization records/medications
 - Ample supply of food and water
 - Carrier or cage
 - Muzzle and leash
- Vehicle fuel tanks filled
- Special Items - for babies and the elderly

Sign up for Emergency Alerts

Register today for our emergency alerts! If you haven't signed up yet, or are registered but not receiving alerts, visit our website to either sign up or sign in and update your contact information. For assistance, please call the Public Information Office at 225-562-3309.



stjamesla.com

Train Derailment

On November 2, 2022, a train derailed at the Highway 642 railroad crossing, spilling 20,000 gallons of its contents. A multi-agency response was initiated, including local, state, and federal agencies. The Department of Human Resources booked **78 hotel rooms** for displaced residents and distributed **281 gift cards**. Due to the excellent emergency response and mitigation work, residents were back in their homes **within 27 hours**. The Parish Emergency Operation Center had a 24-hour a day response for 3 days, and then transitioned to a week of mitigation and cleanup.

Volunteer with us!



The **St. James Parish Volunteer Fire Department** has merged into one department, with two service districts. This will provide better protection to all areas of the parish. By consolidating, there is a potential for better insurance rates in the parish.

*Interested in volunteering?
Call 225-562-2266 for more information.*

Department of Human Resources

253 Households,

386 Individuals

Assisted by Quarterly
Commodity Distribution

219 Households,

478 Individuals

Served by Emergency
Assistance

220 Households

Served through
Volunteer Income Tax
Assistance

451 Households,

834 Individuals

Assisted by Low-
Income Home Energy
Assistance Program

143 Households,

286 Individuals

Served by Annual Toy
& Coat Drive

2,397 Passengers,

31,001 total trips

Transit services ridership
during 2022

Hurricane Ida Long Term Recovery Services

St. James Council on Aging (COA) received a total of **\$550,000.00** in financial assistance from Capital Area United Way (CAUW) to support St. James Parish post Hurricane Ida. This included a \$50,000.00 award to support the immediate housing needs for displaced residents, and \$500,000.00 to support **Long-Term Recovery efforts**. All financial resources went directly into community recovery efforts.

Senior Centers



Lutcher Senior Center Pajama Party



Welcome Senior Center Mardi Gras



Vacherie Senior Center Christmas Party



Convent Senior Center Valentine Party

Fresh Produce Box Distribution

In 2022, we held 3 fresh produce box distributions. **330 households** were served with a total of **384 individuals**. The boxes included fresh vegetables such as onions, peppers, garlic, cabbage, eggplant, apples, oranges etc.

School Uniforms Vouchers

School uniform vouchers assisted **28 low-income families** with the cost of purchasing school uniforms.

TAXPAYER SAVINGS HIGHLIGHTS

\$750,000

Reduction in Health
Insurance Costs

\$331,500

Did not roll forward
millages

\$250,000

Negotiated Property
Insurance

\$200,000

Reduced Bond
Issuance Cost for
Disaster Loan

\$124,000

Negotiated with
Workers Comp Carrier

\$650,000

Other Savings and
Additional Revenues

Actual savings to taxpayers in 2022: **\$2,312,000**

Actual savings to taxpayers in 2021: **\$2,965,529**

Actual savings to taxpayers 2020: **\$2,573,976**

Projected savings from 2020-2023: **\$9,300,000**

Contact Us

Assessor's Office	225-562-2250
Citizen Service Center	225-562-2500
Clerk of Court's Office	225-562-2270
Emergency Preparedness	225-562-2364
Finance	225-562-2293
Human Resources (Social Services)	225-562-2352
Lutcher Library	225-869-3618
Operations	225-562-2444
Parish Council Planning & Permitting	225-562-2264
Parish President's Office	225-562-2260
Park Rental Information	225-562-2500
Public Information Office	225-562-2370
Recreation	225-562-2337
Registrar of Voters	225-562-2445
School Board	225-258-4500
Sheriff's Office	225-562-2200
St. James Parish Health Unit	225-265-2181
St. James Parish Hospital	225-869-5512
Toll Free	800-367-7852
Tourist Information & Welcome Center....	225-562-2525
Transit Services	225-562-2332
Utilities	225-562-2500
Vacherie Library.....	225-265-9066

Senior Centers

Lutcher	225-562-2872
Convent	225-562-2474
Vacherie	225-562-2568
Welcome	225-562-2463

St. James Parish
5800 LA-44
Convent, LA 70723



2022

STATE OF THE PARISH

PARISH PRESIDENT PETER A. DUFRESNE

Mission

We envision a thriving St. James Parish community in which economic and social gains prevail and all people grow, prosper, and live productive, healthy lives while preserving our culture and heritage.

Vision

St. James Parish Government works together with community, business, industry, and agriculture to provide resources and services to improve our quality of life.