

**OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS OF A PUBLIC HEARING HELD BY  
THE ST. JAMES PARISH COUNCIL ON TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 23, 2021**

The Council of the Parish of St. James, State of Louisiana, met for a public hearing in the Council Chambers of the Parish Courthouse Annex in Vacherie, Louisiana on Tuesday, November 23, 2021, at 6:00pm.

The following were recorded present: Council Members Jason Amato, Ryan Louque, Mason Bland, Vondra Etienne-Steib, Donald Nash, and Chairman Alvin St. Pierre. Councilman Clyde Cooper was not in attendance during roll call.

Chairman St. Pierre called the Public Hearing on the following items to order:

**PROPOSED ORDINANCE 21-08, AN ORDINANCE PROVIDING FOR THE PAYMENT  
AND/OR REIMBURSEMENT OF ATTORNEY'S FEES, COSTS, AND EXPENSES  
INCURRED BY OFFICERS, OFFICIALS, AND EMPLOYEES OF ST. JAMES PARISH  
GOVERNMENT AS A RESULT OF CIVIL LITIGATION AND/OR CRIMINAL  
PROSECUTION UNDER CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES**

At this time Chairman St. Pierre called for public comment. Barbara Washington 8191 Pleasant Hill Street spoke in opposition of the ordinance.

Councilman Cooper arrived and assumed his seat on the council.

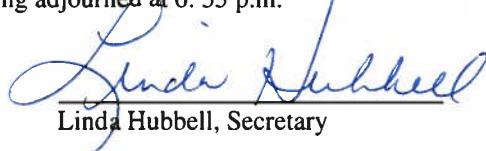
After a lengthy discussion, the following amendments were suggested:

- WHEREAS, the threat of ~~frivolous and/or unmerited~~ litigation or prosecution may deter individuals from seeking Parish employment, appointment, or election; and
- WHEREAS, and, ~~not notwithstanding the provisions contained in Section 1-8 (Repeal of ordinances, effect)~~. The council hereby shall repeal the prior ordinance (Ordinance 19-13) and establish the substance and procedure contained herein, and apply it retroactively.
- (b) The policy of the Parish of St. James is to allow for the payment of any of the following: 1) defense fees, 2) costs, and/or 3) expenses, either individually or collectively, for any officer, official, or employee of the parish who is subject to a civil lawsuit or charged with a crime, provided that officer, official, or employee is not found ~~liable in the civil lawsuit~~ or guilty in the criminal proceedings, and provided further that the allegations arose out of the "discharge of his or her official duties and were within the scope of his or her employment or is thereafter found not guilty or exonerated in the criminal proceedings.
- (c) Any payments under this ordinance are discretionary by the council and require a ~~simple~~ ~~two-third (2/3)~~ majority vote of the members of the council, to invoke.
- (d) Allowable payments may include the payment and/or reimbursement of reasonable attorney's fees, costs, and expenses incurred in the defense of a civil lawsuit or a criminal charge(s), provided that: (1) St. James Parish is financially capable of making said payment(s) and/or reimbursement(s), and (2) the St. James Parish Council by ~~simple~~ ~~two-third (2/3)~~ majority vote make the decision to do so and is based upon the facts and circumstances involved, and further provided that (3) the St. James Parish Council determines that in defending the matter:
- (D) The payment and/or reimbursement would serve a public purpose, including, without limitation, encouraging individuals to seek parish office or employment without the threat or fear of the expense of ~~frivolous and/or unmerited~~ litigation or unwarranted criminal charges.

Mr. Maley then answered the Council Member's questions.

**ADJOURNMENT**

After determining there was no additional business to come before the council, on a motion offered by Councilman Bland and seconded by Councilman Louque and carried, the meeting adjourned at 6: 55 p.m.



Linda Hubbell, Secretary