

**OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS OF A PUBLIC HEARING HELD BY
THE ST. JAMES PARISH COUNCIL ON WEDNESDAY, MARCH 31, 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 in Vacherie, Louisiana at 6:28 p.m. on Wednesday, March 31, 2021, immediately following the public meeting.

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

Vice-Chairwoman Etienne-Steib called the Public Hearing on the following items to order:

**PROPOSED ORDINANCE 21-03, AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 110
“TRAFFIC AND VEHICLES” OF THE ST. JAMES PARISH CODE OF ORDINANCES
TO ADD SECTION 12 “GOLF CARTS” AND 13 “UTILITY TERRAIN VEHICLES” TO
PROVIDE FOR THE OPERATION OF THESE VEHICLES UPON PUBLIC STREETS
OR ROADS**

Councilman Louque explained that operation of golf carts and UTV on local public roads is a violation of state law, subject to enforcement by the Sheriff's Department. Last year the Sheriff's department presented information related to the enforcement act and discussed opportunities to allow for the legal use, subject to state law. La R.S. 32:2993 and 32:299.4 have provisions that allow for legal operation of off-road vehicles on certain local public roadways upon designation by the local government, basically, passing an ordinance approving such use, and posting of appropriate signage indicating that operation is authorized. He said state law defines the meaning of those specific vehicles and the state law specifies the minimal equipment required on those vehicles for operation on roadways. Councilman Louque then listed the requirements defined by state law. He indicated that the passage of this ordinance allows for legal use of UTVs and Golf Carts on certain local public roads pursuant to all the provisions of the state law. Councilman Louque said “we didn't create the state law, we didn't determine the required equipment for the vehicles, we didn't specify the minimum age, or the other requirements for the operation, we are simply creating the ability to use that vehicle pursuant to the state law.” Councilman Louque explained that this ordinance would require the registration of the UTVs and golf carts with the Sheriff's Department for operation on the public street within the parish, specific to the areas outside of the municipalities. He said we didn't specify anything beyond what the state law requires.

Councilman Louque explained that after this ordinance is passed, it is still illegal to ride the UTV or golf cart on public roads unless you take the necessary action to comply with state law. He added that once passed, this ordinance allows residents, who follow the requirement of the state law, the ability to operate these vehicles in a legal manner.

After the Council Secretary read aloud the proposed ordinance, Vice-Chairman Etienne-Steib called for comments.

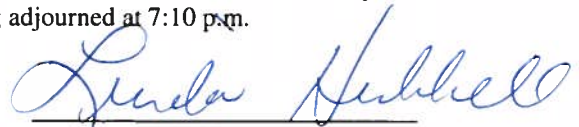
Sheriff Willy Martin then answered the Council member's questions.

The following residents made comments:

Kirk White, Lutchet
Yvette Melancon, St. James
Ann Roussel, Paulina

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 7:10 p.m.


Linda Hubbell, Secretary