

**OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS OF THE
COUNCIL OF THE PARISH OF ST. JAMES, STATE OF LOUISIANA
TAKEN AT A REGULAR MEETING HELD ON FEBRUARY 16, 2022**

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, February 16, 2022, at 6:00 p.m.

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

Those also in attendance were Linda Hubbell, Council Secretary; Peter Dufresne, Parish President; Ingrid Bergeron, Human Resources Director; Eric Deroche, Director of Emergency Preparedness; Felix Boughton, Finance Director; Rick Webre, Operations Director and Adam Koenig, Legal Advisor. Marty Maley, Special Counsel, was also in attendance.

The Honorable Vondra Etienne-Steib, Chairwoman, 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.

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

MINUTES

On a motion offered by Councilman Bland and seconded by Councilman Amato the minutes of the February 2, 2022 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:

Thank you, Madam Chair. Good evening, Council and Good evening, everyone.

- Engineering is complete for the HWY 643 drainage Project. T. Baker Smith has submitted a permit request to DOTD to begin construction. The Operations Department grants manager is submitting the scope of work to DOTD Statewide Flood Control for approval for funding. Once approved, the operations department will obtain construction quotes.
- An interconnect agreement between Gulf South Pipeline and St. James Parish Utilities has been executed to install the natural gas pay point in Grand Point. Electrical power has been established at the site, and the operations department is waiting for an invoice from Gulf South to remit payment for construction to begin. Construction is estimated to begin in the Summer of 2022.
- An interconnect agreement is in development between Acadian Gas Pipeline and St. James Parish Utilities to install an additional natural gas pay point in South Vacherie. All surveying is complete, and land acquisition from the hospital has been recorded. A permit has been approved from through DOTD to place a culvert under HWY 3127 to gain access to the site. A task order has been written to Hightide Consultants for design. Construction is estimated to begin in the Fall of 2022.
- The operations department has received estimate from Feliciana Welders in the amount of \$48,000 for directional boring and installation of a four-inch gas line from N. Nobile Street to Admiral's Landing along HWY 3125. Benton Georgia has provided a quote of \$62,625, and Southern Underground has a quote pending. This gas line will serve residents of Admiral's Landing as well as allowing St. James Parish Utilities to service a new industrial customer in that area. Additionally, Gulf South Pipeline has a tap on its pipeline north of HWY 3125 adjacent to admiral's landing that they are willing to allow St. James Parish Utilities to tap into. Consequently, this tap will facilitate a third purchase point on the east bank of the parish and would drastically enhance the natural gas supply on both the east and west bank of the parish.
- The Operations Department has issued a task order to High Tide Consultants for engineering and railroad permit application for the Romeville-Grand Point natural gas loop. Directional boring will take place from the river road on the east shoulder of HWY 642 under CN Rail then tie into the newly installed main gas line near the Bourbon Country Subdivision.
- The Operations Department has received the roadway assessment from Material Resources Incorporated. Results of this assessment indicate significant edge failure damage as predicted from Hurricane Ida. The 2021-2022 road rehab program will be divided into three categories: Preservation, Mill-Patch-Overlay, and edge failure repair. Edge failure repair will be submitted to FEMA to develop a project work sheet under Category C. Engineering will be obtained for mill and overlay and an indefinite delivery- -indefinite quantity contracts will be written for it and preservation.
- Capital outlay funding for the HWY 3127 widening project has been approved by the state bond commission. The operations department and the finance department will be working closely with the Division of Administration and Facility Planning and Control to process the CEA required for this action. FPSC will provide a completed contract with the parish to procure engineering services. Design of this project will follow.
- Bids have been accepted for the David Plantation drainage improvement project and contracting is complete. A pre-construction meeting, a notice to proceed, and a public meeting is scheduled for February 22, 2022.
- The Humble St. Phase two project is progressing well. Driveway pouring, asphalt patching, and final grading is underway. Contractors are waiting on the last catch basin to be delivered from Design Precast for a resident on North Angelle. The Operations Department has asked the engineer and the contractor to assess the installation of concrete lining on the channel that extends from HWY 3125 to St. James Street. A head wall extension will be required in this location. The cost of this additional work will be covered by the Hazard Mitigation Grant.
- Geotechnical evaluation is complete for the Convent water treatment plant clarifier. Sand is being vacuumed from the water plant filter system for inspection. Bids are expected to begin advertising by the end of February with contracting scheduled by the end of March 2022. This project is funded by the first round of the American Rescue Act.

- The survey is being modified for the Vacherie Multi-Purpose building to capture from Health Unit Drive to HWY 3127. This will assist the engineering in building placement. The surveyor has been instructed to place corner markers to complete that bid service.
- Bids were received for the construction of the new DHR building. The lowest responsive bidder was BETCO Inc. at \$2,018,000. A value engineering study is being conducted to identify savings on this project. Any cost reduction identified would be in the form of a change order line-item reduction.
- Structural steel was ordered for the east bank recreation facility in July of 2021 and have still not been received. Demolition is complete on the interior of the building and interior renovation has begun. Exterior concrete foundation forming is underway.
- Sixteen new roll-off bins for the Solid Waste Division have been ordered and will begin shipping on February 18, 2022. A new roll-off truck and new grapple truck has been delivered to the Operations Department and are in service. Two surplus pickup trucks with one cubic yard self-emptying bins will be added to the current fleet to form a new litter abatement crews. Job descriptions have been developed and interviews for litter abatement crews are complete.
- St. James Parish Operations Department has received an award letter and an authorization to incur cost in the amount of \$2,072,317 from the American Rescue Act water sector program. This funding will be applied to two approved projects; water storage tank rehab, and automated water meters.
- Our Youth Baseball Registration is now open for ages 5-13. The deadline to register is March 11th. Coaches and volunteers are needed for practices and games. If you are interested, please contact the St. James Parish Recreation Office at 225-562-2337
- I'd also like to remind everyone that our offices will be closed on Monday, February 21st in observance of President's Day. Have a safe and blessed weekend!

God Bless St. James Parish.

PUBLIC COMMENT – None

PRESENTATIONS

- Brent Dicharry, Recreation Administrator, provided the Recreation Department's Annual Report
- Al Galindo and Mark Johnson with Entergy provided an update of the streetlight repair.
- Mr. Paul Aucoin was not in attendance for the presentation.
- This presentation was moved to later in the meeting due to Ms. Cooper had not arrived at this time.

APPOINTMENTS TO BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

RESOLUTION 22-24, A RESOLUTION APPOINTING TERRENCE JONES AS THE PARISH COUNCIL'S APPOINTMENT TO THE RIVER PARISHES TOURIST COMMISSION, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Bland. Councilman Nash offered a second, and the resolution was unanimously adopted.

OLD BUSINESS

Acquisition of Land for Multipurpose Building – survey has been complete, awaiting appraisal report.

Councilman Amato offered a motion to take A RESOLUTION AMENDING THE CONTRACT WITH TRIO COMMUNITY MEALS PREVIOUSLY KNOWN AS ELIOR NORTH AMERICAN'S CORPORATION D/B/A BATEMAN COMMUNITY LIVING FOR A 10% HYPERINFLATION INCREASE FOR FOOD SERVICES TO SENIOR CONGREGATE AND HOMEBOUND MEAL NUTRITION PROGRAM from the table. Councilman St. Pierre offered a second, and after a unanimous roll call vote, the motion carried. After Ms. LeBlanc explained that the company will not seek a 10% increase and the terms of the current contract will apply. The resolution was removed from the agenda until the need arises to bring it back to the council.

NEW BUSINESS

RESOLUTION 22-25, A RESOLUTION TO APPROVE DISBURSEMENT OF PAYROLL FOR THE FEBRUARY 18, 2022 PAYROLL, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman St. Pierre and seconded by Councilman Louque. After a unanimous roll call vote, the resolution was adopted.

RESOLUTION 22-26, A RESOLUTION TO APPROVE DISBURSEMENT OF FUNDS TO PAY PENDING CURRENT INVOICES AND PAYABLES, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Nash and seconded by Councilman St. Pierre. After a unanimous roll call vote, the resolution was adopted.

RESOLUTION 22-27, A RESOLUTION PROCLAIMING THE MONTH OF FEBRUARY 2022 AS BLACK HISTORY MONTH IN ST. JAMES PARISH, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Cooper and seconded by Councilman Nash. After a unanimous roll call vote, the resolution was adopted.

RESOLUTION 22-29, A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE PARISH PRESIDENT'S OFFICE TO ADVERTISE AND RECEIVE BIDS FOR FIREFIGHTING EQUIPMENT, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Bland. Councilman Amato offered a second, and the resolution was unanimously adopted.

RESOLUTION 22-30 A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE PARISH PRESIDENT TO SIGN A COOPERATIVE ENDEAVOR AGREEMENT WITH SOUTH CENTRAL PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT FOR FY19 DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY/GOHSEP GRANT, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Nash and seconded by Councilman Bland. After a unanimous roll call vote, the resolution was adopted.

RESOLUTION 22-31, A RESOLUTION PROCLAIMING THE MONTH OF MARCH 2022 AS NATIONAL KIDNEY MONTH AND TUESDAY, MARCH 10, 2022 AS WORLD KIDNEY DAY IN ST. JAMES PARISH,

was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman St. Pierre. Councilman Amato offered a second, and the resolution was unanimously adopted.

RESOLUTION 22-32, RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE PARISH PRESIDENT'S OFFICE TO ADVERTISE AND RECEIVE BIDS FOR A NEW TRACTOR TRUCK FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF OPERATIONS, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Bland, Councilman Cooper offered a second, and the resolution was unanimously adopted.

RESOLUTION 22-33, RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE PARISH PRESIDENT'S OFFICE TO ADVERTISE AND RECEIVE BIDS FOR TWO (2) GATOR TAIL BOATS, MOTORS, AND TRAILERS FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF OPERATIONS, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman St. Pierre. Councilman Cooper offered a second, and the resolution was unanimously adopted.

RESOLUTION 22-34, A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE PARISH PRESIDENT TO ACCEPT THE BID AND ENTER INTO A CONTRACT WITH B.E.T. CONSTRUCTION, INC, FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES NEW OFFICE BUILDING, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Amato and seconded by Councilman St. Pierre. After a roll call vote showing, St. Pierre, Cooper, Nash, Amato, Louque, and Etienne-Steib in favor, and Bland against, the resolution was adopted.

RESOLUTION 22-35, A RESOLUTION ACCEPTING CHANGE ORDER #4 FROM LA CONTRACTING ENTERPRISE, LLC FOR THE HUMBLE STREET DRAINAGE IMPROVEMENTS, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Louque and seconded by Councilman Amato. After a unanimous roll call vote, the resolution was adopted.

After Miss Cooper's arrival, **RESOLUTION 22-28, A RESOLUTION COMMENDING AND CONGRATULATING NYDIA COOPER AND JAMIL SHARIF ON BEING KING AND QUEEN ELECT FOR THE KREWE OF AGAPE CARNIVAL ORGANIZATION,** was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Amato. Councilman St. Pierre offered a second, and the resolution was unanimously adopted. Miss Cooper was recognized and congratulated.

RESOLUTION 22-36, A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE ST. JAMES PARISH PRESIDENT TO SIGN AND EXECUTE A CONTRACT WITH MARGIE H. FORD FOR CONSULTING SERVICES, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman St. Pierre and seconded by Councilman Louque. After a unanimous roll call vote, the resolution was adopted.

RESOLUTION 22-37, A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING ST. JAMES PARISH GOVERNMENT TO RE-ADVERTISE AND RECEIVE BIDS FOR KITCHEN EQUIPMENT FOR THE TITLE IIIC NUTRITION PROGRAM FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES ELDERLY PROGRAM, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Bland. Councilman Louque offered a second, and the resolution was unanimously adopted.

RESOLUTION 22-38, A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE ST. JAMES PARISH PRESIDENT TO ENTER INTO A CONTRACT WITH THE LOGAN LAW FIRM WITH REGARD TO MATTERS INVOLVING OIL AND GAS PIPELINE RIGHT OF WAYS, RELATED NEGOTIATIONS AND LITIGATIONS, AND ANY AND ALL OTHER PROPERTY ISSUES IN WHICH THE PARISH HAS INTEREST, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman St. Pierre and seconded by Councilman Amato. After a unanimous roll call vote, the resolution was adopted.

PROPOSED ORDINANCE 22-02, AN ORDINANCE APPROVING A LEASE AGREEMENT BETWEEN SJ KELLER PROPERTIES, L.L.C. AND ST. JAMES PARISH GOVERNMENT TO TEMPORARILY OPERATE ELDERLY AND DISABILITY SERVICES, AND AUTHORIZING THE PARISH PRESIDENT TO SIGN, EXECUTE, AND ADMINISTER SAID LEASE AGREEMENT AND ANY AND ALL RELEVANT DOCUMENTS, was introduced on a motion offered by Councilman St. Pierre and seconded by Councilman Nash. 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 Wednesday, March 2, 2022 at 6:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the Parish Courthouse in Convent.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

FELIX BOUGHTON – He said they are in the process of closing out 2021. He said they received their last installment of sales tax for the year, adding they were \$1.5 million under from what was collected in 2020. He said that the additional health plan added last year identified that St. James Parish Hospital is the most used provider in the health plan and local pharmacies are also in the top 5 providers. He and Eric Deroche are looking into getting the bond issuance cost and interest reimbursed by FEMA. President Dufresne added that they are excited about the 3rd tier added to the health plan.

RICK WEBRE – He said his information was included in the President's report.

ERIC DEROCHE – He said at the fire association meeting last week, they requested a special council be hired to assist with things they need done.

INGRID BERGERON – No comments.

COUNCIL MEMBER'S REPORT

COUNCILMAN NASH – Councilman Nash requested an update of the Senior Building update. Mr. Deroche indicated that everything has been submitted to FEMA and if approved it will be eligible for a new building. Councilman Nash inquired about the HWY 20 project. Mr. Webre indicated they are moving forward.

COUNCILMAN COOPER – Councilman Cooper requested a condolence letter to the family of Mr. Roland Broden. He thanked Entergy for the streetlight update. He requested an update of the public housing residents affected by Hurricane Ida. Ms. Bergeron said she didn't have the information but will reach out to the housing office for an update.

COUNCILMAN BLAND – Councilman Bland said he wanted to reiterate his No vote to Ms. Leblanc, that it wasn't personal to her department, it was his opinion, at this time. He expressed condolence to the family of Mr. Dennis Louviere, who was a founding member and past president of the Union-Convent Fire Department, adding he will be missed by many in the community. He said He and Adam continue to work to consolidate the recreation board for the parish.

COUNCILMAN LOUQUE – Councilman Louque said he is still trying to communicate with the Postal Service but is not having much luck. He said he is trying to get the official process from the Postal Service on how to move forward to get a delivery route. He thanked Entergy for the update.

COUNCILMAN AMATO – Councilman Amato wished all 4H and livestock exhibitors Best of Success this weekend at the State Livestock Show.

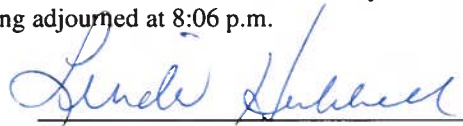
COUNCILMAN ST. PIERRE – Councilman St. Pierre also thanked Entergy for the update. He thanked Mr. Webre for planning to attend the Gramercy Recreation meeting on Monday. He said the Westshore brochure presented in Washington DC, put together by Dennis Hymel and his staff, was well received, CPRA looks promising. He said he appreciated the good discussion on the building.

CHAIRWOMAN ETIENNE-STEIB – Chairwoman Etienne-Steib thanked Ms. Ingrid for articulating her need for the building and fighting for her department. She thanked Mr. Bland for helping them stay fiscally responsible. She said they are voting at the will of their constituents and conscience. She said, at times, they are going to disagree, but they need to disagree respectfully. President Dufresne added that this administration takes pride in the efficiency with the tax dollars. He said that this administration will have saved the taxpayers nearly \$7.4 million in hard-dollar savings, just in their first term. He said they work diligently and hard as they can every day to save every dollar and every penny that they can.

President Dufresne said the levee alignment presentation was impactful, that when they returned on Monday, the CPRA Director reached out on Tuesday morning to schedule a meeting for that Friday. He and Dennis Hymel met with the Colonel at the Corps, Chip Kline with CPRA, and the Corps of Engineers based on information presented to the congressional delegation in Washington.

ADJOURNMENT

After determining there was no additional business to come before the council, on a motion offered by Councilman St. Pierre and seconded by Councilman Bland and carried, the meeting adjourned at 8:06 p.m.



Linda Hubbell, Secretary