

**OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS OF THE
COUNCIL OF THE PARISH OF ST. JAMES, STATE OF LOUISIANA
TAKEN AT A REGULAR MEETING HELD ON JULY 6, 2022**

The Council of the Parish of St. James, State of Louisiana, met in regular session in the Council Chambers of the Parish Courthouse in Convent, Louisiana on Wednesday, July 6, 2022, at 6:20 p.m. immediately following the public hearing.

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

Those also in attendance were Linda Hubbell, Council Secretary; Peter Dufresne, Parish President; Ingrid Bergeron, Human Resources Director; Eric Deroche, Emergency Preparedness Director; Felix Boughton, Finance Director; Ryan Larousse, Assistant Director of Operations, and Adam Koenig, Legal Advisor. Special Counsel Vic Franckiewicz 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 Nash led the Pledge of Allegiance.

MINUTES

On a motion offered by Councilman Louque and seconded by Councilman Nash the minutes of the June 22, 2022 regular meeting were approved as distributed, and the reading of these minutes dispensed with.

FINANCE DEPARTMENT'S MONTHLY REPORT

The Statement of Revenues and Expenditures for May 2022 was approved on a motion offered by Councilman Amato and seconded by Councilman Louque.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President Dufresne presented this report to the Council:

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

- First, I'd like to begin by reminding everyone COVID still exists so please be aware and socially distance if you feel symptoms.
- St. James Parish Market Day will be held this Saturday, July 9th, from 8am - 1pm at the Welcome Center in Gramercy.
- I had the pleasure of attending the WWL Radio and FEMA bunker ribbon cutting last week in Algiers. I was able to see firsthand the upgraded emergency system and see the new emergency broadcast studio that was constructed in coordination with FEMA, making WWL Radio the 14th station in the nation to partner with the federal government to complete an all-hazards upgrade. The project includes increased sheltering capabilities, expanded broadcast capacity & sustainable power generation for all types of hazardous events. Effectively, the bunker provides a reliable and comprehensive system to alert and warn the public in times of emergency.
- The physical structure of the broadcast bunker provides WWL AM/FM the ability to broadcast for up to 60 days in a completely secure space impervious to the most devastating of natural and man-made disasters. The broadcast facility is built on a 12-foot stand to withstand a 1,000-year flooding event. It is also designed to withstand electro-magnetic power surges presumably from detonated nuclear devices, an event that would eliminate our traditional methods of broadcast. I encourage all residents to get a transistor radio and have fresh batteries on hand in case of an emergency. St. James Parish Government will be in communication with WWL radio station during a storm for residents to receive the most up to date information.
- With the approach of the one-year anniversary of Hurricane IDA, I would like to give the council and public an update on recovery process with our insurance carrier and with FEMA. There are 2 categories with FEMA, temporary which includes debris removal and emergency protective measures, which includes supplies like sand and sand bags, EOC activation, generator usage on public building and parish workers working the disaster. The estimated cost for the temporary category is 6.6 million which none of that money is recoverable from our insurance company only reimbursable by FEMA. The other category is permanent work which is the repair or replacement of public buildings and facilities. The parish with Rostan has estimated the damage claim to be \$2.9 million for parish building and facilities, this figure does not include the 4 building we are working on with FEMA to get 50% ruled which means they are substantially damaged and need to be replaced. They are the Vacherie Senior Center, St. James ARC building, Gramercy Recreation Building Park A and North Vacherie Main Fire Station. These 4 building the parish has provide the documentation to FEMA for 50% rule, we believe it has exceeded the requirements and now FEMA is currently reviewing the data to see if they agreed with the information that was provided. If FEMA agrees they will issue us an approved project worksheet (PW) which means we can demo buildings and start the design of the replacement building. Once we have plans completed, they will need to be submitted for review and approval to GOHSEP before we can go out for bid and or construction of the new building.
- Currently, the parish has approved project worksheets with GOHSEP/FEMA for \$3,740,904 and as of today the parish has submitted reimbursement request to GOHSEP for \$2,460,786 and received \$2,419,912. 90% to 95% was debris removal. The remaining went towards Rostan administrative cost and mosquito spraying in which some has been reimbursed as well. The parish has requested express pay were GOSHEP hold back 20% of the payment until they conduct an audit of the request for payment. Once they complete that audit the money is released and sent to the parish less the FEMA match.
- The parish has received \$2,182,057 from the insurance company and we are currently reconciling with the insurance company so we can submit the difference to FEMA.
- As of now the parish has received from insurance and FEMA a total of \$4,601,969.

- All St. James Parish Government departments and I have been meeting and discussing hurricane preparedness preparations, and it's a good time for residents to do the same. Let's remember Hurricane Ida originated and made landfall within only 48 hours. Please be prepared.
- Task Order #1 has been issued to Material Resources Inc. for the 2022 Road Preservation Project. Substantial Completion has been issued on the David Plantation drainage improvement project. A final walk through of the project with representatives from High Tide Consultants, Byron Talbot Contractors, and St. James Parish took place last week. The major drainage outfalls in the Baytree Community are currently being cleared. This project will take several months due to neglect over the last few decades. Crews have been clearing and grubbing the parish right of ways at the rear of Magnolia Heights as part of the Magnolia Heights Project.
- East Bank natural gas metering upgrades are still on track to be completed mid-August. Preparations have also been made in case of a storm during construction. Progress is being made on the West Bank for the Natural Gas Tap and Purchase Point. This agreement has been signed, and site meetings have been conducted over the past several weeks.
- Various summer programs are still going on at our Parish Libraries. Please visit our website and Facebook page for more information.
- God Bless everyone here tonight and God Bless St. James Parish.

PUBLIC COMMENT

The following provided comments on agenda item #12 and/or 13 under new business

Mark Kleehammer, 4809 Jefferson Hwy, Jefferson (Entergy)

Tripp Roy, 60 Maryland Dr, New Orleans (DE Shaw)

Sharon Lavigne, 8581 Hwy 18, St. James

Jessica Cunningham, 4505 S. Claiborne Ave, New Orleans (Alliance for affordable energy)

PRESENTATIONS

- Mr. Glenn Millet was not in attendance to present the Planning Commission's Annual Report.
- Mr. Donald Hains, with Waste Management, reviewed the Hurricane Response Plan for St. James Parish.
- Tommy Naquin and Jesse Daze' with Postlethwaite & Netterville presented the 2021 Annual Audit Report.

APPOINTMENTS TO BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

Councilman Louque offered and moved for adoption **RESOLUTION 22-140, A RESOLUTION REAPPOINTING LOUIS KLIEBERT AS A REPRESENTATIVE OF DISTRICT 3 TO THE ST. JAMES PARISH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BOARD.** Councilman Amato offered a second, and the resolution was unanimously adopted.

OLD BUSINESS

Acquisition of Land for Multipurpose Building – the appraisal value needed to be corrected and needs to be resubmitted to the hospital. A synopsis was requested for the July 20th meeting.

Update of drainage study for Forrestal Street to Pool Lane – before starting we wanted to see if we would be able to get reimbursed by FEMA. FEMA requested a letter of no objection from Coastal Zone, which was received today and was submitted to FEMA, once we get approval we will be ready to start.

ORDINANCE 22-05, AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE JAMES PARISH CODE OF ORDINANCES, CHAPTER 19 BUILDING AND BUILDING REGULATIONS, ARTICLE I UNSIGHTLY AND UNSAFE BUILDINGS AND PREMISES, SECTION 18-207 DEFINITIONS, RELATIVE TO THE LENGTH OF TALL GRASS AND CHAPTER 54 HEALTH AND SANITATION, ARTICLE II NUISANCES, SECTION 54-25 ADMINISTRATION AND ENFORCEMENT, RELATIVE TO THE NOTICE ISSUED TO THE PROPERTY OWNER, having undergone the hearing process, was offered and moved adoption by Councilman Amato and was seconded by Councilman Louque. After a unanimous roll call vote, with St. Pierre and Bland absent, the ordinance was adopted.

ORDINANCE 22-06, AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 118 “WATERWAYS” OF THE ST. JAMES PARISH CODE OF ORDINANCES TO REPEAL SECTION 1 – “NO WAKE ZONES” AND REPLACE WITH SECTION 1 – “SPEED OF WATERCRAFT/IDLE ZONES”, having undergone the hearing process, was offered and moved adoption by Councilman Louque and was seconded by Councilman Amato. After a unanimous roll call vote, with St. Pierre and Bland absent, the ordinance was adopted.

NEW BUSINESS

RESOLUTION 22-141, A RESOLUTION TO APPROVE DISBURSEMENT OF PAYROLL FOR THE JULY 8, 2022 PAYROLL, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Nash and seconded by Councilman Cooper. After a unanimous roll call vote, with St. Pierre and Bland absent, the resolution was adopted.

RESOLUTION 22-142, A RESOLUTION TO APPROVE DISBURSEMENT OF FUNDS TO PAY PENDING CURRENT INVOICES AND PAYABLES, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Louque and seconded by Councilman Amato. After a unanimous roll call vote, with St. Pierre and Bland absent, the resolution was adopted.

RESOLUTION 22-143, RESOLUTION AMENDING THE CONTRACT FOR EMR ELEVATOR SERVICES, LLC TO EXTEND THE CONTRACT BY ONE (1) YEAR AND INCREASE CONTRACT PRICE FOR COURTHOUSE ELEVATOR MAINTENANCE SERVICES, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Louque and was seconded by Councilman Cooper. After a unanimous roll call vote, with St. Pierre and Bland absent, the resolution was adopted.

RESOLUTION 22-144, A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE ST. JAMES PARISH PRESIDENT TO ACCEPT BID AND ENTER INTO A CONTRACT WITH LA CONTRACTING ENTERPRISE, LLC FOR THE BUDDY WHITNEY CANAL DRAINAGE IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Amato and seconded by Councilman Nash. After a unanimous roll call vote, with St. Pierre and Bland absent, the resolution was adopted.

RESOLUTION 22-145, A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE PARISH PRESIDENT TO ENTER INTO A COOPERATIVE ENDEAVOR AGREEMENT WITH THE LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES FOR THE ST. JAMES PARISH COASTAL ZONE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Amato and seconded by Councilman Louque. After a unanimous roll call vote, with St. Pierre and Bland absent, the resolution was adopted.

RESOLUTION 22-146, A RESOLUTION AMENDING THE CONTRACT FOR ROSTAN SOLUTIONS, LLC TO EXTEND THE AGREEMENT BY ONE (1) YEAR FOR DISASTER RECOVERY AND MITIGATION AND ADD NEW 2CFR REQUIREMENTS, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Louque and seconded by Councilman Nash. After a unanimous roll call vote, with St. Pierre and Bland absent, the resolution was adopted.

RESOLUTION 22-147, A RESOLUTION AMENDING THE CONTRACT FOR CRESCENT ENGINEERING & MAPPING, LLC TO EXTEND THE CONTRACT BY TWO (2) YEARS AND INCREASE THE CONTRACT PRICE FOR ENGINEERING AND CONSULTING SERVICES, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Louque and seconded by Councilman Cooper. After a unanimous roll call vote, with St. Pierre and Bland absent, the resolution was adopted.

RESOLUTION 22-148, A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE PARISH PRESIDENT TO SIGN A CONTRACT WITH MATHERNE'S MARKET FOR EMERGENCY FEEDING, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Nash and seconded by Councilman Cooper. After a unanimous roll call vote, with St. Pierre and Bland absent, the resolution was adopted.

RESOLUTION 22-149, A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTION OF A CONTRACT FOR EMERGENCY DEBRIS AND DISPOSAL MONITORING SERVICES BETWEEN TETRA TECH AND ST. JAMES PARISH, TOWN OF GRAMERCY AND TOWN OF LUTCHER, AND AUTHORIZING THE PARISH PRESIDENT TO SIGN, EXECUTE, AND ADMINISTER SAID AGREEMENT AND ALL RELEVANT DOCUMENTS, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Amato and seconded by Councilman Louque. After a unanimous roll call vote, with St. Pierre and Bland absent, the resolution was adopted.

RESOLUTION 22-150, A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTION OF A CONTRACT FOR EMERGENCY DEBRIS AND DISPOSAL SERVICES BETWEEN DRC EMERGENCY SERVICES AND ST. JAMES PARISH, TOWN OF GRAMERCY AND TOWN OF LUTCHER, AND AUTHORIZING THE PARISH PRESIDENT TO SIGN, EXECUTE, AND ADMINISTER SAID AGREEMENT AND ALL RELEVANT DOCUMENTS, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Louque and seconded by Councilman Cooper. After a unanimous roll call vote, with St. Pierre and Bland absent, the resolution was adopted.

RESOLUTION 22-151, A RESOLUTION APPROVING A SUBDIVISION ORDINANCE VARIANCE FOR A. RUSSELL WEBER, ET AUX OWNER WAYNE WEBER FOR A 21' PUBLIC UTILITY AND ACCESS SERVITUDE, PLANNING COMMISSION ITEM 22-21, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Nash and seconded by Councilman Amato. After a unanimous roll call vote, with St. Pierre and Bland absent, the resolution was adopted.

After Mr. Franckiewicz went over a few things, he then suggested to amend the resolution that would delegate guidelines to the planning commission that the council could also use, that would address the issues in the interim while waiting for the study. The guidelines are based on public input for the one solar farm. They would, #1 - consider the comparative economics, #2 - whether or not there would be more beneficial uses of the land, #3 - compatibility with our long-term land use plan, #4 - impact on infrastructure, #5 - cumulative impacts. After the Council's questions were answered, and Council members provided comments, Councilman Cooper offered a motion to table A RESOLUTION IMPLEMENTING A MORATORIUM ON THE APPROVAL OR PERMITTING OF ALL SOLAR PANEL FARMS IN ST. JAMES PARISH until the July 20th meeting for revision. Councilman Nash offered a second. After a roll call vote showing Louque and Amato against, Cooper, Nash, and Etienne-Steib in favor, and St. Pierre and Bland absent, the motion carried.

RESOLUTION 22-152, A RESOLUTION FOR ST. JAMES PARISH GOVERNMENT TO ENGAGE WITH SOUTH CENTRAL PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT TO CONDUCT AN ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STUDY, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Amato and seconded by Councilman Louque. After a roll call vote showing a yes vote by Louque, Amato, Cooper and Etienne-Steib, a nay vote by Nash, and St. Pierre and Bland absent, the resolution was adopted.

INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCE 22-07, AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE ST. JAMES PARISH CODE OF ORDINANCES CHAPTER 2, ARTICLE III, SECTION 2-86 "KEEP ST. JAMES PARISH BEAUTIFUL BOARD", was introduced on a motion offered by Councilman Amato and seconded by Councilman Louque. After a unanimous roll call vote, with St. Pierre and Bland absent, the ordinance was accepted and ordered filed with the Secretary for public inspection and publication of Notice of Public Hearing, which was scheduled for 6:00 p.m., Wednesday, July 20, 2022, in the Council Chambers of the Parish Courthouse Annex in Vacherie.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

FELIX BOUGHTON – next year's budget process will soon begin. Effective August 1st, the bid threshold increases from \$30,000 to \$60,000 which will allow the administration to get the things needed at a lower cost.

INGRID BERGERON – invitations are going out for the community breakfast.

ERIC DEROCHE – he and President Dufresne met with representative of Acadian Ambulance about staffing issues and are working to amend the contract.

Councilman Cooper left the Chambers at 8:16 p.m.

COUNCIL MEMBER'S REPORT

COUNCILMAN NASH – Councilman Nash had no comments.

COUNCILMAN COOPER – Councilman Cooper was not in attendance.

COUNCILMAN BLAND – Councilman Bland was absent.

COUNCILMAN LOUQUE – Councilman Louque inquired about canal cleaning on the East Bank. Mr. Larousse indicated that they started by Acadiana last week and working toward Paulina.

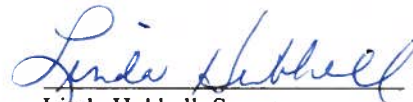
COUNCILMAN AMATO – Councilman Amato congratulated the finance department on the excellent audit. He thanked the Parish for coming to the assistance for the Buddy Whitney project. He requested a letter be sent to Janet Stout, FEMA EA/IGA liaison, for the communications throughout Hurricane Ida recovery. He said our Coastal Zone Board is also having attendance issues with meetings and inquired about also reducing the number of members. He also requested assistance for payment to those who show up to the meeting but there was no quorum.

COUNCILMAN ST. PIERRE – Councilman St. Pierre was absent.

CHAIRWOMAN ETIENNE-STEIB – Chairwoman Etienne-Steib thanked Mr. Ken for all he does for the Keep St. James Parish Beautiful Board. She said she would like to make people understand that when you volunteer for these boards that it is a commitment, adding that if you can't be committed to give up the seat and give it to someone who wants to do it. She said she knows there is disappointment about the moratorium and said she thinks we are setting precedence, and said she is glad that they will be rewriting to make it fit everyone.

ADJOURNMENT

After determining there was no additional business to come before the council, on a motion offered by Councilman Amato and seconded by Councilman Louque and carried, the meeting adjourned at 8:22 p.m.


Linda Hubbell, Secretary