

**OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS OF THE
COUNCIL OF THE PARISH OF ST. JAMES, STATE OF LOUISIANA
TAKEN AT A REGULAR MEETING HELD ON OCTOBER 12, 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, October 12, 2022, at 6:03p.m. following the Public Hearing.

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; Ryan Donadieu, Emergency Preparedness Assistant Director; Felix Boughton, Finance Director; Rick Webre, Operations Director, and Adam Koenig, Legal Advisor. Special Counsel, Mr. 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 Bland and seconded by Councilman Louque the minutes of the September 28, 2022 public hearing were approved as distributed, and the reading of these minutes dispensed with.

On a motion offered by Councilman Louque and seconded by Councilman Bland the minutes of the September 28, 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 August 2022 was approved on a motion offered by Councilman Nash and seconded by Councilman Bland.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President Dufresne presented this report to the Council:

Thank you, Madam Chair. Good evening, everyone.

- On October 5th, our St James Parish Government employees wore pink in support of and to raise awareness for Breast Cancer Awareness Month. A huge portion of our staff wore pink in support, and I was proud to see the turnout we had.
- This week is Fire Prevention Week. Our firemen have been speaking at schools and homeschool organizations this week to help educate our young people on the importance of fire prevention. This year's theme is "Don't wait, plan your escape." In modern homes, you only have about two minutes to escape after the fire alarm goes off. I would like to encourage each of you to sit down with your families and make an escape plan. It only takes a few minutes and can save lives.
- On Monday, October 3rd, the ARC building officially reopened. We are excited to welcome back the clients.
- The Senior Center on the West Bank will temporarily relocate to the fire training center in Vacherie. A purchase order has been written to replace the grease trap at that facility which is one of the last tasks for occupancy.
- The purchase of the hospital property on the West Bank has been resurveyed. The property is currently being reevaluated to adjust the appraisal value based on the square footage. We should have something ready for the next council meeting.
- The Department of Human Resources would like to remind you of its annual Harvest Fest on October 27th at the West Bank Reception Hall for registered seniors participating in our 4 Elderly Services programs. This year's theme is Western, and guests are encouraged to join our seniors in wearing their best western attire and boots. It will be a great time celebrating our seniors.
- The St James Parish Sheriff's Office just hosted their Night Out Against Crime on Tuesday, October 4th. The event was a huge success, with 6 parties hosted throughout the parish.
- The Buddy Whitney canal project in Lutcher is still scheduled for mid-November. Material will be delivered from Design Precast at that time and the contractor is prepared to proceed. The David Plantation interior drainage project is complete.
- The East Bank natural gas purchase point in Paulina has been completed and is running online. Pressure has been increased to east bank residents. This project will substantially improve natural gas supply to the east bank of St. James Parish.
- Road preservation is continuing through Material Resources Incorporated; texture seal was applied to Judge Becnel Street and North Rosery last week. Patching will be completed on North Nobile with a mastic seal to follow. Many roads have been treated with Bio seal, a clear coat that seals and rejuvenates the road and extends its life. It is a biodegradable and carcinogen-free product.
- The new DHR building in Lutcher has been framed, and the project is well under way.
- The road rehab bid opened on the 10th of October and the lowest responsive bidder was Barrier and it's on tonight's agenda for approval.
- A purchase order has been issued to Quality Engineers for conceptual redesign of the St. James Parish Welcome Center.
- Highway 3127 widening project is progressing. Louisiana Facility Planning and Control has approved St James Parish to incur expenses. This project will be conducted on a disbursement basis.
- Permitting has been received from Canadian National Railway to complete the Romeville-Grandpoint gas loop. Flagging and boring is being scheduled at this time. This is another component of our project to enhance the natural gas infrastructure and will greatly increase our ability to provide uninterrupted services to residents.

- Several of our staff from the Emergency Preparedness Department are attending a Cybersecurity Training event today with GOHSEP. We also provided another Diversity and Inclusion Workshop for our employees. Ensuring our staff are properly equipped with training and resources will remain one of my highest priorities.
- If you haven't registered to vote yet, you can do so online at geauxvote.com until October 18th. Early voting will take place Tuesday October 25th through November 1 from 8:30am – 6pm at the Registrar of Voters office in Convent and in Vacherie. You can also vote early at the Lutcher Machine Warehouse on Saturday, October 29th or Tuesday, November 1st, from 8:30 am until 6pm.
- The St James Parish Library is celebrating Lawyers in Libraries Week the week of October 24th. On the 25th, a lawyer has volunteered to provide free consultations at the Vacherie Library from 9am to 1pm. On the 28th, a lawyer will be volunteering at the Lutcher Library from 9am to 11am. There are also phone consultations available and webinars throughout the weeklong event. For information, please call or visit the library.
- Last week our team hosted the St James Parish Pumpkin Patch. We had hundreds of students come throughout the week and wrapped up in a Fall Festival that combined with our Market Day event. The Pumpkin Patch was a huge success and we collected over \$11,000 dollars. We had a very positive response from the community and received many compliments. We hosted over 400 school children, all of whom loved exploring our various activities and picking out a pumpkin. We are already looking forward to next year and making plans to continue to grow this event.

This concludes my report. God bless everyone here, and God bless St James Parish.

PUBLIC COMMENT – None

PRESENTATIONS

- Mr. Dan Lux introduced himself as a candidate for the 2nd Congressional District House of Representatives.

APPOINTMENTS TO BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

RESOLUTION 22-192, A RESOLUTION REAPPOINTING TERRENCE JONES AS THE COUNCIL'S APPOINTMENT TO THE RIVER PARISHES TOURIST COMMISSION was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Bland. Councilman Cooper offered a second, and the resolution was unanimously adopted.

OLD BUSINESS

Acquisition of Land for Multipurpose Building – was addressed during the President's comments.

Update of drainage study for Forrestal Street to Pool Lane – the project is still on the radar.

ORDINANCE 22-11, AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 18 "BUILDINGS AND BUILDING REGULATIONS" OF THE ST. JAMES PARISH CODE OF ORDINANCES AS IT PERTAINS TO BELLEVUE GARDEN LAKES SETBACK REGULATIONS, having undergone the hearing process, was offered and moved adoption by Councilman Louque and was seconded by Councilman Bland. After a unanimous roll call vote, the ordinance was adopted.

NEW BUSINESS

RESOLUTION 22-193, A RESOLUTION TO APPROVE DISBURSEMENT OF PAYROLL FOR THE OCTOBER 14, 2022 PAYROLL, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Amato and seconded by Councilman St. Pierre. After a unanimous roll call vote, the resolution was adopted.

RESOLUTION 22-194, A RESOLUTION TO APPROVE DISBURSEMENT OF FUNDS TO PAY PENDING CURRENT INVOICES AND PAYABLES, 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 22-195, A RESOLUTION CONGRATULATING AND COMMENDING ANYA RANDLE FOR BEING AWARDED THE INTERNATIONAL EAGLE AWARD, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Amato. Councilman St. Pierre offered a second, and the resolution was unanimously adopted.

RESOLUTION 22-196, A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE ST. JAMES PARISH PRESIDENT TO ENTER INTO A CONTRACT WITH THE LOUISIANA DIVISION OF ADMINISTRATION IN ORDER TO ESTABLISH PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES IN ACCORDANCE WITH COMMUNITY WATER ENRICHMENT FUND REGULATIONS, 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 22-197, A RESOLUTION ACCEPTING CHANGE ORDER #5 FROM TBT CONTRACTING, INC. OF LA FOR THE EAST BANK RECREATIONS FACILITY, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman St. Pierre and seconded by Councilman Bland. After a unanimous roll call vote, the resolution was adopted.

RESOLUTION 22-198, A RESOLUTION OF THE ST. JAMES PARISH COUNCIL APPROVING EQUILON ENTERPRISES LLC PROJECT PERI FOR PARTICIPATION IN THE INDUSTRIAL TAX EXEMPTION PROGRAM, 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 22-199, A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE ST. JAMES PARISH PRESIDENT TO ACCEPT THE BID AND ENTER INTO A CONTRACT WITH FELICIANA WELDERS, INC. FOR THE WEST BANK NATURAL GAS PURCHASE STATION PROJECT, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Nash and seconded by Councilman Cooper. After a unanimous roll call vote, the resolution was adopted.

RESOLUTION 22-200, A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE SIGNING OF A LONG-TERM CONTRACT FOR SOLID WASTE COLLECTION AND DISPOSAL, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Amato and seconded by Councilman St. Pierre. After a unanimous roll call vote, the resolution was adopted.

RESOLUTION 22-201, A RESOLUTION SETTING THE HOURS FOR TRICK-OR-TREAT ON HALLOWEEN NIGHT FROM 6:00 P.M. TO 8:00 P.M., was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Louque. Councilman St. Pierre offered a second, and the resolution was unanimously adopted.

RESOLUTION 22-202, A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING ST. JAMES PARISH TO ENTER INTO A COOPERATIVE ENDEAVOR AGREEMENT WITH THE RIVER PARISHES CONVENTION, TOURIST AND VISITORS COMMISSION, TOWN OF LUTCHER, TOWN OF GRAMERCY, ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST PARISH, AND THE FESTIVAL OF THE BONFIRES, INC., AND AUTHORIZING THE ST. JAMES PARISH PRESIDENT TO EXECUTE SAID COOPERATIVE ENDEAVOR AGREEMENT, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman St. Pierre and was seconded by Councilman Amato. After a unanimous roll call vote, the resolution was adopted.

RESOLUTION 22-203, A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE ST. JAMES PARISH PRESIDENT TO ACCEPT THE BID AND ENTER INTO A CONTRACT WITH BARRIERE CONSTRUCTION CO., LLC FOR THE FY 2022 ROAD REHABILITATION PROJECT, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Bland and was seconded by Councilman Nash. After a unanimous roll call vote, the resolution was adopted.

RESOLUTION 22-204, A RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR THE ACCEPTANCE OF WORK PERFORMED BY BYRON E. TALBOT, INC. IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CERTIFICATE OF SUBSTANTIAL COMPLETION FOR THE ST. JAMES PARISH DAVID PLANTATION SUBDIVISION DRAINAGE IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT, was offered and move for adoption by Councilman St. Pierre and seconded by Councilman Amato. After a unanimous roll call vote, the resolution was adopted.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

INGRID BERGERON – She said the ARC has reopened. She thanked her staff for their hard work and dedication. Chairwoman Etienne-Steib inquired about accommodating dialysis patients. Ms. Bergeron said they were and added that shopping days will be cut back in the future to prioritize the medical patients.

RICK WEBRE – Herbicide application will begin on Highways 3125 and 3127, and the bridge access road. The 2 gator tail boats were delivered this week and 1 new tractor delivered this week.

FELIX BOUGHTON – He provided a timeline of the budget process and said most drainage projects will be incorporated into the \$8 million mitigation grant. He said sales tax was up for the first time this year.

COUNCIL MEMBER'S REPORT

COUNCILMAN ST. PIERRE – Councilman St. Pierre said the track lights are up but not sufficient for their needs, he thanked Brent Dicharry for his assistance. He inquired if the permit is still in place for Beaver Canal to clean the other side on Hwy 61. He inquired if it is still possible to put an ADA Park in the Parish. President Dufresne said they are looking at it in the budget.

COUNCILMAN AMATO – Councilman Amato thanked the Council for supporting the Bonfire Festival. He asked about the start date of Buddy Whitney Project. Mr. Webre indicated as soon as the material is delivered they will begin the project. He congratulated the Parish on a successful Pumpkin Patch and Market Day.

COUNCILMAN LOUQUE – Councilman Louque thanked the solid waste committee for the work they did. He thanked the operations department on the gas system. He acknowledged accomplishment on the approval of the Shell ITEP.

COUNCILMAN BLAND – Councilman Bland thanked the Parish President for holding Pink Day in the Parish support of Breast Cancer Month. He thanked the Shell supporters for attending the meeting.

COUNCILMAN COOPER – Councilman Cooper requested a condolence letter for Patricia Schexnayder. He asked when the ceiling fan at the park would be installed, and he said the stop sign at 3219 and River Road is out again.

COUNCILMAN NASH – Councilman Nash requested a letter to DOTD regarding the number of accidents on Hwy20 at Bayou Chevruel, and he requested a status of bridge replacement project. He also inquired about the road repair of the construction done on Hwy 643.

CHAIRWOMAN ETIENNE-STEIB – Chairwoman Etienne-Steib also requested a condolence letter to the families of David Washington and Patricia Schexnayder. She acknowledged the death of Mr. Norman Marmillion, who was the Manager of Laura Plantation. She congratulated Anya Randle for a job well done, and she thanked Waste Management for their presentation.

An **EXECUTIVE SESSION** convened at 8:08p.m., on a motion offered by Councilman Bland and seconded by Councilman Louque. After a unanimous roll call vote, the motion carried. Members of the Council, President Dufresne, Adam Koenig, and Vic Franckiewicz withdrew to an adjoining chamber pertaining to the following two items:

- Executive session under LA R.S. 42:17(A)(2) to discuss pending litigation styled Lamar Contractors, LLC v. SRF Group Consulting, LLC, et al., Docket No. 36,600(E), 23rd Judicial District Court. The litigation pertains to the 5th District multipurpose building.
- Executive session under LA. R.S. 42:17(A)(2) to discuss the pending litigation styled Yolande Schexnayder & Son, Inc. v. St. James Parish, Docket No. 40,298(E), 23rd Judicial District Court. In addition to the named parties in that litigation, St. James Construction Materials, LLC is an intervening party. The litigation pertains to the borrow pit and property commonly known as "Big Shake."

All returned at 9:06 p.m., and the regular session reconvened. Chairwoman Etienne-Steib informed everyone that no action was taken on the first executive session item. Executive session second item: action to modify the agreement to include full drainage plan for drainage prior, drainage during, and future of the pits.

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 Amato and carried, the meeting adjourned at 9:07 p.m.


Linda Hubbell, Secretary