

**OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS OF THE
COUNCIL OF THE PARISH OF ST. JAMES, STATE OF LOUISIANA
TAKEN AT A REGULAR MEETING HELD ON APRIL 27, 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, April 27, 2022, at 6:08 p.m., following the public hearing.

On roll call, the following were recorded present: Council Members Alvin St. Pierre, Jr., Jason Amato, Clyde Cooper, Donald Nash, and Chairwoman Vondra Etienne-Steib. Councilman Louque was not in attendance for roll call, and Councilman 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; Rick Webre, Operations Director, and Adam Koenig, Legal Advisor.

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 Amato and seconded by Councilman St. Pierre, the minutes of the April 13, 2022 public hearing were approved as distributed, and the reading of these minutes dispensed with.

On a motion offered by Councilman Nash and seconded by Councilman Amato, the minutes of the April 13, 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, everyone.
- Our Keep St. James Parish Beautiful Board successfully hosted a parish-wide cleanup day on Saturday, April 23rd. I would like to extend gratitude to Chairwoman Vondra Etienne-Steib, Councilman Donald Nash, Councilman Clyde Cooper, Councilman Jason Amato, and Councilman Ryan Louque. A special thanks to our litter board and residents who are continuously making an effort in keeping our parish beautiful!
- I'd like to thank Chairwoman Vondra Etienne-Steib for their District 6 Town Hall and Councilmen Clyde Cooper for their District 5 Town Hall. We look forward to working with the residents to continue to improve drainage infrastructure and community needs. I'm also looking forward to any future town hall meetings in any district, if they choose to do so.
- St. James Parish is proud to announce, in conjunction with FEMA, the PPDR (Private Property Debris Removal) Program which will allow residents to apply for assistance in Hurricane Ida damages/debris removal from their private property. Residents will need to complete an application and provide necessary documentation for FEMA to determine eligibility. The application deadline for submission will be May 13, 2022.
- In addition, the Department of Human Resources is still accepting applications for Hurricane Ida Disaster recovery and relief for residents of St. James Parish. The current services available for eligible residents are roll off dumpsters, debris and tree removal, and furniture and appliance replacement. DHR is also assisting eligible residents with rent, mortgage, utility services, and emergency services. For Hurricane relief, contact 225-562-2353 and for COVID and other emergency assistance contact 225-562-2442.
- Our Senior Wellness Program began its Fitness Exercise classes on April 21, 2022. The East Bank classes are held at the St. James Fitness Center on Monday and Wednesdays from 9am to 10am. The West Bank classes are held on Tuesday and Thursday at the West Bank Reception Hall from 9am to 10am.
- We are accepting applications until this Friday, April 29th, for our 2022 College Student Summer Internship Program. This will be a 10 week program, starting June 6th. Please visit our Facebook page to apply.
- Maintenance and repairs have been completed on the parish's Recreation Splash parks. All splash parks will be open to residents this Friday, April 29th.
- As a reminder, the St. James Parish utilities department has changed over to a new payment system for all utility bills. This new payment system will replace the old payment system when paying your utilities bill online. If you have any questions, please contact our Citizen Service Center at 225-562-2500.
- I met with Senator Bill Cassidy 2 weeks ago to discuss possible grant opportunities through the Pontchartrain Restoration Program for a kayak boat launch route in the future.
- David plantation – progressing well; 40% complete
- There will be a public hearing for the Solar Farm on May 9th at 6pm at the Vacherie Annex to discuss changing the status of the land use plan.
- Due to surplus moneys from the 1786 hazard mitigation grant, we'll be adding and completing the Buddy Whitney drainage canal project.

Councilman Louque arrived and assumed his seat on the council.

- We will be having a Kickoff meeting with Facility Planning and Control on May 20th for the 3127 4-lane widening.
- We'd like to thank Speaker Clay Schexnayder for his efforts in receiving an additional \$1 million dollars to upkeep and make repairs and improvements to the Blind River Boat Launch.

- Construction is underway for State Project H. 009481 LA 20 Bayou Chevreuil Bridge. The project is 0.441 miles long and the type of work is clearing and grubbing, removal of bridge, grading, drainage structures, milling asphalt concrete, and pavement patching. DOTD advises motorists that on Monday, May 2nd, traffic will be routed to the newly constructed LA 20 detour bridge over Bayou Chevreuil. Motorists should be prepared to follow new signage and striping when traveling this corridor. This phase of construction will last until crews can remove and replace the bridge over the existing alignment.
- Please remember to vote this Saturday, April 30th for the School Board Millage Renewal Election. To receive a sample ballot, please visit our parish website.

This concludes my report. God Bless you and God Bless St. James Parish.

PUBLIC COMMENT – None

PRESENTATIONS

Tommy Scott, Director, provided the Workforce Investment Agency's annual report. He then answered the Council's questions.

APPOINTMENTS TO BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

Councilman Ryan Louque offered and moved for adoption **RESOLUTION 22-90, A RESOLUTION REAPPOINTING MELVINA MATHERNE AS THE DISTRICT 3 REPRESENTATIVE TO THE ST. JAMES PARISH PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD**. Councilman St. Pierre offered a second, and the resolution was unanimously adopted.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Acquisition of Land for Multipurpose Building – The survey and appraisal are complete; we are in the process of setting up a meeting with the hospital to negotiate a selling price.
2. Update of drainage study for Forrestal Street to Pool Lane – The update will be presented during the director's report.
3. **ORDINANCE 22-04, AN ORDINANCE SETTING AND DESIGNATING THE ADOPTED PROPERTY TAX MILLAGE FOR THE YEAR 2022 LEVIED ON ALL TAXABLE PROPERTY WITHIN THE PARISH OF ST. JAMES, STATE OF LOUISIANA**, having undergone the hearing process, was offered and moved adoption by Councilman Nash and was seconded by Councilman Cooper. After a unanimous roll call vote, with Bland absent, the ordinance was adopted.

NEW BUSINESS

RESOLUTION 22-91, A RESOLUTION TO APPROVE DISBURSEMENT OF PAYROLL FOR THE APRIL 29, 2022 PAYROLL, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman St. Pierre and seconded by Councilman Louque. After a unanimous roll call vote, with Bland absent, the resolution was adopted.

RESOLUTION 22-92, A RESOLUTION TO APPROVE DISBURSEMENT OF FUNDS TO PAY PENDING CURRENT INVOICES AND PAYABLES, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Amato and seconded by Councilman St. Pierre. After a unanimous roll call vote, with Bland absent, the resolution was adopted.

RESOLUTION 22-93, RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE ST. JAMES PARISH PRESIDENT TO ACCEPT THE BID AND ENTER INTO AN INDEFINITE DELIVERY/INDEFINITE QUANTITY CONTRACT WITH MATERIAL RESOURCES, INC. FOR ASPHALTIC CONCRETE PAVEMENT, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Louque and seconded by Councilman Amato. After a unanimous roll call vote, with Bland absent, the resolution was adopted.

RESOLUTION 22-94, A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE ST. JAMES PARISH PRESIDENT TO SIGN AND EXECUTE A CONTRACT WITH CRESCENT ENGINEERING & MAPPING, LLC FOR THE 2022 ST. JAMES PARISH ROAD REHABILITATION PROJECT, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman St. Pierre and seconded by Councilman Louque. After a unanimous roll call vote, with Bland absent, the resolution was adopted.

RESOLUTION 22-95, A RESOLUTION ACCEPTING THE BID OF GEAUX CHEVROLET FOR 2021 CHEVY 4500 TRUCKS FOR ST. JAMES, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Nash. Councilman Louque offered a second, and the resolution was unanimously adopted.

RESOLUTION 22-96, A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE AREA AGENCY ON AGING DISASTER PLAN TO BE SUBMITTED TO THE GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF ELDERLY AFFAIRS FOR JULY 1, 2022 TO JUNE 30, 2023 PROGRAM YEAR, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Amato and seconded by Councilman Louque. After a unanimous roll call vote, with Bland absent, the resolution was adopted.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

FELIX BOUGHTON – The annual audit began this week. A meeting with St. James School Board's sales tax department is scheduled for May 16th to discuss increasing revenues for the parish. In the process of getting proposals from architects to do a construction evaluation of every building in the parish, to get certification to help reduce property premiums.

RICK WEBRE – showed a video of the work the parish is doing on the Vacherie Canal. President Dufresne stated that we have saved a ton of money doing the work in-house. Mr. Webre said Forrestal and Pool Streets, are part of the cleaning project and that he needs to coordinate with his counterpart in St. John Parish because they don't clean all the way to Lac Des Allemands. Chairwoman Etienne-Steib said she appreciated the visual of the work being done.

INGRID BERGERON – said a meeting with the Stake Holders regarding long term recovery will be scheduled in the next couple of days and invited the council to attend. They are working through legal issues with the recovery efforts. She said her staff is doing an excellent job. She said she requested assistance from the Workforce Investment Agency for 2 additional case managers. She thanked the council for all the work they do for DHR and said they are getting ready set up at the satellite office. Chairwoman Etienne-Steib thanked DHR for their assistance with the resident in Gramercy. Councilman Amato inquired about the percentage of residents reaching out. Ms. Bergeron indicated about 25-45% and said a report will be sent tomorrow with the numbers.

ERIC DEROCHE – No comments.

COUNCIL MEMBER'S REPORT

COUNCILMAN NASH – Councilman Nash had no comment.

COUNCILMAN COOPER – Councilman Cooper thanked the Parish President and the Administration for attending the town hall meeting last Wednesday. He inquired about the tall grass at the Sunshine Bridge and said he would like to speak with Mr. Brass and Mr. Price for assistance. He thanked everyone who showed up to help pick up litter on the service road. He said he received a call that tree limbs hanging from Hurricane Ida had fallen. Mrs. Bergeron said they can call to complete an application. He asked Mr. Webre to contact the School Board regarding transportation for summer camp, and he requested a condolence letter to the family of Karen Peters Oubre.

COUNCILMAN BLAND – Councilman Bland was absent.

COUNCILMAN LOUQUE – Councilman Louque inquired about a work order to clean out the south side of 3125 and said he received a call that work was being done on the north side. He said it looks like the ditch mowing is moving along. He inquired about the relocation of the notice of violation on Big Shake. Legal Counsel Koenig indicated that he and Special Counsel Franckiewicz are in discussions on how to proceed moving forward.

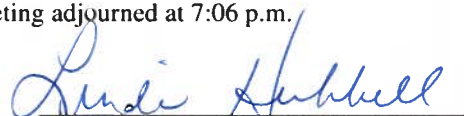
COUNCILMAN AMATO – Councilman Amato reminded everyone that the parish little league program kicks off this weekend at Lutchter Park. He said the redistricting maps will be updated to include the constables and Justices of the Peace locations. He said he appreciated the cleanup efforts. He informed everyone that Mr. Roman Hardy, Vice-President of Shell was on Sunday's Louisiana Business Industry show and encourage everyone to view it if they could because he would talk about the Shell Convent facility. He wished the Council Secretary Happy Administrative Assistant Day and thanked her for all she does for the Council.

COUNCILMAN ST. PIERRE – Councilman St. Pierre said Beaver Canal is starting to get sediment and requested it be looked at and he said the culverts under Airline needs to be cleaned. He also wished Happy Administrative Day to the Council Secretary.

CHAIRWOMAN ETIENNE-STEIB – Chairwoman Etienne-Steib thanked the Administration for attending and supporting her on her first town hall meeting, adding it was a success because of your attendance. She thanked Nicole Charles, Gilda Spellman and family, Patricia Moses, and Susan Bailey for helpin her in the Magnolia area on cleanup day. She said she wants to reach out to the Sheriff's office to help enforce the litter ordinance. She wished Happy Administrative Day to the Council Secretary.

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 Louque and carried, the meeting adjourned at 7:06 p.m.


Linda Hubbell, Secretary