

**OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS OF THE
COUNCIL OF THE PARISH OF ST. JAMES, STATE OF LOUISIANA
TAKEN AT A REGULAR MEETING HELD ON MAY 25, 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, May 25, 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, Emergency Preparedness 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 Louque led the Pledge of Allegiance.

MINUTES

On a motion offered by Councilman Bland and seconded by Councilman Louque, the minutes of the May 11, 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.

- I'd like to thank our Keep St. James Parish Beautiful Board for hosting an electronic recycling and paper shredding community event last Saturday.
- I'd also like to thank the St. James Parish Hospital and our DHR Department for hosting a successful Senior Health Fair and Picnic yesterday. The hospital offered free health screenings and health education to our residents.
- I'm proud to announce that St. James Parish will be hosting a Farmer's Market every second Saturday of every month at the Welcome Center beginning on June 11th from 9am – 2pm. We'll be accepting produce vendors and craft vendors. If you'd like to become a vendor, please visit our website to sign up.
- All Parish splash parks are operating and open for residents to enjoy for the summer. The operating hours of the parks are 10am until 8pm.
- The Operations Department and I met with DOTD on Monday to discuss a change in design for the Hwy 643 project.
- A kick-off meeting took place this past Friday about the new gas purchase point project on the West Bank. The interconnect agreement is nearly complete and is projected to begin construction 1st quarter of 2023.
- A kick-off meeting was conducted on site for the East Bank Natural Gas Purchase Point. Gulf South Pipeline has assigned a construction and project manager and fabrication of infrastructure has begun. This project is scheduled for late 3rd quarter 2022.
- The Operations Department and I met with Facility Planning & Control last week to discuss the 3127 Widening project. A draft master services contract for engineering as well as the 3 initial task orders have been submitted to FP&C for review and approval.
- The David Plantation Subdivision drainage project is near completion. All driveways have been formed and concrete pouring should be concluded by end of the week. Once the project has been inspected by Operations and contractors have cleared the area, Operations crews will begin the installation of resident requested culverts and basins.
- B.E.T.C.O. has deployed and initiated construction for the new DHR Building in Lutchet. A groundbreaking ceremony is being planned and scheduled.
- A Notice to Proceed was issued to Morcore Roofing for the water plant roof replacements. Construction will start first at the Convent water plant.
- Meetings were conducted between Crescent Engineering and Material Resources, Inc. for our Road Rehab and Preservation. A joint follow-on meeting will be conducted with both companies to ensure coordination. Advertisement for Road Rehab is expected to begin 3rd quarter 2022.
- This week Operations crews accompanied by personnel from Rostan evaluated major drainage channels on both the East and West banks of the Parish for continued waterway debris removal. FEMA applications for this project are being developed.
- (9) residents that have experienced severe repetitive loss and have been contacted to participate in FEMA's mitigation program. So far, (2) have registered for assistance and (1) has declined.
- I met with officials from American Cruise Line and The Tourist Commission last week about a potential offloading site for cruise passengers. American Cruise Lines and The Tourist Commission are in the process of working with the landowners to develop an agreement where they can offload passengers at the old Ferry Landing on the West bank.
- I would like to congratulate all the seniors who graduated from both Lutchet and St. James High Schools this past Friday night.
- I attended the Law Enforcement Torch Run for Special Olympics this past Saturday morning along with The St. James Parish Sheriff's Office.
- The 2022 St. James Parish Government College Student Summer Internship Program is set to start on Monday, June 6th, 2022. Orientation for the summer workers was held this morning at the Convent Community Center.

- St. James Parish Government offices will be closed on Monday, May 30, 2022, in observance of Memorial Day.
- St. James Parish Senior Centers have new hours of operation effective June 1, 2022. The new hours are Monday – Thursday 7:30am to 4:30pm and Friday 7:30am to 1:00pm.
- Library registration starts Tuesday, May 31, 2022, for the summer reading program and other library events.
- We received word of the closure of Zapp's Potato Chips located in Gramercy. Mr. Steve Nosacka then shared more information on the closure.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Justin Kray, 2433 Onzaga Street, New Orleans, a representative from the Bucket Brigade, spoke against the Proposed Ordinance, to amend section 82-25 of the Land Use Ordinance and to amend the generalized future land use plan.

PRESENTATIONS

Mr. Edwin Octave, Jr. was recognized and presented a plaque for his 100th birthday.

The Calendar Contest winners were not in attendance to be recognized.

Keri Walker, Library Supervisor and Veda Bailey, Library Board Chairwoman presented the St. James Parish Library Board's annual report to the Council.

APPOINTMENTS TO BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS – None

OLD BUSINESS

1. Acquisition of Land for Multipurpose Building – there is a resolution on the agenda to negotiate a purchase price with the hospital.
2. Update of drainage study for Forrestal Street to Pool Lane – continuing to maintain the permit. Crews are in Couteau and Brazan canals, looking at that area for debris removal and submitting applications.

NEW BUSINESS

RESOLUTION 22-109, A RESOLUTION TO APPROVE DISBURSEMENT OF PAYROLL FOR THE MAY 27, 2022 PAYROLL, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Bland and seconded by Councilman Amato. After a unanimous roll call vote, the resolution was adopted.

RESOLUTION 22-110, A RESOLUTION TO APPROVE DISBURSEMENT OF FUNDS TO PAY PENDING CURRENT INVOICES AND PAYABLES, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Bland and seconded by Councilman Nash. After a unanimous roll call vote, the resolution was adopted.

RESOLUTION 22-111, RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE ST. JAMES PARISH PRESIDENT TO SIGN AND EXECUTE A CONTRACT WITH FABCO, INC. FOR REPAIRS TO THE CLARIFIER RING AT THE VACHERIE WATER PLANT, 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.

RESOLUTION 22-112, A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE ST. JAMES PARISH PRESIDENT TO SIGN A COOPERATIVE ENDEAVOR AGREEMENT WITH THE LSU AG CENTER TO SUPPORT AND ADMINISTER LOUISIANA COOPERATIVE UNITS OFF CAMPUS, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Louque and seconded by Councilman Amato. After a unanimous roll call vote, the resolution was adopted.

RESOLUTION 22-113, A RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING AND HONORING EDWIN OCTAVE, JR. ON HIS 100TH BIRTHDAY, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Amato. Councilman Louque offered a second, and the resolution was unanimously adopted.

RESOLUTION 22-114, A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE ST. JAMES PARISH PRESIDENT TO SIGN AND EXECUTE A CONTRACT WITH DOYLE ELECTRIC, INC. FOR THE SEWER PLANT GENERATOR ADDITION, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman St. Pierre and seconded by Councilman Louque. After a roll call vote showing, Louque, Cooper, Amato, St. Pierre, Bland, and Etienne-Steib in favor, and Nash against, the resolution was adopted.

RESOLUTION 22-115, A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE ST. JAMES PARISH PRESIDENT TO SIGN AND EXECUTE A CONTRACT WITH DOYLE ELECTRIC, INC. FOR THE GENERATOR ADDITION AT THE ST. JAMES PARISH COURTHOUSE, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Bland and seconded by Councilman Louque. After a unanimous roll call vote, the resolution was adopted.

RESOLUTION 22-116, A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE PARISH PRESIDENT TO EXECUTE A JOINT AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE ST. JAMES PARISH SCHOOL BOARD AND THE ST. JAMES PARISH COUNCIL FOR THE COLLECTION OF SALES AND USE TAXES FOR THE PERIOD JULY 1, 2022 THROUGH JUNE 30, 2023, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Louque and seconded by Councilman Bland. After a unanimous roll vote, the resolution was adopted.

RESOLUTION 22-117, A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE PARISH PRESIDENT TO APPLY FOR AND EXECUTE ALL DOCUMENTATION FOR FUNDING FROM THE LOUISIANA OFFICE OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSISTANT PROGRAM FOR TWO 5,000 GALLON DOUBLE WALLED FUEL TANKS FOR THE EAST AND WEST BANK FUEL SITES, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Amato and seconded by Councilman Bland. After a unanimous roll call vote, the resolution was adopted.

RESOLUTION 22-118, A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE PARISH PRESIDENT TO APPLY FOR AND EXECUTE ALL DOCUMENTATION FOR FUNDING FROM THE LOUISIANA OFFICE OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY WATER ENRICHMENT FUND PROGRAM FOR FUNDING TOWARD SERVICE PUMPS AND MOTOR FOR THE EAST AND WEST BANK WATER TREATMENT PLANTS, 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 22-119, A RESOLUTION OF THE ST. JAMES PARISH COUNCIL APPROVING LOUISIANA SUGAR REFINING, LLC GRAMERCY REFINERY 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 22-120, A RESOLUTION PROCLAIMING THE MONTH OF MAY AS OLDER AMERICANS MONTH IN ST. JAMES PARISH, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Bland. Councilman St. Pierre offered a second, and the resolution was unanimously adopted.

RESOLUTION 22-121, A RESOLUTION PROCLAIMING THE MONTH OF MAY AS COMMUNITY ACTION MONTH IN ST. JAMES PARISH, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Bland. Councilman Amato offered a second, and the resolution was unanimously adopted.

RESOLUTION 22-122, A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE ST. JAMES PARISH PRESIDENT TO NEGOTIATE A PURCHASE AGREEMENT BETWEEN ST. JAMES PARISH AND ST. JAMES PARISH HOSPITAL SERVICE DISTRICT FOR THE LAND DESIGNATED FOR USE AS THE MULTIPURPOSE BUILDING IN SOUTH VACHERIE, 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.

After Mr. Vic Franckiewicz explained the proposed ordinance and answered the Council's questions, Councilman Cooper offered a motion to table the **INTRODUCTION OF PROPOSED ORDINANCE 22-05, AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND SECTION 82-25 OF THE ST. JAMES PARISH CODE OF ORDINANCES, AND TO AMEND THE ST. JAMES PARISH GENERALIZED FUTURE LAND USE PLAN**, until more information is received. Councilman St. Pierre offered a second, and after a unanimous roll call vote, the motion carried.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

FELIX BOUGHTON – the annual audit field work is complete, should receive a report at an upcoming meeting. Met with the School Board regarding sales tax. He indicated that we had a fraud check cashed and therefore we now have to go to a new system.

RICK WEBRE – a list of the roads being considered for rehab were given to the council and ask that they review the list. A list of roads for preservation will be distributed at later time. Teams are out in the waterways, Bourbon Canal needs work, looked at the area at Dey Say St. and Brazan Canals, they also need clearing.

INGRID BERGERON – working with an architect to resolve licensing issues with the Arc and Senior Centers. Hurricane recovery efforts are moving along. She provided an update of housing assistance.

ERIC DEROCHE – informed everyone that the State is not expecting the housing stock to get back to normal for another 5-7 years due to the impact of recent hurricanes and said that due to the fires out west, there is a shortage of trailers. He said the debris monitoring contracts need to be amended to align with FEMA's new rules.

COUNCIL MEMBER'S REPORT

COUNCILMAN NASH – Councilman Nash requested an update of the issues at the Bayou Chevreuil Bridge repair. He requested a status of the Hwy 643 issue. Mr. Webre said he met with DOTD and they said the permit can be modified.

COUNCILMAN COOPER – Councilman Cooper requested condolence letters for Randy Harris and Robin Green. He thanked Mr. Webre and President Dufresne for the flashing stop signs on Highways 3219/18 and 3219/3127. He indicated that he received a call from Energy regarding a breaker panel for the light on Hwy 3129 and requested Mr. Webre contact them to get the project moving along. He indicated that the summer camp will begin the first week of June and applications are being distributed, and he expressed appreciation to the Parish President. He thanked Mr. Vic Franckiewicz for attending the meeting and congratulated Mr. Octave on his 100th birthday. He expressed concern about hearing that St. Louis academy may close in the future.

COUNCILMAN BLAND – Councilman Bland requested an update on the Big Shake Pit. Mr. Franckiewicz indicated that he had to work out legal issues and should have the paperwork that needs to be served and backup paperwork in the next day or two, and then he talked a little about the appeals process.

COUNCILMAN LOUQUE – Councilman Louque asked Mr. Franckiewicz what time frame he is expecting on the Supreme Court ruling. Mr. Franckiewicz said in a couple of weeks.

COUNCILMAN AMATO – Councilman Amato congratulated the Latcher Bulldog Baseball team on winning the State Championship and he congratulated the 2022 high school graduates. He expressed gratitude for input from the Council on the grass cutting ordinance.

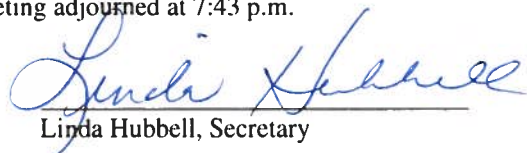
COUNCILMAN ST. PIERRE – Councilman St. Pierre said David Plantation drainage should be complete in the next couple of weeks. He met with the Gramercy Recreation Board and discussed bonding issues, adding they have committed to a timeline. He congratulated the Lutcher Baseball team on their accomplishment, and he said he is looking forward to the farmer’s market at the Welcome Center.

CHAIRWOMAN ETIENNE-STEIB – Chairwoman Etienne-Steib wished Mr. Edwin Octave a Happy Birthday and said he lived a great life and was glad he was able to attend the meeting. She thanked Mr. Webre for the work being done at the Magnolia playground. She thanked the Council for approving the resolution to move forward with negotiations on the purchase of land for the multipurpose building for the West bank. She asked everyone to pray for the families who lost their children last week.

At this time Councilman Bland indicated that the next redistricting meeting will be on June 8th in Convent at 4:30 pm.

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 7:43 p.m.


Linda Hubbell, Secretary