

**OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS OF THE
COUNCIL OF THE PARISH OF ST. JAMES, STATE OF LOUISIANA
TAKEN AT A REGULAR MEETING HELD ON JUNE 22, 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, June 22, 2022, at 6:00 p.m.

On roll call, the following were recorded present: Council Members Jason Amato, Ryan Louque, Mason Bland, Clyde Cooper, and Donald Nash. Council Members Alvin St. Pierre and Vondra Etienne-Steib were 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 Jason Amato, Vice-Chairman, 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 Bland offered the invocation and Councilman Nash led the Pledge of Allegiance.

MINUTES

On a motion offered by Councilman Bland and seconded by Councilman Nash, the minutes of the June 8, 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, Mr. Chairman. Good evening, council. Good evening, everyone.
- I'm proud to announce that we hosted our first Farmer's Market on Saturday, June 11th at the Welcome Center with great success. Its looking like the summer heat is affecting the produce, according to some produce vendors and hopefully we'll be able to continue with some success.
- I would like to remind residents that Hurricane Season is here and that the time to prepare is now. We have several resources available on our website on how residents can prepare their emergency kits at home and be ready for another storm season.
- Fabrication has been completed for the Natural Gas Pay Point on the Eastbank. Installation will begin end of July and is expected to be completed in August. Additionally, an interconnect agreement is being executed between Acadian Gas Pipeline Co. and St. James Parish for the Natural Gas Pay Point here on the Westbank. This project is proceeding as scheduled with fabrication and construction expected to be completed the 4th quarter of this year.
- (2) bids were received at the bid opening for the Buddy Whitney Canal Drainage Project on June 8th. The lowest responsive bidder was LA Contracting with a bid of \$679,960. A resolution to accept the bid and enter into contract will be on the next Council agenda. This project will be fully funded by HMGP grant DR-1786.
- T. Baker Smith has developed the bid packet for the Hwy 643 drainage project. This packet will be on the next Council agenda for approval to begin advertising and bidding.
- The interior drainage project for Magnolia Heights subdivision is progressing. Surveying is currently underway, and engineering is about 70% complete. This project will be funded by a Community Development Block Grant.
- A coordination and planning meeting was conducted between Material Resources Inc., Crescent Engineering, and St. James Parish Operations for the 2022 Road Rehab and Preservation Project. This project will be illustrated during the Operation's Director report tonight.
- The master services contract for engineering was submitted to Facility Planning & Control (FP&C) for the 3127 Widening Project. Operations Department is coordinating with FP&C in an attempt to release Capital Outlay funding that was approved for design by the Bond Commission in February 2022.
- Substantial completion of the David Plantation Subdivision Drainage Project is expected in 2 weeks. St. James Parish drainage crews will attend the final walk through and immediately deploy to begin installation of culverts and drainage systems requested by residents.
- The final design for the Convent Water Plant Clarifier is being verified for confined space piping. Bid packet will be submitted for advertising and bidding mid July. This project is being funded by the American Rescue Act.
- District 5 Drainage Study is nearing completion by Crescent Engineering. This data is required for grant approval and will be submitted to GOHSEP and FEMA for consideration for funding by HMGP DR-4611 mitigation projects.
- Wind retrofitting of the West Bank Reception Hall is complete. This facility will now serve as a critical building during disasters and disaster recovery with uses as a temporary shelter and donation/pod sites. Additionally, (2) trailer mounted 100KW generators have been purchased from Federal Surplus, one of which will power this facility.
- Contracts have been signed and Notice to Proceed issued to Doyle Electric for the Courthouse and Sewer Plant Generator Additions. A pre-construction meeting is scheduled for Monday June 27th. The material lead time for these units is nearly (1) year.
- The Permitting Department will be announcing Online Permitting soon. This system gives the ability for residents and contractors to apply for permits using an online system. All systems are currently in place and being tested. Public outreach for this service will begin in July.
- Many improvements and repairs are being made at our parks. New playground equipment has been installed at Magnolia Park and we are waiting for arrival of the soft playground surface material. A new netting system was installed at Paulina Park and new field lighting is currently being installed by Musco Lighting at Lucher and Gramercy Park. These were both damaged during Hurricane Ida and the repairs will be reimbursable through FEMA.

- The Recreation Department is in the process of obtaining quotes for the covered basketball courts addition at Magnolia Park. As for current recreational activities, the Men's Slow Pitch Softball League is starting soon. (5) teams have registered, and games will be played at Paulina Park on Mondays and Wednesdays.
- Various summer programs are still going on at our Parish Libraries. A (4) day journaling workshop for creative writing is happening this week at the Vacherie Library. The older kids can also check out Theater Camp that will be held next week at both our Vacherie and Lutchter Libraries. The next Storytime will be on Monday, June 27th. Times are 10am at the Vacherie Library and 1pm at the Lutchter Library. Registration is required for this fun event of stories, finger plays, and crafts. You can check our Parish website or Facebook page for more details on these events.
- As a reminder, Parish offices and buildings will be closed on July 4th, in observance of Independence Day.
- I went to Michigan on Thursday and Friday, with Mrs. Etienne-Steib to tour their Wellness Center which the hospital is modeling off of. It's worth wild visiting and we may need to plan another trip so other council members can see first hand the asset that this facility can have for the residents of St. James Parish.
- This concludes my report. God Bless everyone here and God Bless St. James Parish.

PUBLIC COMMENT – None

PRESENTATIONS

Brooklyn Forsyth, Anna LaCoste, Harmony Vancourt, and Gabriela Bivona were recognized as winners of the South Central Louisiana Human Services Authority calendar contest. Each were presented with a certificate from St. James Parish.

Mr. Ken Guidry, Chairman of the Keep St. James Parish Beautiful Board touched on the events that were held this year. He also presented changes that he would like to see to the Keep St. James Parish Beautiful Board ordinance to reduce the number of members serving on the board to hopefully improve the current issue with quorums.

APPOINTMENTS TO BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

RESOLUTION 22-130, A RESOLUTION REAPPOINTING KIMBERLY MARTIN TO THE ST. JAMES PARISH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BOARD AS A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PARISH PRESIDENT, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Bland. Councilman Nash offered a second, and the resolution was unanimously adopted.

RESOLUTION 22-131, A RESOLUTION REAPPOINTING BRAD POCHE AS A PARISH PRESIDENT'S REPRESENTATIVE TO THE ST. JAMES PARISH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BOARD, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Cooper. Councilman Louque offered a second, and the resolution was unanimously adopted.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Acquisition of Land for Multipurpose Building – we did forward appraisal information to the hospital last week and will reach out to Ms. Pratt to discuss.
2. Update of drainage study for Forrestal Street to Pool Lane – took FEMA and Rostan representatives on a tour. We geo coded all the down trees in the canal. We are applying now to get additional funding approval to continue with the barges to get it cleaned out.

NEW BUSINESS

RESOLUTION 22-132, A RESOLUTION TO APPROVE DISBURSEMENT OF PAYROLL FOR THE JUNE 24, 2022 PAYROLL, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Nash and seconded by Councilman Louque. After a unanimous roll call vote, with St. Pierre and Etienne-Steib absent, the resolution was adopted.

RESOLUTION 22-133, 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 Bland. After a unanimous roll call vote, with St. Pierre and Etienne-Steib absent, the resolution was adopted.

RESOLUTION 22-134, RESOLUTION APPROVING AND ADOPTING THE REVISIONS TO THE PERSONNEL POLICY GOVERNING ST. JAMES PARISH EMPLOYEES, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Louque and seconded by Councilman Cooper. After a unanimous roll call vote, with St. Pierre and Etienne-Steib, the resolution was adopted.

RESOLUTION 22-135, A RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR THE ACCEPTANCE OF WORK PERFORMED BY LA CONTRACTING ENTERPRISE, LLC IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CERTIFICATE OF SUBSTANTIAL COMPLETION FOR THE ST. JAMES PARISH HUMBLE STREET DRAINAGE IMPROVEMENTS – INDUSTRIAL STREET TO NORTH ANGELLE STREET PROJECT, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Louque and seconded by Councilman Bland. After a unanimous roll call vote, with St. Pierre and Etienne-Steib absent, the resolution was adopted.

RESOLUTION 22-136, A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE ST. JAMES PARISH PRESIDENT TO ENTER INTO AN INTERCONNECT AGREEMENT WITH ACADIAN GAS PIPELINE SYSTEM TO CONNECT ST. JAMES PARISH FACILITIES TO ACADIAN GAS PIPELINE SYSTEM IN VACHERIE, LOUISIANA, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Bland and seconded by Councilman Nash. After a unanimous roll call vote, with St. Pierre and Etienne-Steib absent, the resolution was adopted.

RESOLUTION 22-137, A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING PARISH PRESIDENT PETER DUFRESNE TO SIGN A RENEWAL CONTRACT WITH ELECTRONIC BUSINESS SYSTEMS, INC., was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Bland and seconded by Councilman Cooper. After a unanimous roll call vote, with St. Pierre and Etienne-Steib absent, the resolution was adopted.

RESOLUTION 22-138, A RESOLUTION AMENDING THE CONTRACT WITH TRIO COMMUNITY MEALS PREVIOUSLY KNOWN AS ELIOR NORTH AMERICA'S CORP. D/B/A BATEMAN COMMUNITY LIVING FOR A SIX MONTH FOOD SERVICES TO SENIOR CONGREGATE AND HOMEBOUND MEAL NUTRITION PROGRAM FOR A 2% INCREASE, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Bland and seconded by Councilman Nash. After a unanimous roll vote, with St. Pierre and Etienne-Steib absent, the resolution was adopted.

RESOLUTION 22-139, A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE PARISH PRESIDENT TO ENTER INTO A MOSQUITO CONTROL CONTRACT WITH MOSQUITO CONTROL SERVICES, LLC AND FOR THE PARISH PRESIDENT AND/OR HIS DESIGNEE TO SIGN ANY AND ALL ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS THEREWITH, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Louque and seconded by Councilman Bland. After a unanimous roll call vote, with St. Pierre and Etienne-Steib absent, the resolution was adopted.

PROPOSED ORDINANCE 22-05, AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE ST. JAMES PARISH CODE OF ORDINANCES, CHAPTER 18 BUILDING REGULATIONS, ARTICLE VI 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, was introduced on a motion offered by Councilman Nash and seconded by Councilman Bland. After a unanimous roll call vote, with St. Pierre and Etienne-Steib 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 6, 2022, in the Council Chambers of the Parish Courthouse in Convent.

PROPOSED 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, was introduced on a motion offered by Councilman Louque and seconded by Councilman Bland. After a unanimous roll call vote, with St. Pierre and Etienne-Steib 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 6, 2022, in the Council Chambers of the Parish Courthouse in Convent.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

FELIX BOUGHTON – received April installment of taxes and we are \$250,000 under from this time last year. If the trend continues, we will begin to feel the effects in solid waste, elderly, 911, and parks. In 2023 we will feel the full effects of the Shell plant closing for property tax. Clay Schexnayder was able to get the State Treasury to allocate \$250,000 to parishes with drainage problems, we will placed that money back into the GOMESA fund.

RICK WEBRE – total work orders for code enforcement is 272; 70 are open and 202 are closed. Jobs completed by contractors are 16 and jobs waiting for a contractor are 14. He then reviewed the road rehab program documents that were given to the council.

INGRID BERGERON – provided an update on the ARC and elderly center. She said they are still working to get the buildings approved. A community breakfast is schedule for July 19th that will include industry, local pastors, and other community stakeholders discuss a couple of topics, including long-term recovery, youth concerns, etc., adding that some programs have already been planned. She said youth summer camp fees may be reimbursed.

ERIC DEROCHE – modifications need to be done in the prior to the installation of new audio equipment in the council chambers and EOC. He provided an update of FEMA replacement on substantial building damage (PWs). A mandatory meeting will be held with every plant manager, every emergency response coordinator, and every ES&H person to bring them up to speed on our ordinance and state law, adding the State Police will identify their shortcomings. Councilman Amato said Mr. Deroche and Mr. Donadieu did a great job coordinating the fire association meeting.

COUNCIL MEMBER'S REPORT

COUNCILMAN NASH – Councilman Nash requested an update of the Hwy 643 culvert repairs. Mr. Webre indicated that T. Baker Smith has the bid package complete and will bring it to the council at the next meeting.

COUNCILMAN COOPER – Councilman Cooper requested a condolence letter to the family of Charles Jasmin. He requested an update of the Mosaic ammonia leak. Mr. Deroche indicated that they were in a turn-around. Preliminary investigation revealed that the contractor opened the wrong valve, which cause the release. Councilman Cooper inquired about funding for residents who still have damage from Hurricane Ida. Mrs. Bergeron indicated that the applications are currently being reviewed. She also said the RV program is unavailable. Mr. Deroche said the State has given a September 1st deadline for resident to be out of the RV because they are ending the program because it was for short term sheltering. Councilman Cooper inquired about the work being done near Blue's Grocery. Mr. Webre said he will look into it.

COUNCILMAN BLAND – Councilman Bland updated everyone that a stop work order was issued to Big Shake Pit operations about a week ago and that they needed to go through the Land Use process. President Dufresne said they met with him about a residential development plan, adding no permits have been applied for. Councilman Bland indicated that some Convent residents have teamed up to break the cycle of violence with a 2022 Summer Kids Festival on July 29th at the Paulina Park and a flyer has been shared on his Council Facebook page. They are accepting donations and help for the event. He said the wanted to make sure a task order has been issued for the black topping of Central Crossing Park.

COUNCILMAN LOUQUE – Councilman Louque had no comment.

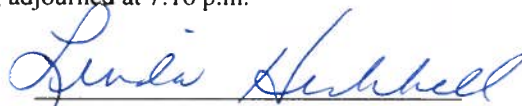
COUNCILMAN ST. PIERRE – Councilman St. Pierre was absent.

CHAIRWOMAN ETIENNE-STEIB – Chairwoman Etienne-Steib was absent.

VICE-CHAIRMAN AMATO – Vice-Chairman Amato said a great job by the Administration, Mrs. Audrey, and the Economic Development board on the Small Business Banquet held last week. He thanked Mr. Ken for everything he does for the Parish. He said Mr. Donald Hains with Waste Management requested to be at the next meeting to review their hurricane response plan for St. James Parish. He thanked the Parish for their help with the Buddy Whitney project.

ADJOURNMENT

After determining there was no additional business to come before the council, on a motion offered by Councilman Bland and seconded by Councilman Cooper and carried, the meeting adjourned at 7:16 p.m.


Linda Hubbell, Secretary