

**OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS OF THE
COUNCIL OF THE PARISH OF ST. JAMES, STATE OF LOUISIANA
TAKEN AT A REGULAR MEETING HELD ON NOVEMBER 9, 2021**

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 Tuesday, November 9, 2021, at 7:01 p.m., following the public hearing.

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

Those also in attendance were Linda Hubbell, Council Secretary; Peter Dufresne, Parish President; Eric Deroche, Director of Emergency Preparedness; Ingrid Bergeron, Human Resources Director; Felix Boughton, Finance Director; Rick Webre, Operations Director; and Adam Koenig, Legal Advisor. Special Counsel Marty Maley was also in attendance.

The Honorable Alvin St. Pierre, Jr., 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 Amato offered the invocation and Councilman Cooper led the Pledge of Allegiance.

MINUTES

On a motion offered by Councilman Bland and seconded by Councilman Amato, the minutes of the October 27, 2021 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 September 2021 was approved on a motion offered by Councilman Amato and seconded by Councilman Bland.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President Dufresne presented this report to the Council:

- Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good evening, Council. Good evening, everyone.
- We are continuing with Hurricane Ida recovery including continuing to remove debris. We know some of our residents have been unable to move debris to the roadside at this time, therefore we will continue making additional passes to allow all remaining debris to be removed.
- Debris being staged at the Romeville debris site will be hauled off this week in order to close down that site. Construction and Demolition debris is now being hauled away from the Vacherie landfill. Both the Paulina and Vacherie landfill transfer sties will remain in use for vegetative debris.
- FEMA has notified our Emergency Operations Department that the Disaster Recovery Center located in the Convent Community Center will officially close on Thursday, November 18th. This closure is due to a low number of visitors per day not meeting the required FEMA threshold. I encourage our residents if you still have not filed a claim or need assistance following up on a previously filed claim, to please visit the DRC in-person between now and November 18th. After the DRC closes, residents can call 1-800-621-3362 or by visiting disasterassistance.gov.
- In our Operations department, crews are continuing work on several of our major drainage and infrastructure projects. A public meeting will be held tomorrow, Wednesday, November 10th at 6 pm at Sandwich World to discuss the plans for the David Plantation Drainage Improvement Project. Residents are encouraged to attend, ask questions, and see an overview of what will take place during this project. Bid advertisements will follow soon after.
- In addition, we continue to make progress to build a new natural gas pay point on the west bank which will greatly improve the natural gas delivery service to our residents. We recently entered into an Intergovernmental Agreement with the hospital in which they will donate a 40 x 40 parcel of property to St. James Parish Government on which we can construct this new pay point.
- The major drainage project replacing the drainage trunk line in the Carrol Dale Subdivision in Paulina is approximately 50% complete. 48 inch arched concrete culverts are replacing the damaged galvanized trunk line. Additionally, interior drainage culverts are being replaced and placed on grade to enhance drainage and to alleviate a storm water flooding issued on south Angelle.
- The Vacherie Canal levee restoration was completed this week after the Hurricane Ida delay. Seeding is the only remaining task to be completed. This project raised the crown of the levee up to four feet in some areas. Had this project not been completed this levee would have been over topped during hurricane Ida.
- The operations department has submitted projects for consideration under the American Rescue Plan water sector. These projects can potentially be worth up to 15 million dollars.
- Herbicide and vegetation crews have resumed work in all parish ditches and drainage servitudes.
- As a reminder, the last day to register for Bidy Basketball is November 12th. More information on how to register can be found on our website at www.stjamesla.com.
- Crews have been working to complete renovations to the 5th district park bathrooms and concessions stand. I'm pleased to say this project has now reached substantial completion, and upon DHH approval will be ready for our residents to enjoy the use of this newly renovated park.
- As the holiday season quickly approaches, I am excited to see our community back to normal and celebrating together once again.
- Our Department of Human Resources will host their annual toy and coat drive thru event again this year. Both donations and applications are being accepted at this time. The event will take place December 15th. More information on how to donate or apply can be found on our parish website at stjamesla.com.
- Last year, this event served 292 children and 119 families in our community. We are excited to continue that service again this year and look forward to spreading Christmas cheer to those in our community in need.

- As we continue preparing for the holiday season, we are gearing up for some of our favorite traditions including annual Festival of the Bonfires being held December 9th-12th and of course the Lighting of the Bonfires on Christmas Eve.
- Many in our community, myself included were disappointed at last year's covid-19 cancellation of the Christmas Eve Bonfires. I am proud to see this time-honored tradition return this year and I'm confident this Christmas will be one to remember.
- Very soon, information will be released on where and how to get a permit to build your bonfires. I encourage our residents to support the Festival of the Bonfires by getting out to the festival this year and enjoying all that it has to offer. The proceeds of this event help to fund the insurance policy required in order to have bonfires on Christmas Eve. By supporting the festival, you are supporting this unique tradition in our Parish and the ability to continue the lighting for years to come.
- Thank you, Mr. Chairman, this concludes my report. God bless each of you and God bless St. James Parish.

PUBLIC COMMENT – None

PRESENTATIONS – None

APPOINTMENTS TO BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS – None

OLD BUSINESS

District 5 Alternate Access Route – President Dufresne suggested to send an email to Ergon.

Acquisition of Land for Multipurpose Building – President Dufresne indicated that they will try to meeting with the hospital tomorrow to try to move forward with the acquisition. He said the preliminary plans are available for the council to review.

NEW BUSINESS

RESOLUTION 21-241, A RESOLUTION TO APPROVE DISBURSEMENT OF PAYROLL FOR THE NOVEMBER 12, 2021 PAYROLL, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Louque and seconded by Councilman Cooper. After a unanimous roll call vote, with Nash absent, the resolution was adopted.

RESOLUTION 21-242, 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 Councilwoman Etienne-Steib. After a unanimous roll call vote, with Nash absent, the resolution was adopted.

RESOLUTION 21-243, A RESOLUTION AMENDING THE CONTRACT WITH MEYER ENGINEERS, LTD TO PROVIDE PROFESSIONAL SERVICES FOR ANY PROJECTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE CARES ACT AND AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN WATER SECTOR PROGRAM, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Amato and seconded by Councilman Louque. After a unanimous roll call vote, with Nash absent, the resolution was adopted.

RESOLUTION 21-244, A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE ST. JAMES PARISH PRESIDENT TO SIGN AND EXECUTE A CONTRACT WITH RJ DAILGE & SONS FOR ASPHALT REPAIRS ON NETTE STREET, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilwoman Etienne-Steib and was seconded by Councilman Cooper. After a unanimous roll call vote showing Louque, Etienne-Steib, Cooper, Amato, and St. Pierre in favor, Bland against, and Nash absent, the resolution was adopted.

RESOLUTION 21-245, A RESOLUTION AMENDING THE CONTRACT WITH CRESCENT ENGINEERING & MAPPING, LLC TO INCREASE THE CONTRACT AMOUNT, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Louque and seconded by Councilman Cooper. After a unanimous roll call vote, with Nash absent, the resolution was adopted.

RESOLUTION 21-246, A RESOLUTION GIVING PRELIMINARY APPROVAL TO THE ISSUANCE OF NOT TO EXCEED EIGHT MILLION DOLLARS (\$8,000,000) OF HURRICANE RECOVERY REVENUE BONDS, IN ONE OR MORE SERIES, OF THE PARISH OF ST. JAMES, STATE OF LOUISIANA; AND PROVIDING FOR OTHER MATTERS IN CONNECTION THEREWITH, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Bland and seconded by Councilman Louque. After a unanimous roll call vote, with Nash absent the resolution was adopted.

RESOLUTION 21-247, A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE ST. JAMES PARISH PRESIDENT TO SIGN AND EXECUTE A CONTRACT WITH KEL-AR ENERGY CONSULTING LLC FOR NATURAL GAS SYSTEM CONSULTING, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Amato and seconded by Councilman Cooper. After a unanimous roll call vote, with Nash absent, the resolution was adopted.

RESOLUTION 21-248, 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 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 Louque and was seconded by Councilwoman Etienne-Steib. After a unanimous roll call vote, with Nash absent, the resolution was adopted.

RESOLUTION 21-249, A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING AND EMPOWERING PARISH PRESIDENT PETER DUFRESNE TO SIGN A CHRISTMAS BONFIRE PROGRAM AGREEMENT AND HOLD

HARMLESS AGREEMENT WITH THE PONTCHARTRAIN LEVEE DISTRICT AND THE LAFOURCHE BASIN LEVEE DISTRICT RELATING TO CHRISTMAS BONFIRES, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Bland and was seconded by Councilman Louque. After a unanimous roll call vote, with Nash absent, the resolution was adopted.

RESOLUTION 21-250, A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING ADVERTISEMENT AND RECEIVING OF BIDS FOR ROOF REPLACEMENT FOR THE VACHERIE AND CONVENT WATER TREATMENT PLANTS AS A RESULT OF DAMAGE CAUSE BY HURRICANE IDA, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Bland. Councilwoman Etienne-Steib offered a second, and the resolution was unanimously adopted.

RESOLUTION 21-251, A RESOLUTION APPROVING A SUBDIVISION ORDINANCE VARIANCE FOR POCHE BROTHERS PLANTATION OWNER JOSEPH SPADONI FOR A 16' PUBLIC UTILITY AND ACCESS SERVITUDE, PLANNING COMMISSION ITEM 21-35, was offered and moved for adoption by Councilman Bland and seconded by Councilman Louque. After a unanimous roll call vote, with Nash absent, the resolution was adopted.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

ERIC DEROCHE – No comment

INGRID BERGERON – Planning a Christmas dinner for our Seniors, more information will be provided at the next council meeting.

FELIX BOUGHTON – The budget is posted on the DMS drive. Will have two new schedules this year, one will be permanent and include a new project schedule. The other will be on Hurricane Ida expenses. We budgeted for the worse-case scenario, and it doesn't look good. For property taxes, we got the numbers for 2021 and 2022 and budgeted less than that, just to be conservative. Budgeted for sales tax to be really low for 2021 and 2022. Didn't budget any FEMA or insurance money for 2022. All projects on the Operations Capital Improvement Plan and building that were damaged by Hurricane Ida have been budgeted for 2022.

RICK WEBRE – The grant writer is cleaning up the old grants that are still on the books and is taking over the Capital Improvement Plan document.

COUNCIL MEMBER'S REPORT

COUNCILMAN AMATO - Councilman Amato requested a meeting with Rick to discuss the school-side drainage project. He thanked the Veterans.

COUNCILMAN LOUQUE – Councilman Louque thanked the EOC for the continued updates on debris monitoring.

COUNCILMAN BLAND – Councilman Bland said he is working on the Unified Recreation Board ordinance. He said we need to return the old Romeville Park back to the school board. He indicated that he placed a work order for the RR crossing on Legion Lane, it needs replacing. He reminded everyone to vote this Saturday. He said "My Ascension", a premier on suicide prevention, the St. James Parish Council is invited to attend in Lutchter on November 29th, and he wished a Happy Veteran's Day to all Veterans.

COUNCILMAN COOPER – Councilman Cooper commended Mr. Webre and Mr. Deroche for the debris pickup.

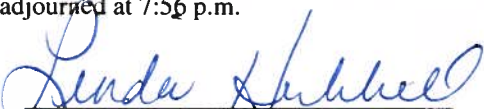
COUNCILWOMAN ETIENNE-STEIB – Councilwoman Etienne-Steib requested a status of the road rehab project. Mr. Webre indicated that a company will do a complete road assessment in the first quarter of 2022. She inquired about the lights in the Magnolia Park. Mr. Webre indicated quotes are expected this week. She inquired if the ban on the use of the Parks due to COVID had been lifted. Mr. Webre said it had been lifted due to COVID but now there are stipulations due to damage. She also inquired about the Port's plan with the old Petroplex property. Mr. Webre will get back with her.

COUNCILMAN NASH – Councilman Nash was absent.

CHAIRMAN ST. PIERRE – Chairman St. Pierre thanked Eric Chauvin and Glen Vicknair for assisting with the meeting tomorrow at Sandwich world. He indicated that the 2022 calendar needs to be finalized. He said Mr. Josh Manning with South Central Planning will make a presentation at the next meeting on the redistricting process. He said the election is very important, especially the 1st amendment. He thanked our Veteran's and encouraged everyone to attend the celebration on Thursday.

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 7:56 p.m.


Linda Hubbell, Secretary