

City of Abbeville
Regular Meeting
July 16, 2024

The Mayor and Council of the City of Abbeville met in regular session on July 16, 2024 at 5:30 P.M., at the regular meeting place, the Council Meeting Room, located at 101 North State Street, Abbeville, Louisiana, with the Honorable Roslyn R. White, Mayor, presiding.

Members Present: Council Members: Carlton Campbell, Terry Broussard, Brady Broussard, Jr. and Tony Hardy

Members Absent: Councilman Francis Touchet, Jr.

Also, Present: Bart Broussard, City Attorney
Jude Mire, Fire Chief
Chris Hardy, Police Department Lieutenant
Heather Fontenot, Secretary to the Police Chief
Chris Gautreaux, Public Works Director
Cristian LeJeune, Digital Media Assistant
Bryan Fisher, Code Enforcement Officer
Byron Dozier, Parks and Recreation Coordinator
Todd Vincent, Engineer
Kim Touchet, Engineer
Hardy Andrews, Foley & Judell-Bond Counsel
Roderick "Nu" Darby

Mayor White called the meeting to order and requested a roll call. Mayor White asked Mr. Nu Darby to lead those assembled in prayer. Mayor White asked Lieutenant Chris Hardy to lead the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor White asked if there were any comments on any agenda item prior to action. There were none.

Mayor White began the discussion pertaining to pay increases for Police Department TCOs, Clerk and Secretary to the Chief since Chief Hardy was at a conference. Heather Fontenot and Lieutenant Hardy are here in his absence. This item, the Chief had asked to be placed on the agenda earlier in the year but we took it off. It is back on the agenda because we have some people making their anniversary that he would like for the Council to consider giving a raise that was in the original hiring packet. Originally the telecommunication officers (the dispatchers), on the first year, were promised a 5% increase, 10% after the fourth year and 15% after the eighth year. That is no longer in the hiring packet because it was something that was never approved by the City Council. At a previous meeting we did take action to give 2% annual increases to all Police Department personnel as required by State law. The action tonight is to consider the additional 5%, 10% or 15% for the TCOs, the Clerk and the Secretary to the Police Chief. The Chief provided a document to us outlining the dates of hire as well as what the pay has been for each year and all the raises that have been received by each individual that is up for consideration. The second sheet is a color-coded sheet the Mayor developed showing the APD positions up tonight, the number of years they have been employed and their current pay with the 2% plus the raises that were given in 2019 and 2023. She also added in the additional 15%, 10% or 5% depending on the number of years they have been here. This is what was proposed by the Police Chief. She compared it to our Municipal personnel which are Secretary-Treasurer, Billing Manager, Payroll Manager and Administrative Assistant. What do we want to do about

the pay increases for APD? The proposed pay increases are 5% plus their regular 2% (total of 7%) for one year for one TCO, 10% plus the regular 2% (total of 12%) for another TCO (4 years of service), 5% plus the regular 2% (total of 7%) for the Clerk (one year of service) and 15% plus the regular 2% (total of 17%) for the Secretary to the Police Chief (8 years of service). They are all going to receive the 2% raise on their anniversary.

-01 introduced by Mr. Tony Hardy to give the proposed pay increase follows: 5% for the TCO making the one-year anniversary, 10% for the TCO making their four-year anniversary, 5% for the Clerk making their one-year anniversary and 15% for the Secretary to the Police Chief making the eight-year anniversary. The motion died for lack of a second.

Mayor White clarified that every personnel will get the 2% that everybody else in Civil Service gets but not anything above that. Heather Fontenot asked if this would be brought back up to the City Council if we explain a little bit better. Mayor White stated that for this year, there will be no 5%, 10% or 15% above the 2% that we have to give by law.

-02 introduced by Mr. Tony Hardy and seconded by Ms. Terry Broussard to ratify bills paid in the month of June 2024. The motion carried unanimously.

Mayor White explained that our Water Treatment Plant is in need of some major renovations. The cost is approximately \$8,000,000.00. We received a Water Sector Grant in the amount of \$2,300,000.00 and a DRA grant in the amount of \$500,000.00 for this project. We have been approved for a revolving loan through LDH. With that we would be able to complete all the work. In order to do that, we have to bond that out. We would pledge future revenues in the water and electrical system. We do know that 49% of the \$5.9 million is eligible for forgiveness. There is also a chance that we may receive up to 100% of loan forgiveness. We need to petition the State Bond Commission to seek their approval to bond this out. This is what the resolution does. The Water Sector grant does require a complete rate study. That means there will likely be an adjustment in water rates once their study is complete.

Campbell/T. Broussard
Resolution R24-17

A resolution declaring the intention of the City of Abbeville, State of Louisiana, to issue taxable utilities revenue bonds in an amount not to exceed Five Million Nine Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$5,900,000) and providing for other matters in connection therewith.

The motion carried unanimously.

208 North Lyman – *No one was present to represent the property. Bryan Fisher stated that the property was cited in 2022 for not applying for a building permit. They were doing unpermitted construction. Since then, they were told to cease and desist and they did. At this point, the property has deteriorated and no more work has been done. We have received multiple complaints from the neighbors. We need to do an inspection to determine if it is worthy to remain standing. Mayor White stated that after the owners were given the cease and desist, they did come in and it was explained to them when they received their packet to apply for the permit, what was needed. They did not return, they never applied for the permit and they never did anymore work. The building is in the same state as it was in 2022. Councilman Broussard stated that he would like an appropriate inspection to see if what was done is according to code. We could see what that inspection is and then we can decide if we will condemn and demolish or give them time to make appropriate progress on a reasonable schedule. They also need to*

secure the structure. The condition right now is unacceptable. He wants to see progress. It can't stay like it is now. Mayor White stated that we should have an inspection and if the work that has been done is no where near code, it needs to come back up at the next meeting to be condemned. We can post a sign on the door and let them know that. Bart stated that first it has to be determined if it is in a dilapidated condition. Once that has been determined, the City can take steps to rectify that situation. We should take the least expensive step. If it can be boarded up and secured versus tearing it down, then that is what the City should do. If the only way to take care of the dangerous condition is to tear it down, then that is what the City has to do. Bryan stated that the owners have been notified as per State law. Councilman Broussard stated that we will follow State law in this process. He would like to address this at the next meeting because the neighborhood has waited long enough. Bryan stated that he will have contractors go out for quotes to abate the property, he will post the notice on the door with a 10-day deadline to make contact with us and he will work to get the inspection completed.

-03 introduced by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. and seconded by Mr. Tony Hardy to table any action on 208 North Lyman so that the property can be inspected and to bring the property back up at the next meeting. The motion carried unanimously.

-04 introduced by Ms. Terry Broussard and seconded by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. to award the contract for demolition of the structure and to clear the property at 509 S. Young Street to the low bidder, Savoy's Excavation and Demo in the amount of \$5,675.00. The motion carried unanimously.

-05 introduced by Mr. Tony Hardy and seconded by Mr. Carlton Campbell to accept the recommendation of the Abbeville Planning Commission to grant a variance from the sign ordinance for Mendoza Auto Tire Shop located at 110 Alan Lane. The motion carried unanimously.

-06 introduced by Mr. Tony Hardy and seconded by Ms. Terry Broussard to accept the recommendation of the Abbeville Planning Commission to approve the final plat of the subdivision of the lot located at 1928 Charity Street. The motion carried unanimously.

-07 introduced by Mr. Tony Hardy and seconded by Ms. Terry Broussard to grant a variance so that the City may burn the trees being removed at LaFitte Drive-In Park. The trees are being removed so that a fence can be put up. The motion carried unanimously.

-08 introduced by Mr. Tony Hardy and seconded by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. to ratify the quote from Versalift in the amount of \$8,781.82 to repair the pole truck in the Electrical Department. The motion carried unanimously.

-09 introduced by Mr. Carlton Campbell and seconded by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. to approve change order number 2 relative to the Abbeville Road Transfer Program Downtown Street Project. The motion carried unanimously.

-10 introduced by Mr. Tony Hardy and seconded by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. to approve payment of partial payment number 3 in the amount of \$107,930.49 payable to Glenn Lege Construction, LLC for the Abbeville Road Transfer Program Downtown Street Project. The motion carried unanimously.

-11 introduced by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. and seconded by Mr. Tony Hardy to award the base bid to the low bidder, Glenn Lege Construction, Inc., in the amount of \$1,265,815.66 for the

Construct Hangar Development Area Project at the Airport contingent upon the concurrent execution of Plan Change Number 1, DOTD, and FAA approval and grant award. The motion carried unanimously.

-12 introduced by Mr. Carlton Campbell and seconded by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. to approve plan change order number 1 for the Construct Hangar Development Area project to reduce the asphalt pavement footprint which decreases the contract amount by \$369,735.42. The motion carried unanimously.

-13 introduced by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. and seconded by Mr. Tony Hardy to approve the use of local funds in the amount of \$122,814.00 from the Airport Fund until reimbursement of those funds are available from the Fiscal Year 2025 Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) Funds. The motion carried unanimously.

Hardy/T. Broussard
Resolution R24-18

A resolution authorizing the Mayor to execute agreements with DOTD and FAA and to award and sign related contracts for Fiscal Year 2024 projects at the Airport.

The motion carried unanimously.

Chris Gautreaux, Public Works Director

- *We are trimming trees in the City Parks.*
- *The Street Crew is pouring concrete. We used to have to hire a contractor to do that but the crew is capable of doing that work now.*
- *The Electrical Department is cutting low hanging branches on the By-Pass.*
- *We had four breakdowns at the Water Plant this past weekend. We are working on those repairs. We will shoot infrareds tomorrow on the connections to see if we have a loose connection.*
- *Councilman Hardy stated that a constituent contacted him to report a street light out on the 800 block of Vermilion. Chris stated it is helpful when a tape is tied to the pole where the light is out. He would get Stewart to go take a look at it.*
- *Discussed sewer project contractor. Mayor White stated that all of those road cuts along Maude and that area are the sewer contractor. That is not the City or the other contractor that is doing roadwork. The City is not breaking streets and leaving them unrepaired. It is a contractor doing a job who is taking far longer than they should be. They are not on schedule fixing it the way they should. Chris stated that at the last meeting we were told that they were supposed to start fixing those road cuts but they have not yet. Mayor White stated that State law requires us to take the lowest bid but sometimes the lowest bid comes with a lot of headaches and a lot of problems. Chris stated that the City cannot do anything about it because it is the contractor's work. We need to decide where we will go next. We have been patient. The young guy said he was going to save the job and he did well when he first got here but now he is not. This is the first time he speaks publicly about how bad they are getting. It is starting to be a burden for everybody. Mayor White stated that there are liquidated damages in the contract. Todd Vincent stated that they do have a bond in place so if things continue to deteriorate that is what we would look to. Chris stated that it is hard to get somebody to come pick up the work of another contractor. Mayor White stated that you try to salvage the job because if you don't then you will wind up with only half of the job done and you can't get anybody to come finish it. You try to work with them to make sure they complete it safely so no one gets hurt and you want to make sure that it is*

done right. You don't want them speeding through it and messing it up. We are getting very close to having to take some action against this contractor. Chris stated that the line is good. They were supposed to fill the road cuts right after that before they moved to another part of the project. They still have to build two lift stations. We bought the generator and they have to build a pad for the generator. The road repairs have to be prioritized.

Byron Dozier, Parks and Recreation Coordinator

- *Tomorrow the World Series in Youngsville begins. The QSA 6U T-ball team will be competing. They will be playing through Sunday.*
- *The 2024 baseball season has finished. Will be holding the Toys For Tots tournament in December.*
- *Registration for flag football will continue until August 18, 2024.*

Mayor Roslyn White

- *The start date for the Graceland Street/Sidewalk Project will be within one to two months.*
- *The City was awarded, by the legislature, a capital outlay grant for sidewalk enhancements on Martin Luther King. She thanked them for that.*
- *Thanked everyone for their patience during the construction project downtown. It should be completed by September.*
- *Thanked everyone for their prayers and well-wishes for her family.*
- *Councilman Hardy asked where the asphalt will end on North State Street. She stated that it will stop south of Edwards.*

Councilman Brady Broussard, Jr.

- *There is a Farmers' Market this Saturday.*

There being no further business to discuss, Mayor White declared this meeting adjourned.

ATTEST:

APPROVE:

Kathleen S. Faulk
Secretary-Treasurer

Roslyn R. White
Mayor