

The Mayor and Council of the City of Abbeville met in regular session on January 21, 2020 at 5:30 P.M., at the regular meeting place, the Council Meeting Room located at 101 North State Street, with the Honorable Mark Piazza, Mayor, presiding.

Members Present: Council Members, Francis Plaisance, Terry Broussard, Brady Broussard, Jr., Francis Touchet, Jr., Mayor Pro-Tem and Roslyn White

Members Absent: None

Also, Present: Jude Mire, Fire Chief  
Bill Spearman, Police Chief  
Ike Funderburk, City Attorney  
Clay Menard, Public Works Director  
Denise Mire, Park Director  
Gene Sellers, Engineer  
Richard Primeaux, Engineer  
Joseph Vallee', Municipal Civil Service Board  
Gerald Gaspard, American Legion & Chamber of Commerce

*Mayor Piazza asked Councilman Francis Plaisance to lead the assembly in prayer. Mayor Piazza asked Councilman Francis Touchet, Jr. to lead the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance.*

*Mayor Piazza asked if there were any comments from the public on any agenda item. There were none.*

*Councilwoman Broussard stated Mr. Norman (Mayo) Levine is one of the greatest helpers in her district. He has some questions about LaFitte Park so she asked him to come to the meeting tonight to discuss his concerns. Mr. Levine stated when the park first started with Councilman Wayne Landry, he was told it would be a fishing pond, a civic center and a water park. It looks like we don't even have a plan for the park. Councilman Plaisance stated there is a detailed plan for the park and he had it with him tonight for Mr. Levine to look over. There are no plans for a water park and we do not have plans for a civic center yet. A civic center could be a possibility but we do not have a plan for that. There is a 23-acre fishing pond and it is fully stocked. At some point in the future we hope to be able to allow fishing. We have applied for a \$400,000 grant which would include a walking trail and a fishing pier. Last Thursday, he approached the Lieutenant Governor's office about assistance in trying to secure the grant. Within 24 hours, he had a response from the Lieutenant Governor's office and they are working on that right now. The dog park is open. PetSense donated \$1,000 of items for the dog park today. They will be a sponsor for our park. They also asked us to apply for a grant with them for the dog park. We are not yet prepared to have the park open full-time yet. It is still in the developmental stages. A lot of things have been donated and we hope we will not have to approach the City for any funds for the park. We are setting up another organization to help with the park. It will be called the Friends of LaFitte Drive-In Park. That is all in the process right now. We need grant money to develop the fishing pier and the walking trail. The concrete tables were purchased and donated by several businesses. Raising Canes is interested in participating in the park. We will utilize the new fundraising organization to raise funds for the park. The pond is fully stocked. The*

*Department of Wildlife and Fisheries have donated all the fish except for \$600 of it. Councilwoman White stated the pond was built as a retention pond. We cannot allow fishing without a pier because it is not safe for our citizens. We have allocated \$50,000 in our budget as the City's share of the grant. The pier will cost \$250,000. Mayor Piazza stated the additional property at the park was purchased because we sold property at the airport. A lot of things have been talked about and several ideas have been kicked around. All those things take a lot of money that we don't have so we have to rely on grants. Some grants take a long time. Our sidewalk project took 9 years. Councilman Plaisance and Councilwoman Broussard went out and solicited donations for the benches and bar-b-que pits. The fence for the dog park was not a large project because most of the fence was already up. We want to utilize the park as best as we can with as little money as possible. There are a lot of questions that, at this time, we do not have the answers. But those answers will come up at our Parks and Recreation Board meetings. You can attend our Parks and Recreation Board meetings to address your concerns with this park or any other park or you can visit with Denise Mire, our Parks Director. We have to make sure the things we do there are cost effective and safe for the public. Money is raised for these parks by organizations like Friends of the Park. The government does not just dish out money to fund these parks. The group goes out and raises money for the park. If you are that concerned, Mr. Levine, then you and other people like you need to join the Friends of the Park group to assist in raising money for the park.*

-01 introduced by Ms. Terry Broussard and seconded by Ms. Roslyn White to install a four-way stop sign at the intersection of Maude and Dutel. The motion was put to a vote and the vote thereon was as follows:

YEAS:	4(T. Broussard, B. Broussard, Touchet, White)
NAYS:	1(Plaisance)
ABSENT:	0
ABSTAIN:	0

Therefore, the motion carried.

-02 introduced by Ms. Roslyn White and seconded by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. to appoint Akeem Lewis to the Parks and Recreation Board. The motion carried unanimously.

-03 introduced by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. and seconded by Ms. Terry Broussard to appoint Felicia Williams to the Parks and Recreation Board. The motion carried unanimously.

-04 introduced by Mr. Francis Plaisance and seconded by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. to approve partial payment estimate #2 in the amount of \$22,245.00 payable to TyBe Company for the addition of new headworks mechanical screen project at the Wastewater Treatment Facility. The motion carried unanimously.

-05 introduced by Ms. Roslyn White and seconded by Mr. Francis Plaisance to award the contract for asbestos removal at 1507 Franks Alley to American pollution Control, Inc. in the amount of \$5,610.00 and to table any action on awarding the contract for demolition at this time. The motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Mark Piazza

- *Was disappointed with the turnout for the Martin Luther King Day parade. Maybe we can sit with the Committee and try to get it revitalized.*

Councilman Francis Touchet, Jr.

- *Asked Clay when we will switch back to two days a week for grass cutting. Clay stated we will keep that schedule until the grass starts growing but we can switch that whenever the Council wishes. Mayor Piazza stated that if we miss a day because of rain we should catch that up on Friday unless there is other work planned.*

Councilman Francis Plaisance

- *Is concerned about our boundaries. Maurice is coming this way. Asked if Mr. Gene Sellers can come up with some suggestions. Mr. Gene stated that the only thing we could do is approach the landowners to see if they are interested. Mayor Piazza stated that Maurice has been annexing undeveloped property. You can't make someone annex their property if they don't want to. Ike Funderburk stated a forced annexation has to have City all the way around and requires an election of the people in the City and those who are impacted by it. You have to carry both. Mayor Piazza stated that existing businesses and areas have to want to be annexed. You can't force them to do that. The vacant property is a little different because their incentive is to help them develop the property. Cities go and negotiate with them to bring utilities and other City services.*

Councilman Brady Broussard, Jr.

- *Today was Annual Government Day for some of our brightest students who take over parish government for a day. That cannot be accomplished without the support and the sponsorship of our local American Legion. This is a program that goes back decades and it was great to see those young people in the courthouse today interested in their local government. It gives hope that future leaders were in that group today.*
- *There are good jobs available right now for our citizens who are waiting around for it to drop in their lap. The federal government is hiring hundreds of people locally for the census. The pay is \$17.50 to \$18.00 per hour with a laptop and cellphone. They are hired immediately. If anyone is interested, they can contact him or the Mayor.*

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

ATTEST:

APPROVE:

Kathleen S. Faulk  
Secretary-Treasurer

Mark Piazza  
Mayor