

City of Abbeville
Regular Meeting
October 18, 2022

The Mayor and Council of the City of Abbeville met in regular session on October 18, 2022 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
Mike Hardy, Police Chief
April Bodin, Fire Captain
Gene Sellers, Engineer
Kim Touchet, Engineer
Rani Lege, Administrative Assistant to the Mayor
Chris Gautreaux, Public Works Director
Allie Horton, Digital Media Assistant
Steve Moosa, CPA
Gerald Gaspard, American Legion
Nathan Granger, QSA
Byron Dozier, QSA
Arlene Collee, Giant Omelette Festival
John Suire, Rotary Club President
Lauren Trahan, Abbeville Coalition
Roger Boynton, Abbeville Coalition
Alice Sagrera, Abbeville Coalition
Mother Madge
Reckel O'Brien
Nikki Vidos and Claire Broussard, Abbeville Christmas Celebration
Kibbie Pillette, Vermilion Parish School Board member

Mayor White asked Mother Madge to lead those assembled in prayer. Mayor White asked Mr. John Suire to lead the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance.

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

Mayor White stated that in the interest of moving things forward on our agendas, she will be limiting presentations to ten minutes or less and any public comment on any agenda item will be limited to three minutes or less. If you are here for a specific item and the item has been covered, you are free to leave if you want to.

-01 introduced by Ms. Terry Broussard and seconded by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. to ratify the appointment of Rani Lege to the unclassified position of Community Program Director/Administrative Assistant to the Mayor. The motion carried unanimously.

Mrs. Arlene Collee was present tonight to discuss the upcoming Giant Omelette Festival. Mrs.

Collee stated that the Omelette Festival will be November 5th and 6th. She thanked the City of Abbeville for everything they do for the festival. We rely on them heavily and they are most gracious to help us out. We have about 120 members in their organization and they have 7 different places that this Omelette does take place at different times of the year. Membership from those organizations come here to help us celebrate and members of our organization go there to help them celebrate. We have been as far as Argentina, New Caledonia, France, Belgium and Canada to represent the City of Abbeville and to bring those people back here. We are ambassadors for Abbeville and we enjoy doing it. We have introduced Abbeville to a lot of people around the world. We have had film crews in the past and we will have a film crew this year filming the Omelette. They will focus on the organization and they will also reach out and do a little travel segment on the City of Abbeville. We are happy to be able to bring some recognition to the City of Abbeville. We are very much involved in the French immersion so our celebration is supposed to be a French cultural exchange. We are looking forward to all the young people in French immersion to be able to join our Omelette in the future.

Ms. Lauren Trahan, Mr. Roger Boynton and Ms. Alice Sagraera, with Abbeville Coalition, were present tonight to discuss their transportation prospects for public transportation. Ms. Trahan stated that the Abbeville Coalition feels that it is essential to the future of our community in accessing education and employment opportunities in addition to connecting our community to events and resources in the area that we focus on public transportation. The Coalition is made up of St. Paul's parishioners, the Nehemiah Project, VEDA and Committed Citizens and they would like to hear input from the community as to how to progress and to join us in our search for grants. She introduced Mr. Roger Boynton who will describe the initial phase and research what they have found. Mr. Boynton stated that they have met with a lot of different people. They went to Houma and met with people in order to find out the cost for the buses, which is a lot. We could get used buses for about \$4,000 but that may be two years down the road. We have looked at all kinds of grants. They have spoken with CPEX and Boo Thomas. She is very excited about the project and meeting with the Mayor. They have a tentative budget of about \$250,000. They have prepared a sheet of proposed bus stops. This list is not set in stone. We are hoping for the input from the public on these. We are looking at a lot of grants that would provide the money for this. Most of our restaurants are not getting employees because of a lack of transportation. We do have the Louisiana Transit System which is very expensive, at \$4, both ways and you have to schedule 48 hours ahead. Their basic hours are 8:30 AM to 3:30 PM. That doesn't help people who need to be to work at 7:00 AM. They are asking for the City's support in backing them at least tentatively to get this done because we think the City needs this. It will take all of us to get this done. Ms. Trahan stated that they are in the initial phases of planning this out. The proposed stops discussed are in the initial phases of planning too. Ms. Sagraera stated that to curb violence we have to have a population that has access to things like education, medical appointments and getting to a job. This is an extreme need in our community. We would like to hear the needs of the community. Councilman Broussard stated that he would like to see the business plan and future phases. Remember we have state owned streets in the City of Abbeville. They are not our streets so we do not govern them. Mayor White stated that her first meeting with Todd Vincent, one of our City engineers, dealt with the need for public transit. We need that not only to get people where they need to be within our community but to get them to Lafayette and New Iberia for opportunities for better jobs and education. They have a pledge from her to support it in any way she can, with the approval of the City Council. She has already met with Acadiana Planning Commission and with CPEX regarding this issue.

-02 introduced by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. and seconded by Ms. Terry Broussard to ratify bills paid in the month of September 2022. The motion carried unanimously.

-03 introduced by Mr. Carlton Campbell and seconded by Ms. Terry Broussard to approve the budget to actual reports for the months of July 2022, August 2022 and September 2022. The motion carried unanimously.

Mayor White stated that as a recommendation by our auditors, we need to make sure that the Council is reviewing the monthly budget to actual reports. It was recommended that we take action to approve those on a monthly basis so that we have a record of us doing so. Mr. Steve Moosa stated that the Legislative Auditor has recommended that when the Council meets on a monthly basis that you at least be made aware of the actual expenditures of the City compared to what was approved in the budget. That is what we are doing here and we are acknowledging that you have reviewed the document. General Fund should be done every month and special revenue funds should be done on a quarterly basis. The small capital outlay projects need to be done on an annual basis. It is a best practices recommendation from the Legislative Auditor. Mayor White stated that the Council has already been receiving these in a paper form each month in the past. Now you will receive those digitally prior to the meeting and you can see that during the meeting too. If you have any questions, please reach out to her or Kathy and we can explain any issues you might have with the report.

Mayor White discussed the changes in Abbeville Parks and Recreation. This is an agenda item because there were some changes in our Parks and Recreation Department in the last 10 days. There were a lot of rumors on the street about what was going on so she thought it was very important that we clear it up so that everybody knows and if anybody has any questions or comments, we are happy to hear those. Within the last ten days, QSA, our recreation provider, had a representative who was running our parks and recreation department; Tommy Picard. They have decided to part ways with Mr. Picard. He is no longer associated with the Abbeville Parks and Recreation Department or QSA. He is now retired and QSA has made the decision to appoint Byron Dozier as the new head of recreation for Abbeville Parks and Recreation. He is not an employee of the city. He is an employee of QSA. QSA is the contractor who provides recreation. Many of you already know Mr. Dozier. He grew up in the recreation program in Abbeville. She is excited to see some young new energy head up that department. Mr. Dozier stated that he would like to thank everyone for the opportunity. His door is always open. Mr. Nathan Granger stated that this process is a long time coming and it was time to hand the baton over to Jeremy Picard. He is president of Quality Sports. Quality Sports is a non-profit organization that has three members. The three members are himself, Jeremy Picard and Jacob Landry. Byron will be our park coordinator. They are the contractor and Byron will be their point person. Kristin is our administrative manager of Quality in Erath and has done a lot here. Nathan stated that he has been passionate about youth sports his entire life. When they had an opportunity to come run the recreation program here, it was a great fit. It would cost less than an entire department and they could bring a lot of things here. Jeremy Picard is one of the most recognized travel ball and tournament ball people in the country. Jeremy is in charge and you will get more tournaments with Jeremy. It is a misconception that you will lose tournaments. Mr. Granger has received a lot of phone calls from people that he hasn't heard from in a while. He is not here to bash Tommy. Tommy is a friend of his and he hopes no one gets up here to do that. He has received calls from tournament directors to see what dates we have open. They are ready to get Bidy Basketball going. He hopes the City wants to keep on with QSA because they want to continue and they know they can do more. We can provide the service and keep getting people here. You spent a lot of money on fields and people want to know what they are getting for their money. That is not a secret. It is about getting people to this City, eating in our restaurants and staying in our hotels. It is about getting the tax base. The biggest thing it is about is getting the kids off of the streets. Kids get in trouble when they are idle. We want to move forward and we are very excited about this. We will be very transparent. We are here to help the kids. Ms. Reckel O'Brien stated

that she started with Abbeville Parks and Recreation and QSA last year but she has been coaching for about three years. It is about the kids and getting them off of the streets. Last year, she distributed flyers and paid for some of the kids to be able to play so that they could have something to do. We need a fresh face and somebody that wants to work with the community. Mr. Byron is a fresh face. He has the energy and he is a positive spirit that we need. Her experience last year was not great. Mr. Tommy Picard is not the face that we need. If we can get a fresh face, we will get more participation. There are a lot of people who have told her that they will not sign up to play if it is under Mr. Tommy Picard. If we can get the word out that Mr. Tommy Picard has retired, then you will have a better league. Mayor White stated that aside from Nathan, no other person has given more to rec ball than Tommy Picard. We thank him for the services that he provided and his involvement for all of these years. She can already feel the change of energy in our Parks and Recreation program. She appreciates it and the community appreciates it. There is nowhere to go but up from here. Councilwoman Broussard asked Ms. O'Brien to contact her when she is out recruiting kids so that she can work with her on that. Ms. O'Brien stated that she will probably set up a few tables in the next few weeks to register for basketball. Parents don't see the back end and they want to see what they are getting for their money. We can show them what they are getting. Moving forward, we will have to rebuild and that won't be easy but if we are all on board it will work.

-04 introduced by Mr. Tony Hardy and seconded by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. to approve a stop sign to be placed on Lorraine at Pecan. The motion carried unanimously.

Mayor White discussed the live streaming of Council meetings. She has spoken about this in the past and some Council members have shown their support. Before we do a lot of work on getting this in place, she wanted to see if the City Council is in favor of this. All Council members were in agreement to move forward with this. Mayor White stated that once we have numbers, we will bring it back up for action. Councilwoman Broussard stated that she is ok with it but she does not want to discourage the public from attending the meetings. Mayor White stated that this is another way of bringing government to the public. The screen will show the Council. Allie Horton reported that a lot of people have requested this. Ms. Felicia Williams asked if there would be an option for comments. Mayor White stated that they will have to look at the logistics. She is pretty sure that if you offer it, you have to have a way of accepting the comments. She will go over that with LMA. This item will come back up for action once we have the costs and answers to those questions.

Mayor White announced the Abbeville Cajun Christmas Celebration and Parade. Last year the Rotary Club took over the Abbeville Cajun Christmas Celebration. We want to try to build a unique event in the City. The City is a partner with this so it doesn't need a special event permit. Rotary has extended the invitation to all civic organizations. Mr. John Suire stated that it is a pleasure to take over this project and it is a lot of fun. He turned the floor over to Nikki Vidos and Claire Broussard. Ms. Vidos stated that they will do things a little different this year. It will begin at 2:00 PM and last until 8:00 PM. They will have live music in the Square. They will have a parade starting at 5:00 PM. It will be the same route as last year. We have 30+ vendors that have signed up so far. Kiwanis and Rotary will be doing kids crafts. If you want to participate, please reach out to Rotary or go to Abbevillechristmas.com. We will also have a city-wide decorating contest where we will have a prize for residential and for commercial. We will have an antique car show and they will also be running in the parade. The event will take place on December 10, 2022. Mayor White stated that the residents of Eastridge will be judging the decorating contest. They will ride around in a bus and they will score all the participants.

-05 introduced by Ms. Terry Broussard and seconded by Mr. Tony Hardy to pledge the 2022-2023 Local Government Assistance Program allocation in the amount of \$25,000 for road overlay and

repairs in the City and the 2022-2023 Community Water Enrichment Program allocation in the amount of \$25,000 to water line repairs, water meters and water valves. The motion carried unanimously.

-06 introduced by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. and seconded by Ms. Terry Broussard to reject the bids received for the North Henry Wastewater Pump Station Number 8 building and repairs due to them being overbudget. The motion carried unanimously.

Mayor White stated that this was to cover the pump station at North Henry and Eleazar. It was not a budgeted project but it was a needed project. We will try to move forward with it but with the cost of building materials right now, it was way outside of what we were willing to pay. She will look at trying to put it in the budget for next year and rebid it when materials, hopefully, go down. We will do the project but we just don't know when that will be at this time.

-07 introduced by Mr. Carlton Campbell and seconded by Ms. Terry Broussard to approve payment of estimate for partial payment number 2 in the amount of \$59,857.60 payable to Shaw Construction Services, LLC for the FY 2021 LCDBG Sewer System Rehabilitation Project. The motion carried unanimously.

-08 introduced by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. and seconded by Ms. Terry Broussard to table any action pertaining to the approval of the plat survey received from Mr. James Noel, Jr. for a proposed subdivision off of Wildcat Drive until the Councilman of that district is at the meeting. The motion carried unanimously.

-09 introduced by Ms. Terry Broussard and seconded by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. to approve the quote from S & L Services, LLC in the amount of \$5,135.00 to bore a 2" line and tap a 10" main at Pere Megret/North Main Street. The motion carried unanimously.

B. Broussard/Hardy
Resolution R22-30

A resolution granting the authority to the Mayor to sign and submit all necessary documents, appoint an administrative consultant and engineer and to commit costs for the Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Louisiana Community Development Block Grant.

The motion carried unanimously.

-10 introduced by Mr. Tony Hardy and seconded by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. to reject bids received to demolish multiple campers located at 708 Coulee Kinney Road because the property owner has removed the campers and to rebid the project with the new scope of work to clean up the rubbish on the property. The motion carried unanimously.

-11 introduced by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. and seconded by Mr. Carlton Campbell to approve a special event permit for the 2nd Annual Veteran Heritage Festival hosted by the Louisiana Military Museum to be held on November 11, 2022 through November 12, 2022 from 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM at Chris Crusta Memorial Airport pending approval from Chief Mike Hardy. The motion carried unanimously.

-12 introduced by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. and seconded by Ms. Terry Broussard to approve a special event permit for Bikes, Brews and Omelettes Two to be held on November 6, 2022 from 7:00 AM to 2:00 PM in association with the Giant Omelette Festival pending the approval from

Chief Mike Hardy and the receipt of proof of insurance. The motion carried unanimously.

-13 introduced by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. and seconded by Ms. Terry Broussard to approve a special event permit for the Fit for French 2-Mile Fun Walk to be held on November 5, 2022 from 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM in association with the Giant Omelette Festival pending receipt of proper proof of insurance and to reduce the permit fee to \$100.00. The motion carried unanimously.

-14 introduced by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. and seconded by Mr. Carlton Campbell to approve a special event permit for Courir DE L'Omelette to be held November 5, 2022 from 7:00 AM to 10:00 AM in association with the Giant Omelette Festival pending receipt of proper insurance and to reduce the permit fee to \$100.00. The motion carried unanimously.

Chris Gautreaux, Public Works Director

- *Introduced Mr. Willie Leger, the new foreman in the Street Maintenance Department. He is a great asset for the City.*
- *Discussed the need to make some changes to the throws for parades. We need to stay away from sticky candy as it is very hard to clean off of the road. Mayor White suggested that cups and hard candies could be thrown instead. Councilwoman Broussard suggested that candy could be placed in a small decorated zip lock bag to be thrown. Mayor White stated that is something they would look at in the future.*
- *The water leaks are very bad right now.*
- *The sewer department has been very quiet. They are running the camera in three hot spots right now.*
- *They have finished the property at Felicity Substation and the electrical crew has been dealing with a few outages in the City. The transformer for Felicity has been running behind schedule. They tested it but it failed. They will have to change the cooling fans.*
- *They are cleaning up the back at Comeaux Park. They are about 7 days away from the tennis courts being finished. The further west court will be marked for pickleball too. Brandon will install the key pads on the gates.*

Byron Dozier, QSA Park Coordinator

- *Basketball registration is under way.*
- *He will contact high school coaches to conduct a coaches' clinic.*
- *He is changing a few things with basketball. He will have a one-day clinic with the kids and the parents will have to attend a meeting.*

Mayor Roslyn White

- *We have a \$1.2 million project planned for the Water Plant. We were recently notified that we have received a \$508,000 grant for that project from Delta Regional Authority (DRA). We have also applied for a Water Sector Program grant and are waiting to see if it will be awarded to us. This project is required due to citations received from DEQ so we have to do the project.*
- *She commended the City team for their work with the recent parades.*
- *Discussed what happened at the Abbeville High School football game. It was not directly related to the school. She was there, leaving the parking lot when it happened. She had her eyes on the police officers when the gunshots were fired, she saw the flash from the gun and thought our officers reacted very bravely and appropriately for the situation. It could have been a very bad situation but it was handled very well. She commended Chief Hardy and all of our team at APD for handling that situation. The Marshal's office and VPSO also came out to help. We appreciate the response to that. It could have been very bad. It was a black eye for our community but the good news is that we will search for them relentlessly. We will find them and make sure they come to justice.*

Mike Hardy, Police Chief

- *Our officers did a good job that night and they do have evidence on a camera that they are checking into. We hope to get the exact person that was doing the shooting that night. They do have a lot of help coming from the community and he thanked everyone for giving them information. Please keep giving us information. The only way we can solve crime is not just with the police department, that is only 25 people out of about 11,800, we need the community to help out also. There are a lot more people out there who can help. We are the pointing arrow you are the rest of the gunshot and everything else going towards it. We need to work against all the illegal discharges, the shootings and the retaliations we having going on throughout our city. Once we get this done, this will be a beautiful city with a lot of quiet. Mr. Kibbie Pillette stated that the school board met to try to improve the security of athletic functions. He would like the city to consider closing Abadie Street from Lyman to Gertrude during athletic events on the field. Chief Hardy stated that the shots were not fired from there, they were shot from the south side. People are there on Abadie to park there and watch the game so they don't have to pay. Mr. Pillette stated that their number one objective is to make the athletic events as safe as possible. Mayor White suggested that Mr. Pillette visit with Chief Hardy regarding this request. If the school board does not have cameras at the stadium, she suggested that they get cameras with the Chief's advice. This would prevent crime and also help with evidence. Mr. Pillette stated they do have cameras but this is where the buses park so the camera view was obscured. Chief Hardy stated that he would like to advise them where to put the cameras in the future. Ms. Reckel O'Brien asked if the City could put up more lights outside of the stadium. Mayor White stated that this is something we can do. She will send the electrical department to go and check it out at night and make a recommendation. Ms. O'Brien also asked about more security at the games. Chief Hardy stated that the security funding is provided by the school board. Mr. Pillette stated that they had 8 security officers at the event. We are trying to be proactive as a board. Mayor White stated that she knows the Chief is on board to assist the school board and anything we can do to keep the kids safe when they are playing sports and allowing kids to have a regular sporting event experience. You have a commitment from her, the Chief and the Council. This is not an agenda item so we can't spend a lot of time on it but she will be happy to put it as an agenda item next meeting so we can discuss it further and take any action that may be needed. That will give the Chief time to meet with you and Chris can get with the electrical department and come back on their recommendation. Mr. Pillette agreed he would like to be on the next agenda. Chief Hardy offered to meet with the school board at any time. Chris Gautreaux suggested to Mr. Pillette that he get with the school electricians to see if they can add lights to their building that may shine in the parking lots.*

Councilman Carlton Campbell

- *Would like to work with Chief Hardy to begin a gun buyback program. He offered to raise funds for this. Mayor White suggested he meet with the City attorney about this.*

Councilwoman Terry Broussard

- *Thanked everyone for attending the meeting tonight.*
- *She is looking forward to working with QSA, Byron and Kristin. We need to get more kids involved.*
- *On Halloween night, October 31, 2022 they will be distributing candy at Harmony Park and they will have a costume contest. The park is located at the intersection of Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive and Lamar Street.*

Councilman Brady Broussard, Jr.

- *Thanked the Abbeville Christmas Parade powered by Rotary. If you miss this, you are missing something that is so clean and so beautiful.*
- *The Christmas Stroll will be on December 1, 2022.*
- *He represents ½ of J. H. Williams, the southern half of that, and his constituents have contacted him to see if we could focus on people and/or vehicles and open alcohol containers on City streets and easements. We need to keep that moving and out of there. That is City property and they cannot have their party on that. Thank you so much Chief Hardy. Your department is doing a fabulous job in a difficult situation. We appreciate it and the residents have taken notice and we want that trouble moved along.*

Councilman Tony Hardy

- *He worked the weekend of the parade but he will be there for the Christmas parade and the Christmas Stroll. He is looking forward to that.*
- *He will meet with Chief Hardy in reference to J. H. Williams since it is in his district. We will do what we have to do. He will meet with Chris. He knows they do a fabulous job and we will get it done.*

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

ATTEST:

APPROVE:

Kathleen S. Faulk
Secretary-Treasurer

Roslyn R. White
Mayor