

City of Abbeville
Regular Meeting
December 20, 2022

The Mayor and Council of the City of Abbeville met in regular session on December 20, 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., Francis Touchet, Jr., Mayor Pro-Tem and Tony Hardy

Members Absent: None

Also, Present: Bart Broussard, City Attorney
Mike Hardy, Police Chief
Jude Mire, Fire Chief
Chris Gautreaux, Public Works Director
Ann Hardy, Municipal Employees Civil Service Director of Personnel
Allie Horton, Digital Media Assistant
Gene Sellers, Engineer
Janis Fabre, Sellers & Associates
Charles Dill, Abbeville Planning Commission
Elaine Dill, Municipal Employees Civil Service Board
Byron Dozier, QSA-Parks and Recreation Coordinator
Rick Putnam, City Judge
Jeremiah Bolden, City Marshal
Reggie Hilts, City Marshal Deputy
Mona Hebert, Retired City Court Employee and her family members
Carl Turnley, President of Kaptel
Kimberly Bessard, Director of Boys and Girls Club, Abbeville
Felton Hogan and Donavan Davis, Gun Buy Back program

Mayor White asked Marshal Bolden to lead those assembled in prayer. Mayor White asked Ms. Mona Hebert 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. Chief Hardy stated that he is opposed to the four-way stop sign that is proposed tonight at the intersection of Michael and Bernadette. There is a stop sign one block away and he feels like it would be a hinderance to most of the neighbors. If there is someone speeding in the neighborhood all they have to do is call us and we will handle it. Mayor White asked that we keep agenda item comments limited to 3 minutes and any presentations to 7 minutes in order to move the meeting along.

-01 introduced by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. and seconded by Ms. Terry Broussard to approve the job description, new pay range and classification of Director of Public Works and Parks. The motion carried unanimously.

Mayor White and the City Council recognized Ms. Mona Hebert who has retired after serving 54 years with the City of Abbeville. She is the longest serving employee in the City's history. She was an employee at City Court and served with many administrations and City Judges. They presented

a proclamation and a plaque to Ms. Hebert.

Mr. Carl Turnley provided an update of their services in Abbeville. They have been serving Vermilion Parish for 70 years and they are committed to staying here. They are a local company. They will provide wi-fi to Magdalen Square at no cost. It will be with filtered content. His staff has already completed a site survey at Comeaux Park to provide wi-fi for the baseball tournaments. All they will need is a cooled building for the equipment. The temperature cannot exceed 120 degrees. Mayor White asked Carl to get with Chris to locate a building on the premises that would work. Mr. Turnley stated they are working on expanding their fiber service south of downtown and we hope to have that in place in 12-18 months. Mayor White stated that Kaptel has been a good provider to the City of Abbeville and she asked Bart to look into the legality of Kaptel donating the wi-fi service to the City at Magdalen Square.

Ms. Kimberly Bessard stated that she is the new director of the Boys and Girls Club in Abbeville. Mr. Brian Ford has moved into another position with the organization. The Boys and Girls Club offers their after-school program 3 PM to 7 PM Monday through Friday and in the Summer from 10 AM to 5:00 PM. They provide the service to the kids that need them the most. They are one of seven locations in Acadiana. She is wanting to the grow the club.

Mr. Brac Salyer, with LDWF was scheduled to be on the agenda to discuss the recent addition of 980 quarter-pound channel catfish to the LaFitte Park pond but he was not at the meeting. Councilman Broussard provided the update.

Mr. Felton Hogan and Mr. Donovan Davis discussed their gun buy back program. This is a public safety initiative. They did one on August 6, 2022 in New Iberia and they picked up 25 guns. They also did one in Jeanerette and are planning one in Franklin. They go out and get churches involved and get the funds from them. You can turn in the gun anonymously. The guns are then turned into the police department for ballistic testing and destruction. They don't want uniformed officers as security as it is an anonymous program. The gun has to be working. They will pay up to \$300 depending on the caliber. They have a whole program with speakers and food. They will get the local community involved. They would like to have one in Abbeville on February 25, 2023. Chief Hardy stated that he was ok with this. Mayor White asked Mr. Hogan and Mr. Davis to keep Chief Hardy in the loop.

-02 introduced by Ms. Terry Broussard and seconded by Mr. Tony Hardy to approve the November 2022 budget to actual report. The motion carried unanimously.

-03 introduced by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. and seconded by Mr. Tony Hardy to increase the capital outlay line item for each Council Member in the Sales Tax Fund from \$6,000 each to \$10,000 each for the 2023 fiscal year. The motion carried unanimously.

Councilman Touchet asked for a clarification of what capital outlay funds could be used for. In the past he has used his funds to pay to QSA for registration of children to play ball. He has also given funds to the Police Department to award to officers who have done outstanding work during Chief Spearman's term. He asked if these were correct use of those funds. Mayor White stated that we were not doing it correctly in the past. Sales tax is supposed to be used for capital outlay improvements. It is supposed to be used for things of longevity of more than one year. Sales tax is what we call our discretionary funds but it is actually capital outlay. The proposition clearly states what sales tax dollars can be used for. Councilman Touchet stated that he has become accustomed to using these funds to help the children in the community. All of his funds last year were put into Comeaux Park. He wants to use his funds to help with registration for children and

other things like that in the park. He paid for bases at the park. Was that allowed? Mayor White answered yes it was a purchase of a new thing and would be allowed. Councilwoman Broussard stated that they all sponsored children but we all paid that from our own personal funds because we were told we could not use our City funds. We did not use our discretionary funds. Mayor White and Councilman Campbell agreed that they used their own personal funds and not City funds. Mayor White added that we were advised not to use the City funds during a meeting and Mr. Gene Sellers ended up paying for most of entries for the children. Mayor White stated that she distributed the information to the Council so they will know what they can legally spend their capital outlay funds on and that any item costing over \$5,000 has to be brought before the City Council to vote on. That rule is for anyone requesting to spend over \$5,000, not just the Mayor and City Council.

-04 introduced by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. and seconded by Ms. Terry Broussard to enter into a public hearing for public comments on the following two proposed ordinances: 1) To set the four election districts and their geographical area of the City Council in accordance with the 2020 census within the City of Abbeville and 2) To adopt the 2023 budget and amend the 2022 budget. The motion carried unanimously.

Public Hearing

Mayor White stated that we had a public hearing at the November 15, 2022 Committee meeting and another public hearing at the December 6, 2022 regular meeting to receive comments pertaining to the reapportionment plan that was proposed after the 2020 census. It was our consultant's recommendation that we keep the election districts the same since the change was minimal and there are some questions about the validity of the accuracy of the 2020 census. There were no other comments from the public.

Mayor White stated that the 2023 budget was presented at the December 5, 2022 Committee meeting in detail. Councilman Touchet stated that public safety is of utmost importance. We have increased the salary of each Police Department employee, across the board, by \$13,340 annually. We will need to watch the budget and any big-ticket items will have to come to the City Council for approval to make sure we have the finances to expend on that. There were no other comments.

-05 introduced by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. and seconded by Ms. Terry Broussard to reconvene the regular meeting from public hearing. The motion carried unanimously.

Campbell/T. Broussard

Ordinance 22-12

An ordinance to set the four election districts and their geographical area of the City Council in accordance with the 2020 census within the City of Abbeville.

The motion was put to a vote and the vote thereon was as follows:

<i>YEAS:</i>	<i>5(Campbell, T. Broussard, B. Broussard, Touchet, Hardy)</i>
<i>NAYS:</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>ABSENT:</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>ABSTAIN:</i>	<i>0</i>

Therefore, the ordinance was adopted unanimously.

Touchet/Hardy
Ordinance 22-13

An ordinance to adopt the 2023 budget and to amend the 2022 budget.

The motion was put to a vote and the vote thereon was as follows:

YEAS: 5(Campbell, T. Broussard, B. Broussard, Touchet, Hardy)
NAYS: 0
ABSENT: 0
ABSTAIN: 0

Therefore, the ordinance was adopted unanimously.

-06 introduced by Ms. Terry Broussard and seconded by Mr. Tony Hardy to table the request to change the two-way stop sign at the intersection of Michael and Bernadette to a four-way stop sign because Chief Hardy is opposed to it. The motion carried unanimously.

-07 introduced by Ms. Brady Broussard, Jr. and seconded by Mr. Carlton Campbell to table any action for the cleanup remediation permit for 1100 Charity Street in order to obtain additional information. The motion carried unanimously.

-08 introduced by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. and seconded by Mr. Tony Hardy to approve payment of partial payment number 3 payable to Shaw Construction Services in the amount of \$65,829.57 for the LCDBG Sewer Rehabilitation Project. The motion carried unanimously.

Touchet/Campbell
Resolution R22-32

A resolution to set the holiday schedule for 2023.

The motion carried unanimously.

Gene Sellers, Engineer

- *Discussed the upcoming Downtown Sidewalk project. They will begin on January 9, 2023 and hope to be completed by July 7, 2023.*

Chris Gautreaux, Public Works Director

- *Thanked the Council for approving his new job description.*
- *Discussed the tree line at the airport*
- *He is working on the problem on Pearl Street.*
- *Is working on bringing water to the Fire Training Tower to be built by the Vermilion Parish Police Jury. That is on Port Street. Our firemen will be allowed to use it.*
- *The are working on the ADA compliance on three fields in the middle first and will take care of the rest of fields after that.*
- *The Water plant is ready for the upcoming freeze.*

Byron Dozier, Parks and Recreation Coordinator

- *Basketball is underway.*
- *Councilman Campbell asked Byron to look at bringing tournaments to Williams Park.*

Mayor Roslyn White

- *Wished everyone Happy Holidays.*

- *We are anticipating three days of freezing temperatures. We had a meeting of the staff and are as prepared as we can be. She hopes the people that live in Abbeville are too. Please check your batteries and call City Hall to turn your water off.*

Mike Hardy, Police Chief

- *Thanked the Mayor and City Council for the adequate budget for the Police Department. He is planning to begin recruiting with the new \$40,000 annual beginning salary. He will also promote benefits.*
- *Wished everyone a Merry Christmas.*

Jude Mire, Police Chief

- *The three recruits have all passed the rookie school and will begin working this week.*
- *All the fire trucks now have Norcan.*

Councilman Tony Hardy

- *Wished everyone Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.*

Councilman Francis Touchet, Jr.

- *Congratulated the Vermilion Catholic Eagles for making it to the State Championship.*
- *Recognized and commended Chief Mike Hardy who patrolled so that his staff could enjoy their Christmas Party. He also gave rewards to the officers. It was a great example of leadership.*

Councilman Brady Broussard, Jr.

- *Wished everyone a Merry Christmas.*
- *Please do not run your water during the freeze. Call City Hall to have your water shut off. That way your utility bill will be lower.*

Councilwoman Terry Broussard

- *Wished everyone a Merry Christmas and thanked everyone for coming to the meeting. Please be safe and love your family.*

Councilman Carlton Campbell.

- *Wished everyone a happy and safe holiday.*

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

ATTEST:

APPROVE:

Kathleen S. Faulk
Secretary-Treasurer

Roslyn R. White
Mayor