

The Mayor and Council of the City of Abbeville met in regular session on November 5, 2019 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  
Stewart Head, Electrical Superintendent  
Lee Schexnaider, Wastewater Plant Superintendent  
Gene Sellers, Engineer  
Richard Primeaux, Engineer  
Ronald Darby and Wayne Touchet, Police Jurors  
Dr. Elista Istre and Joey LaRouge, Louisiana Military Museum  
Joseph Vallee', Municipal Civil Service Board member

*Mayor Piazza asked Mr. Ronald Darby to lead the assembly in prayer. Mayor Piazza asked Mr. Wayne Touchet to lead the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance.*

-01 introduced by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. and seconded by Mr. Francis Plaisance to not ratify hiring at this time for the Abbeville Police Department. The motion carried unanimously.

-02 introduced by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. and seconded by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. to ratify bills paid in the month of October 2019. The motion carried unanimously.

-03 introduced by Mr. Francis Plaisance and seconded by Ms. Roslyn White to approve the minutes from the October 1, 2019 personnel interviews, committee meeting and the regular City Council meeting. The motion carried unanimously.

*Mayor Piazza asked if there were any comments on any agenda item at this time. Mr. Ronald Darby stated he wanted to comment on the ordinance that will be adopted tonight. He believes landlords should be added to that ordinance. Landlords should be held accountable for their property. Teenagers are coming into his neighborhood at night. There is supposed to be a curfew.*

*Mr. Alfred Thibodeaux, Jr., was here to discuss loose chickens. He lives at 707 S. St. Valerie and the chickens have been loose for years. He has taken several videos. This problem has been going on for a long time and it needs to be corrected. We need to fine them. They do not seem to care. Mayor Piazza stated this is the second time Mr. Thibodeaux comes to the meeting. Mr. Funderburk stated that you have to prove ownership of the chickens. If the chicken roosts at your house it is your chicken. He says he will get the video that Mr. Thibodeaux has. If it this is a rental property it would be the tenant. He cannot file charges against somebody when it can't be proven.*

*He has spoken with Mr. Thibodeaux to request video from him on a couple of occasions. We have conducted hearings and we have opted to bring criminal charges. Councilman Touchet asked if the area where the chickens were kept was secure. Clay stated one side has a chain link fence with an open gate and the other address has no fence. Mayor Piazza suggested that Ike should work with the Police Chief or the Marshal's office. The Chief or Marshal's office should take pictures of both yards of the residences. Also, Ike needs to make sure our ordinance reflects a secure enclosure like our dog ordinance does. We may not have a clear ordinance.*

-04 introduced by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. and seconded by Mr. Francis Plaisance to make sure 703 and 704 S. St. Valerie have a secure dwelling for their chickens and if not give them time to do so or to get rid of the chickens. The motion carried unanimously.

-05 introduced by Ms. Terry Broussard and seconded by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. to approve the placement of a four way stop sign at the intersection of Martin Luther King and South Lyman. The motion carried unanimously.

***Plaisance/White  
Ordinance 19-08***

*An ordinance to add Section 5-400, et sequa, Multi-Family Dwelling Facility Security Requirements.*

*The ordinance was put to a vote and the vote thereupon was as follows:*

<i>YEAS:</i>	<i>5(Plaisance, T. Broussard, B. Broussard, Touchet, White)</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.*

*Councilwoman Broussard asked if a smaller apartment complex would install cameras would APD monitor the system for them even though it is not mandatory. Chief Spearman stated all they would need to do is provide their IP address for them to do it.*

-06 introduced by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. and seconded by Ms. Terry Broussard to approve payment of estimate for partial payment number one payable to Glenn Lege Construction in the amount of \$41,375.50 for the sidewalk construction along Highway 82 project. The motion carried unanimously.

-07 introduced by Mr. Francis Plaisance and seconded by Ms. Terry Broussard to approve the purchase of a server and software from our Arsement and Hayes, LLC in the amount of \$9,810 for the Abbeville Police Department. The motion carried unanimously.

*Mr. Wayne Touchet stated they wanted to partner with the city to clean up dilapidated properties. We are trying to get capital outlay dollars to assist us with this. We would like to form a committee of two City Council members and two Police Juror members to discuss how to tear these properties down and how to fund it. Mayor Piazza stated sometimes we get bids and we can't afford to tear the properties down so this is where this would help us. Mr. Wayne Touchet stated we want to be a part of Abbeville and this will help bring the crime rate down and bring property values up. Mayor Piazza appointed Councilman Brady Broussard, Jr. and Councilwoman Terry Broussard to the committee. They could work with the Police Jurors on this project and then report back to the*

*Council. Councilman Broussard stated that the State legislature has made a lot of progress in fighting blighted properties and we have a request in Baton Rouge for funding.*

-08 introduced by Ms. Roslyn White and seconded by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. to authorize the Mayor to request an appraisal and negotiate to purchase 6.76 acres adjacent to the Abbeville RV Park that would include access to Coulee Kinney. The motion carried unanimously.

-09 introduced by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. and seconded by Ms. Roslyn White to approve change order number one for the Rehabilitation of the Main Hangar project. This change order increases the project total by \$13,916.96. The motion carried unanimously.

-10 introduced by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. and seconded by Mr. Francis Plaisance to approve payment application number two in the amount of \$60,953.66 for the Rehabilitation of the Main Hangar Project. The motion carried unanimously.

-11 introduced by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. and seconded by Ms. Roslyn White to surplus items from the pole yard for the Public Works Department. The motion carried unanimously.

*Mayor Piazza distributed a packet of proposed pay raises beginning January 1, 2020. The first packet are the municipal employee listings with their current rate and then their proposed pay. The second packet are the increases requested by the Fire Chief. The third packet are the increases requested by the Police Chief. The municipal employees' increases change their classification so this will have to be approved by the civil service board. The packets are what the Council requested and it will be introduced by resolution at the next meeting and then added to the budget. On December 3, 2019 we will have a committee meeting to present the budget. At our December 17, 2019 City Council meeting we will adopt the budget after it has been advertised and available for public inspection. Councilman Touchet thanked the Mayor for putting these figures together. This seems right to him because he has always said that we have places where we need to address certain amounts. If we don't have people who come work in those buckets then nobody is going to have electricity and no one will get paid. We have our superintendent who is having to get into the bucket. If something happens to him, we are in trouble. The Mayor has put additional funds into that particular area. This is the right thing. The Mayor should have the discretion from \$1 to \$10 to put where he feels it is needed. When you look at some of these salaries throughout, the Chief and the Mayor will make less than some of the employees. He would like to see the Mayor's salary somewhere around the West Monroe and Pineville area. He would like to see the Police Chief's salary somewhere around the Hammond area. These increases cannot come out of the new taxes. They would have to come out of the General Fund.*

-12 introduced by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. and seconded by Mr. Francis Plaisance to accept the salary figures as proposed by the Mayor and to look at increasing the Mayor and the Police Chief's salary with other funds. The motion carried unanimously.

*Mayor Piazza said we had Dr. Elista Istre here with us tonight. She has some very interesting things to tell us about the Military Museum tonight. Dr. Istre wanted to give us an update of the museum. The museum has been here for the last 10 years. The original goal was to provide a museum for veterans and never get kicked out. Over time we have discovered that veterans are not meeting like they used to. She was brought on board to help refocus the museum. We recently went through a whole rebranding. The new logo will be revealed on Monday for Veterans Day. The vision is to provide a walk-through of Louisiana history. We will start with the French and Indian War and then go through the war of 1812 and the battle of New Orleans. The Civil War, World War I, World War II and then all the way up to the present. This will provide Louisiana*

history through a military perspective. When we bring in tour buses and tour groups they are eating here and spending money here. This provides an economic impact. As we move forward with this, we are hoping to get partners to help us fund this. The plans are to expand the current building and move into the next hangar for event hosting. The suicide rate for veterans is high and it's not going down. A lot of these men and women are coming back and they have a lot of deep-seeded issues because of what they saw. This will a place to honor our veterans. We will have a place for them. We want them to know they are appreciated. I want to remember their stories. We will hold an open house on November 11, 2019 to interact with the community. We really need partners as we are us now separating from the Secretary of State. We will have no funds coming in now. Councilman Plaisance stated he had not heard anything about this. It is a great idea. What happens to the Silver Star? Will that be phased out? Dr. Istre stated when she conducted interviews with different veterans, a lot of them did not like the term Hall of Fame. The second expansion we plan to call it the Hall of honor instead of the Hall of Fame. We will keep the plaques and install them and then add to that. We hope to add a veteran database to the new website. Mayor Piazza asked what happens to the items owned by the state? Mr. Joey LaRouge said the state would donate those to the city and then we would keep them there. The city takes responsibility of it. The museum has been a struggle. We have cleaned house and have gotten the records straight. You just don't have these people with the extra time. Elista is a historian and a wonderful person. She came up with the concept to tell a story. Millennial's don't want to look at a static tank. The D-Day Museum tells a story. If something doesn't work one way, then you have to go another way. Thank you to the city Council for everything you have done for us. Mayor Piazza said we are back to square one financially. Where do we get the dollars to open it? Joey says we still get a small portion of about \$13,000 per year from the hotel/motel tax. As it stands right now, we will probably have to come ask the city for help. We need to do something to stop the bleeding. We are still bleeding. We need to offset some of the expenses that we have. Mayor Piazza stated museums are a great asset. We have four different entities in our cultural center and to taxes in order to make it run. We have to do a festival to have funding to maintain our Blacksmith Shop Museum. We only open by appointment and other special events. It also participates in the hotel/motel tax. He spoke to someone this week about doing a fly in. In Jennings they just had one with some antique planes and they had a lot of people there. That is something we will have to do. Dr. Istre stated that the Secretary of State's office contacted her today about a grant opportunity. The Secretary of State is willing to work with us. Museums do not make money. They bring in clean dollars. We have to show that the local community is behind it. The museum is open by appointment only right now. We have never charged admission for the museum. At some point we may have to charge admission because it will be worth it. People will pay for it if it's worth seeing.

Mayor Mark Piazza

- Received the wish list from the Park and Rec department, the Fire Chief and Police Chief for the budget. He has met with Lonnie regarding this. The budget is in motion.

Councilwoman Roslyn White

- the Omelette Festival was this past weekend and it was a great success. She wanted to thank everyone with the city. The guys did a great job. It was the largest turnout she has seen in the 10+ years she has worked with that organization.
- This Saturday is hazardous waste collection day from 8 AM to 1 PM at the landfill.
- She is working on updating the city's website. She is working on a pilot program for businesses that she will try to present at the next meeting to give the Council some information.
- If Headstones Could Talk tour is this Friday and there are still a few tickets available.

- *The Christian Service Center is having a community baby shower on November 7th from 11 AM to 2 PM.*
- *The sidewalk Project in her district on North St. Charles Street and State Street are nearly complete. It didn't go as far as she would've hoped but we did eliminate some major trip hazardous areas.*

Councilman Brady Broussard, Jr.

- *What happened in your city this weekend and was quite special. He had the privilege of talking to people from Québec, Michigan and California who were spending their dollars in our town. Don't ever forget that tourism is the cleanest economic development.*
- *I hope you are admiring the nearly completed mural on the Cultural Center building. The artist, Robert Dafford, will be here tomorrow to finish it up. He is an internationally recognized artist.*
- *The splash pad is soon coming together. If you go to Comeaux Park you can see the flagging. The children will have access to that. That is a credit to the Rotary club and the city of Abbeville.*
- *This Saturday the Sip and Savor event put on by the Abbeville Rotary club will be at the Erath community center. That is where you spend your dollars on their fundraiser and they put it back in our community.*

Councilwoman Terry Broussard

- *she would like to thank everyone for coming out to the meeting and playing a role in what is happening in our great city.*

Councilman Francis Plaisance

- *he had the honor and privilege to sit with Senator Hensgens and witness the promotion of Lieutenant Scott Desormeaux to Commander of the 256. What an honor that was to be able to see that. Four others were promoted. He was told the reason they are doing that is because they were being deployed.*

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

ATTEST:

APPROVE:

Kathleen S. Faulk  
Secretary – Treasurer

Mark Piazza  
Mayor