

The Mayor and Council of the City of Abbeville met for a committee meeting on February 7, 2023 at 5:15 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
Stewart Head, Electric Department Superintendent
Charlene Becket, Main Street Manager
Allie Horton, Digital Media Assistant
Gene Sellers, Engineer

Mayor White stated that we are here for an Ordinance Committee meeting chaired by Councilman Tony Hardy. She asked if there were any comments from the public on any agenda item. There were none. She turned the floor over to Councilman Hardy.

Councilman Hardy stated the first item is to discuss a proposed ordinance to repeal and re-enact the liquor permit ordinance. Mayor White explained that our old ordinance is very complex so we want to make it more business friendly. It is currently fourteen pages long. It is a photocopy of the State law. We did some research and we have looked at what other communities do and there is some work that we can do be a lot more business friendly and a lot less complicated. It will reference State law and they will have to submit an affidavit stating that they are going to apply for a State license and then bring the State license back when they have it. Right now, we have them submit fingerprint cards and give us all sorts of information that we do absolutely nothing with. It is a waste of resources and time. We also require them to get signatures of surrounding property owners. It is her suggestion that we do away with that process. No other communities do that and it is very cumbersome. Another thing that is in our ordinance is that we require waiters and waitresses to get a bar card from the City and they have to have a different bar card for every business they were employed. This is cumbersome. We have no way of policing this and we do not go back and inspect it. They have to have one from the State and the State does police it. We don't necessarily need to take action on this ordinance tonight. Look it over and let us know. Councilman Touchet stated that he was in favor of all things discussed tonight pertaining to this ordinance. If this is something that no one else is doing then we should not continue to do this. This ordinance has caused a lot of heartache for a lot of people. Mayor White stated to submit any changes to Rani and she and Bart can look over those and make changes. Councilman Touchet stated that he was ready to move on this.

-01 introduced by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. and seconded by Ms. Terry Broussard to recommend to the City Council at their regular meeting scheduled for March 7, 2023 to adopt an ordinance repealing and re-enacting the liquor permit ordinance. The motion carried unanimously.

Councilman Hardy stated that the next item is a discussion regarding a proposed ordinance to permit street legal golf carts on City streets. There was no discussion regarding the proposed ordinance.

-02 introduced by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. and seconded by Mr. Carlton Campbell to recommend to the City Council at their regular meeting scheduled for March 7, 2023 to adopt an ordinance pertaining to the permitting of street legal golf carts on City streets. The motion carried unanimously.

Councilman Hardy read the third item on the agenda. It was a discussion regarding an

ordinance to increase the Chief of Police's salary. Since Councilman Touchet had requested this to be on the agenda, Councilman Hardy turned the floor over to Councilman Touchet. Councilman Touchet stated that in every organization you look to see where there are inequities. You look for opportunities to fix those. We have elevated the salary of the Director of Public Works and Parks by \$25,000 annually because of the additional duties. The Chief of Police in Scott is making \$92,663 and our Chief only makes \$65,000. We need to fix that. He is the one who is directly responsible for the safety of our citizens. There are other positions that need to be fixed as well. The Chief of Police in Youngsville makes \$86,000, New Iberia makes \$85,000, Broussard makes \$85,000 and Crowley \$75,000. We need to bring our Police Chief's salary up to \$85,000. That would be a little more than \$700 for each of the 26 pay periods per year. We would then have a competitive salary. Councilman Campbell asked if the \$85,000 included the State supplemental pay. Councilman Touchet stated it does not. That would be an additional \$7,200. That comes from the State and not the City. Councilman Broussard asked where the raise would be paid from. Councilman Touchet stated from General Fund. Mayor White added that it would be paid from General Fund however General Fund is ultimately funded by our Utility System Fund. The General Fund already operates at a deficit. The Chief is well worth it but we took this job knowing what our salary would be. We committed to that. There are some inequities and it is an underpaid position. She does not feel that moving it up to \$85,000 is feasible. We don't have the same income as Scott, Youngsville and Broussard. We don't have the same type of growth as they do either. She has concerns moving it to that number and would feel better about moving it to \$75,000. That is her opinion. The highest paid lieutenant in the department is making \$71,000. The highest lieutenant has been with the department for several years. The decision is up to the Council and we will have to amend the budget if we take this action. Councilwoman Broussard stated that she respects what the Mayor is saying and this is no reflection on the Chief. She agrees with the \$75,000. Councilman Touchet stated that Chief Hardy gets more calls than any other municipalities.

-03 introduced by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. and seconded by Mr. Carlton Campbell to recommend to the City Council at their regular meeting scheduled for March 7, 2023 to adopt an ordinance to increase the Police Chief's annual salary to \$85,000. The motion was put to a vote and the vote thereon was as follows:

YEAS: 3 (Campbell, B. Broussard, Touchet)
NAYS: 1 (T. Broussard)
ABSENT: 0
ABSTAIN: 1(Hardy)

Therefore, the motion carried.

Councilman Hardy read the final item. It was to consider an ordinance to amend Section 15.5-29 (c), Location of trash containers, exceptions, to designate the City as the governing body that determines variances regarding household garbage containers within the City limits. Mayor White stated that this request came from the Police Jury. Currently the Police Jury has to grant variances for this. This would change it so that the variance would be granted by the City. Anyone needing to leave their container at the roadside would have to come to the City for that.

-04 introduced by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. and seconded by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. to recommend to the City Council at their regular meeting scheduled for March 7, 2023, to adopt an ordinance to amend Section 15.5-29 (c), Location of trash containers, exceptions, to designate the City as the governing body that determines variances regarding household garbage containers within the City limits. The motion carried unanimously.

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

ATTEST:

APPROVE:

Kathleen S. Faulk
Secretary-Treasurer

Roslyn R. White
Mayor