

The Mayor and Council of the City of Abbeville met in regular session on December 7, 2021 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 Mark Piazza, Mayor, presiding.

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

Members Absent: None

Also, Present: Ike Funderburk, City Attorney
Jude Mire, Fire Chief
Bill Spearman, Police Chief
Lieutenant Jonathan Touchet
Chris Gautreaux, Public Works Director
Lee Schexnaider, Wastewater Treatment Plant Superintendent
Allie Horton, Digital Media Assistant
Janis Fabre, Engineer
T. J. Savoy, Engineer
Richard Primeaux, Engineer
Ralph Hutchinson, retired Assistant Fire Chief
Byron Perry, retired Assistant Fire Chief
Tommy Picard, Park & Recreation Director, QSA
Bridget Levy, Parks & Recreation Board
Felicia Williams, Parks & Recreation Board
Homer Stelly, Director of Vermilion Parish Homeland Security &
Emergency Preparedness
Joey Boneski
Mike Hardy

Mayor Piazza asked Mr. Joey Boneski to lead the assembly in prayer. Mayor Piazza asked Mr. Mike Hardy to lead the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance.

-01 introduced by Mr. Francis Plaisance and seconded by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. to approve the probational appointment of Hunter Wagers to the position of Police Officer pending all post-hire assessments. The motion carried unanimously.

-02 introduced by Mr. Francis Plaisance and seconded by Ms. Terry Broussard to approve the probational appointment of Jacob DuPont to the position of Firefighter, pending all post-hire assessments. The motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Piazza recognized Assistant Chief Ralph Hutchinson and Assistant Chief Byron Perry who recently retired from the Abbeville Fire Department. All of our departments with the City of Abbeville are special but when you come from the Fire Department or the Police Department those are jobs where lives are put on the line. Those are jobs where lives are being saved. Those are jobs that require a lot of training, a lot of dedication and a lot of hours of work. These two gentlemen have both achieved the rank of Assistant Fire Chief. That is not an easy

accomplishment. He has known both of these gentlemen his entire tenure on the City Council and as Mayor. He worked very closely with both of these individuals and they are both very hard workers and are dedicated individuals. Firemen work a 24-hour shift. That means they go to work for a whole day and then they are off of work for two days. It doesn't matter if it is Christmas or Easter or the 4th of July or whatever day of the year it is, if that is your shift then that is your shift. You are at the fire station all day for 24 hours. You are not at home with your family. Both of these employees were exemplary in their department and they were looked up to by their peers. We appreciate your work. He presented each employee with a plaque.

-03 introduced by Mr. Francis Plaisance and seconded by Ms. Terry Broussard to approve the minutes from the Committee meeting held on November 2, 2021 and the regular City Council meetings held on November 2, 2021 and November 16, 2021. The motion carried unanimously.

-04 introduced by Mr. Francis Plaisance and seconded by Ms. Terry Broussard to ratify bills paid in the month of November 2021. The motion carried unanimously.

Plaisance/White
Resolution R21-43

A resolution adopting the 2022 Holiday schedule.

The motion carried unanimously.

-05 introduced by Ms. Roslyn White and seconded by Ms. Terry Broussard to award the contract for removal of a fallen trees at 400 Gauraud and 300 S. East Street to Tony Landry for \$1,500 and \$3,200, respectively. The motion carried unanimously.

-06 introduced by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. and seconded by Mr. Francis Plaisance to approve the quote from BihmCo, since the lower bid is ope-ended, for clean out of the wet well for the Main Sewer Lift Station and to pay the project from American Rescue Plan Act funds. The motion carried unanimously.

Plaisance/T. Broussard
Resolution R21-44

A resolution authorizing Sellers and Associates, Inc. to prepare and the Mayor to sign any and all documents related to the Love Louisiana Outdoors Program and to commit local funds for engineering and grant administration fees.

The motion carried unanimously.

Touchet/White
Resolution R21-45

A resolution authorizing the Mayor to execute an intergovernmental agreement with the Vermilion Parish Police Jury for the resurfacing of the parking lot at Chris Crusta Memorial Airport whereby the City will commit \$10,000 from Airport funds for the asphalt and the Vermilion Parish Police Jury will commit to the labor and balance of asphalt if more is needed.

The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Homer Stelly stated the current National Armory was built in 1949 and it was built on property that belongs to the City of Abbeville. Once they vacate that building, it will revert back to the City. They decided that they need a new build a new building and it will be 47,000 square feet. We will build it on the circle by the airport. They will receive federal funds to build it and it should be completed by 2024. The building can be used for different functions. It will be a state-of-the-art building. Mayor Piazza stated that the National Guard approached him three or four years ago. They currently have a 99-year lease with the City and they are in year 72 of that lease. They want to upgrade their armory. They need a minimum of 10 acres of land. They really want to be by the airport and they plan on utilizing the helipad and the helipad facility as part of their operation. Their intention is to build a brand new \$22 million National Guard armory. They are consolidating a couple of other older armories in the area into one armory to be located in Abbeville. They do not have to build this armory in Abbeville. It is because of General Bob LeBlanc and a lot of input from Commander Scott Desormeaux that this armory will stay in Vermilion Parish. They looked at several parcels of land throughout the parish. They were originally interested in school board property but a lot is not located on major highways except the property next to Kaplan High School. That property is in a flood zone. What they do in other parishes is that they reach out to local governments first. Mr. Homer Stelly stated that the federal government cannot purchase land. They usually look for someone to donate the land. If they build something on your property, then they will give it back to you.

Touchet/White
Resolution R21-46

A resolution committing to establish a long-term lease for 10 or more acres of land located adjacent to the Chris Crusta Memorial Airport with the Louisiana National Guard 256 Infantry for the location of the new armory.

The motion carried unanimously.

Councilman Touchet stated he would like Mr. Richard Primeaux to research the south side of Comeaux Park to see how feasible it would be to locate camper spots that would have electricity, water and sewerage. Additionally, he would like to see how many spots they could put in. We could keep the costs down by utilizing City forces for the labor. He would like the research to be conducted and then reported back to the Council.

-07 introduced by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. and seconded by Ms. Roslyn White to authorize Primeaux, Touchet and Associates to conduct research on the feasibility of placing camper spots on the south side of Comeaux Park that would have electricity, water and sewer services. The motion carried unanimously.

-08 introduced by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. and seconded by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. to approve the quote from Turf Grass Farms for sod for Sellers Field in the amount of \$6,480 whereby \$3,240 will be paid from Councilman Touchet's capital outlay funds and \$3,240 will be paid from Councilman Broussard's capital outlay funds. The motion carried unanimously.

-09 introduced by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. and seconded by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. to approve payment of pay application number 1 in the amount of \$1,377,975.00 payable to GeoSurfaces, Inc. for the Comeaux Park Renovation project. The motion carried unanimously.

Councilman Touchet discussed the possible approval of restroom trailers. He stated this was approved at the last meeting and that different trailer restrooms would be utilized within the City

at different spots. They had received several different quotes. He asked Tommy to make a recommendation. We want to worry about what the cost is and all that is happening in the pandemic and the supply chain shortage. We can't get this in two years from now. We need them sooner so we need to order those. Whatever decision we make, we need to order those tomorrow morning. Tommy stated that all Council members had been given the three choices. One of the quotes promised delivery by early spring. The other quote promises delivery by June. They are about the same price. The Mayor asked him to get a local bid for construction of the restrooms. The restroom trailer bids are about \$270,000 but the one constructed locally would be \$320,000. That is a container building. They are looking at a six restroom trailer. The price is \$83,000 each. Councilman Touchet asked the Mayor if he thinks they should order two or three. Mayor Piazza stated that he will explain this one time. He really shouldn't have to explain it but he will explain it one time. We got quotes on these manufactured restroom trailers. Tommy said that he thought that maybe we could get them built cheaper. He got quotes and those quotes were not cheaper. They were higher. The Council authorized him (the Mayor) to go out for bids at the last City Council meeting. Why did we go out for bids? Councilman Touchet stated to get the cheapest one? Mayor Piazza stated no. We went out for bids because they are manufactured restroom facilities. It is like buying a car. We are required to publicly bid the item. It is not a public works project. You are purchasing an item, like a car or a tractor or anything else. If it is over \$30,000 you have to go out for public bid. That is what we did two weeks ago. So, what we are discussing here tonight, he really doesn't know. Tommy stated that he contacted Event Solutions and the price to rent one is \$9,000 per month. So go ahead and get your bids and we can still get a rented facility in the meantime. Maybe we can negotiate so we can get it for the whole summer. Councilman Touchet asked if they need to do anything tonight. Mayor Piazza stated no. He has already sent those specs to LAMATS the day after the last meeting two weeks ago and they are bidding them out. We have to publicly bid them. He doesn't know how to explain that any better than that. LAMATS was going to issue the bid yesterday but he held him up because you put it on the agenda for tonight. He will call him back tomorrow and tell him to proceed. It is not a public works project. A public works project is when they would build it on site from start to finish. If you will buy a fabricated restroom facility, it is like buying a car, a truck or a gradall or something. You have to bid it. He asked what the Council what they want him to do. Councilman Broussard stated they should wait and hear from LAMATS.

-10 introduced by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. and seconded by Mr. Francis Plaisance to table any action regarding the portable restroom trailers and to proceed with using LAMATS for the public bid process as approved at the last City Council meeting. The motion carried unanimously.

Richard Primeaux, Engineer

- The drainage board will meet next Tuesday night and he will request an update on the cleaning of the two channels. Councilwoman White asked him to ask about the tree in Valcout Coulee too.
- The MS4 permit has been renewed.

Ike Funderburk, City Attorney

- LMA has a subdivision for City Attorneys. It is called the Louisiana City Attorneys Association. Today he was appointed as the City representative for the Louisiana City Attorneys Association to their executive board. He would be representing not only the City of Abbeville, but every other City in the State of Louisiana in the same type of population.
- Don't forget we have an executive session tonight at the end of the meeting.

Tommy Picard, Park Director, QSA

- *They are doing the work at the park and they would have been nearly finished if it would not have been for the rain. Sellers Field should be finished by February 1, 2022. Mayor Piazza stated they met with Dominic Listi about when the bleachers come in about the slabs and coverings. He asked Tommy to show Councilman Touchet and Councilman Broussard about what they talked about. He forgot to put the surplus of the bleachers on the agenda tonight but in the meantime, we need to have Chris get together with Tommy and prepare an inventory of the bleachers. We need to figure out where they need to go and if some will be relocated to other parks. Also let us know if some of the bleachers will be donated to other schools. Ike stated that we first have to surplus the bleachers that we do not want to keep. We can do an intergovernmental agreement with the school as needed. Tommy thanked Broussard Brothers and Acadiana that helped move the bleachers. It saved us between \$7,000 to \$10,000. His two crew members did a great job. QSA hired Jesse and he is cleaning up Sellers Field. We need to get a trailer in there to put all the junk in. You also need a plan for the dirt. Ike stated that dirt is an asset of the City so we have to have it valued and then we can surplus it and we can dispose of it in accordance with the value. Mayor Piazza stated that goes for the lights, the poles and any other stuff over there. That is all City property and cannot be given away. Even if it is another governmental entity, we have to complete an intergovernmental agreement for the donation. Ike stated he needs a copy of any valuation completed on the items.*

Councilwoman Roslyn White

- *This Saturday will be a fun filled family day in Abbeville for Christmas. It will start at 8:30 AM. Junior Auxiliary will have their "Here Comes Santa Run". It will begin at Magdalen Square. Following that will be Abbeville's Cajun Christmas Celebration. We will have vendors set up along Concord Street. Those vendors will open at 4:00 PM. At 5:30 PM the parade will roll. That should last about one hour. Following that we will have Storytime in the Square with Mayor Mark Piazza. There will be a band in the Square following story time from 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM. General Bob LeBlanc is the grand marshal of the parade and Santa will be arriving by airboat on a trailer. At the same time, Boys and Girls Club of Vermilion Parish is having a "Making Spirits Bright" holiday light trail. They will decorate the circular drive at A. A. Comeaux Park with lights and you can go for \$10 per car. You can drive thru with you family and see the Christmas lights. They will also have a trolley that will run between Magdalen Square and A. A. Comeaux Park for those who don't want to go in their car. That is \$5 per adult and \$2 per child. The trolley will make the circle around A. A. Comeaux Park and return to the Square. It is sure to be a fun day for everyone. Mayor Piazza asked about the booths on Concord opening at 4:00 PM and the events in the Square. Councilwoman White stated the events in the Square will be after the parade. Mayor Piazza asked Councilwoman White to get together with the Police Chief to discuss the streets that will be blocked and when they will be blocked. Please take into consideration 4:00 PM mass at St. Mary Magdalen Church. We can't block that off for mass and there is also a wedding that night too. The reception is at Black's. The wedding is at 6:00 PM. Councilwoman White stated she will be meeting with the Police Chief tomorrow at 11:00 AM.*

Councilman Brady Broussard, Jr.

- *He seconds what Councilwoman White said and he hopes all the Council members and the Mayor are participating in that event. It is a great thing.*
- *Commended the Main Street program for a highly successful Christmas Stroll. It was largely attended.*

- *It is so pleasant to see all the progress that our new Public Works Director, Chris Gautreaux, is doing. Keep up the good work all teams of the City. We are about to enter into a new year and thank you for what you do.*

-11 introduced by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. and seconded by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. to enter into executive session to consider an order of administrative leave as issued by Mayor Piazza on November 17, 2021. The motion carried unanimously.

-12 introduced by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. and seconded by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. to reconvene the regular meeting from executive session. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Funderburk reported on the executive session. Mayor reported to the City Council that he had placed an employee on administrative leave effective November 17, 2021 and that a hearing will be conducted as a public meeting on the 14th of December, 2021 at 2:00 PM in this room.

-13 introduced by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. and seconded by Ms. Roslyn White to ratify the administrative leave with pay as discussed. The motion carried unanimously.

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

ATTEST:

APPROVE:

Kathleen S. Faulk
Secretary-Treasurer

Mark Piazza
Mayor