

The Mayor and Council of the City of Abbeville met for a committee meeting on February 4, 2020 at 5:15 P.M., at the regular meeting place, the Council Meeting Room located at 101 North State Street, with the Honorable Francis Touchet, Jr., Mayor Pro-tem, presiding.

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

Members Absent: Mayor Mark Piazza

Also Present: Ike Funderburk, City Attorney
Jude Mire, Fire Chief
William Spearman, Police Chief
Clay Menard, Public Works Director
Denise Mire, Park Director
Richard Primeaux, Engineer
Gene Sellers, Engineer
Gerald Gaspard, American Legion & Chamber of Commerce
Joseph Vallee', Municipal Employees Civil Service Board
Pastor Steve Delino, Abbeville Parks and Recreation Board
Felicia Williams, Abbeville Parks and Recreation Board
Tommy Picard and James Broussard, QSA

Councilman Touchet stated we are here for a Recreation Committee meeting chaired by Councilman Brady Broussard, Jr. He asked if there were any public comments on any agenda item. There were none so he turned the floor over to Councilman Broussard.

Councilman Broussard stated the Recreation Committee is convened tonight to address the contract for recreation with QSA. The original contract was a three-year contract which is coming to an end making it necessary for the Council to renew or not renew. At this time, we would like QSA to give us the annual report and address the Council.

Mr. Tommy Picard stated they are in agreement with the contract. There may be a few things they need to discuss prior to signing it. In 2016 there were 65 kids playing basketball in Abbeville. We have 185 kids from Abbeville today playing. It is a work in progress. James has taken over our basketball program. We met with Mayor Piazza and Councilwoman Broussard Thursday to discuss things they want to do. Baseball is a work in progress. We need more support from the community to get these kids out. We have tried everything. We have sent flyers to schools, done robocalls and put banners all over town. We had about 65 kids who played last year. Mr. James Broussard stated there has been a lot of growth in the girls basketball program. The boys basketball team will be very competitive again this year. We hope to get the adjustable goals at Abbeville High School so we can have games in Abbeville. We are playing at Henry now. Councilman Plaisance stated what he hears from the public is the amount of money the City is paying for this program. It is important that we get the breakdown like you are giving us tonight regarding the number of Abbeville kids that are playing. It looks like it has gotten better this year than the previous year. Mr. Picard stated that QSA is saving the City money. Some of the kids want to play for free. We are a business and cannot do that. We broke out even in basketball. We would like the Recreation Board to help us get sponsors and kids to play. Councilwoman Broussard thanked Mr. Picard and Mr. James and everyone who is affiliated with Quality Sports. Even before she became a Councilwoman, a lot of people thought allowing QSA to run the recreation program was a bad move that the City had made. Still today, some of those people feel the same way. She is not sure where she is with this. She has to listen to her constituents and the majority that she has discussed this with are not happy. Councilman Touchet stated before you got on the Council, Councilwoman Broussard, and before we had QSA we had a lot of problems there. What happened was actually a disgrace. What are your constituents saying so you can make us aware of it and try to resolve it? If there is something that is not happening, then we need to know about that. We are saving money compared to what we were doing in the past. All those years, we had to have a director and pay for all the expenses. We also had all the headaches

too. Give us those problems and let us try to address them. Mr. Norman Levine stated that last year Bronk had to raise his own money and QSA is not recognizing them. Mr. Picard stated that QSA paid their insurance, we furnished the baseballs, we gave him the concessions in order to raise money for him to go to New Mexico. He ran the league and he received all the proceeds. All he had to do was pay the umpires. Mr. Picard stated that he donated, personally, \$150 to bring his kids to the Saints game. I don't do this to be recognized. He had been doing this for 46 years. We did 8 world series. That brought \$2.5 million into the community. We were never brought before this Council for recognition. The only thing we got from this Council was criticism over what we did. Mr. Levine stated the renewal should be denied. Councilwoman White stated that as to the question of recognition she would like to say that both she and Councilwoman Broussard tried numerous times to get Bronk and Bridget here with the team to recognize their accomplishments but we could not get them here. We tried for numerous meetings following their victory at the World Series. It is not that we didn't try to recognize them it is just everybody is busy and they couldn't get the team together to come. It does sound like QSA did quite a bit to help. Mr. Picard stated that we have a meeting Monday. We found a flag football director and we will try to do flag football. We will have a golf tournament in March at the Country Club. We are talking about a golf league. We will do anything to help. Councilman Broussard stated that we have a very good Park Director, Denise Mire, here tonight. We have some very devoted Recreation Board members, Pastor Steve Delino and Felicia Williams, here tonight also. Thank you so much for being here. He would like to remind the audience that some people may think that the grass is always greener somewhere else. He was here when Mrs. Denise Mire was doing her best to run the program. We did not have enough children at that time interested to sign up for baseball. Two teams had to keep playing each other every other day because we didn't have a league. That is why QSA was contacted to see if we could get more children involved in recreation. This contract has done that. Mrs. Denise did an outstanding job but the numbers were not there for the local system to even create a league. Mrs. Denise Mire stated that we had a league but we had so few teams per age group. Three teams played each other over and over again. With QSA, the teams go play in other leagues. We couldn't get enough kids to play in-house. It was about the numbers. Councilman Plaisance stated that he attended most of the World Series. There is no one who has worked harder for baseball over the years than Tommy Picard. When we look at this thing, it is probably best to move forward with this program and give it more time to see how it develops further. He touched on some new ideas tonight that they will try moving forward. Councilwoman White stated that she understands Councilwoman Broussard's concerns. She went herself and sat down with QSA about some complaints she had received from her district and to try to see what we could do as a team. The biggest complaint she heard was that there were not enough games in Abbeville city limits and not enough practices in Abbeville city limits. James touched on the reason tonight and this is what Tommy told her too. One of the reasons is securing a gym and the other reason is not having the proper goals at the gyms inside the City of Abbeville. They worked and got goals donated to the gym in Henry as well as a gym in Erath. For us to see the proper goals in the gyms in Abbeville, we need to work to get a donation of the proper goals. We are trying to resolve some of those issues. We will probably have to renew the contract going forward but work as a team with QSA and those that are volunteering in order to solve some of the problems to make people happier and see more recreation inside the City limits of Abbeville while under the direction of QSA.

-01 introduced by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. and seconded by Ms. Roslyn White to recommend to the City Council to renew the contract with QSA at their regular meeting scheduled for February 18, 2020. The motion was put to a vote and the vote thereon was as follows:

YEAS: 4(Plaisance, B. Broussard, Touchet, White)
NAYS: 1(T. Broussard)
ABSENT: 0
ABSTAIN: 0

Therefore, the motion carried.

There being no further business to discuss, Councilman Touchet declared this meeting adjourned.

ATTEST:

APPROVE:

Kathleen S. Faulk
Secretary-Treasurer

Francis Touchet, Jr.
Mayor Pro-Tem