

The Mayor and Council of the City of Abbeville met in regular session on June 1, 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, Terry Broussard, Brady 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  
Jason Hebert, Police Department Lieutenant  
Clay Menard, Public Works Director  
Charlene Beckett, Main Street Manager  
Allie Horton, Digital Media Assistant  
Gene Sellers, Engineer  
Kim Touchet, Engineer  
Bridget Levy, Parks and Recreation Board  
Steve Moosa, CPA  
Lloyd Campisi, Insurance Agent  
Hope and Chad McCloskey, requesting foot truck permit  
Coaches and Players from Abbeville Angels Baseball team

*Mayor Piazza asked Mr. Richard DuBois to lead those assembled in prayer. Mayor Piazza asked Mr. Colt LeBlanc to lead the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance.*

*Councilman Francis Plaisance recognized the Abbeville Angels Baseball Team. He attended their tournament at Pelican Park in Carencro and he was really surprised at how well they played. They won the tournament there and a gold ring. They went on to Zachary to play in the 12 and under South Louisiana State championship. There were 10 teams and they "smoked" them all. He was able to be there both days and on the second day there was no competition for them. They won that tournament undefeated again. They are representing Abbeville. They had a total of 8 homeruns during the tournament. He is very proud to present them tonight. He asked the coaches to come up and introduce the team. Mr. Richard DuBois stated that we have a great group of kids. He stated that he is the head coach and then he introduced the rest of the coaches and the team members as follows: Coach Greg Bradley, Coach Colt LeBlanc, Coach Jude Champagne, Josh Rupert, Caden LeBlanc, Lane Goutierrez, James Bradley, Logan Boutte, Graham LeBlanc, Bennett LeBlanc, Landon Romero, Brylon Touns, Cade Francis, Jacob DuBois and Dean LeBlanc.*

-01 introduced by Ms. Roslyn White and seconded by Ms. Terry Broussard to deviate from the agenda to add change order number 1 for the Flood Reduction and Drainage project. The motion carried unanimously.

-02 introduced by Ms. Roslyn White and seconded by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. to deviate from the agenda to add approval of pay application number 1 in the amount of \$49,467.87 payable to LA Contracting Enterprise for the Flood Reduction and Drainage Project. The motion carried unanimously.

-03 introduced by Ms. Roslyn White and seconded by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. to approve the minutes from the May 4, 2021 and May 18, 2021 Council personnel interviews, the May 4, 2021 and May 18, 2021 special City Council meetings, the May 18, 2021 Committee meeting and the May 4, 2021 and May 18, 2021 regular City Council meetings. The motion carried unanimously.

*Mayor Piazza asked if there were any public comments on any agenda item prior to action. There were none.*

*Mrs. Hope McCloskey and Mr. Chad McCloskey were at the meeting to request a permit for a food truck. There is currently a moratorium on issuing food truck permits. Mrs. McCloskey stated they are about two to three weeks away from completion of having a food truck. Chad is from here and he wants to serve in his community. We have learned that the City has only a certain number of permits that are allowed for food trucks. We have submitted an application for a permit and we would like it to be considered. Mayor Piazza stated that our ordinance says that we can have a maximum of five in the community and they have to be on private property. That does not include festivals and those types of events. Back several months we had a couple of food trucks already permitted in the City and the Council felt like because of the situation with COVID and the restaurants being closed or operating at reduced capacity that a moratorium should be placed on the issuance of any additional food truck permits. At that time, we had two permits issued. That moratorium is still in place. Mrs. McCloskey submitted a permit and was told that there was a moratorium so she asked to be put on the agenda. Councilwoman White stated she loves the idea of food trucks and the more options we have for dining the better however she fully supports the moratorium. Our restaurants took a huge hit last year. The moratorium was put in place and only existing licenses remained. She does not think we are ready to lift that moratorium at this time but we might want to start discussing this with our restaurants to get their input and the input of the community to see if we would have support to change that moratorium moving forward. Right now, our restaurants are still trying to catch up from what has happened. She does think more competition is good but we have to give special consideration to those restaurants operating here and paying for utilities and the licenses they have in place. Councilman Touchet stated he is the one who brought this up the last time because of the situation with COVID and the effects on our restaurants. His big thing is that we still have an economy that is not where it needs to be. We need to get some of our people back to work and see exactly what this will look like. He feels like Councilwoman White that we are not at that point yet to lift anything. These food trucks are not paying electricity, water, sewer and property tax. They are paying a fee to have a permit and they can use it every day if they can find someone to let them on their private property. Councilwoman White stated she will commit to speaking to the restaurants regarding this but she does not think that we are ready to raise that moratorium yet. She sees what is going on in Erath and that is a great thing but they are in a different situation than us because they don't have the restaurants built into their community like we do. We will take this into consideration but unfortunately, she does not feel like we will be able to grant that license at this time. She will take steps to begin discussing this with the businesses in her district to get feedback and then we can bring it back to the table for discussion. Councilman Broussard stated that we are in an extended oil and gas reduction in our parish, job loss, tax income loss and that means our economy is not back to where we would like it to be. Our restaurants are looking for more customers not fewer customers. Nothing would be better than if we would have more demand for what we can supply in our restaurants but he doesn't feel like we are there yet. There*

are other food trucks who have expressed their desire to operate in the City of Abbeville and we have not given them any different message than we are giving tonight. He appreciates that the McCloskey's want to do business here and he wishes the circumstances were different and we could allow that. Councilman Plaisance stated that he agrees with Councilman Touchet because these businesses that are there now are paying taxes and utilities. It is not fair to those restaurants for us to break that moratorium at this time. You are welcomed to come to the events and festivals that we have at the Red Barn. At this time, he cannot vote to lift the moratorium at this time. Councilwoman Broussard stated that our concerns are our businesses at this time and getting everybody back to work. Mayor Piazza thanked the McCloskey's for coming tonight and he hopes that things will change in the future however at this time the moratorium will stay in place. He might look at what Erath is doing now and may want to do something like that in the future. Our restaurants are not yet back into full operation. We hope things will turn around very quickly. Mrs. McCloskey understands but there are currently no food trucks operating in the City right now. Mayor Piazza stated there is one on the corner every day. Mrs. McCloskey stated she is in Erath now. She understands about the electricity but we purchase our supplies for the truck in the City. She is glad she will be able to use the truck at festivals. You are asking people to bring business to the City and when we try to, we are denied. She understands all the reasons but at the same time you have people selling barbeque on the corner near Dollar General. That is taking away but she is being told no. Mayor Piazza stated the issue is that we know you and we know you are local and we know you are buying stuff right here in the City but when somebody walks in here for a permit, we don't necessarily know who they are or where they are from and where they buy their stuff. How do you issue a permit to one person and not the other? The first lady that came was from Kaplan and didn't live in the City. The second person was from Lafayette. How do you treat one food truck differently from another? You are the first one that has come, since the moratorium, that are local. Councilwoman White stated she has a good point that if someone is selling barbeque out of their truck in a parking lot and we are not doing anything about it or are not knowledgeable about it, then we probably need to figure that out too. Mayor Piazza stated that is a tough one. What do you do about the guy on the side of the road selling crabs or shrimp or watermelon or vegetables? Councilman Plaisance stated that this year they will only allow local vendors at the Cattle Festival. Mayor Piazza stated that they will do a little more research as to how many food trucks we still have in the City and who they are and then he can get back with them. Councilwoman White stated that businesses are changing every day and more and more businesses test the market with the incubator style, micro retail food trucks. The hope is that if she starts a food truck operating here that it eventually grows into a store front. She can see in the horizon that we will offer this but it just is not quite the time for it right now. Mayor Piazza stated he agrees. Look at the Taco Sisters in Lafayette. They started with a food truck and now they have a huge operation. Councilwoman White stated we do have an obligation to our businesses right now. Councilman Broussard stated that Mrs. McCloskey has mentioned something that we are not aware of. If we have a permitted food truck that has left the City and if they want to turn in their permit, we can then fill that permit with someone else. If he has no intention of being here, as Mrs. McCloskey indicated, then Councilman Broussard does not know why that person would want to keep the permit.

Mr. Steve Moosa presented the audit for the fiscal year ended 12/31/2020. He discussed various items in the audit. It is an unmodified opinion and they feel the financials are fairly presented. He discussed the balance sheet and the total of governmental funds. The fund balance is \$2.7 million. This is money that is available for future years. He discussed the revenues and expenditures for the calendar year. The sales tax revenue is up from the previous year. There was a slight decrease in expenditures compared to the previous year. Councilman Touchet asked if the sales tax that was passed for raises will cover the cost of the raises. Mr. Moosa stated yes. The costs will go up each year as employees receive their step raises so we built in a cushion for

that. At this point, all things remaining the same, it should last between 10 to 12 years. Unfortunately, retirement costs are out of the control of the City since they are state retirement plans. He discussed the utility system fund revenues and expenditures as well as the hurricane expenditures and expected reimbursement from FEMA. Last year's hurricanes cost the City about one million dollars. There a decrease in revenue due to the electrical system. Mayor Piazza stated he attended a Zoom meeting for the \$1,000,000 LCDBG project. One of the requirements is that our sewer and water revenues operate in the black. This is required by federal law. We do go up that 3% every year and hopefully that will compensate for the losses we have. If we get audited that could be an issue that we are not operating in the black in the sewer department. Depreciation is part of that. It is an accounting number not a cash item. We don't know if those people who administer the grant will look at that as an operating expense or not. Mr. Moosa discussed the auditor's opinion letter. We did not have any findings for the audit. He also wanted to mention outstanding debt. The City has three outstanding bond issues. One from 2012, one from 2014 and one from 2016. All those bonds will be paid in full in 5 years. The 2012 bond will be paid in 2022. After 5 years the City will be debt free. Councilman Broussard stated that is unique club. Councilman Touchet stated he is thankful that we don't have the financial issues some municipalities have. It always starts at the top. We are in good financial shape and that is a credit to the Mayor and the department heads. Mayor Piazza stated in a few short months our total debt will be \$1,500,000. He doesn't ever remember it being that low in the 31 years he has served.

-04 introduced by Ms. Terry Broussard and seconded by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. to accept the financial audit for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2020. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Lloyd Campisi presented the health insurance renewal for July 1, 2021. UMR has presented a renewal with no increase in costs. Tokio Marine HCC, our stop loss insurance provider, has presented a renewal with no increase in costs. There are no benefit changes being proposed for this renewal.

-05 introduced by Mr. Francis Plaisance and seconded by Ms. Terry Broussard to accept the renewal offers from UMR and Tokio Marine HCC and to authorize the Mayor to execute all necessary documents relative to the renewal on July 1, 2021. The motion carried unanimously.

-06 introduced by Mr. Francis Plaisance and seconded by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. to approve the payment of the invoice from Terry's Diesel in the amount of \$5,880.34 to repair the firetruck from the Maude Avenue Fire Station. The motion carried unanimously.

-07 introduced by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. and seconded by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. to approve the purchase of one 8' X 20' and one 8' X 40' metal storage container from Pac-Van at a cost of \$8,000 to be used for equipment storage at Comeaux Park. The motion carried unanimously.

-08 introduced by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. and seconded by Ms. Roslyn White to award the contract for the abatement of rubbish at 901 E. Oak Street to the low bidder, Brown's Demolition, at a cost of \$1,999.00. Th motion carried unanimously.

Clay Menard stated he had inspected 109 and 111 N. Guegnon today and there was no rubbish left on the property. There will be no need to award a contract to remove the rubbish at this time. The boats are still on the property. Mayor Piazza stated the boats would have to be tagged and removed.

-09 introduced by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. and seconded by Ms. Roslyn White to table awarding the contract to abate the rubbish at 109 and 111 N. Guegnon since the rubbish had been removed and to authorize the City Attorney to have all the boats tagged and removed from the property. The motion carried unanimously.

-10 introduced by Mr. Francis Plaisance and seconded by Ms. Terry Broussard to award the contract to cut and remove a tree from 906 Greene Street to the low bidder, Brown's Demolition, at a cost of \$1,975.00. The motion carried unanimously.

-11 introduced by Ms. Roslyn White and seconded by Ms. Terry Broussard to award the contract to cut and remove a tree from 811 N. Lamar Street to the low bidder, Brown's Demolition at a cost of \$775.00. The motion carried unanimously.

-12 introduced by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. and seconded by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. to approve contract change order #1 relative to the Flood Reduction and Drainage Project. The motion carried unanimously.

-13 introduced by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. and seconded by Mr. Francis Plaisance, Jr. to approve pay application #1, payable to LA Contracting Enterprise, LLC in the amount of \$49,467.87, for the Flood Reduction and Drainage Project. The motion carried unanimously.

Gene Sellers, Engineer

- *The Main Street Outfall drainage project is complete.*
- *The State's Park Department will be reviewing the plans for the LaFitte Park Walking Trail and not DOTD.*
- *They will start on the concrete coulee cleaning project soon.*

Clay Menard, Public Works Director

- *The grass cutting crew and the construction crew are running behind because of the excessive rain. They will work on Saturdays to catch up. Since yesterday was a holiday and it was Councilman Broussard's day, the crew will work in that district Friday.*
- *During the week of the rain, they bagged a lot of sand. They depleted the pile of sand they had. The guys cannot thank the Mayor and Council enough for the sand bagging machine. They replenished the stockpile of sand. They have about 6,500 sand bags that are not filled and we have about 2,000 sand bags that are filled. We did have some residents that picked up sand bags for the week long of rain. The pump at the retention pond did run. We went there at the end of the week and we had to let some water out of the pond.*
- *The contractor for the McKinley Scott Park Pavilion project contacted him and they plan to be here the week after the 4<sup>th</sup> of July. That will depend on receipt of the material and the weather.*
- *Last week we were able to do some dress up work at the splashpad. We think it is where it needs to be so they can come in and paint the splashpad. He spoke to a company about furnishing the sod. They will need a week's notice for that. Once the sod is complete, we will be able to put the fence up and then install the features. The anticipated completion date will depend on weather.*
- *He attended a hurricane preparedness meeting for the parish last week. It was put on by OEP. One of the things they focused on during the meeting was communication. That is the key to the success of any hurricane. Councilwoman White stated she has seen better communication with OEP since Homer is there. Mayor Piazza agreed that he has heard from Homer Stelly several times over the past few weeks. He communicates very well.*

- *Tomorrow morning, we are having a pre-construction meeting with Stallion for the demolition of those 8 structures.*
- *We still have the two electrical contractors working with us to assist the electrical department.*
- *Councilman Touchet asked about the request from Abbeville General Hospital for underground electrical service because the pole will be in the way of the sign. Mayor Piazza stated he met with the gentleman from Abbeville General Hospital and Councilman Broussard regarding this. He has not yet had time to get with Harvey Dubois or Clay or Stewart to see how much that would cost. He needs to get additional information as he is waiting for research of the options.*
- *Councilwoman White asked if the water line repairs had been completed at the Abbeville RV Park. Clay stated they had.*

**Charlene Becket, Main Street Manager**

- *Attended the Main Street quarterly meeting in Crowley last week. It was the first in-person meeting in a while. There were speakers for each of the topics in Main Street.*
- *We are in the final stages of approving the text that we will put on the interpretive signs that will be placed at the murals downtown.*
- *We have two new businesses downtown. SOAR is renting the back part of the building on the corner from City Hall and Vermilion Life Photography who is moving on the second floor of Onezieme's building. She is thinking about starting the Downtown Business Association again since we are getting more businesses downtown. We also have a new business that has located in the old Vermilion Office Supply building. It is a woodworking business and he will be a vendor at the Daylily Festival.*
- *She presented the vendor map for the Daylily Festival. There are less vendors this year because we took into consideration COVID. They will be spaced out.*
- *Gwen Lanoux spruced up the flower beds at the Blacksmith Shop.*
- *Culverts were put in today at Harmony Park. We will put in the catch basins next.*
- *Councilman Broussard stated how proud they are of Charlene for the recognition by Keep Louisiana Beautiful. It recognizes your hard work that has made our City more beautiful.*

**Allie Horton, Digital Media Assistant**

- *Discussed the social media analytics for April 28, 2021 through May 25, 2021. We have been getting a lot of engagement on the Facebook page. This week she is heavily promoting the Daylily Festival. Today is the first day of hurricane season so she posted the link for the National Hurricane Center on the Facebook page.*
- *She attended the hurricane preparedness meeting and it made her think about the things she can do to prepare for hurricane season. She will make some emergency posts ready in case they are needed.*
- *She put together a "Welcome to the City" flyer to give to new residents who move here and turn their utilities on with us. It also shows where they can get phone service, internet and trash pickup.*
- *Posted that we are doing hydrant testing and will continue until it is finished.*
- *She also posted that sand bags are available.*
- *Charlene Beckett added that Theresa has created and added to the website excellent maps. They show all the different districts like the Main Street District, the historic district and the corridors.*

**Councilwoman Roslyn White**

- *Recognized Theresa, in the Tax Department, for her hard work in creating those maps. She mapped every district like the cultural and historic, main street and a map where a*

*constituent can find their Council person by clicking on their street. Theresa did it all herself and she took it upon herself to get training so she can keep up the tax department portion of the website. She was doing that with the school board when she was there. We now have two very knowledgeable digital media people working for us.*

- *Allie is doing a great job and please send her your events.*

Councilman Brady Broussard, Jr.

- *We are starting to get some money we are insured for from the hurricanes we had in 2020. We received \$173,916.00 for Hurricane Laura and we are in the process of collecting proceeds from Hurricane Delta. FEMA no longer makes us whole.*
- *He requested that the Vermilion Parish Drainage Board clean the Dick Hunter Coulee as they agreed to when the drainage improvement construction is completed as it has been completed. Clay and Kim have spoken to them about that and the citizens along that coulee are ready for that to happen. Please communicate to them that the City construction is complete.*
- *There is a Vermilion Catholic fishing tournament this weekend. It starts Thursday and goes through the weekend. It is at Don's Landing.*

Councilwoman Terry Broussard

- *Since there have been problems in her district, Pastor Stevens would like to attend the next meeting to discuss changes to the noise ordinance. She asked everyone to study the ordinance. They have been having wild block parties. Mayor Piazza stated it would be appropriate to have a committee meeting for that. Ike stated that he has been working on this issue.*

Councilman Francis Plaisance

- *He did the invocation and the welcome at the Memorial Service at the Louisiana Military Museum yesterday. It was a beautiful service and was very well attended. There were more people than the board anticipated. It was very unique because we had four WWII Veterans in attendance. The flyover was very impressive.*
- *He thanked Bridget for taking good care of the people who were fishing at LaFitte Drive-In Park this weekend.*
- *We all, as a Council, need to be extremely concerned about the \$50 million that Lafayette received for dredging the Vermilion River there. He and the Mayor discussed this today. Please talk to your Police Juror about this. They will dump all that water on us so we need to file a very strong objection to that and get behind the Mayor with what he comes up with. We will get flooded here.*

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

ATTEST:

APPROVE:

Kathleen S. Faulk  
Secretary-Treasurer

Mark Piazza  
Mayor