

The Mayor and Council of the City of Abbeville met for a committee meeting on December 15, 2020 at 5:15 P.M., at the A. A. Comeaux Recreation Center located at 300 A. A. Comeaux Drive, Suite 200, 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
Kelly Mire, Assistant Fire Chief
Bill Spearman, Police Chief
Jason Hebert, Police Lieutenant
Clay Menard, Public Works Director
Richard Primeaux, Engineer
Gene Sellers, Engineer
Steve Moosa, Accounting Consultant
Richard Minvielle, Grant Consultant
Felicia Williams, Park and Recreation Board member

Mayor Piazza stated we are here for a Finance Committee meeting chaired by Councilman Francis Touchet, Jr. He turned the floor over to Councilman Touchet. Councilman Touchet stated we are here to introduce the proposed budget for 2021 and amended budget for 2020. He asked Mr. Steve Moosa to present the information.

Mr. Moosa stated the Mayor has put the budget together for 2021 with Council members and department heads. Page one is the Mayor's letter. Mr. Moosa discussed the details of the letter. The third paragraph of the letter discusses that the full -time employees of the City will receive a 2% pay raise on their anniversary date. Page two shows the general fund and special fund revenues. These total \$4.9 million. The expenditures in the general fund are about \$10.8 million. We fund this with transfers from the Utility System Fund. The 2012 debt service will be paid off early in 2022. That will free up some money in the Sales Tax Fund for capital outlay projects. Mayor Piazza discussed specific items in the budget that he wanted to highlight. We will have a 2% pay raise for our employees. The general fund does include reimbursement from FEMA for the two hurricanes in 2020 and also Hurricane Barry in 2019. This is something we hope to receive. We have depleted our FEMA fund and have used Sales Tax and Utility System Fund reserves to pay those expenses. He will try to get a breakdown of those three storms and what the costs of the storms are. Kathy is working on Hurricane Laura right now and those project worksheets. In 2021 we have allocated \$25,000 to complete the splashpad and \$50,000 for the walking trail at LaFitte Drive-In Park. We have received a \$50,000 grant for the walking trail and hope to receive another \$50,000. We have \$10,000 for park equipment. The Mayor and City Council discretionary budgets have been increased to \$6,000. The flood protection grant will include \$115,000 in Sales Tax money, \$10,000 coming from economic district #1 and \$375,000 from the state grant. Resurfacing and bridge repairs on Hollingsworth will be \$75,000 and the Police Jury has agreed to match that same amount so the entire project will cost \$150,000. We hope to purchase property adjacent to the Abbeville RV Park for \$16,000. We have allocated \$5,000 for the completion of the new website and City video. The proposed City action and city plan will have a budget of \$5,000. The LCDBG demolition grant program is a \$20,000 City match with a \$250,000 grant. The streetscape phase two project is a \$50,000 City match and the remainder is a state grant. There is no additional money in the 2021 budget for police units because we are still paying off the lease for the units they purchased last year. There is \$71,000 for police department cameras in various areas of the City. We have budgeted \$30,000 for repairs and clean up of the concrete coulee. We hope to get the drainage board and the police jury involved to help us in that project. There was one project that was not put in the budget because he needs to wait to see what will happen with the reimbursements from the hurricanes. Once we know for certain what we will be reimbursed he would like to bring that back up to the table because it is a worthwhile project. He hopes to have that answer in the summertime and we can do a budget amendment

then. That project is to raise the pavilion at McKinley Scott Park. That is about \$130,000 to \$150,000. He knows that Councilwoman Broussard was disappointed that this did not get put into the budget. He is the one who has to be fiscally responsible and with the funds depleting and the balances going down and getting low, he got very worried about it. Councilman Touchet stated it may take years for us to get the money back from the hurricanes so he is not sure we will know more in the summer. Councilman Plaisance stated we cannot spend money we do not yet have. The Mayor is correct that we have to be fiscally conservative. Mayor Piazza stated he is in charge and responsible for the budget and the Council can vote yes or no. They don't have line-item veto and cannot change it as they see fit. He proposes the budget. Terry has gone to bat for her district but he cannot present a budget right now that will say that sales tax will have that \$150,000 in it. We will certainly have it in 2022 because we will be finished paying the 2012 debt service. Felicia Williams stated that the pavilion has been this way for a long time and this should be priority number 1. The foundation is unlevel and causes a safety issue. This should be ahead of some of the other projects like the tennis courts. The foundation needs to be attended to. We need to find money and allocate it to the project. Councilman Touchet asked if we could fix the foundation and asked Clay to assess the foundation. Mayor Piazza asked if the Council wants to explore the cost to fix the foundation first.

-01 introduced by Ms. Terry Broussard and seconded by Mr. Francis Plaisance to explore the costs associated with fixing the foundation of the pavilion at McKinley Scott Park. The motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Piazza stated we have introduced the budget tonight and we will have a special meeting on December 22, 2020 at 5:30 PM to hold a public hearing and to adopt the budget. The budget is available for viewing at this time and it has been advertised in the newspaper.

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

ATTEST:

APPROVE:

Kathleen S. Faulk
Secretary-Treasurer

Mark Piazza
Mayor