

The Mayor and Council of the City of Abbeville met in regular session on December 17, 2019 at 5:30 P.M., at the regular meeting place, the Council Meeting Room located at 101 North State Street, with the Honorable Mark Piazza, Mayor, presiding.

Members Present: Council Members, Francis Plaisance, Terry Broussard, Brady Broussard, Jr. and Roslyn White

Members Absent: Councilman Francis Touchet, Jr.

Also, Present: Jude Mire, Fire Chief
Bill Spearman, Police Chief
Ike Funderburk, City Attorney
Clay Menard, Public Works Director
Tom Carroll, Engineer
Richard Primeaux, Engineer
Joseph Vallee', Municipal Civil Service Board

Mayor Piazza asked Chief Bill Spearman to lead the assembly in prayer. Mayor Piazza asked Lieutenant Jason Hebert to lead the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance.

-01 introduced by Mr. Francis Plaisance and seconded by Ms. Terry Broussard to ratify the hiring of Tyrone Alexander, Desiree Stonecall and Jacoby Biscoe to the Abbeville Police Department, pending successful completion of all post-hire assessments. The motion carried unanimously.

-02 introduced by Mr. Francis Plaisance and seconded by Ms. Roslyn White to ratify bills paid in the month of November 2019. The motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Piazza asked if there were any comments from the public on any agenda item. There were none.

***B. Broussard/White
Ordinance 19-09***

An ordinance to amend Chapter 2, Section 2.1 and 2.21 pertaining to the increase in salary of the Mayor and Chief of Police.

The motion was put to a vote and the vote thereon was as follows:

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

Therefore, the ordinance was adopted.

-03 introduced by Mr. Francis Plaisance and seconded by Ms. Roslyn White to enter into a public hearing to discuss the proposed budget for 2020 and the amended budget for 2019. The motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Piazza stated we are now in a public hearing to discuss the 2020 budget and the amendments to the 2019 budget. It would be appropriate at this time for anyone in the audience to make comments pertaining to this issue. There were none. Mayor Piazza stated that we went through the budget in great detail at the last Finance Committee meeting held on December 3, 2019. The budget was presented by Mr. Steve Moosa. We are presenting a very good balanced budget with a small surplus. It will be work in progress as budgets are a guideline. Overtime will have to be monitored. We have a good budget with a healthy reserve balance. He is comfortable presenting the budget tonight. The budget has been advertised and available for public inspection for the required number of days. Councilman Broussard stated that the commitment of the Mayor and the Council to control overtime in the 2020 budget is an important part of the budget. We are committed to control that component of the budget. Councilman Plaisance stated that he is pleased with the support of the public for the new tax and we will be able to implement the raises in the 2020 budget as a result of the new tax. We will also bring the Mayor and Chief of Police salaries to a competitive level with surrounding cities. Their raise is not from the new sales tax but from the General Fund budget.

-04 introduced by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. and seconded by Ms. Roslyn White to close the public hearing and reconvene the regular meeting. The motion carried unanimously.

Plaisance/T. Broussard
Ordinance 19-10

An ordinance adopting the 2020 budget and amending the 2019 budget.

The motion was put to a vote and the vote thereon was as follows:

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

Therefore, the ordinance was adopted.

Hearings were to be held on the condemnation of the following property with the property owners or their designees: 1507 Franks Alley, 207 S. Gertrude, 1728 Franks Alley and 309 9th Street.

1507 Franks Alley – represented by Ricky LaFleur, attorney. Mr. LaFleur stated he is the appointed representative of the estate of Beatrice Bruno. She is the record owner of the property. He was appointed by Mr. Funderburk because the succession has not yet been opened. His duty is to try to find the family of Ms. Beatrice Bruno to let them know this is going on. He is trying to locate the son. He has spoken to the property owners around the property but they do not know where he is. Mr. Funderburk stated this was all done so we could file suit since there was no representative that we could serve. The property was inspected by Clay Menard on November 27, 2019. It was found that the cost to repair the structure to current code outweighs the cost to demolish the property, therefore, the property should be condemned and demolished. He recommended that the Council proceed with the condemnation of the property.

-05 introduced by Ms. Roslyn White and seconded by Ms. Terry Broussard to condemn the structure located at 1507 Franks Alley and proceed with the demotion process. The motion carried unanimously.

207 S. Gertrude – no representative. Mr. Funderburk stated that the inspection was completed by Mr. Menard on December 4, 2019. He went to the site and found the cost to repair the

structure to current code outweighs the cost to demolish the property, therefore the property should be condemned and demolished. Councilwoman Broussard stated that Ms. Adams had purchased the permit to demolish the property but it expired after 90 days and nothing was done. She would like to make contact with Ms. Adams and get back with the tax department.

-06 introduced by Ms. Terry Broussard and seconded by Ms. Roslyn White to condemn the structure located at 207 S. Gertrude but allow Councilwoman Broussard an opportunity to meet and negotiate with the property owner and report back to the tax department before the demolition process begins. The motion carried unanimously.

1728 Franks Alley – represented by Kimberly Bolden. Mr. Funderburk stated that Mr. Menard completed the inspection of the property on November 27, 2019 and found the cost to repair the structure to current code outweighed the cost to demolish, therefore it should be condemned and demolished. Ms. Bolden would like to repair the property. She has small children and would like to pass something on to them. She had someone living in the property but they moved out in January 2019. She lives in Lafayette and right now she is dealing with her children (twins) that have health issues. This is more important than this property so she comes here very seldom. She has boarded up the property but when she does come down here, the boards have been removed. She has to pay someone to put the boards back up which takes money out of her kids' mouths. She thinks this is being done intentionally because the neighbors want to buy her property. She has all this documented on her phone. Councilwoman Broussard asked Ms. Bolden how long would it take to repair the property and will when the work begin. Ms. Bolden stated the only thing that needs to be repaired is the back section of the roof. It has a leak. Sheetrock will also have to be repaired because of the leak. This is not major and she does not understand why it was deemed unlivable. She could go right now, change the door locks, change the floor which has rotted away because of the roof leaking and repair the sheetrock and it could be lived in. It has been leaking like this for over a year. She will start on this once she is finish dealing with her babies. Councilwoman Broussard stated that as long as those complaints continue, the letters won't stop and sooner or later the City will be forced to take action. Councilwoman Broussard wanted to grant the property owner until March (90 days) to bring this property into compliance. Ms. Bolden stated that she is having surgery in March. Councilwoman Broussard stated then we will give until February. Ms. Bolden stated the only thing she can do is board it up. This has been going on. Councilwoman Broussard agreed that this has been going on a long time but nothing has been done. Mayor Piazza asked if Ms. Bolden owns the lot too. Mr. Menard stated he inspected the property but could only see through the windows. There is some structural damage from the roof leaking over a period of time. The floors are gone and the doors were open as far as he could tell. There were some parts of the house he could not see. There are some supports that are rotten and it will cost a good bit of money to get the house repaired from what he could see. Ms. Bolden offered to accompany Mr. Menard on a walk through of the property. Councilwoman White asked if we received responses from the certified letters that were sent. Mayor Piazza answered yes. Councilwoman Broussard asked Ms. Bolden when she will be able to make repairs to the property so that the City won't have to continue contacting her because the windows are broken or the doors are being kicked in. This is what happens to homes that are not being occupied. This is what happens in today's world. She needs to know this from Ms. Bolden because, right now, she is leaning towards March. We could work with you up until March to get the repairs done and she cannot give anymore time. This issue has been going on a very long time. Ms. Bolden stated she cannot get anything done by March. Mayor Piazza asked Ms. Bolden how long would it take her to get the roof repaired and the doors and windows secured. Ms. Bolden stated she could do the doors and windows now. Mayor Piazza stated the roof needs to be repaired too because just securing the doors and windows will not do any good if the roof is not repaired. We do not want vandalism in there and people going in and out of there. This

structure was brought before the Council because we received complaints from the neighbors. Ms. Bolden stated that they will continue to receive complaints from the neighbors because that is who wants to buy the property. Mayor Piazza stated the grass was not cut all summer long and we had to send someone twice this summer to cut the grass. Ms. Bolden stated the City can do what they want and she will hire an attorney. She hired Darrell Thibodeaux to cut the grass. The grass did get tall but whoever is telling you they are cutting the grass is not telling the truth because Darrell Thibodeaux has been cutting the grass. Mayor Piazza asked Ms. Bolden, again, how long would it take her to complete the repairs. Ms. Bolden stated she would like until the end of April 2020. She does not have time to be dealing with this right now because she has more important thing to deal with. Councilwoman White asked Mr. Funderburk about our ordinance dealing with tarps on the roof. Mr. Funderburk stated a tarp is an approved device for an interim but it is not a final repair. That is according to State building codes.

-07 introduced by Ms. Terry Broussard to condemn the structure located at 1728 Franks Alley and to give the property owner until April 15, 2020 to make the repairs. If the repairs are not made by then the City will begin the demolition process. **The motion died for lack of a second.**

-08 introduced by Ms. Roslyn White and seconded by Mr. Francis Plaisance to condemn the structure located at 1728 Franks Alley and to move forward with the demolition process. The motion was put to a vote and the vote thereon was as follows:

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

Therefore, the motion carried.

309 9th Street – represented by Robert Kelly, Sandra Cain and Shirley Grogan. Mr. Kelly stated he lives in Texas and has been getting these letters. Two years ago, he came here and paid the taxes and he noticed they had a raggedy mobile home on the property. He went to his cousin and asked her about the mobile home and who had given permission to place that on the property. We do not know anything about that. When he got home, he contacted the tax office and brought it to their attention. He did not give permission for a mobile home to be moved onto the property. We had problems before when his nephew wanted to put a trailer there and she (Shirley Grogan) would not allow him to put it there but she did allow this gentleman's girlfriend to put that mobile home there. That thing is not livable and it is not worth fixing. It needs to be removed from the property. If they tear it down, then they will leave all the trash on the property and then we will be bothered again. I came today because of the certified letter he received from the tax office. He is part owner of the property. Only one person takes it into her own hands to tell people what they can do with the property. That is not right because we have to pay taxes too. We inherited this from our grandmother through our parents. When his father died, we inherited his part. She needs to consult all of us in order to do something on that property. The trailer needs to be gone. He will only accept demolition if the City does it. They will not do it. Mayor Piazza asked if the family wants to evict him off of the property. Mr. Kelly stated he has no business putting the trailer there. He is not family. Councilwoman Broussard asked if the family is giving permission to go on the property and demolish the mobile home. Mr. Kelly stated yes but he is not paying any money. Councilwoman Broussard wanted the family to understand that the cost of demolition has to be put against the property as a lien. Mr. Kelly again stated that he is not paying anything. He would agree to the mobile home being removed and hauled off by the owner. They need to pay for that because they put it there. Ms. Sandra Cain stated that the people who put the trailer should have to tear the trailer down because she will not pay for something that she did not put there. Let them do it. Mr. Funderburk stated that on co-owned property,

everybody has the same rights as everybody else. So, if I am a co-owner of property, I can possess the entirety of the property to the exclusion of everyone else if they acquiesce. That is obviously what we have in this situation. The trailer doesn't belong to the landowners but unfortunately, it is the land that is going to wind up being liened for the cost of the demolition of the trailer unless the owner of the trailer does what he should have done a long time ago which is removing the trailer from the property. This would solve the problem for the landowner. Ms. Shirley Grogan stated that she gave permission to put the trailer there. She (the girlfriend of the gentleman) said she was going to have the trailer redone but she did not. I have been telling her to get it off the property. My mother was the owner and she passed away so I am the owner. It is dangerous to have that on the property. People can go in there and hide and we do not want that. She is not for trouble. She wants it torn down or removed. She asked if she could have until January 31, 2020 to have the trailer removed off of the property. Councilwoman Broussard stated she was willing to give until January 31, 2020 and she reminded Ms. Grogan that they will have to come into the tax office and get a demolition permit. They are responsible for hauling what they tear down to the solid waste facility. They are responsible for the total cleanup. If the City has to come in because it is not done, there will be a lien on the property.

-09 introduced by Ms. Terry Broussard and seconded by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. to condemn the structure located at 309 9th Street and grant the property owners until January 31, 2020 to remove or demolish the structure or the City will begin the demolition process. The motion carried unanimously.

B. Broussard/Plaisance
Resolution R19-30

A resolution authorizing the Mayor to execute an agreement with Acadiana Broadband.

The motion carried unanimously.

Plaisance/B. Broussard
Resolution R19-31

A resolution declaring the legal holidays the City will observe for the calendar year 2020.

The motion carried unanimously.

B. Broussard/Plaisance
Resolution R19-32

A resolution requesting Louisiana DOTD to augment the signage for truck routes around and through the City of Abbeville.

The motion carried unanimously.

-10 introduced by Ms. Roslyn White and seconded by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. to approve change order number 1, to increase the contract time by 30 days, for the addition of the new headworks mechanical screen at the Wastewater Treatment Facility project. The motion carried unanimously.

-11 introduced by Mr. Francis Plaisance and seconded by Ms. Terry Broussard to approve partial payment number 1 in the amount of \$193,455.00 payable to TyBe Company, LLC for the addition

of new headworks mechanical screen at the Wastewater Treatment Facility project. The motion carried unanimously.

Plaisance/White
Resolution R19-33

A resolution authorizing the Mayor to execute all agreements with Louisiana DOTD relative to the Rehabilitate T-Hangar Taxilanes & Apron – Phase 1 (design) project.

The motion carried unanimously.

-12 introduced by Mr. Francis Plaisance and seconded by Ms. Roslyn White to approve application for payment number 3 in the amount of \$36,445.02 payable to L. Michaud Construction for the Rehabilitation of the Main Hangar project. The motion carried unanimously.

Tom Carroll, Engineer

- *Wished everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.*

Richard Primeaux, Engineer

- *Wished everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.*
- *Drainage grant project is progressing. We are meeting to try to get the utilities located in order to minimize those costs.*

Ike Funderburk, City Attorney

- *Wished everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.*

Clay Menard, Public Works Director

- *Wished everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.*

Mayor Mark Piazza

- *He hopes everyone has a safe, eventful and family oriented Christmas and New Year's. He hopes you get to spend some time with family and friends as he plans on doing.*
- *We have a few projects that we are doing our best to get completed by year-end. Clay and Larry and his crew have been working diligently to get the splashpad formed up so we can have the kids out there by the spring. It is going well. Weather permitting, we will have that done. We have some really nice projects to look forward to this spring.*

Lieutenant Jason Hebert

- *Wished everyone Happy Holidays.*

Councilwoman Roslyn White

- *Wished everyone Happy Holidays.*

Councilman Brady Broussard, Jr.

- *The decades awaited streetscape grant project will start on January 6, 2020 in our downtown area. It will start at the corner of Black's old restaurant.*
- *Wanted to make a comment about blighted property. We had some citizens here today where it had reached a point where the Mayor and Council wanted to talk to them about their solutions to their blight. Blight lowers property value around it. Blight invites rodents to a neighborhood. Blight is an invitation for crime all hours of the night. This Council will work with anyone who owns property but we have to start looking out for the neighbors*

of these properties that are the subject of blight. So, he thanks this Council for focusing on blight. He thanks Sarah and Theresa in the tax department. We will fight this head on. If someone comes to the Council meeting, we do want to talk to them. There is no excuse for blight. If you own property, it is your responsibility.

Councilwoman Terry Broussard

- *Thanked everyone for coming out tonight for the meeting.*
- *Wished everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. May you and your family be blessed with love, joy, peace and happiness. May everyone be safe. Remember to keep our employees in your prayers. They are the ones that make it happen for us. Thank you, guys, so much.*

Councilman Francis Plaisance

- *It is nice to be able to end the year with a successful budget and a successful year.*
- *Would like to see us focus in 2020 on empty buildings, especially businesses. Hopefully we can work in that direction.*
- *Wished everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. He hopes that everyone can visit with family and eat good food.*

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

ATTEST:

APPROVE:

Kathleen S. Faulk
Secretary-Treasurer

Mark Piazza
Mayor