

City of Abbeville
Regular Meeting
January 17, 2023

The Mayor and Council of the City of Abbeville met in regular session on January 17, 2023 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 Francis Touchet, Jr., Mayor Pro-Tem, presiding.

Members Present: Council Members, Carlton Campbell, Brady Broussard, Jr., Terry Broussard, Francis Touchet, Jr., Mayor Pro-Tem and Tony Hardy

Members Absent: Mayor Roslyn R. White

Also, Present: Bart Broussard, City Attorney
Mike Hardy, Police Chief
Jude Mire, Fire Chief
Kelly Mire, Assistant Fire Chief
Chris Gautreaux, Director of Public Works & Parks
Allie Horton, Digital Media Assistant
Kim Touchet, Engineer
Byron Dozier, Parks and Recreation Coordinator, QSA
Members of the Louisiana Cattle Festival: Karen Guilbeau,
Victoria Bourque, Marcella Davis and Queens
Joey Hebert, former superintendent of VPSB

Councilman Touchet Councilwoman Terry Broussard to lead those assembled in prayer. Councilman Touchet asked Councilman Carlton Campbell to lead the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance.

-01 introduced by Mr. Carlton Campbell and seconded by Mr. Tony Hardy to amend the agenda to remove the two executive sessions at the end of the meeting because they are not needed and to add Mr. Joey Hebert to presentations for a donation of artwork to the city. The motion carried unanimously.

Councilman Touchet asked if there were any public comments from the audience on any agenda item prior to action. There were none. Councilman Touchet asked that the presentations be limited to 3 to 5 minutes.

-02 introduced by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. and seconded by Mr. Tony Hardy to ratify the appointment of Dwayne Schexnider to the position of Police Officer with the Abbeville Police Department. The motion carried unanimously.

Mrs. Victoria Bourque introduced the Louisiana Cattle Festival President Ms. Karen Guilbeau. Ms. Bourque was recently elected to the position of Vice-President with the organization. They are very passionate about the Cattle Festival. Ms. Guilbeau stated that she is excited to serve at the 73rd president. She has been involved in the Cattle Festival for 20 years. She introduced the queens. The queens are our walking billboards about the festival. Ms. Bourque stated their goal is to move the festival back downtown and they have met with Mayor White a few times. Because of the streetscape project, the festival may not be in the traditional downtown area. They are excited to bring community to the festival and to have new innovative ideas while still staying true to the traditions that everyone knows and loves. We have had a beautiful response from the

public especially cattle producers. We are wanting to get the cattle industry more involved. The organization wants to do whatever they can to make Abbeville shine. Tourism is very important to them.

Ms. E. J. Berry had requested to be on the agenda to introduce Sharecare USA but she was not at the meeting.

Mr. Joey Hebert stated that two years ago he was passing around the Square and it was in the fall. As he passed, he glanced and there was an eerie light because of the tropical depression. It was about 7:00 AM in the morning and it caught his attention as an amateur photographer. He made another block around the Square and got in the road and took several pictures. He presented the Council with a beautiful framed photograph that he took that morning of Concord Street facing the Courthouse.

-03 introduced by Ms. Terry Broussard and seconded by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. to ratify bills paid in the month of December 2022. The motion carried unanimously.

Chris Gautreaux updated the City Council on the proposal to lease City vehicles from Enterprise. They will be leasing 13 vehicles for approximately \$12,735 per month. This will include a maintenance agreement plan. This is a 60-month lease. May take two to three years for us to see the benefit of the program. We will save a lot of money in vehicle maintenance.

-04 introduced by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. and seconded by Ms. Terry Broussard to authorize Chris to proceed with the Enterprise vehicle lease and to ratify the Mayor's signature on all documents. The motion carried unanimously.

Councilman Touchet began a discussion regarding the annual 2% raise for the Abbeville Police Department officers. In 2019 we froze the 2% because they received a substantial raise. We just implemented a \$13,340 annual raise for all police department personnel for 2023 so he suggested that we freeze the annual 2% raise to them because of the \$13,340 raise that was granted for 2023. We will give the 2% again next year to them.

-05 introduced by Mr. Tony Hardy and seconded by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. to not grant an additional 2% to the Abbeville Police Department Officers on top of the new raise for 2023 for this year. The motion carried unanimously.

-06 introduced by Ms. Terry Broussard and seconded by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. to enter into a public hearing to receive comments pertaining to the adoption of an ordinance to address Section 6-7 (a) (3) – Prohibited Activities, Penalties, to add a fine. The motion carried unanimously.

Public Hearing

Councilman Broussard stated that we have gone through the process with the Ordinance Committee to put fines on those who live in dilapidated structures without utilities. The City can turn off utilities to dilapidated structures. That has not always resulted in someone not living in that structure. So, we hope this will strengthen that. The fees are \$100.00 per day as a penalty. Bart stated that this is about properties that have continuous problems and have been through numerous hearings. The penalty would be implemented after a hearing through the proper channels. This fee would apply to the property owners. Councilwoman Broussard thought the \$100.00 per day fine is high. Councilman Campbell thought that \$50.00 per day would be more appropriate. Bart stated that the fine is for extreme situations. He only knows of one case that

this will apply to right now.

-07 introduced by Ms. Terry Broussard and seconded by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. to reconvene the regular meeting from public hearing. The motion carried unanimously.

The original ordinance as presented for adoption included the \$100.00 per day fine. This was the recommendation of the ordinance committee at their meeting on 1/3/23. Councilman Campbell wanted to reduce that fee to \$50.00 per day so the following motion was made.

-08 introduced by Mr. Carlton Campbell and seconded by Ms. Terry Broussard to reduce the per day fine for the ordinance from \$100.00 per day to \$50.00 per day. The motion was put to a vote and the vote thereupon was as follows:

YEAS: 3(Campbell, T. Broussard, Hardy)
NAYS: 2(B. Broussard, Touchet)
ABSENT: 0
ABSTAIN: 0

Therefore, the motion carried.

***Campbell/Hardy
Ordinance 23-01***

An ordinance to address Section 6-7 (a) (3) – Prohibited Activities, Penalties, to add a fine of \$50.00 per day.

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

YEAS: 5(Campbell, T. Broussard, B. Broussard, Touchet, Hardy)
NAYS: 0
ABSENT: 0
ABSTAIN: 0

Therefore, the ordinance was adopted unanimously.

-09 introduced by Ms. Terry Broussard and seconded by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. to authorize the Mayor to execute the following contracts with Darnall, Sikes & Frederick: The audit engagement letter for the annual audit for the fiscal year ended 12/31/2022, the agreed upon procedures (AUP) letter for the annual audit of AUPs and the consulting engagement letter for years 2023 and 2024. The motion carried unanimously.

-10 introduced by Mr. Carlton Campbell and seconded by Ms. Terry Broussard to table the approval of payment of a partial payment relative to the LCDBG Sewer System Rehabilitation project since Mr. Gene Sellers was not at the meeting. The motion carried unanimously.

-11 introduced by Ms. Terry Broussard and seconded by Mr. Carlton Campbell to approve the cost of \$5,000 per day plus materials for Bihm Construction to complete a sewer repair at Leblanc and Maude. The motion carried unanimously.

-12 introduced by Mr. Carlton Campbell and seconded by Mr. Tony Hardy to authorize the Fire Chief to apply for a 2023 grant to purchase a new aerial truck and if the grant is awarded, to allocate a City match in the amount of \$400,000 in the 2025 annual budget. The motion carried unanimously.

Bart Broussard stated that he will email a draft of the street legal golf cart ordinance to everyone and it will be on the February 7, 2023 committee meeting for consideration.

-13 introduced by Mr. Tony Hardy and seconded by Ms. Terry Broussard to authorize the City Attorney to proceed with the draft of an ordinance to permit street legal golf carts on City streets. The motion carried unanimously.

-14 introduced by Ms. Terry Broussard and seconded by Mr. Carlton Campbell to award the contract to tear down the structure and clear the lot at 1006 Franks Alley to the lowest bidder, Ticket Services in the amount of \$2,800.00. The motion carried unanimously.

Chris Gautreaux, Public Works and Parks Director

- *Finished cleaning up on Fairmont.*
- *Discussed the cleanup at McKinley Scott Park for the MLK Day Celebration.*
- *Working on handicapped accessibility at Comeaux Park. Councilwoman Broussard asked him to work on handicapped accessibility at McKinley Scott Park too especially for access to the court.*

Byron Dozier, Parks and Recreation Coordinator, QSA

- *They are ending the regular season of basketball.*
- *Will have an All-Star tournament on 2/3-2/5 for basketball. There will also be a 10-year-old regional on 3/10-3/12.*
- *He is still adding baseball tournaments to the calendar.*
- *He is in the process of getting contracts worked out for field usage.*
- *He spoke with the high school coaches to coordinate fields and will speak with them about concessions. Councilman Touchet asked Byron to keep Chris Gautreaux in the loop.*

Jude Mire, Fire Chief

- *Ran only 16 medicals in the last two weeks. We would have normally ran about 40.*
- *Last Wednesday at the Police Jury Committee meeting, Global Medical and Acadian Ambulance were there to speak. The Police Jury voted 7 to 4 to not allow another ambulance service in the parish. They have to wait 18 more months before they can try again. He is trying to get some numbers to show the City Council what they have been dealing with for so long. One of the big arguments from Juror Poche' is that there were no complaints at any of the committee meetings about Acadian. Chief Mire stated that he has been Fire Chief for 9 years and he did not know there was a Police Jury committee meeting for complaints against Acadian Ambulance. If he doesn't know that as Fire Chief, then probably most citizens in Vermilion Parish did not know they had to lodge their complaints against Acadian Ambulance to the Police Jury. The Fire Department goes to a lot of calls and those residents are wondering where the ambulance is. His personnel have to deal with the residents' emotions and concerns because the ambulance is not there timely and that is difficult on the staff. He was disappointed in the vote. He does have a meeting with Acadian Ambulance to see if they can work something out. He wants to work with anybody. He doesn't care if there are 10 companies in town or 1, the people of Abbeville and Vermilion Parish are what matter. Councilman Touchet asked Bart if the City of Abbeville could allow another ambulance in the City limits of Abbeville. Bart stated that we could. Assistant Fire Chief Kelly Mire suggested that Bart check our ordinances to make sure there is no conflict. We have met with Acadian Ambulance and we still end up in the same spot. He is not here to push Global Medical or Acadian Ambulance. He is here for the people of Abbeville. We want the people to be taken care of like they do. We don't want to be used as a crutch anymore by Acadian Ambulance.*

Councilman Carlton Campbell

- *Requested Bart to research the liability and legality of the City installing speed bumps in a subdivision.*

Councilwoman Terry Broussard

- *Thanked Chris and the employees for what they did to prepare for the MLK Day Celebration and thanked Vermilion Outreach for going above and beyond in the community.*

Councilman Brady Broussard, Jr.

- *Thanked the Cattle Festival for being here tonight and for sharing their vision of the festival with everyone.*
- *Streetscape Phase II has started. They are working on the north side of the street now. Until the north side is finished, you will not have construction on the south side. Traffic will continue to flow at all times and it will not stop businesses' entrances or exits.*

Councilman Francis Touchet, Jr.

- *Thanked Bart for the work he is doing.*
- *Thanked Chris for always stepping up.*
- *The Mayor is working on City business tonight. She is in Baton Rouge trying get funds to the City. That is why she is not at the meeting tonight.*

Councilman Tony Hardy

- *He hopes the Cattle Festival will be able to be moved back downtown.*

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