

The Mayor and Council of the City of Abbeville met in regular session on December 3, 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., Francis Touchet, Jr., Mayor Pro-Tem and Roslyn White

Members Absent: None

Also, Present: Jude Mire, Fire Chief
Bill Spearman, Police Chief
Ike Funderburk, City Attorney
Clay Menard, Public Works Director
Donna Baudoin, Retired City Employee
Gene Sellers, Engineer
Richard Primeaux, Engineer
Corey LeBlanc, Architect

Mayor Piazza asked Ms. Sandra Marant to lead the assembly in prayer. Mayor Piazza asked Mr. Ike Funderburk to lead the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Piazza presented a certificate of appreciation from the City to Mrs. Donna Baudoin. She had recently retired from the City after 39 years of service. Mayor Piazza read the certificate of appreciation aloud.

-01 introduced by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. and seconded by Ms. Roslyn White to approve the minutes from the November 19, 2019 regular City Council meeting. The motion carried unanimously.

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

-02 introduced by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. and seconded by Mr. Francis Plaisance to award the bid for abatement for rubbish at 208 Alleman Street to Elbert Dawson in the amount of \$300.00. The motion carried unanimously.

-03 introduced by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. and seconded by Ms. Terry Broussard to award the bid for abatement of rubbish and cutting of grass and weeds at 1109 Vernon Street to Elbert Dawson in the amount of \$445.00. The motion carried unanimously.

-04 introduced by Ms. Roslyn White and seconded by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. to table awarding the bid for abatement of rubbish at 808 N. East Street since the bid was so high (\$4,500) and to revisit the issue at a later date once other options are researched. The motion carried unanimously.

Chief Mire discussed the recent fire rating results. In the state of Louisiana there are 600 different cities and districts that are rated. There are 9 of them that have a rating of 1, 35 that are rated at 2 and the City of Abbeville received a rating of 3. This is the same rating that we have been for several years. In 2014 our score was 74 out of a scale of 105. You get points based on communication, trucks, training and other things. All these points add up and that is shown on the report that was distributed to you tonight. In 2019 our score was 78.3. We are very close to a 2. We will meet in January with the gentleman that rated us. He will point out to us what we were deficient in and what we can improve on. The big thing that the Chief is trying to work out with the parish is to get the training center. If we had a training center, we would have received an additional 3 points so we may have been a 2 rating. That would have put us in the top 40 departments in the state of Louisiana. We are rated every 5 years. Mayor Piazza stated it is important to mention, since a lot of people don't understand the significance of the fire rating, that this directly affects your homeowner's premiums for homeowner insurance. It also affects your business insurance for your fire premiums. The lower the rating, the lower your premiums will be for 5 years. Since we are at a 3 and we have been at a 3, our insurance premiums for fire protection will not go up.

-05 introduced by Mr. Francis Plaisance and seconded by Ms. Terry Broussard to adopt a sexual harassment policy in keeping with Act 270 of the regular session of the 2018 Legislature. The motion carried unanimously.

-06 introduced by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. and seconded by Ms. Roslyn White to approve pay application #15 in the amount of \$46,738.71 payable to Minvielle Lumber for retainage and a portion of the punch list and the invoice from The Sellers Group, both for the Airport Terminal Building Renovation project. The motion carried unanimously.

Councilman Touchet asked for an update on the chicken issue on South St. Valerie. He asked Mr. Funderburk to provide the update. Mr. Funderburk stated we asked the Chief of Police to take pictures. He did and Mr. Funderburk has the pictures. Mr. Funderburk met with Mr. Thibodeaux and Mr. Thibodeaux indicated that he would make another effort to get videos. Be that as it may, this thing has lingered on for a long time. He referred to section 4.1 in the ordinances, definitions. A person who has possession of the chicken must keep control of the chicken with a secure fence. One of the properties has no fencing at all. The other property has fencing that is inadequate to hold the chickens. Ike will file criminal charges against the property owners. Ike stated we have already sent letters. Mayor Piazza stated that it will take something more forceful than a letter from the tax department. Ike stated we will have Mr. Thibodeaux testify in court and we will present the documents filed by the tax and permit department and we will present the picture as evidence. We will file criminal charges at City court and they will be summoned to come to court by subpoena. We will have a warrant out for their arrest.

Clay Menard, Public Works Director

- Councilman Plaisance asked about the hole on Rodeo Road left by the sewer project contractor. Clay stated the contractor cannot fix the issue permanently until it settles. They dug down 10 feet so it will take a long time to settle and compact. We continue to add limestone and dress it up as it settles. Once it settles completely, the contractor will make the permanent repair. That is part of the LCDBG and it is part of the contractor's punch list. If we could get some more rain, it would help to compact it.
- Councilwoman Broussard asked Clay to meet with her in front of Pleasant Green Church to discuss holes in front of the church. She also wanted to meet with him to discuss the Martin Luther King Street project.

Mayor Mark Piazza

- *He appreciates the support of the Council not only for himself but for the Police Chief and for all the City employees. This is been a very trying year and trying experience for all of us. Nobody likes taxes. Our employees are the beneficiaries of a nice salary increase as well as himself and the Police Chief. We will see the results in long-term with better quality personnel and the ability to hire better personnel. It will provide a better work environment and we will see productivity increase out there. This will improve the morale of the employees and it will be a different situation than what we are having now. These were not easy decisions to make. He's a business owner he knows what it's like. In the long run, the City will be much better off due to the efforts we made this year. We have made tougher decisions this year than we have had to make in the past five years. He thanked the new City Councilwomen for their research and their homework to make these decisions. They did not take these decisions lightly.*

Bill Spearman, Chief of Police

- *He thanked all the Council members for his raise. The officers are looking forward to their raise and it is well deserved.*

Jude Mire, Fire Chief

- *Thanked the Mayor and Council for their support.*

Councilman Francis Plaisance

- *The Christmas parade will be Saturday night at 6:00 PM.*

Councilwoman Terry Broussard

- *She will be having her first Christmas event for underprivileged children on Friday. This will serve all children throughout the City of Abbeville. She is asking for everyone to donate a toy for the children. We will collect toys until the 13th or 14th of this month.*

Councilman Brady Broussard, Jr.

- *This Thursday, December 5, 2019, is the Christmas Stroll. On Saturday, December 7, 2019, we will have a Farmers' Market in the morning, the parade at 6:00 PM and then a free movie in the Square after the parade.*

Councilwoman Roslyn White

- *Stated she would contact Chief Mire to schedule a grand opening of the new Fire Station.*
- *We will also have Painting under the Oaks on Saturday, December 7, 2019. This will be available in Magdalen Square. You will be able to paint some streetscapes of the City for a fee of \$25. There are still a few spots available. All of this in on the Facebook page as well as the City website if you need more information.*

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

ATTEST:

APPROVE:

Kathleen S. Faulk
Secretary-Treasurer

Mark Piazza
Mayor