

The Mayor and Council of the City of Abbeville met in regular session on June 15, 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
Allie Horton, Digital Media Assistant
Gene Sellers, Engineer
Richard Primeaux, Engineer
Bridget Levy, Parks and Recreation Board
Tommy Picard, Park Director, QSA

Mayor Piazza asked Councilman Brady Broussard, Jr. to lead those assembled in prayer. Mayor Piazza asked Councilman Francis Touchet, Jr. to lead the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance.

-01 introduced by Mr. Francis Plaisance and seconded by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. to approve the promotional appointment of Eldridge Harrison to the position of Street Maintenance Foreman in the Street Maintenance Department. The motion carried unanimously.

-02 introduced by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. and seconded by Mr. Francis Plaisance to ratify bills paid in the month of May 2021. The motion carried unanimously.

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

-03 introduced by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. and seconded by Ms. Roslyn White to enter into a public hearing for comments pertaining to an ordinance to adopt the Centerpoint Energy Franchise fee proposal. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Funderburk explained this is a 25-year deal and we have had the same deal for the last 50 years at least. We have a favored nation clause in the proposal so if they go up on the franchise fee rate with anybody else in Louisiana, we will also get that rate increase. This is in keeping with the language that has been approved by the State Legislature and the Public Service Commission. There is not much room for adjusting anything here.

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

B. Broussard/White
Ordinance 21-04

An ordinance to adopt the Centerpoint Energy Franchise fee proposal.

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

NAYS: 0
YEAS: 5(Plaisance, T. Broussard, B. Broussard, Touchet, White)
ABSENT: 0
ABSTAIN: 0

Therefore, the ordinance was adopted unanimously.

Councilwoman Broussard had asked Mr. Richard Primeaux to discuss the flooding in District D. Mr. Primeaux distributed a hydrological map of the area. The brown areas are 14-16 areas of elevation. The blue areas are elevations as low as 6, 7 or 8 feet. The area of interest is about 55 acres. It is an area that is densely populated. Mayor Piazza asked if the area of interest is that which has been referred to for years as "The Bottom". Mr. Primeaux answered yes. Councilman Touchet stated he thought we had put something in when we put in the retention pond that addressed this. He was the Councilman in that district when we did that. Mr. Primeaux stated the drainage and the pump station along with the retention pond have helped the area and without it, it would be even worse. Mayor Piazza asked Mr. Primeaux if the jars had been sized yet. Mr. Primeaux stated he had not. Tonight, he was here to seek permission to do a drainage study in order to make recommendations. Mayor Piazza stated that we did a very extensive project there a few years ago and a lot of drainage improvements have been done in that area in the past. That is why the retention pond was created. Mr. Primeaux stated we are considering another outfall area to reduce that hydrologic drain line. The main drainage would still be the most important. This area has to fight the other drainage. Everything above it has to drain first. It drains last and fights against the drainage. Water is collecting there and it can't get out of there quickly because it has to compete with everything else. It will eventually drain. We have done this before where we added another outfall and dedicated it only to the area like this. A new outfall would be dedicated to this area only. Mayor Piazza asked Councilwoman Broussard what was the main complaint from the constituents and what is the main objective. Councilwoman stated the last time we had all that rain, it was all over Facebook about the flooding. Mayor Piazza stated he doesn't pay too much attention to Facebook. His opinion, and he is not an engineer, is that every time that he goes to the Franks Alley area after a heavy rain, we have experienced some street flooding but only a few yards have water. He has not received any complaints of people's homes getting flooded since we put in the retention pond. 75 to 80 percent of the problem, when he has received complaints, is because of trash in the ditch and trash covering the catch basins because people won't go in their own front yard and clean their own ditch and catch basins. That has been the majority of the problem in that neighborhood. If we will authorize Mr. Primeaux to study this project, he recommends that we need to get with Clay to discuss with the Street Maintenance Superintendent to make sure that these ditches are clean and that the jars are unobstructed. That could be causing the flooding in some of those streets and blocks in that neighborhood. It could simply be trash in the jars. Also, he has experienced, on 5th Street that two catch basins were so old they were made of brick and they were so poorly designed that they were taking no water whatsoever. We are having both the those catch basins rebuilt. Those catch basins on 5th Street are not taking in the water they were supposed to because they were poorly built and designed a long time ago. This should also be part of any study that is conducted. Mr. Primeaux stated that would be part of the study too. Councilman Touchet asked how extensive is this and what are we looking at as far as time and cost. Mr. Primeaux stated he would like to do a thorough study so he can give some

recommendations and come back with an estimated cost. It would take at least one month for that.

-05 introduced by Ms. Terry Broussard and seconded by Ms. Roslyn White to authorize Mr. Richard Primeaux to conduct a drainage study on the area discussed and report back his findings to the Council when it is finished. The motion carried unanimously.

Plaisance/White
Resolution R21-24

A resolution requesting Louisiana and Delta Railroad to remove all structures which were part of the old railroad bridge which crosses the Vermilion River.

The motion carried unanimously.

Plaisance/White
Resolution R21-25

A resolution requesting Louisiana DOTD to repair and/or replace the pylons and wings associated with the bridge located on Louisiana Highway 14/Port-Pere Megret Streets.

The motion carried unanimously.

Touchet/T. Broussard
Resolution R21-26

A resolution authorizing the Mayor to execute the Airport Coronavirus Response Grant Program grant agreement with FAA.

The motion carried unanimously.

Councilwoman White stated that Mrs. Amiee Louise Powell requested to place a 2007 mobile home at 409 Louis Drive which is in a no mobile home zone (Corridor #1). It is a small subdivision which is all mobile homes with the exception of one brick house. They have a sale arranged for this vacant lot on Louis Drive and when they went to permitting, they realized it was part of corridor #1 and they would need a variance to put a mobile home there. After reviewing the building specifications of the neighborhood, as well as our ordinance, she is under the assumption that the mobile home park would have been grandfathered in as part of an existing mobile home park. It is the final lot on a street that is all mobile homes, and only because of those conditions, she is recommending a variance for 409 Louis Drive.

-06 introduced by Ms. Roslyn White and seconded by Mr. Francis Plaisance to grant a variance to allow Mrs. Amiee Louise Powell to place a 2007 mobile home at 409 Louis Drive. The motion carried unanimously.

Councilwoman Broussard stated that during the last hurricane we had, a tree fell on Ms. Debra Coleman's current mobile home. It destroyed a room and one-half. FEMA did not give her enough to buy a new mobile home. She is requesting a variance to move a 1996 mobile home to 1314 Green Street. The variance is needed because of age. Councilwoman Broussard has explained to Ms. Coleman that the tree and damaged mobile home would have to be removed from the property as well. Mayor Piazza asked Ms. Coleman how long it would be before the tree and the

damaged mobile home are removed from the property. Ms. Coleman stated she is ready to do it now.

-07 introduced by Ms. Terry Broussard and seconded by Mr. Francis Plaisance to grant a variance to allow Ms. Debra Coleman to move a 1996 mobile home to 1314 Green Street. The motion carried unanimously.

-08 introduced by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. and seconded by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. to submit the names of Jimmie Steen and Joey Songne to fill one vacancy on the Abbeville Harbor and Terminal Board. The motion carried unanimously.

-09 introduced by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. and seconded by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. to appoint Hollie Nelms to the Abbeville Municipal Employees Civile Service Board. This appointment fills the unexpired term in Mr. Joseph Vallee'. The motion carried unanimously.

-10 introduced by Mr. Francis Plaisance and seconded by Ms. Roslyn White to approve payment of partial payment #2 in the amount of \$207,317.57 payable to LA Contracting Enterprise, LLC for the Flood Damage Reduction & Drainage Improvements Project. The motion carried unanimously.

-11 introduced by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. and seconded by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. to approve change order #1 to increase the contract with Glenn Lege Construction, Inc by \$4,600.13 for the Main Street Outfall Drainage Repair project. The motion carried unanimously.

-12 introduced by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. and seconded by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. to approve payment of partial payment estimate #1(final) in the amount of \$45,103.08 payable to Glenn Lege Construction, Inc. for the Main Street Outfall Drainage Repair project. The motion carried unanimously.

Gene Sellers, Engineer

- *The contractor should begin the Hollingsworth overlay at the end of July and the cleaning of the concrete coulee the first part of July.*
- *The Walking Trail plans have been submitted to the State.*

Richard Primeaux, Engineer

- *The Flood Damage Reduction and Drainage Improvement project is going very well and may finish two months ahead of schedule. We will have some change order items at the next meeting for this project. There were other conflicts with utilities that took place that were not on the as built maps so no one knew about them. We had to run conflict boxes around those. The one item that really caught us by surprise was that AT&T put two fiber optic cables where they were not supposed to be. They were supposed to be on the south side of the road and they put them on the north side of the road. We are trying to get an answer from AT&T to see if there is anything on the south side of the road but they haven't answered us. In the meantime, the contractor found a solution to keep going. It would cost between \$40,000 to \$50,000 to get around their cable and then we may be able to file a claim with AT&T. We will have all the final numbers at the next meeting and he will present those. These fiber optics cost hundreds of thousands of dollars and would put a lot of people without service if they were damaged. Mayor Piazza stated that this project had four projects in one that we applied for through the capital outlay grant with the State. One of those projects was Cedar Street and that neighborhood decided that they did not want the project. An alternate project was Robert Wells Drive and that did not get*

approved because we were over budget. So, before we get on any other drainage projects, we still have that one to do.

Tommy Picard, Park Director through QSA

- *Installing the fence at the football field. They are half way done. Coke will send someone to discuss the scoreboard for the football field.*
- *Baseball season is over but we have All-star tournaments. We have a tournament on the 24th through the 27th for three age groups coming in. This is about 12 teams. The following week we have a super-regional. This is a state tournament. There are 8 teams coming for that.*
- *We will begin basketball on the 28th and he is having problems finding a gym. The goals at Henry are still broken. Hopefully they will be fixed. At Abbeville we can only have it Monday, Wednesday and Friday but we have to haul our concessions since they have someone else using it on Tuesday and Thursday. In Henry it is all set up and it stays there.*
- *We will get a welder to fix the bracket to put the keypad panel at the tennis courts. We will get Brandon there tomorrow.*
- *Ask if he should order the tennis court signs? Councilwoman White asked that “verify the gate is locked upon exiting” is on there. Councilman Broussard stated that a vandal has already bent the gate between the old courts and the new courts. The tennis courts have to be locked. Mr. Picard stated he would order 3 signs once Ike adds and approves the language.*
- *The containers have been ordered and they have to be delivered. We will put those on cement blocks. A crane will come in to put those. He asked someone to come today to provide a quote for a slab to put those on instead. We can just roll those on it. Mayor Piazza stated we approved the price of the containers but you didn’t mention the price of the slabs that were needed. Why didn’t you have all that together in one price so we would know exactly how much money we were talking about? You never even came with the price to put the cement under the bleachers that you wanted. When you come with your price for the slabs, put it all together so that we will know exactly the amount of money we have to decide on. Don’t bring it one at a time every meeting.*
- *We started NFL flag football. It will cost them \$25 per kid for them to get an NFL team registered jersey and the flag.*
- *Steve Delino will chair the committee and partner with Lawrence Williams and Chase Lege.*
- *Councilwoman White asked about the rotten trees in the back of the park. Tommy stated he and Clay had discussed that today. It has been very wet there because of all the rain. They are working on it.*

Bill Spearman, Police Chief

- *Discussed the calls the Police Department responded to for the last two weeks.*
- *Has one on sick leave. One of our officers fell and broke his arm today while on foot pursuit. He will be out 6 to 8 weeks.*
- *Councilman Broussard thanked Chief Spearman for what he and his department are doing.*

Jude Mire, Fire Chief

- *He has three people on sick leave and a lot of people are taking vacation so there will be a lot of overtime.*
- *The new rescue boat is in service.*
- *We will be running all medical calls, like we did before COVID.*
- *The hydrant testing was finished in one week.*
- *We will be painting all the hydrants in the City in July.*
- *We will be hose testing this week for our insurance rating.*

- *The last week in June we will be pump testing.*
- *He discussed the calls they responded to.*
- *Applied for a grant with Centerpoint Energy for \$2,500. We received the grant and we will use it to pay for one-half of a new thermal imager that we use to find hot spots in a house.*
- *He applied for an Assistance to Firefighter grant for a new compressor to fill their air bottles. It is \$52,000 and it looks like we may receive that grant.*
- *He attended the Chiefs' conference last week in Lake Charles with the three Assistant Chiefs. They learned a lot and will be implementing some new procedures. The department did a great job while they were gone.*

Councilman Francis Plaisance

- *The event the Police Department (FOP) had planned at LaFitte Park for this weekend has been postponed because of the impending weather.*

Councilwoman Roslyn White

- *We had a successful Daylily Festival. Props to Charlene for making the move ahead of time. They probably had over 1,000 people go through that building.*
- *Acknowledged the Mayor's announcement in the newspaper this past week. She thanked him for his years of service. You will be missed. You have earned and should enjoy your retirement.*
- *There is a tropical system in the gulf that that could potentially develop into a tropical storm hitting here by Friday night. Keep your eyes open and be aware.*

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

ATTEST:

APPROVE:

Kathleen S. Faulk
Secretary-Treasurer

Mark Piazza
Mayor