

The Mayor and Council of the City of Abbeville met in regular session on May 5, 2020 at 5:30 P.M., at A. A. Comeaux Recreation Center, 300 A. A. Comeaux Drive, Suite 200, Abbeville, Louisiana 70510, 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
Chris Duhon, Abbeville Rotary Club
Richard Primeaux, Engineer
Ben Rivera & Colton Daigle, Insurance agents

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

Mayor Piazza stated we will have call in capability during the meeting, the agenda has been posted to our website for 24 hours and we have the meeting streaming live on Facebook. The call-in number is 337-898-4242.

Mr. Chris Duhon with the Abbeville Rotary Club was at the meeting to discuss the proposed improvements to the Vermilion Parish Council on Aging Building. Mr. Duhon stated each year they do different things in the community. We are able to apply for district grants from Rotary International. They would like to focus on the elderly of Vermilion Parish. He reached out to the Vermilion Parish Council on Aging to see if they could make improvements to the building. We would make some improvements to the common space and also to the outdoor area. They would also like to complete a kitchen remodel. The Council on Aging delivers 160 meals to the homes per day. They prepare it in the very small kitchen they have in the building. We would do some minor improvements to the kitchen and do some painting. This would cost around \$3,500 to \$4,000. We are allowed to apply for a district grant for \$2,000 and Rotary will contribute the rest to this project. Since the building is owned by the City, we wanted to get approval and permission to do any type of renovations to the building. Mayor Piazza stated that this is a great project. The City also owns the park that is next door to it so we may want to make some improvements to the park to go along with what Rotary will be doing in the building. When you exit the kitchen area, you walk right into the park. The housing authority had to take the fence down on the back side of the park so we may take the fence down completely and try and upgrade some of the things that are in the park and then secure the back door area. He asked Mr. Duhon to contact him so they could go to the facility and discuss this. The City does own the building but we have partnered with Louisiana Department of Elderly Affairs and with the Council on Aging and their board as well as the Vermilion Parish Police Jury that runs the transportation area. They run that through, S M I L E.

-01 introduced by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. and seconded by Mr. Francis Plaisance to approve the proposal to renovate the Vermilion Parish Council on Aging as discussed. The motion carried unanimously.

-02 introduced by Mr. Francis Plaisance and seconded by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. to approve the minutes from the Personnel Interviews and the regular City Council meeting both held on April 7, 2020. The motion carried unanimously.

-03 introduced by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. and seconded by Ms. Roslyn White to ratify bills paid in the month of April 2020. The motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Piazza asked for any public comments at this time. He reminded the public that were viewing the meeting on Facebook that they could call in utilizing the telephone number 337-898-4242. There were no call-in comments. Ms. Anita Levy discussed holding a parade for all the graduates of Vermilion Parish.

Mr. Ben Rivera discussed the LWCC renewal and Mr. Colton Daigle discussed the LWCC dividend program and the payments the City has received. Any increase in premium due to increase in payroll was offset by the dividends.

-04 introduced by Ms. Roslyn White and seconded by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. to approve the renewal of workers compensation insurance from LWCC for the period from 5/19/2020 through 5/19/2021 for \$384,217.00. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Richard Primeaux discussed the flood damage reduction and drainage improvement projects. The project budget is \$500,000. \$375,000 of this is a grant from Capital Outlay and it is dedicated only to construction. The City's participation is \$125,000 of which \$80,000 is designated for construction and the rest is your soft costs. So total funds available for construction is \$455,000. We have 4 projects and when we reviewed the project in October the estimated costs were \$65,000 for Riverside, \$190,000 for Lafayette/S. Louisiana, \$110,000 for Robert Wells and \$60,000 for Cedar Street. We also had a \$30,000 contingency. We have designed the Riverside project and the Lafayette/S. Louisiana. The other two are about 75% complete. Riverside subdivision has a large area of water coming into the coulee. The crossing at 5th Street is an 80 square foot opening. When you go down to 2nd Street, where everything is flowing, it is a 56 square foot opening. You will get anywhere from 3 to 4 feet of back water. When you get that in the channel, then that backs up into the neighborhood. That is where the flooding is coming from. You can't get the water through. Initially we thought we would need a 60-inch pipe but we will need a 72-inch pipe for it to work right. That will be part of the increase in cost to match what is downstream. We also have to extend the shoulder of the road so the contractor can work because it is a one-way in and one-way out of the that neighborhood. This will allow the traffic to flow. We have to use dependable pipe because it will be placed in a wet surface. We will also use Fill Crete so the traffic can drive right back on top of the road. That project cost is now estimated to be about \$85,000 to \$90,000. The next critical project is the one at Lafayette Street. All the water flows down to that one intersection and it floods. We also found the drainage from around where the Police Station is and some of these other areas that the pipe flow is a circular direction. There is also a ridge so when it gets to the intersection it circles backs to the intersection. It creates a big pond there. We have to take the water and make it go towards the outfall. This will prevent it from making that circle. This hopefully will relieve a lot of the ponding at that intersection. To do this we have to go another 400 to 500 feet to get across the ridge. The water will go straight into the outfall. We also found out that we have water coming from the Courthouse that goes to that intersection. If we don't correct these issues, we will not have completed the project properly and it would still flood. Those businesses that are still low will still have to protect themselves but this should help them out. Right now, that project has increased to about \$225,000 to \$250,000. He would like to bid these two projects and get real numbers to

get the correct costs. Once we get some real numbers on these two critical projects, we can make a decision on the other two projects. This will give us our options on what to do. We also have a lot more utilities involved after 10 years since when we began planning and applying for these projects. Mayor Piazza stated he would like us to go out for bids on the first two projects. Councilman Touchet was concerned that we would run out of money for the other two projects. Mayor Piazza stated we could let him design all four and bid all at one time and then the Council could decide which ones to do. Councilwoman White asked that we bid the entire project but have each divided in the bid. Mr. Primeaux stated we can do that. He should have all four ready to bid in a month from now.

-05 introduced by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. and seconded by Mr. Francis Plaisance to have all four projects designs completed and then authorize advertisement for bids in one entire bid package but broken down into four projects. The motion carried unanimously.

-06 introduced by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. and seconded by Mr. Francis Plaisance to ratify payment of estimate for partial payment number 3 payable to Glenn Lege Construction in the amount of \$117,675.73 for the Downtown Abbeville Streetscaping Project. The motion carried unanimously.

Touchet/T. Broussard
Resolution R20-07

A resolution adopting the annual Louisiana Compliance Questionnaire for audit engagements of governmental entities for the fiscal year ended 12/31/2019.

The motion carried unanimously.

-07 introduced by Mr. Francis Plaisance and seconded by Ms. Roslyn White to approve payment number 16 payable to Minvielle Lumber Company in the amount of \$7,999.93 for the renovations to the Airport Terminal Building project. The motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Piazza stated that we have recently received a \$30,000 grant from the federal government for the airport. He has asked them if we could use these funds for the overhang on the terminal building that had to be removed because the project was overbudget. He is awaiting the answer to that.

Ike Funderburk, City Attorney

- *At the 2/19/20 City Council meeting the Council adopted a resolution requesting DOTD to address issues related to drainage structures on LA 14 at or near Airport Road. We have received their response. The first request was the cleaning of the three 6'X6' RCB crossing LA 14. DOTD declined to perform the requested work because they feel there would be considerable costs to clean the barrel for very little or no benefit. The second request was to clean the three 30" RCP located west of Jimmy Vorhoff Drive. DOTD responded that they would clean this structure when they have scheduled their sewer truck to be in Vermilion Parish. Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, they do not have a projected timeline for this. The third request was to clear and snag/clean the channel on the south side of LA 14. DOTD declined to perform the work because the channel is located outside of its right of way. He suggested the City contact the drainage board to do some work there.*

Mayor Mark Piazza

- *Basically, it has been business as usual at City Hall. The lobby is still closed. The drive through window has been very busy and people have been paying their bills as we have been sending them out. Lynn and Nicole have been working with individuals when they need. It has been going well.*
- *We are getting very close to reopening and we want to make sure that we do so in a safe and considerate manner following the guidelines of the federal government and the governor's office. We do have some guidelines that were presented to us from the Police Jury last night. We will review those and establish some guidelines of our own but they look good and follow a pattern of the federal government's phase 1, 2 and 3. He is asking for everyone's patience and hopefully we will get our businesses open in an expeditious manner.*
- *He has had Lynn and Charlene Beckett calling businesses all last week. Charlene contacted the downtown businesses. Lynn and Clay made a list of businesses that looked closed but really weren't. They were doing business out of the back door. Lynn reached out to 30 to 40 businesses last week just asking them if the City could do anything to assist them. We encouraged them to open if they were able to open. Some of the "gray area" businesses are starting to open and that is encouraging.*
- *We have made some modifications to our lobby. We have added a glass enclosure to the information desk to protect the individual sitting at that desk. We will modify the glass on the tax and permit front. The collector's windows are ok so they do not need any modifications. If our employees have to come out to speak to the public, the employee will be required to wear a mask. We are asking people to stay in their offices. We are fortunate at City Hall that everyone has their own individual office. We don't have more than two in an office and everyone is very comfortable with that. We are not having a big flow of traffic through the back of City Hall either. The guys working out in the field are wearing masks and practicing social distancing. They are working hard and doing a good job. They have caught up with their work for the first time in years. We appreciate all that they do. We appreciate our public safety employees too. They work during all types of disasters and difficult situations.*

Councilman Francis Touchet, Jr.

- *Discussed the recent shooting and death in the City. He was looking for answers and solutions. Councilman Plaisance agreed the situation is not acceptable. He suggested that the Police Chief come to the next meeting to discuss this. Last week he had four gentlemen around 2:00 AM in his backyard. He caught them on video at his house. Something has to be done. People are frightened. Mayor Piazza stated he has been in contact with the Police Chief with the camera situation. Councilman Touchet stated all this is very discouraging. We need to do something.*

Councilwoman Roslyn White

- *Thanked Councilman Touchet for bringing up the violence. She and Councilwoman Broussard discuss this on a daily basis. We have people living in our district who are scared. We have to be mad about what they are doing in our City. It will take not only the police but every person who lives in those districts to not be scared and to come forward with information. The Chief has helped out in our districts but anything we can do to help the crime problem needs to be addressed and a priority.*
- *The Daylily festival has been cancelled for this year.*
- *Thanked the Hanes Corporation for the masks they donated to Vermilion Parish. We had about 5,000 at City Hall. We have about 100 left now. If you need a mask, call or go by*

City Hall. Tomorrow will probably be the last day that we will have some to distribute. She is hoping that we can put in a request for more but there is no guarantee that we will get that.

- *Don't forget to complete your 2020 Census online. The federal dollars we receive are all based on Census numbers and data. You can visit 2020census.gov. It takes about 10 minutes to complete it.*

Councilwoman Terry Broussard

- *Thanked Councilman Touchet for bringing up the crime issues. The crime is not going unnoticed. It is getting out of hand and we need to meet with the Police Chief so that we can see where we are. People are scared and families are hurting. We need to take our City back and send a message to the gang members that we will not let you do this to our City.*

Councilman Brady Broussard, Jr.

- *We have some outstanding law enforcement officers in our City. You can have all those but if the public is not interested in solving these things, law enforcement cannot do it alone. We have an anonymous way to give that information to our law enforcement officers to get these people who make a living through crime. We still have a curfew for minors. There should be no minors gathering on corners. People need to stay home.*
- *Also gave a big thanks to the Hanes Corporation for giving free masks to our citizens. He is glad our citizens have taken almost all of those already.*
- *So sorry to hear the Daylily Festival has been cancelled but it is the times we live in now. We will come back and we will be stronger and wiser because of this.*

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

ATTEST:

APPROVE:

Kathleen S. Faulk
Secretary-Treasurer

Mark Piazza
Mayor