

The Mayor and Council of the City of Abbeville met in regular session on August 16, 2022 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 Roslyn R. White, Mayor, presiding.

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

Members Absent: None

Also, Present: Ike Funderburk, City Attorney  
Jude Mire, Fire Chief  
Mike Hardy, Police Chief  
Gene Sellers, Engineer  
Kim Touchet, Engineer  
Chris Gautreaux, Public Works Director  
Ann Hardy, Municipal Employees Civil Service Director  
Allie Horton, Digital Media Assistant  
Stephanie Fezzia Jean-Batiste, daughter of late the Larry Fezzia  
Corlette Fezzia, daughter of the late Larry Fezzia  
Mason Jean-Batiste, grandson of the late Larry Fezzia  
Ava Jean-Batiste, granddaughter of the late Larry Fezzia  
Dickie Gaspard, husband of the late Pamela Gaspard  
Julie Champagne, daughter of the late Pamela Gaspard  
Lillian Champagne, granddaughter of the late Pamela Gaspard  
Gerald Gaspard, American Legion

*Mayor White asked Chief Mike Hardy to lead those assembled in prayer. Mayor White asked Councilman Tony Hardy to lead the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance.*

-01 introduced by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. and seconded by Mr. Tony Hardy to deviate from the agenda to add the re-subdivision of lots 1 and 2 of the property located at 2205 Veterans Memorial Drive (the old Bay City Ford). The motion carried unanimously.

-02 introduced by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. and seconded by Mr. Carlton Campbell to deviate from the agenda to add the hiring of a Police Officer for the Abbeville Police Department as number 2 under personnel. The motion carried unanimously.

*Mayor White asked if there were any public comments on any agenda item prior to action. There were none.*

*Mrs. Ann Hardy stated that Mr. Allen Ramke resigned from the Municipal Employees Civil Service Board and names were solicited from several civic clubs. The deadline to submit names was August 12, 2022. The two names that were received from civic clubs were Dianne Forsythe whose name was submitted by the Women's Club of Abbeville and Sabien Brown whose name was submitted by the Nehemiah Project.*

-03 introduced by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. to appoint Dianne Forsythe to the Municipal

Employees Civil Service Board. The motion died for lack of a second.

-04 introduced by Ms. Terry Broussard and seconded by Mr. Carlton Campbell to appoint Sabien Brown to the Municipal Employees Civil Service Board. The motion carried unanimously.

*Ann Hardy stated that Mr. Brown would be sworn in at tomorrow night's meeting.*

-05 introduced by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. and seconded by Mr. Carlton Campbell to appoint Deontray Casimere to the position of Police Office with the Abbeville Police Department. The motion carried unanimously.

*Councilman Carlton Campbell stated that there was a discrepancy in Abbeville history as to who was the first African American Councilman. It was thought that was Mr. Herbert J. Myles but that was not correct. Mr. Larry Fezzia, who he knew very well, was the first African American Councilman to serve. We would like to recognize the family as his appointed personnel to receive the honor from the Mayor and Council. Mayor White asked the family members who were present to come up to receive a plaque that had been prepared to honor the late Councilman Larry Fezzia. Mayor White read the proclamation aloud. It was to honor Councilman Lawrence "Larry" Fezzia. He was born on November 2, 1938. He grew up in Abbeville and was a graduate of Herod High School. He continued his educational pursuits at Grambling University. While still attending college he married Sylvia Clements in 1959. They made their home in Abbeville with their daughters Corlette and Stephanie. Upon graduation from Grambling, with a bachelor's degree in education, he began teaching at Wilkins Stroud Elementary in Kaplan, Louisiana. He taught for 8 years. He also attended a master's program at the University of Texas. After that he began teaching at E. Broussard Elementary in Forked Island, Louisiana in 1972. He was a head coach of the girls' basketball team, assistant coach to the boys' basketball team and the head coach of the boys' baseball team. He also provided adult education night classes giving many adults the opportunity to earn their high school diploma. He loved teaching but wanted to have a bigger impact on his community. In 1974 he ran and became the first African American City Councilman of Abbeville. During his time as City Councilman, he had the opportunity to bridge the racial gap by being the first person of color to be invited, with the Mayor and other Councilmen, to the Abbeville Country Club. He recognized the need for low-income housing in the black community. Along, with other members of the Live Oak Masonic Lodge #193 Chapter, he became part of the board of directors of the Live Oak Masonic Housing Corporation to build Live Oak Manor Project Housing. He dedicated his life to public service and charitable giving to support not only his community, but those who were less fortunate throughout the state of Louisiana. Mayor White expressed the gratitude for the contributions that Lawrence "Larry" Fezzia has made to the City of Abbeville. Ms. Corlette Fezzia stated that it was well said in the proclamation. They deeply appreciate this honor today. She will share this with her niece, Ava Jean-Bastiste and her nephew Mason Jean-Batiste who have been working hard in their school work to follow in their grandfather's footsteps. Her Dad, Larry Fezzia, was very active in the community by doing a lot of public service. They are here today to receive this. Her niece and nephew did not know him because he passed away before they were born. They can see all the things that he has done to continue to move their journey forward and that is one of the biggest honors for them as a family. She presented the proclamation to her niece and nephew since they are carrying the torch and continuing to journey forward and do the wonderful things that they are doing. They did not know their grandfather, but he is very present in both of them and they continue to do those things. By sharing this, they can keep this with them.*

*Councilman Carlton Campbell stated that he had the great opportunity to serve with Councilwoman Pamela Gaspard in a previous administration. There was some confusion in the*

community as to who was the first female to serve on the Abbeville City Council. Mrs. Pamela Gaspard was the first female to serve on the Abbeville City Council. He wanted to set the record straight and recognize her tonight. Mayor White called her family up and then read the proclamation aloud. Mrs. Pamela Gaspard was born on September 16, 1951. She graduated from Abbeville High School. She married Richard Gaspard and they raised two daughters and one son. She was working for Brady Broussard, Jr. when the position for the mayor's secretary became vacant so Brady Broussard, Jr. recommended her for the job. She applied and was hired to work as the Secretary to Mayor Brady Broussard, Sr. She became well respected and well known throughout the City. She loved her job and was proud of her work with the Louisiana Association of Municipal Secretaries and Assistants. When a statewide association was formed, she was asked to be on the committee. She was asked to serve on the board of directors and went on to be the Associations first president in 1989. She was an advocate for the Vermilion Parish Tourist Commission. She was a strong supporter of the Main Street Program and the twinning of the sister city in Belgium. She worked for 16 years as Mayor Brady Broussard's secretary and then she decided that she wanted to do more for the City so she ran for the Council seat. She ran for the seat in District A and made a record-breaking tradition of being the first woman to be elected to the Abbeville City Council. She broke another tradition and asked to be addressed as Councilwoman. She would say "It's like being a boy named Sue", followed by her infectious laugh. Her greatest accomplishment would always be her husband and her children but she also loved Abbeville and serving all of the people of this City. Mayor White and the City Council hereby honor Pamela Gaspard for all of her contributions to the City of Abbeville. Her daughter, Julie Champagne, stated that this City was her (Pamela's) heart and soul and she enjoyed every minute of it.

-06 introduced by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. and seconded by Ms. Terry Broussard to approve the minutes from the July 19, 2022 Committee meeting and regular City Council meeting. The motion carried unanimously.

-07 introduced by Mr. Carlton Campbell and seconded by Ms. Terry Broussard to ratify bills paid in the month of July 2022. The motion carried unanimously.

-08 introduced by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. and seconded by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. to enter into a public hearing to receive comments from the public pertaining to a proposed ordinance to amend Section 11-9, Prohibition on living in campers and travel trailers". The ordinance will increase the penalties for violations. The motion carried unanimously.

### **Public Hearing**

Mayor White asked Mr. Funderburk to discuss the proposed change. Ike stated that we will add subparagraph (e) to section 11-9 and it will read as follows: Any person convicted of a violation of this section shall be punished by a fine of not more than one thousand dollars (\$1,000.00) or imprisonment of not more than sixty (60) days per violation. Each day of occupancy shall constitute a separate violation. Mayor White asked if there were any comments from the audience. Mr. Gerald Gaspard asked if this includes all travel trailers. Mr. Funderburk stated it includes all. It prohibits people from living in travel trailers as a permanent residence. They can't have utilities hooked up to them other than those that are needed to maintain their warranty. This gives some teeth to the existing ordinance that is currently on the books. Mayor White stated that the full ordinance reads that if they are in an RV park, they can come in and stay in the travel trailer. They can't live in it as a residence for an extended period of time. What we are seeing is that on property, they are moving in these campers and hooking them up to city utilities, sometimes without even getting permits, and it is becoming a big problem. This will put some

teeth in the penalty once we give them notice that they have to stop living in it. We have some penalties to try to remedy the situation. Councilman Touchet stated there are designated areas that they are allowed like the mobile home park on Rodeo Road. Councilman Touchet asked how will it be enforced. Mayor White stated we have been fighting the issue for 3 ½ years on a certain property. It started out with one camper but now they have four campers. It is a drug infested camp and there is junk on the property. We have enough documentation to show proof because the police get called out there a lot. Even with all that proof, we will have to bring a lawsuit to get them off of the property. Having the teeth will allow us to start piling up the fines that makes it more threatening for them so that hopefully it doesn't have to come to a lawsuit. We hope they will alleviate the problem themselves. You have to build up the case. It starts with a complaint from a neighbor and then there is the burden of proof there. Ike stated that the purpose of the ordinance is to make this very expensive. Mayor White stated there is a clause pertaining to storm victims in the original ordinance. Ike stated that the ordinance states that you can't live in a camper 30 consecutive days. After that you would have to move it off or not occupy it. What we have here is people who have been consistently living in these things and consistently creating problems for our law enforcement and for the good neighbors that are living near them. Mayor White stated that those campers have been towed there. They are not even mobile. It was towed there by a tow truck in the middle of the night and became a camp for criminal activity. There will always be exceptions that we will have to be given especially in any areas affected by hurricanes. We have some language in the full ordinance that allows for that. You will see that our tax department is pretty good with working with people especially when it comes to a disaster. This situation that has been giving us a lot of problems are a constant burden to taxpayers, to the police department and our fire department. We have some kind of penalty that is enforceable and severe enough to make them reconsider breaking the law. Councilman Touchet stated it is about enforcement.

-09 introduced by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. and seconded by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. to reconvene the regular meeting from public hearing. The motion carried unanimously.

**Campbell/Touchet**  
**Ordinance 22-04**

*An ordinance amending Section 11-9, "Prohibition on living in campers and travel trailers" to increase the penalties for violations.*

*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.*

-10 introduced by Ms. Terry Broussard and seconded by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. to approve the accounting of the tax roll for 2021. The motion carried unanimously.

-11 introduced by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. and seconded by Mr. Tony Hardy to approve payment of the invoice in the amount of \$7,457.97 from Delta Fire and Safety to repair the aerial firetruck. The motion carried unanimously.

-12 introduced by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. and seconded by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. to authorize the purchase of 2 used police vehicles from New Iberia for a total cost of \$40,000.00. The funds

to pay for these will be as follows: \$15,000.00 from General Fund line item 411264, Maintenance of Vehicles, \$5,000.00 from General Fund line item 411650, Capital outlay-autos, \$19,000.00 from Accident Report Fund line item 411650, purchase vehicles/equipment and \$1,000.00 from City Sales Tax Fund line item 411650, Capital outlay autos. The motion carried unanimously.

-13 introduced by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. and seconded by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. to approve the final payment in the amount of \$119,900.00 payable to GeoSurfaces, Inc. for the Comeaux Park Turf and Lighting Project. The motion carried unanimously.

**Campbell/Touchet**  
**Resolution R22-23**

*A resolution to recognize the population of Abbeville as 11,186 citizens in accordance with the 2020 census.*

*The motion carried unanimously.*

*Mayor White stated that they had a Planning Commission meeting today and we met with the contractor for the business that wants to locate at part of the old Bay City Ford property. They are taking the southeastern front lot and that will be a Starbucks. The contractor stated that he is about three to four months out from putting the permitting in place. He didn't give us a timeline of the build out but she imagines it would be about 8 months. Kim stated that Richard did make the Planning Commission meeting today. Richard's recommendation is to approve the plat contingent upon compliance with the smart zone ordinance, utilities verification and permitting requirements that need to be met. Councilman Touchet stated that we have to do whatever we need to do to land a business. Mayor White stated that after the meeting, she called Chris Gautreaux and he verified that we already have utilities available there. That will not be a problem. The permitting will come in the next phase. Right now, we are only asking to authorize the re-subdivision of lots 1 and 2 of the property so that they can sell the portion of the property that the business wants to buy. It will come back to the Council once it goes through the permitting process. The contractor did ask for assistance with our drainage requirements. We just need to get him a packet. Kim stated that the contractor can call their office and they will accommodate him.*

-14 introduced by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. and seconded by Ms. Terry Broussard to approve the re-subdivision of lots 1 and 2 of the property located at 2205 Veterans Memorial Drive (the old Bay City Ford dealership property). The motion carried unanimously.

*Councilman Touchet requested to change the opening hour of the walking trail at LaFitte Park from 7:00 AM to 6:00 AM. There have been some requests from some of his constituents to open one hour earlier so they can walk before work. He feels this is reasonable. It is much safer to walk on the trail than the road. Councilwoman Broussard stated that there are some homeless people sleeping in the back where there is no fence. When they start to hear people there, they come out. They walk through the park to get off of the property. Mayor White stated that she and Councilman Campbell discussed this before the last meeting and the reason that we recommended 7:00 AM is because at 6:00 AM it is still not quite fully daylight and we don't have adequate lighting there yet. Her thought is that it is not safe to open it this year at 6:00 AM. Next summer that should absolutely be the goal. Councilman Touchet stated that people who come to him are voters and they are requesting this. If we have to put more lighting then let's see what we can do. We can get Chris and Stewart there and see where we can put lighting. Councilman Campbell stated that he has had people come to his house for this and he is called constantly.*

*Mayor White stated that it is a reasonable request but she does not think it is the right thing for this summer. Councilwoman Broussard stated that we should keep the time as it is. Chief Hardy stated that he is at gym near there. At 6:00 AM there are people already walking there. Mayor White stated that she wants the record to reflect that she is not in favor of opening the walking trail at 6:00 AM until there is adequate lighting in case something happens. Councilman Touchet stated that he would want Chris and Stewart to go out there when it is dark to see how we can light the trail and to do that in a reasonable time. Mayor White asked what he considers a reasonable time. Councilman Touchet stated that would be a within a week. Mayor White stated that is not reasonable. Councilman Touchet stated that he is not talking about solar lighting. He is talking about box lighting that we can just throw up there until we can put up a permanent fixture. Mayor White stated then we will be spending the money twice. She stated that she will get together with Chris and Stewart to come up with a plan on how the walking trail can be lit, including the cost, and she will bring that back to the Council at the next meeting. In the meantime, if someone calls to complain, you can tell them to call our Park Director, Tommy Picard.*

-15 introduced by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. and seconded by Mr. Carlton Campbell to change the walking trail opening hour at LaFitte Park from 7:00 AM to 6:00 AM once the Mayor gets with Chris and Stewart to come up with a lighting plan and cost of the plan, it is brought back before the Council for approval and the lighting is installed. The motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Roslyn White

- *We are working on the fall Sounds on the Square schedule. It will be the four Thursdays in October.*
- *Asked Chris Gautreaux to change the City of Abbeville flag at A. A. Comeaux Park.*

Mike Hardy, Police Chief

- *Thank the Council for the hire.*
- *Councilman Touchet asked where are we with the cameras at Stonebridge. Chief Hardy stated that they said they are working on it. They have not hired security guards. The lady was on vacation today when they went however, he will revisit with her tomorrow. If she is there tomorrow, he will let her know that they will begin writing citations. Mayor White stated that she would like Chief Hardy to start issuing citations. It is a per day fee for every day that he goes there and there are none. Once he notifies her tomorrow in person, he will begin issuing citations. Chief Hardy stated he believes the penalty is \$2,000.00 per day. Councilman Touchet stated that he doesn't want something to happen again.*

Jude Mire, Fire Chief

- *Asked if everyone received the email he sent regarding his plan to cut costs of fuel that Councilman Touchet requested at the last meeting. The Council stated they had.*

Councilman Tony Hardy

- *Stated that he will be getting in touch with Chief Hardy regarding the camper issue on Coulee Kinney now the ordinance has passed.*

Councilman Brady Broussard, Jr.

- *The Great Acadian Awakening will be held on October 1, 2022 in Magdalen Square.*

Councilwoman Terry Broussard

- *Thanked everyone for coming to the meeting tonight.*

Councilman Carlton Campbell

- *Presented Chris Gautreaux with an American Flag for Harmony Park. Chris stated that the flagpole will hold two flags. Mayor White stated she would like to see the American Flag and the City of Abbeville flag there.*

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

ATTEST:

APPROVE:

Kathleen S. Faulk  
Secretary-Treasurer

Roslyn R. White  
Mayor