

City of Abbeville
Regular Meeting
October 4, 2022

The Mayor and Council of the City of Abbeville met in regular session on October 4, 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: Bart Broussard, City Attorney
Jude Mire, Fire Chief
Mike Hardy, Police Chief
Todd Vincent, Engineer
Kim Touchet, Engineer
Stewart Head, Electrical Superintendent
Tommy Picard, Parks & Recreation Director, QSA
Gerald Gaspard, American Legion
Nathan Granger, QSA
Corey Miller, Global Medical Response
Calvin "Woody" Woodruff, Acadiana Crime Lab
Ronald Gaspard, Louisiana Cattle Festival
Francis and Vana Plaisance, Louisiana Cattle Festival
Gerard Baudoin, G & G Catering food truck
Talitha Boudreaux and Raymond Lewis, Teen Court
Victoria Sagera Bourque, VEDA

Mayor White asked Former Councilman Francis Plaisance to lead those assembled in prayer. Mayor White asked Mr. Nathan Granger to lead the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance.

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

Mr. Corey Miller with Global Medical Response (GMR) discussed ambulance service in Vermilion Parish. Mr. Miller stated that GMR is the nations largest air and ground EMS service in the United States. They are currently in 10 parishes around Louisiana. They have recently applied for a permit in Vermilion Parish. Their plan is to put 3 ground ambulances to start, a wheel chair service and possibly a helicopter at the hospital, if there is room, or at the airport. Currently they cover 41 parishes and counties throughout the United States. They average a little over 1,000,000 transports per month company wide. They currently have 352 helicopters, 109 fixed winged aircraft and 8,600 ambulances. They also have fire departments in 158 counties in the United States. They believe the Police Jury will vote around mid-November. If approved, they will put an ambulance in Maurice, Abbeville and Kaplan, all 24-hours per day. They understand that Acadian Ambulance already has service here in Gueydan and Erath, so they are trying to fill some of those gaps. Mayor White stated that the Police Jury will conduct a public hearing tomorrow night where both GMS and Acadiana Ambulance will be able to present. The meeting will be held at the Police Jury meeting room beginning at 5:30 PM. The Police Jury is the governing authority that can grant GMS to work in the parish. Mr. Miller added that in 2001 there were about 52,000 people in

Vermilion Parish and Acadian Ambulance had 4 ambulances in the parish at that time. The population is now 79,000 and there are only 2 ambulances in the parish. There is a need for competition and we can fill in those gaps. We work with Acadian Ambulance in other parishes and we will work with them here. We have been able to cut down on the response times. We roll calls back and forth. Everything runs through the Police Jury first. If it doesn't pass there, then each municipality can decide to have the ambulance service within their city limits. They prefer to incorporate the entire parish because if we cannot go outside the city limits then our hands are tied as we cannot work outside of the city limits. It is a better situation to start with the Police Jury and then try to be able to respond to the entire parish.

Mr. Calvin "Woody" Woodruff was at the meeting to discuss the request from District Attorney Don Landry regarding a pledge of \$189,302.00 from the City of Abbeville as a match for a State Capital Outlay request to fund a new Acadiana Crime Lab. Mr. Woodruff stated that the Acadiana Crime Lab serves the Acadiana region. It serves all of the police departments, all of the city prosecutors, and all of the district attorney offices in the 15th, 16th and 27th Judicial Districts. Every drug case has to go to the crime lab. They have to do a scientific analysis on every quantity of drugs that are picked up. It must go to the crime lab. They also do all of the ballistic examinations for all of the agencies served. They now do all of the DNA testing and analysis for these agencies. They have two major problems here. We have gun violence and we have drugs. This is not unique to Abbeville. This is epidemic throughout the country. Currently his office is prosecuting 19 open murder cases. Most of those cases originated in the City. He is handling 6 of those and we have 4 other prosecutors. Everyone of his 6 cases involves a young black man killing another young black man. These cases are difficult to solve and prove because there is generally a lack of cooperation within the minority community. They are having to rely more and more on scientific evidence. Juries want DNA evidence, ballistic evidence, fingerprints, and drug evidence given to them by a scientific expert. We have those scientific experts at our disposal. The problem is that the facility that they work in is so grossly outdated and understaffed that they cannot keep up with demand. The facility is in New Iberia. We are 10 years behind the curve of upgrading the facility. We are requesting commitments from governmental bodies to support this concept of a new crime lab. All of the parishes in the 16th Judicial District and all of the municipalities have signed on. We are not asking for money right now just resolutions. In this parish, the police jury led the way. Kaplan, Maurice and Gueydan have agreed to do it. The amount pledged requested varies depending on the size of the population and the number of cases that come out of the municipality. This is a non-binding resolution. It is an expression of support of faith and good will. If the time comes and the money is requested, if that ever happens, and the City can't pay it, then the City can't pay it. There is no legally enforced obligation. He would feel proud if Abbeville would join in with the other municipalities in this parish. We need the resources to do our job. We cannot fall behind. Mayor White stated that there is a need for this. She asked Mr. Woodruff if the new facility would allow quicker turnaround time on cases. Mr. Woodruff stated absolutely because there will be more people in the new facility. Mayor White stated the cost of \$26,000,000 is for a new building, more personnel and new equipment. The resolution would be non-binding and it would be a one-time payment from the City of Abbeville in the amount of \$189,302.00. We will need to budget it for the upcoming year if the Council wants to move forward. We have applied for a lot of grants and will need our ARPA funds for our local matches for those. There is also a chance that the Acadiana Crime Lab will be funded 100% also. This is the first time that it has been explained that this is a non-binding resolution so she believes the City of Abbeville could issue a letter of support and a non-binding agreement to pay.

Mr. Ronald Gaspard had requested to be on the agenda to discuss the upcoming Louisiana Cattle Festival. Mr. Gaspard turned the floor over to former Councilman Francis Plaisance. Mr. Plaisance stated that this is the 76th annual festival and he has been president of the Louisiana Cattle

Festival for the past 21 years. He was concerned because he received a letter from the City on October 3, 2022 stating that he needed a special event permit. He would like the City to honor the special exemption status they have had for years. They will have vendors from as far away as Texas. They will have a large parade, live music and hot air balloon rides. We need electricity and water to the property for this. We will pay for the usage. The lights need to be repaired. They will not have a street fair this year. We will have farm animals for the kids. They will have a mechanical bull. The hot air balloon ride will be a tethered flight. TV 10 will broadcast live at the festival grounds on Friday. Mayor White thanked everyone from the Cattle Festival for being here tonight. She really appreciates all they do. The Louisiana Cattle Festival has an exemption from the special event permit requirements. The letter you received was for the owner of the Red Barn. Incorrect information was given to a trail ride recently that was to occur on City streets. The letter was sent so there will be no misunderstanding of the requirements in the future. That is very important. The owner of the property has to know that if they allow a function, like the trail ride, to utilize City property or public right of ways, like City streets, then they have to have a special event permit. This letter has absolutely nothing to do with the Louisiana Cattle Festival. Councilman Touchet stated that the Cattle Festival is exempt. We have been doing things and giving away public funds to a lot of different organizations and we can get ourselves in trouble. We need to come up with a policy that states what we can provide to someone on private property. We may have to charge per pole or per water connection. If we are on public property, then those organizations will not have to pay. We need to get the festival back downtown. Mr. Plaisance stated that the board has voted to move the festival back downtown next year.

Ms. Talitha Boudreaux and Mr. Raymond Lewis were at the meeting tonight to discuss a teen court. Ms. Boudreaux stated that Iberia Parish has opened up teen court since last year. She asked Mr. Lewis to speak on the project. Mr. Lewis stated that he is an Iberia Parish School Board member and a New Iberia Housing Authority Commissioner. The teen court program was started in 2021 due to the loss of his son to the crime in New Iberia. His son was killed by 7 individuals while waiting for his girlfriend. He was not a criminal. He was an honor student looking forward to his senior year. He began a foundation for his son and he was approached to begin the teen court utilizing funding from the foundation. New Iberia had a teen court 10 years prior and it was working but it dissolved due to a lack of funding. They spoke to Judge Haik and he agreed to begin the court. They took over New Iberia City Teen Court. They have grown. They have participation from City Court, the City of New Iberia and the New Iberia School District. We catch the kids that have low level, misdemeanor crime, from 7th grade through 12th grade. That is very important because once they become 19 and 20, there is nothing that can be done for them. The district attorney and the City prosecutor assign them cases. We might have a runaway, a shoplifter or somebody that was caught with a joint. They even deal with those caught with guns. They do not deal those who shot the gun or committed a violent crime. We are a diversionary program and we work with the prosecutor's office and the schools. They deal with truancy. We haven't had one case that was sent to them by the school district or the prosecutor that we have lost a child that didn't do what they needed to do. They don't want to leave the program. They want to stay and be a judge, prosecutor, defense attorney, court report, a bailiff or the jury. They hear real live cases, teen on teen. They are changing minds and opinions. They are impacting these children like no other organization has done in a long time. He is asking the City of Abbeville to partner with the school district to begin a teen court here. Councilman Touchet asked if they had presented this idea to the school board. Ms. Boudreaux stated they did. That was the first organization that she spoke to. One of the problems is that the kids are out of control. They have no authority over them and don't care about anyone. The kids are not going to school. They are leaving their guns in bushes on the side of the road so that when they do leave school they can go back and pick them up. The kids don't want to learn and are giving principals, teachers and police officers a hard time. They want to relieve some of that. They want to take the kids back. When

we had teen court 10 years ago, they did a lot for the kids. The funding ran out and they couldn't get anyone to back them up. Mayor White stated that they have been trying to get in to see her but she asked Councilwoman Broussard to take care of this because she did not have time on her agenda to meet with them. There is a quarterly meeting at the courthouse with the Vermilion Parish Criminal Courts Committee (VPCCC). It is the D.A., the judges, the municipalities, the chiefs of police, the sheriff's office, the criminal probation and parole and others. She asked Ms. Boudreaux if she has presented this idea to them. Ms. Boudreaux stated that she talked to the someone in the D. A.'s office and they are willing to give them cases. She has a meeting with Sheriff Couvillion in the morning. She also spoke the Chief Mike Hardy. Mayor White stated that they spoke with Amy in the D. A.'s office. It used to be funded through that office. The D. A. and Amy stated that it worked when it was in place and they suggest that it be put back in place but they did not offer to fund it. She will ask VPCCC if you can present this at their next meeting. That is the appropriate audience to begin this conversation. They deal with the youth in the criminal system. They repeatedly say that they have nowhere to send the youth in this parish. We had a 14-year-old who shot someone and he was back at home with his parents the next day. That is the problem. None of the facilities will take the youths regardless of the severity of the crime. If that parent is an absent parent, then there is no penalty or discipline for that child. It is a great program and she commends Councilwoman Broussard for taking it under her wing and getting the facts out so we can put it on the agenda. Councilwoman Broussard stated that years ago Mr. Harson funded teen court. They did great work for that. Kids on Saturday would have to clean and wash police cars. They had them busy and it worked. It is unfortunate that when Mr. Stoutes became the District Attorney, he sliced the program. That is one that he should have kept. She applauds Pastor August and the Nehemiah group because they have offered to station Teen Court right here at their building. She recommends that they speak with the District Attorney. You need to get all entities involved. She is 100% behind the program. She will stay in touch with Ms. Boudreaux so that we can see who is where so we can implement the program. Ms. Boudreaux stated that she agrees. We don't want it stuck on just one person.

-01 introduced by Mr. Carlton Campbell and seconded by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. to approve the minutes from the Committee meeting and special City Council meeting held on September 20, 2022 and the regular City Council meetings held on September 6, 2022 and September 20, 2022. The motion carried unanimously.

-02 introduced by Mr. Brady Broussard and seconded by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. to enter into a public hearing to receive comments from the public on the following proposed ordinances: (1) To amend Section 5-268, Finding for permit to remove "City Attorney" from the section and replace with "the Mayor or his or her designee", (2) To remove Article II, Cutting Pavement, Sections 16-21 through 16-29 and replace with same. The motion carried unanimously.

Mayor White stated that we are in a public hearing. She stated that the first ordinance pertains to the sign ordinance. Instead of the City Attorney reviewing the sign application, the Mayor or his or her designee will review the application. The next ordinance pertains to excavations and the permitting of those. It will give us a little more accountability with those contractors and subcontractors excavating in the City.

-03 introduced by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. and seconded by Ms. Terry Broussard to reconvene the regular meeting from public hearing. The motion carried unanimously.

T. Broussard/B. Broussard

Ordinance 22-07

An ordinance to amend Section 5-268, Findings for Permit, to remove "City Attorney" from the section and replace with "the Mayor or his or her designee".

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.

Campbell/B. Broussard

Ordinance 22-08

An ordinance to remove Article II, Cutting Pavement, Sections 16-21 through 16-29 and replace with same.

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.

-04 introduced by Mr. Brady Broussard and seconded by Mr. Tony Hardy to authorize the Mayor to execute the fiscal agency agreement between the City of Abbeville, Bank of Abbeville and Gulf Coast Bank. The motion carried unanimously.

-05 introduced by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. and seconded by Mr. Tony Hardy to surplus a Glock 17 Gen 5 bearing serial number BMWY555 that was Lieutenant Todd O'Bryan's service weapon so that the Fraternal Order of Police can purchase the weapon at fair market value to present to Lieutenant O'Bryan since he has retired. The motion carried unanimously.

-06 introduced by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. and seconded by Mr. Tony Hardy to authorize the purchase of various rebuilt transformers from Solomon Corporation at a cost of \$23,020.00 for stock. The motion carried unanimously.

-07 introduced by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. and seconded by Mr. Tony Hardy to approve a Class A and Class R liquor license for Tito's LaCasa Restaurant located at 124 Concord Street pending completion and approved signature survey and the health department inspection. The motion carried unanimously.

-08 introduced by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. and seconded by Mr. Tony Hardy to approve the subdivision of property located at 501 Veterans Memorial, formerly the Schwegmann Property. The motion carried unanimously.

Mayor White stated they will divide the property into four sections. One will have the property that McDonald's is located, one will have the property that Popeye's is located, one will have the property that the older home in back of the current Schwegmann's building is located on and the

final one will be the rest of the property including the old Schwegmann building. They have submitted a proposed plan. They will incorporate rear entrances onto the property. Their developer is ready to get started and they have tenants that are interested.

-09 introduced by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. and seconded by Mr. Tony Hardy to approve a food truck permit for G & G Quality Catering to be parked at 2401 Veterans Memorial Drive (old Stine's parking lot). The motion carried unanimously.

Councilwoman Broussard announced upcoming Halloween activities. They had discussed a Trunk R Treat that would start from Harmony Park however Pleasant Green Baptist Church will be hosting their Halloween Fest this year. So, they have decided to set up at Harmony Park for Halloween and they will have a Halloween costume contest for the kids instead. She will get three people to be costume judges and we will have prizes for the kids that win. This will take place on Halloween night, 10/31/22, from 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM. Mayor White stated that some of the news media wanted to know when are we going to celebrate Halloween in the city limits of Abbeville. She would like us to do it on Halloween night, Monday, October 31, 2022. The library is not doing Scare on the Square this year and she does not know of any other organized events in the City. Councilwoman Broussard stated they are also working on a pumpkin patch this week at Harmony Park.

-10 introduced by Mr. Carlton Campbell and seconded by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. to table the discussion about re-establishing the Park and Recreation Board so that Councilman Campbell can do further research. The motion carried unanimously.

Tommy Picard, Parks and Recreation Director, QSA

- *The opening ceremonies for flag football will be held on October 8, 2022 at 1:00 PM.*

Mayor Roslyn White

- *Saturday, October 8, 2022 is Paul Whittington's Anything over Rice Cookoff. This is an annual event. The Chee Weez will be playing. It is a great event.*
- *The Cattle Festival is this weekend. The parade will be held on October 9, 2022.*
- *Before our next meeting we will have Homecoming festivities. We will have Vermilion Catholic and Abbeville High School's homecoming parades on the same day. AHS will be at 2:00 PM and VC will begin at 4:00 PM. The routes are similar.*
- *We really had a great event this past Saturday with the Great Acadian Awakening. It well showcased Abbeville and the rest of the parish. We received nothing but positive feedback.*
- *We will be adding GPS tracking devices to our road crew vehicles. We will be able to see where they are and if they are speeding. We will be able to correct some unwanted behavior. The cost is under \$20 per vehicle and it is a one-year contract through Acadian Total Security. At this time, we are not opting to put those on our electrical department vehicles but we may add that later. This would help us locate the crew during storm restoration. Employees will be notified of the installation of the devices.*

Mike Hardy, Police Chief

- *It has been very quiet lately. They have had to put a few people in detention.*

Jude Mire, Fire Chief

- *Presented the report of calls responded to.*
- *The Bypass Fire Station has been putting up decorations for the upcoming holidays.*

Councilman Francis Touchet, Jr.

- *Need to look at our special event permit to reduce the 60-day timeframe.*
- *We have to have a policy on what we can provide on private property for events.*
- *We are two years passed with our contract with QSA. Tommy is not an employee of the City but we have him telling our employees what to do. We cannot tell him what to do because he is not our employee. He is an employee of QSA. Contracts and agreements need to be looked at. We have to do better with these contracts. He wants the Mayor and Bart to look at these. Mayor White stated that the expenditures are being made on City property so approval for those have to come to the Mayor's office. Councilman Touchet asked who is watching out for the City. Mayor White stated she is as part of her duties of the day-to-day operations of the City.*

Councilman Brady Broussard, Jr.

- *Benson Wade Landry recently moved back to Abbeville. He is a musical star. He is back here after stops in Houston, Baton Rouge, Nashville and Branson. Wade has performed with a lot of great stars. He promoted our Cajun culture there for 15 years and it has paid dividends for us. He will perform here and around Acadiana since he has moved back here.*
- *Saturday was a bright day in Abbeville's history. The City performed magnificently and everyone who participated in it did a fantastic job. He received a lot of positive comments from residents and visitors alike. It was a wonderful day with great food and fellowship.*
- *This Thursday we will have Sounds on the Square. Donny Broussard and the Louisiana Stars will be performing. It begins at 5:30 PM in Magdalen Square.*

Councilwoman Terry Broussard

- *The Community Cleanup Day was another great success. She thanked the Vermilion Reach Group. We also thank Mr. Roderick Darby and Ms. Nikia LeBlanc with Math Depot. We picked up 100 bags of trash and 199 tires.*

Councilman Carlton Campbell

- *Asked what we can do to people who do not bring their trash cans in after they are emptied. Mayor White told him that we have an ordinance. Send the address to Sarah and she will send them a letter letting them know they have to remove the trash can within 24 hours of it being emptied. He asked that we put the ordinance as a utility bill stuffer.*
- *Congratulated Councilwoman Broussard on being named as one of the "Women who Mean Business".*
- *Congratulated Mayor White as being named a guest speaker of the big showdown of the Nehemiah Project in Houston, Texas.*

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

ATTEST:

APPROVE:

Kathleen S. Faulk
Secretary-Treasurer

Roslyn R. White
Mayor