

The Mayor and Council of the City of Abbeville met in regular session on July 5, 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
Lieutenant Jonathan Touchet
Chris Gautreaux, Public Works Director
Charlene Beckett, Main Street Manager
Allie Horton, Digital Media Assistant
Ann Hardy, Municipal Employees Civil Service Director
Richard Primeaux, Engineer
Gene Sellers, Engineer
Tommy Picard, Park Director, QSA
Victoria Sagraera Bourque, Program Director VEDA
Elbert Dawson and Dexter Perry, Live Oak Lodge
Gerald Gaspard, American Legion
Mrs. Keisha Touchet

Mayor White asked Mr. Elbert Dawson to lead those assembled in prayer. Mayor White asked Mr. Gerald Gaspard to lead the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance.

-01 introduced by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. and seconded by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. to deviate from the agenda to add an intergovernmental agreement with the Town of Erath for services rendered by the City of Abbeville after their 4th of July Celebration. The motion carried unanimously.

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

-02 introduced by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. and seconded by Ms. Terry Broussard to appoint Evan DuBois to the position of Firefighter with the Abbeville Fire Department. The motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Ann Hardy discussed the resignation of Mr. Allen Ramke from the Municipal Employees Civil Service Board. The resignation is effective July 13, 2022. This position is a City Council appointed position after receiving nominations from local civic organizations. We will solicit nominations from those organizations and the list will be prepared for presentation to the Council. The Council would vote to appoint someone from the list provided. We will accept nominations until August 12, 2022. In the five members that serve, three are City Council appointed and the other two are employee elected. Mayor White stated that we do have a portal on our website for anyone who wants to volunteer. She asked Allie to see who is listed in the portal to see if they would be

qualified to be nominated by a civic organization. Ms. Ann stated that she has a list of civic organizations that have been approved to receive nominations from and she will send that out to each Council member and the Mayor.

Councilman Touchet discussed that a job description had been distributed earlier for the vacant position of Administrative Assistant to the City Council. We need to move on opening the position. We are all going to have some needs and we will have nobody to go to in order to take care of our needs. This position will be very important in fielding calls and doing certain things as far as following up. He asked if anyone needs to make changes to the job description, do so in order to get it advertised. Mayor White stated that when we opened the position for digital media assistant, we sent the advertisement to our local colleges, the newspaper and posted it on social media. We should get enough coverage with that. Councilman Touchet stated that credentials will determine pay. When we find people who have credentials and experience, we as a Council have the ability to pay them whatever we want to pay them. If we get a rockstar, you pay the rockstar. If you want a rock, then you will pay a rock. We need to keep that in mind. When we advertise, we need to put that the salary is to be negotiated. Ike stated that he wanted to remind the Mayor and Council that Section 2-9 of our code of ordinances defines this position as administrative assistant to the Council and City Attorney. Councilman Touchet stated that before this job included the administrative assistant to the attorney, this was a City Council secretary. Between Ike and the Mayor, they will have to work it out. The first thing he is worried about is them taking care of the five Council members because they are the governing authority and we have to make sure that the people are being taken care of. We have to take care of having an administrative assistant that has the skills to take care of the City Council's business. Ike stated his point for bringing this up is that if you will make it an administrative assistant to the City Council only, then the ordinance will have to be amended. This was done to clarify the hiring process. This was a compromise done that your Council and the Mayor entered into several years ago to ensure the fact that the Council would have the authority to hire certain positions. Ike stated that he can prepare the necessary paperwork to amend the ordinance. We would have to have an ordinance committee meeting to introduce the amendment and then the amendment could be adopted at the City Council meeting scheduled after that. We have to follow the law. It would take two meetings. At the next meeting we could schedule the ordinance committee meeting and then at the following regular meeting, we could adopt the amended ordinance.

-03 introduced by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. and seconded by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. to authorize Ike to prepare an ordinance to amend Section 2-9 in order to change the description to Administrative Assistant to the City Council. The motion carried unanimously.

Councilman Campbell stated he is an Abbeville historian. There is some misinformation in the public that Mr. Herbert Myles was the first African American Councilman for the City of Abbeville. That is not true. The first African American to serve on the City Council was Mr. Larry Fezzia. He served under Mr. Daniel Noel's administration. He served a four-year term. Back then, there were no districts. Everybody ran at large. He would like to get his immediate family here and present them with a commendation indicating that he was the first African American to serve on the City Council.

-04 introduced by Mr. Carlton Campbell and seconded by Ms. Terry Broussard to authorize a commendation to Mr. Larry Fezzia declaring him to be the first African American to serve on the Abbeville City Council. The motion carried unanimously.

Councilman Campbell stated that Mrs. Pamela Gaspard was the first female to serve on the City Council. He would like to get her immediate family here and present them with a commendation indicating that she was the first female to serve on the Abbeville City Council.

-05 introduced by Mr. Carlton Campbell and seconded by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. to authorize a commendation to Mrs. Pamela Gaspard declaring her to be the first female to serve on the Abbeville City Council. The motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Victoria Sagrera Bourque was at the meeting tonight to introduce herself to the Mayor and Council. She is the Program Administrator for the Vermilion Economic Development Alliance (VEDA). She was born and raised south of Abbeville in Mouton Cove. July 1st kicks off her second month in this position. She is very excited and eager to work with everyone. She will be in touch with everyone to work with them one on one to see what each one thinks we need in terms of economic development not only to better Abbeville but to better Vermilion Parish as a whole. Mayor White pointed out that Victoria also served as Miss Louisiana in the past. She is a great spokesperson and is very well educated.

Mr. Dexter Perry and Mr. Elbert Dawson were present to announce the 75th anniversary of Live Oak Lodge. Mr. Dawson stated that they are brothers of Live Oak Lodge. We will celebrate our anniversary at Palmetto State Park on September 10th and 11th. He invited everyone to take part in this historical event. Mayor White asked Mr. Dawson to send the invitation to the Mayor's office and the City Council's office. Mr. Dawson stated that Live Oak Lodge has been in existence since 1947. They have only charter member left, Mr. Minor Wright. He has been a member of their lodge for 75 years. We have had some major contributors to our community and the lodge deserves to be celebrated. Mr. Dawson stated that he has been a member of the lodge for nearly 50 years. Councilman Campbell stated that he wants the Council to recognize the 75th anniversary of the Live Oak Lodge. Councilman Broussard stated that he wants to promote the book that Live Oak Lodge is putting together with support from the entire community. Anyone can advertise in the book. The book will be a historical record of the contributions of the Live Oak Lodge to our City.

-06 introduced by Ms. Terry Broussard and seconded by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. to approve the minutes from the Committee meeting held on June 7, 2022, the Personnel Interview meeting held on June 21, 2022 and the regular City Council meetings held on June 7, 2022 and June 21, 2022. The motion carried unanimously.

Mayor White announced the recommendations of appointments of the following City Council members to committees:

Councilman Carlton Campbell – Recreation Committee and Public Safety Committee

Councilman Tony Hardy – Ordinance Committee and Litter Abatement Committee

Councilman Francis Touchet, Jr. – Finance Committee and Airport Committee

*Councilman Brady Broussard, Jr. – Insurance Committee and Tourism and
Economic Development Committee*

Councilwoman Terry Broussard – Parks Committee and Streets and Sidewalk Committee

-07 introduced by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. and seconded by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. to ratify the appointments to Committees as recommended by Mayor White. The motion carried unanimously.

-08 introduced by Ms. Terry Broussard and seconded by Mr. Carlton Campbell to appoint Councilman Francis Touchet, Jr. as Mayor Pro-Tem for the four-year term beginning July 1, 2022. The motion was put to a vote and the vote thereon was as follows:

YEAS: 4(Campbell, T. Broussard, B. Broussard, Hardy)
NAYS: 0
ABSTAIN: 1(Touchet)
ABSENT: 0

Therefore, the motion carried.

Mr. Funderburk stated that in 1957 our code was codified for the first time. Prior to that, it was probably kept in a manila folder. At that time, you didn't have to be on the City Council to serve as Mayor Pro-Tem and there were no descriptions of official duties. In 2008 and 2010, there were two amendments that clarified that you had to be a member of the City Council and that the duties were clarified to state that it was to serve in that capacity in the absence of the Mayor. That would be only to serve in those official duties.

-09 introduced by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. and seconded by Ms. Terry Broussard to appoint the firm of Darnall, Sikes and Frederick, CPAs as auditors and accounting consultants. The motion carried unanimously.

-10 introduced by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. and seconded by Mr. Carlton Campbell to appoint the firm of Primeaux, Touchet & Associates as City engineers. The motion carried unanimously.

-11 introduced by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. and seconded by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. to appoint the firm of Sellers & Associates as City engineers. The motion carried unanimously.

-12 introduced by Ms. Terry Broussard and seconded by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. to table the discussion regarding the rental of the Recreation Center Hall until the next meeting. The motion carried unanimously.

Councilman Campbell stated that we have several murals throughout the downtown area on several private and City buildings. There is a gleaming building on the corner of State Street and Lafayette Street. It belongs to Mr. Blair Menard. He would like us to get with Keep Abbeville Beautiful and Main Street to have a mural painted on the south side of that building. It could depict the Daylily Festival or LaFitte Park. We have a lot of tourists that come from Palmetto State Park that head down State Street. It would be nice to have a mural on that building. Mr. Menard stated that he would love to have that. Councilman Campbell would like to get with Charlene Beckett to see what type of funds we could come up with and then contact the mural painter to see if we can get that done. Mayor White asked Ike if the mural on Black's was paid for by Black's. Ike stated yes it was privately funded. The one on City Hall was paid for by the Vermilion Parish Film and Visitors Commission. Mayor White stated she believes all the other murals were paid for by private funding. She is in favor of having many murals depicting the uniqueness we have here in Abbeville. We just to make sure we get the right partnership. Councilman Touchet asked if we have used City funds to put up murals on other people's private property. Charlene stated she is not sure about the old furniture store near City Hall because she was not working for the City at that time. Mayor White stated that we could look for grants for this too. Councilman Campbell stated he could go out a raise money for it too.

-13 introduced by Mr. Carlton Campbell and seconded by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. to research funding sources for the installation of a mural at the building on the corner of State Street and

Lafayette owned by Mr. Blair Menard in partnership with Keep Abbeville Beautiful and/or Main Street. The motion carried unanimously.

-14 introduced by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. and seconded by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. to approve the quote in the amount of \$39,490.00 from Bayou Fencing for the fence at the tennis courts at Comeaux Park. The Community Foundation of Acadiana will reimburse the City the expense from one of their donors. The motion carried unanimously.

-15 introduced by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. and seconded by Ms. Terry Broussard to submit the names of Gerald Gaspard, Jeremy Mouton, Johnny Gaspard and Clarice Landry to fill two vacancies on the Abbeville Municipal Fire and Police Civil Service Board. The names will be submitted to an established four-year higher learning institution for selection. The motion carried unanimously.

-16 introduced by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. and seconded by Ms. Terry Broussard to authorize Sellers and Associates to submit two applications for funding to the Office of Community Development-Local Government Assistance for funding assistance under the Water Sector Program, Round 2, for a sewer system improvements project and for a water system improvement project and to authorize the Mayor to execute amendment number 1 to the agreements with Sellers and Associates to provide for the fees for these applications. The motion carried unanimously.

-17 introduced by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. and seconded by Mr. Tony Hardy to ratify the payment of the invoice from ITA Truck Sales and Service in the amount of \$7,710.24 for a repair to Unit #528, a 2010 bucket truck in the Electrical Department. The motion carried unanimously.

Councilman Touchet discussed school security. The new Police Chief is not here tonight. He complimented him on the article that he put in the paper. Hopefully, he stays true to putting more police officers on the road. The reality that a school shooting will never happen in Abbeville is something that we better keep out of our minds. We have our most precious children that are in our schools. His son goes to a school in Abbeville and Councilman Touchet doesn't feel safe without somebody, like a police officer, that has a gun on the side of them. When you look to see what happened in Texas, everything that he read, was about response time. We need to have people that will be able to act in our schools. There is not a resource officer where his son goes to school. Where are there resource officers? Lieutenant Touchet stated there he does not believe there is an Abbeville Police Department resource officer at Harvesttime, Eaton Park and Herod. Abbeville High School has had an Abbeville Police Department resource officer and another agency supplies one at J. H. Williams Middle School. Councilman Touchet stated that he is willing to push to fund the portion that we need to fund to put resource officers in every school in the City. By our next City Council meeting he would like the Police Chief to meet with the Vermilion Parish School Superintendent as well as the leaders at Vermilion Catholic and Harvesttime to see if they are willing to put forth funding for their portion of having a resource office in every single school. Our kids need to be protected. Our kids are our future. He will not sleep until we get answers from some of these individuals. We will need to do what we need to do. Safety has to be a priority. The school board pays for the time the officer is in their school. We can utilize the officer when they are not at the school. Councilman Campbell asked if Councilman Touchet would be opposed to private security. Ike stated that we want someone who is post-certified to be in that situation. Councilman Touchet stated that he wants somebody that can shoot a gun. We have to have somebody that is trained for this type of situation.

Councilman Touchet discussed police patrol. The curfew needs to be enforced. We have to be active and hold parents accountable when underaged kids are free to go and do what they do. He is asking for the Chief to really push and follow the ordinance. Lock your doors and store your personal items where they need to be. We have people that are not doing that. We also need to hold people accountable when they are walking the streets after hours. He is talking about juveniles and the things they will do that will get themselves in a difficult situation. He is concerned about those kids. Mayor White stated that the violent crimes that we are seeing are amongst that younger age group. Some of this can be solved by making sure we take them off of the streets before they have a chance to get in trouble.

Councilman Touchet discussed the future focus on A. A. Comeaux Park. This is all about economic development. We have seen an influx of people coming into our community because of what is happening at Comeaux park. We spent \$3,000,000 at those fields. We have kids that are vandalizing our property. Our recreation committee and the Mayor need to think about how we can secure that park. He is not trying to deny anyone access. That is a public park. Nothing good happens at 11:00 PM at night. We have kids in the park at 11:00 PM. If we have a tournament, we will have security. We will work with Tommy. We have to think about how we will secure that park so we can preserve what we have invested in so that we can make sure that people will continue to come here. We were lucky to get the games that we got in. We will have even a better year next year. This is a future focus of ours. He is also about all parks. Councilman Broussard stated that we are speaking from experience. When you see bathroom laboratories pulled off of the wall and toilets and urinals ripped from their foundations, this is the type of vandalism that happens all hours of the night. The police cannot be every place in the City at the same time. We have to protect the assets of our citizen taxpayers.

-18 introduced by Mr. Carlton Campbell and seconded by Ms. Terry Broussard to surplus a 2006 Bauer air compressor from the Abbeville Fire Department. The motion carried unanimously.

T. Broussard/Touchet
Resolution R22-16

A resolution donating a surplused 2006 Bauer air compressor from the Abbeville Fire Department to the Maurice Volunteer Fire Department.

The motion carried unanimously.

-19 introduced by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. and seconded by Ms. Terry Broussard to approve the quote in the amount of \$19,287.00 from Bonaventure Fire and Safety for the skid for the brush truck. The motion carried unanimously.

-20 introduced by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. and seconded by Mr. Carlton Campbell to approve the quote from Griner Drilling in the amount of \$8,595.00 for a reconditioned 5HP submersible pump for the Hollingsworth Lift Station. The motion carried unanimously.

-21 introduced by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. and seconded by Ms. Terry Broussard to ratify the intergovernmental agreement between the City of Abbeville and the Town of Erath to provide the City's street sweeper and the operator after the Town of Erath's 4th of July Celebration. The motion carried unanimously.

Ike asked Mayor White if she could reach out to all the municipalities in the parish to establish an annual mutual aid intergovernmental agreement. It would be effective July 1 of each year and end on June 30th. Mayor White stated that she would do that.

Gene Sellers, Engineer

- *Presented the property line map of Comeaux Park to Chris Gautreaux.*
- *Shared a little bit of his family history. DeMary came to the United States in 1838. He landed in New Orleans, went to Franklin and then to Abbeville. He bought six of the first lots sold by Pere Megret. He built the first house in Abbeville by the church. He was the first postmaster of Abbeville. He was Mr. Gene's Great-Great Grandfather.*

Richard Primeaux, Engineer

- *Thanked the Mayor and the Council for the appointment and the vote of confidence.*

Chris Gautreaux, Public Works Director

- *The water department repaired 18 water leaks, replaced one fire hydrant, completed four water taps on Harvest Lane and Harvest Court and relocated all the LDHH water sample taps.*
- *The sewer department resolved 26 sewer blockages, secured three sewer lines for demo, ran the camera 4 times in sewer lines and took care of the pump on Hollingsworth. Late this afternoon they discovered the pumps are out at Sellers Lift Station. Lightning took those out.*
- *Richard Sysak has retired. Eldridge Harrison has been appointed to that position so we will open Eldridge's position. We will test for the vacant Street Maintenance 2 position. We received 24 applications for Street Maintenance Worker 1 position but only 8 showed up to test. We have hired two but are awaiting their drug screens to be returned. They have passed all other assessments. We are in hurricane mode with sandbags and flushing culverts on weekends. We are also cutting grass on the weekends too. Hopefully when the two guys can start, we will have a second crew. Mayor White stated that she is in favor of hiring a couple of extra seasonal workers to assist with the grass cutting.*

Tommy Picard, Parks and Recreation Director, QSA

- *There were a lot of Police in the park this past weekend.*
- *We lost the American Legion tournament. We will write a letter to the Commander.*
- *2-D is coming Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday. We will have tournaments for the next three weekends.*
- *His people are tired. We have been doing this since February. These guys did a tremendous job. We will need some help. We need more workers. Mayor White stated that she will set up weekly meetings with Tommy to work on what we have to do and working on a Parks Master Plan. Tommy stated that we need to work on handicap accessibility.*

Mayor Roslyn R. White

- *Welcomed the new Council members. She looks forward to working with each of them. We have a good Council and will be able to see eye to eye and will be able to do great things for the City of Abbeville.*
- *Thank you for wearing the mask. There has been an uptick in the numbers over the weekend. That is why she put the mask mandate in place for this meeting. We need to try our best to keep our workers and our community safe. It won't be forever.*
- *Thank you for being here tonight.*

- *She is very honored to serve everyone. She promises to work very hard every day. She will remain focused on our City's future. She wants to build a plan and move forward with that plan. It will include all voices and all members of our community. She believes Abbeville has a very bright future. She looks forward to serving the community for the next four years and thanked everyone for electing her and for sharing their evening with us tonight.*

Lieutenant Jonathan Touchet

- *Distributed the report of calls received for the last two weeks. Mayor White stated that the Council will be added to the text message system by the new Police Chief.*

Jude Mire, Fire Chief

- *Distributed the report of calls received for the last two weeks.*
- *Mr. Herb Toal asked Chief Jude about fire regulations. Chief Mire asked that Mr. Toal meet with him after the meeting.*

Councilman Carlton Campbell, Councilman-at-large

- *Asked if he could discuss food trucks now. Mayor White stated that it has to be an agenda item.*

Councilman Tony Hardy, District A

- *Thanked the Mayor and the Council for making this an easy transition for him. He is eager to get to work to help District A. If anyone needs help, please contact him.*

Councilman Francis Touchet, Jr., District B

- *Urged Lieutenant Touchet to let Chief Hardy know about the issues discussed tonight.*
- *Recognized his wife, Keisha Touchet.*
- *Looking forward to working with everyone.*
- *We have the right person at Mayor. She will take care of business.*

Councilman Brady Broussard, Jr., District C

- *Complimented Mayor White. The first meeting was a success just as her administration and her term will be.*

Councilwoman Terry Broussard, District D

- *Love you Mayor and you will do well.*
- *Looking forward to working with the new Council.*

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

ATTEST:

APPROVE:

Kathleen S. Faulk
Secretary-Treasurer

Roslyn R. White
Mayor