

The Mayor and Council of the City of Abbeville met in regular session on April 20, 2021 at 5:30 P.M., at the A. A. Comeaux Recreation Center located at 300 A. A. Comeaux Drive, Suite 200, Abbeville, Louisiana with the Honorable Mark Piazza, Mayor, presiding.

Members Present: Council Members, Francis Plaisance, Brady Broussard, Jr., Terry Broussard, 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  
Allie Horton, Digital Media Assistant  
Gene Sellers, Engineer  
Kim Touchet, Engineer  
Tommy Picard, QSA  
Brac Salyers, Louisiana Wildlife & Fisheries  
Ben Rivera and Colton Daigle, LWCC  
Marilyn Mitchell  
Lance Broussard

*Mayor Piazza asked Lieutenant Jason Hebert to lead those assembled in prayer. Mayor Piazza asked Chief Jude Mire to lead the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance.*

*Mayor Piazza stated the Street Maintenance Foreman position is hired by the Council because it is a department head position. The Council has the choice of authorizing the advertising of the position either promotional only or open and promotional. Promotional only will only allow those already in the department to apply. Open and promotional allows all departments as well as those not employed by the City to apply. The foreman that is there now has not given an exact date of resignation but he did tell him that he was resigning in June and then recently he said he is probably leaving at the end of May. It will take about one month to complete the entire process. The advertisement has to appear 15 days prior to the close of the request for applications, applications have to be reviewed and testing has to be done.*

-01 introduced by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. and Mr. Francis Plaisance to authorize open and promotional advertisement for the soon to be vacant position of Street Maintenance Foreman in the Street Maintenance Department and request a list of eligibles. The motion carried unanimously.

*Mr. Brac Salyers with Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries discussed the Abbeville Family Fish Fest to be held on May 8, 2021 at LaFitte Drive-In Park. It would be held from 7:00 AM to Noon. He and Francis Plaisance started this conversation back in 2015 about a hole in the ground. Here we are six years later and the pond is stocked with blue gills, regular sun fish, largemouth bass, channel catfish and grass carp. Then the hatchery guys brought some nice catfish they had left in a couple of ponds. They brought blue catfish and the bass that they brought were offspring taken from large females and large males spawning. These were 46 of those that were four to five pounds*

*each. This will be a fun event. He wants to see a lot of kids out there fishing and catching fish. The week before the event the outreach program in Baton Rouge will bring an additional 1,000 pounds of channel catfish. We want the kids to catch a fish and leave having such an awesome time that they want to continue fishing. We really want everyone to catch a fish. Bring them out even if they never have ever fished in their life. We will have a few rod and reels for the very young kids. The older kids will have to bring their own. We will have stations and will teach them how to cast, how to tie a knot and how to bait a hook. They will practice casting into an inflatable. We will also have arts and crafts for them. They will be able to learn the species of fish. They will be able to take pictures with the LDWF mascot, "Robbie the Redfish". We released a press release about the event. We will also have a fish cleaning station and if we have time may be able to fry some too. Ages 16 and older will need a basic fishing license. That license is good until June 2021. You can order your fishing license on your cellphone. We will set a courtesy limit of 5 catfish per person for that day only. Councilman Plaisance stated that Allie has prepared a flyer for the event and she did a great job. Free food will be provided by Mr. Lance Broussard. Tommy has provided us with 6 banners from Coca Cola. There will be free prizes for the kids. Brac stated they would like everyone to register their children 15 years old and younger on the Louisiana Wildlife & Fisheries website for the event. The first 100 kids registered will receive a goodie bag. Their name will be entered into the raffle for door prizes. Mr. Lance Broussard asked Brac if a fish could be tagged because he would like to donate that person who catches that tagged catfish \$500. It would be for that day only. Brac stated he would definitely look into that and get back with him Councilman Plaisance stated the dog park will be closed that day. Mayor Piazza stated that Councilman Plaisance started this endeavor 10 years ago. He remembers when Councilman Plaisance first came up with this idea to have the park and have the opportunity to fish, Mr. Richard Putnam, Judge Rick Putnam's Father, wrote a letter to editor of the Abbeville Meridional, complimenting Councilman Plaisance, the Mayor and the City Council for this endeavor. He said in that letter to the editor that "every child should have an opportunity to learn how to catch a fish". It has taken a while but they will have that opportunity.*

-02 introduced by Ms. Terry Broussard and seconded by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. to deviate from the agenda to add a discussion regarding repairs to the pavilion at McKinley Scott Park. The motion carried unanimously.

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

-03 introduced by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. and seconded by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. to enter into a public hearing to receive comments regarding a proposed amendment to Section 2-9 of the code of ordinances: Designation of Municipal Officers and Appointment of the Same. The motion carried unanimously.

*Ike Funderburk stated that we are amending this section to remove the Park Director from the list of designated officers. Ms. Marilyn Mitchell asked if this is the same thing that was discussed previously. Ike stated it is.*

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

***Touchet/Plaisance***  
***Ordinance 21-03***

*An ordinance to amend Section 2-9, Designation of Municipal Officers and Appointment of same. This will remove the title of Park Director for the list of designated officers.*

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

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

*The ordinance was adopted unanimously.*

-05 introduced by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. and seconded by Ms. Roslyn White to accept the resignation of Eric Adcock from the Abbeville Planning Commission and to appoint Nikki Vidos to fill that vacancy as the District C appointment. The motion carried unanimously.

-06 introduced by Ms. Terry Broussard and seconded by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. to appoint Bridget Levy as the District D appointment to the Parks and Recreation Board. The motion carried unanimously.

-07 introduced by Mr. Francis Plaisance and seconded by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. To appoint Glenn Frederick as the Councilman at large appointment to the Parks and Recreation Board. The motion carried unanimously.

*Mr. Ben Rivera stated the quote for the renewal of LWCC coverage is \$441,511. This is an increase as a result of past claims. Councilman Broussard stated that we have had over \$280,000 in dividends over the past few years. This is a credit to the Mayor, the City Council, the supervisors and our safety advisors. Our EMOD is trending down by 12% for 2023. Mr. Colton Daigle stated the dividend you will be receiving this year is \$113,634.*

-08 introduced by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. and seconded by Mr. Francis Plaisance to renew the LWCC contract for coverages from May 19, 2021 through May 19, 2022. The motion carried unanimously.

-09 introduced by Ms. Roslyn White and seconded by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. to authorize advertisement for bids for the Hollingsworth Drive/Cypress Street Road Improvements Project. The motion carried unanimously.

-10 introduced by Mr. Francis Plaisance and seconded by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. to authorize Sellers and Associates, Inc. to prepare the reapportionment plan after the completion and receipt of the 2020 census. The motion carried unanimously.

-11 introduced by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. and seconded by Mr. Francis Plaisance to award the contract from bids submitted for the demolition of the structure located at 1807 Prairie Avenue to the low bidder, Acadiana Shell & Limestone, at a cost of \$4,250.00. The motion carried unanimously.

-12 introduced by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. and seconded by Mr. Francis Plaisance to award the contract from bids submitted to remove the fallen tree on the 1800 Block of Charity to Roland Brailey at a cost of \$450.00. The motion carried unanimously.

-13 introduced by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. and seconded by Ms. Terry Broussard to award the contract from bids submitted for the removal of a large tree from the fence, repairing of the

fence and clean-up of the property located at 901 E. Vermilion Street to Roland Brailey at a cost of \$1,600.00. The motion carried unanimously.

-14 introduced by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. and seconded by Mr. Francis Plaisance to approve estimate for partial payment number 1 in the amount of \$310,854.25 payable to Elliott Construction, LLC for the Rehabilitation of the Runway and Partial Taxiway Project. The motion carried unanimously.

-15 introduced by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. and seconded by Ms. Terry Broussard to approve amendment 1 of the contract between the City of Abbeville and Terracon Consultants, Inc. to provide an accredited asbestos inspector for the City of Abbeville's LCDBG Clearance Program. The motion carried unanimously.

-16 introduced by Ms. Terry Broussard and seconded by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. to authorize sales tax expenses to complete Phase 1 of the McKinley Scott Park Pavilion. This is to elevate the pavilion. The motion carried unanimously.

Gene Sellers, Engineer

- *The outfall repair on Main Street was delayed because of the rain we received. They will begin that on Monday.*
- *The coulee cleaning project has been delayed because the outfall repair project has been delayed. They will begin that after the outfall repair project is complete.*
- *At the airport, there was seepage in the cracks when the first testing of the existing runway occurred. They had a second phase testing and they still have some issues. It delayed them about one month. They are now starting to do the overlay.*
- *We started the plans and specifications for the walking trail at LaFitte Drive-In Park. We should be finished in about two weeks. Then we will have to submit those for approval. DOTD will review the plans. The survey stakes can be removed for the event on May 8<sup>th</sup>.*
- *Phase 2 Sidewalk Project plans were submitted six month ago and they are now just being reviewed by DOTD.*
- *We will receive bids for the Hollingsworth Drive overlay in about 5 weeks.*

Kim Touchet, Engineer

- *Will start on the Flood Reduction Project on Monday. They will begin on 2<sup>nd</sup> Street. We will be in contact with the Fire Chief regarding the lane closures. The contact is for 135 days and the Second Street portion will take about one and one-half months. We may have to shut down some lanes but they should be back opened at night.*

Ike Funderburk, City Attorney

- *Has put together an RFP to request electrical contractors for emergency disasters as we do with the debris contractors. He reached out to the City of Alexandria to provide a template for this. FEMA has given us problems in the past because we didn't have contracts in place with electrical contractors so hopefully that will help us.*
- *All known expenses for the two hurricanes have been submitted to the insurance company. Mayor Piazza asked about how long should it be before we hear something. Mr. Ben Rivera stated he hopes to get an offer within the next two weeks.*
- *We received our first directive regarding the American Rescue Plan money and we have made sure we can comply with that directive. By the 10<sup>th</sup> of May the State should have the money and they have 30 days to disburse it to the governmental bodies.*

Tommy Picard, Park Director

- *The baseball season began last week but we couldn't play because of the rain. We did play Sunday and there were a lot of people here. People were parked everywhere. He requested "No Parking" signs to be placed along the circle. Mayor Piazza stated that we will not put up permanent "No Parking" signs but Tommy could let us know when he has a tournament and we can handle it then.*
- *Luquette and Delcambre are ready and now we are moving on to another field. We will dedicate Wednesdays to McKinley Scott Park and Williams Park.*
- *Do you want to order the panels for the football field? Lawrence is supposed to play there and Harvestime is supposed to start playing football. Mayor Piazza asked if that was part of the hurricane damage. Tommy answered yes. Mayor Piazza stated that we will need three quotes for the fence and then put that on the next City Council meeting agenda. Tommy thinks Harvestime or Lawrence or Steve have offered to put it up.*
- *Any non-Abbeville Recreation should pay a fee to use your facilities. We have a team from North Vermilion that gave us \$250 last year and \$250 this year to use the fields. Broussard charges \$30 per hour or \$1,500 per year per team. Mayor Piazza stated we have gone back and forth with this over the years. Sometimes we charge and sometimes we don't charge and it depends on who it is. The bottom line is that some of these parents and coaches that have travel ball teams that don't play in our league and that they need somewhere to practice. They want to practice here and they don't want to pay because they are citizens of Abbeville and they feel like they shouldn't have to pay. Then you have some teams that are not all from Abbeville. The question is do we want to charge and then we have to stick to our guns when the decision is made. We will get some complaints from some people. Councilman Broussard stated there is a designated field for practice. That is Badon Field. When you get push back that they don't want to practice on Badon then the City needs to put their foot down. We have a recreational program with a director and we have dedicated a field for practice and that should be the practice field. That needs to be coordinated with the recreation office. Mayor Piazza stated that was a solution in the past and anybody can go practice there. It is not a regulation field but it is a good field to practice. Some teams don't want to use that field they want to use the better groomed and better manicured fields and don't want to pay. Tommy stated they will make Badon look better. Councilman Plaisance stated we can make a rule offering them Badon for free and then if they don't want to use that field then they have to pay or join the league. We need to hold them to that. Councilman Broussard stated that we are the only place on Earth with free everything. The tennis ladies pay \$6 per hour to play in Lafayette. Mayor Piazza asked if anybody has a problem with Tommy establishing a price to practice for these teams and that we will support him in whatever decision he makes? Tommy stated they can join the league and practice anywhere in Abbeville or Erath. They will have insurance and get a uniform. That is \$65 per child. Plus, they get to play more games.*
- *Tommy asked about the equipment being used by the high school. He thinks they should furnish their own equipment. Councilman Touchet stated that every school has lawn mowers and weed eaters. Are we putting ourselves in a liable situation if they get on our equipment and they do something on our fields. That is the most important thing. Councilman Plaisance stated we need to set some rules down and stand by them. Councilman Touchet stated they need to understand that they need to use their own equipment because we cannot put ourselves in a position of liability. Mayor Piazza asked Ike to look at the third-party usage agreement to see if we need to tweak it.*
- *QSA will pay to change the locks at the park. We will change the cores and give the keys to Clay and City Hall. He wants all locks to be the same for all the parks. That way he will only need one key. He will give the cores to Clay that belong to the City and if something*

*happens, the City can put their cores back in. Councilman Broussard and the Mayor Piazza were ok with the idea.*

- *He contacted two people about getting a building behind the recreation center. One will not give us a quote because everything is backed up. He went off on what Jake is doing. He is building a building at his office. It is 30 X 15 and it is costing him \$18,000 for the building and the slab. He contacted one of those companies in Lafayette that have those storage containers. A 40 X 8 container, delivered, is \$3,200. He would like to buy two. One to put the equipment and one to put tools in. That would be \$6,400. There would be no slab needed. No one can break into them. He would designate the other buildings for Harvestime and Abbeville High to put their equipment in.*
- *Asked about the policy of people selling stuff at the pavilion. Mayor Piazza stated you cannot use public property for private gain. They cannot do it.*
- *Bell's Sporting is closed. Can we open an account with BSM? There are other places that are cheaper. Can we open an account with everybody? One is Epic Sports.*
- *Asked about cement underneath the bleachers. Mayor Piazza stated that Clay is supposed to measure it and get quotes.*
- *We need two portable mounds. They are \$1,900 per mound. Mayor Piazza told him to get three quotes.*
- *Councilman Broussard stated the bathrooms by the tennis courts have not been getting opened in the morning. It has to be done. Tommy is afraid somebody is hiding in that bathroom and that would be scary. Councilman Broussard stated he is under the impression that the bathrooms get locked at night and they are unlocked in daylight. He asked him to get Aurris to do it. Mayor Piazza stated we should have a keypad on the gates of the tennis courts and they could call to reserve the courts. Councilman Broussard stated the lights should be on a timer. Mayor Piazza stated we can get timers. We have had those before. Councilwoman White stated that we have talked about charging an entrance fee for the new tennis courts. It doesn't have to be much but it needs to be something to make them accountable to use it. We can sponsor the schools. The ladies tennis group recommends it. Everywhere else they go they have to pay. It is about keeping people out who are not there to play tennis. Councilman Broussard stated we should put cameras too to catch the vandals.*
- *He asked for security guards for the games on the schedule games list that he had distributed. Councilman Touchet told Tommy to give a copy of the schedule to the Police Chief.*

#### Mayor Mark Piazza

- *Thanked Ben Rivera for his hard work.*
- *We will receive bids on 4/27/2021 at 11:00 AM for the 6 houses in Phase I for the LCDBG Clearance Program. We will award the bid at the 5/4/2021 City Council meeting.*
- *The airport is scheduled to open Friday 4/23/2021. They will complete the runway asphalt overlay tomorrow and it takes two days to put down the temporary striping. If they can't get the temporary striping down then it will have to wait until Monday and we may not be able to open it until Tuesday or Wednesday. The asphalt has to cure for one month then they can put down the permanent striping.*
- *The Omega Protein planes that were stranded at the airport were able to take off Sunday.*
- *MedXcel will be closing on April 30, 2021. This is where we do our employee drug testing. Councilman Broussard will be coming back with a proposal to move our program.*
- *He and Councilwoman Broussard met with the Street Department employees and Clay. The consensus of Clay, Marlon, Richard and the lead men in the crew is that they can be more productive if the entire crew spends the entire day in one district instead of half the crew being separated between two districts. They can do a better job. The concerns of*

*the Council is rain. We will work the schedule where it may not be a set schedule. We will let you know what day your district will fall on. We will try to coordinate those days more efficiently with our grass cutting contractors. That way the entire district will be cut all on one day. It is worth a try. He is loosening up on the overtime. Friday will be catch up day. We started this new schedule yesterday. Richard will also provide a list of work he is doing each week.*

Bill Spearman, Police Chief

- *Had 396 calls since last meeting.*
- *We are 5 short and have one going through the hiring process.*
- *Had a homicide on Friday and over the weekend we arrested the suspect. We utilized the camera system to assist us in locating the suspect. It took less than a week.*
- *They assisted the Sheriff's Office with a suspect that was at a local hotel and wanted for armed robbery. We found out that APD also had warrants for these individuals when they were arrested. We arrested them on our charges of attempted first-degree murder.*
- *We had a subject for home invasion and simple burglary and we located him and arrested him. He is in jail.*
- *During the last week we have worked one homicide, one suicide and one death by overdose.*
- *Councilwoman Broussard thanked the Chief for the extra patrols.*
- *Councilwoman White stated she gets a lot of people complaining about traffic being stopped on the highway because of people waiting to turn into Popeyes. Chief stated they try to take care it very quickly and he has also contacted DOTD and they have put signs up.*

Jude Mire, Fire Chief

- *Have two on extended sick leave.*
- *Will be interviewing 4 candidates on Friday and 1 on Monday. Will bring the candidate to the next City Council meeting.*
- *The fire truck at Maude is back in service.*
- *We had a structure fire at 604 Thomas and the 100 block of Miles. We had 15 false alarms, 5 medicals, 4 vehicle accidents and 1 vehicle fire. We also had one trash fire and one power line. Mayor Piazza asked Chief to break it down inside and outside the City limits. He also asked Chief to bring a map showing their response area to the next City Council meeting.*

Councilman Brady Broussard, Jr.

- *Calabria Italian Restaurant is now open downtown.*

Councilman Francis Plaisance

- *There is a chicken wing place opening up on Charity Street.*

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

ATTEST:

APPROVE:

Kathleen S. Faulk  
Secretary-Treasurer

Mark Piazza  
Mayor