

The Mayor and Council of the City of Abbeville met in regular session on August 21, 2018 at 5:30 P.M., at the regular meeting place, the Council Meeting Room located at 101 North State Street, with the Honorable Mark Piazza, Mayor, presiding.

Members Present: Council Members, Francis Plaisance, Terry Broussard, Brady Broussard, Jr., Francis Touchet, Jr., Mayor Pro-Tem and Roslyn White

Members Absent: None

Also Present: Jude Mire, Fire Chief
Bill Spearman, Police Chief
Ike Funderburk, City Attorney
Clay Menard, Public Works Director
Denise Mire, Park Director
Charlene Beckett, Main Street Director
Richard Primeaux, Engineer
Gene Sellers, Engineer
Anita Levy, Parks & Recreation Board
Stephanie Richard, Vermilion School Employees Credit Union
Joseph Vallee, Municipal Civil Service Board
Gerald Gaspard, Chamber and American Legion
Tommy Picard & Jake Landry, QSA

Mayor Piazza asked Councilman Brady Broussard, Jr. to lead the assembly in prayer. Mayor Piazza asked Chief Bill Spearman to lead the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chief Spearman presented Shaina Comeaux and Hannah Gentry. They just graduated from the Police Academy and are patrolling the City.

Mayor Piazza asked if there were any comments from the public about any agenda. There were none.

Municipal Board Reports

Main Street report given by Charlene Beckett. Fall Sounds on the Square has been set. It begins September 27. We received a grant from the Vermilion Arts Council to help pay for this series of the Sounds on the Square. The bench program that Councilman Broussard initiated, includes 10 benches. 8 have been installed so we have 2 left to install.

Keep Abbeville report given by Charlene Beckett. We received the LMA Lieutenant Governor beautification award at their convention in Lake Charles. The civic pride award goes to Balance Well Being Yoga and to Hoa Nguyen. There is a Keep Louisiana Beautiful conference in Baton Rouge September 25-26. We have received a trash receptacle grant. The trash cans are in but they have not been installed because we are awaiting signage. Those will be placed in Godchaux Park. We have done a litter index recently. The whole city got a much better rating. We do this yearly.

Abbeville Planning Commission report given by Ike Funderburk. Will be bringing the policy and procedures for renaming streets to the September 18, 2018 City Council meeting.

Abbeville Parks and Recreation Board – Update from Quality Sport Authority. Mr. Tommy Picard presented a handout showing that 533 Abbeville children participated in their leagues in 2018. They had 243 kids in baseball/softball, 134 kids in Bidy basketball, 29 kids in spring soccer and 127 kids in the Vermilion Academy. We held one tournament with teams from Crowley, Welsh, Deridder and other areas from Louisiana. It was well attended. We appreciated the help from Mr. Aurris Wiltz. Bryan Plowden registered kids and played in Mexico in the World Series. We met with all the pastors at Dianne Broussard’s house. We received some donations to help with basketball. North Vermilion wants to join Bidy but they have to join us because we have the charter for Bidy. A lady in the audience asked why Williams Park is not being utilized. Tommy said that is a question for Parks and Recreation. Denise Mire stated the park is open for practice. They were practicing there but the coach decided they did not want to practice there anymore because of some problems with someone from the outside coming in and starting a fight. They thought it was too dangerous for the kids so they called her to move the practice. They do use the facility. Bronc practices there all the time. Reverend Taylor stated we need a comprehensive plan to get the parks and recreation back together for the children. We can put our heads together to come up with something. Mr. Raymond Frederick stated that parents will have to push their kids to play ball. What is happening here is happening in every community. Mayor Piazza stated the Parks and Recreation Board meets quarterly and we would love to have more participation. We also have a full-time park director at Comeaux Park everyday if anyone wants to volunteer.

Touchet/B. Broussard
Resolution R18-21

A resolution authorizing the Mayor to execute an amendment to the existing contract with Quality Sport Authority to change the payments to them from quarterly to monthly.

The motion carried unanimously.

Touchet/T. Broussard
Ordinance 18-08

An ordinance to amend Section 6-13 – Utility Account Delinquencies; termination of service; billing and collection procedures; additional deposits.

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

Therefore, the ordinance was adopted unanimously.

-01 introduced by Ms. Terry Broussard and seconded by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. to table the discussion/approval to cancel the contract with Don’s Lawn Service for grass cutting of Mona Mouton Park and Lafayette Street Park. The motion carried unanimously.

Plaisance/B. Broussard
Resolution R18-22

A resolution to authorize the Mayor to execute an intergovernmental agreement with the Vermilion Parish School Board for a School Resource Officer.

The motion carried unanimously.

Touchet/Plaisance
Resolution R18-23

A resolution authorizing the Mayor to execute all documents necessary for the City employees to join the Vermilion School Employees Credit Union.

The motion carried unanimously.

B. Broussard/Plaisance
Ordinance 18-09

An ordinance enlarging the corporate limits of the City of Abbeville by annexing the Motty property.

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

Therefore, the ordinance was adopted unanimously.

-02 introduced by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. and seconded by Ms. Terry Broussard to ratify the replacement of the wind sensor at the airport at a cost of \$6,576.00 from DBT Transportation. The motion carried unanimously.

-03 introduced by Mr. Francis Plaisance and seconded by Ms. Roslyn White to ratify the repair and rebuilding of the gearbox at the Water Treatment Plant at a cost of \$37,300.00. The motion carried unanimously.

The topic of paying the QSA invoice was originally tabled at the 8/7/18 meeting in order for the City Attorney to render his opinion relative to the City's contract with QSA. It was put back on this meeting agenda to discuss if the City Council members could use their discretionary funds in the Sales Tax Fund to pay this invoice. It was unpaid registration for basketball and baseball. Mayor Piazza asked Mr. Funderburk to discuss the opinion he rendered. Mr. Funderburk stated he did an analysis of the contract with QSA and emailed the Mayor and each Council Member regarding his finding. His conclusion is that you cannot use public funds to pay this \$2,800.00 invoice. These are delinquent fees that QSA did not collect from kids who had the benefit of participating in their program. Councilman Touchet stated that he represents a constituent group and if he has a discretionary fund he should be able to use that money however he wants to in his district. If there is something in that district that he wants to do, he doesn't have to come to anybody for approval. If there are kids in my district that he wants to pay for then he should be able to use that discretionary fund. Ike has told him that the contract that the City has with QSA forbids that. If that is the case then he wants to amend the agenda for all of them to go on record to say that

based upon what we are doing with QSA that he should have a discretionary amount of money that you can use to pay for kids' registration. Because the contract doesn't have that then we should amend it. Councilman Plaisance stated when we first discussed the contract in the \$75,000.00 we were paying QSA we wanted to make sure that kids who could not afford it would be able to play on those funds. Based upon the contract we had, he was under the impression that the kids who could not pay would be allowed to play within the \$75,000.00. He thought we had a provision about that in the contract. Mr. Tommy Picard stated there was an application with the approved contract for the individuals to apply for reduced registration. It was not going to be free, only reduced. In this instance, the coaches thought it was free. They already received the reduced rate. The contract that allowed them to pay for free did not pass. Ms. Anita Levy stated they met with QSA before they signed the contract about taking kids that could not afford to pay and their representative agreed to that. They were asked if they would take the kids who could not afford to pay and the answer was yes. This is what Francis Plaisance is talking about. Mayor Piazza asked Ike exactly what the contract says. Ike stated the contract was never amended. We executed a contract and the language that he quoted in the email to the Mayor and Council is "QSA or one of its affiliates shall pay all registration fees to those children who qualify under the criteria set forth in the goals and objectives above. The goals and objectives are QSA shall administer a comprehensive and affordable youth recreation program for the youth of the City of Abbeville". Mr. Tommy Picard stated that is the reason they didn't sign it. Ike responded that the contract was executed. It was signed by Jeremy Picard and Mayor Mark Piazza. Mr. Tommy Picard asked what constitutes a kid that cannot afford it. Ike stated attached to the contract is a form entitled "Quality Sports Authority Fee Exemption Form, Athletic Programs". This was provided to the City by QSA. Mr. Gene Sellers stated he wanted to donate the money to pay the QSA invoice. He stated it is not appropriate to use public funds to pay this. Councilman Touchet stated to Ike that he doesn't care if that clause is kept in the contract. He does not want any Councilman to stifle him from doing what he feels he needs to do for his constituents. He wants to have the discretion, regardless of what that contract says, to spend his City discretionary fund how he sees fit and according to people who vote for him. Ike stated as long as it is for a public purpose. Councilman Touchet stated the public purpose is those kids. Councilwoman White stated it sounds like the contract doesn't say what is done with the form. It doesn't say if the funding for the underprivileged kids come from QSA or the City of Abbeville. She would like to see the contract define specifically what happens once the registration reduction fee form is turned in so we don't have the same problem in the future. Ike stated he can craft something and send it to everyone so everyone has an opportunity to review it before we get back together. Councilman Touchet stated he doesn't care what happens as long as he can make the final decision as to what kids his discretionary funds are used for. Councilman Plaisance agreed the contract needs to be cleared up so the language is clear. Mr. Jake Landry stated that no kids were turned away. Mr. Tommy Picard stated that these kids were allowed to play for nothing. At the end of the year, we had one team playing. Those kids had nothing into it so they didn't put nothing into it. It was free so it didn't matter if they play. Bronc had 60 kids to play and he finished with 60 kids. They all paid their registration. Bronc told them if they didn't pay then they didn't get a shirt. If you don't get a shirt, then you can't play. When we have to forfeit a game, it costs us \$50.00. The kids have to be committed in some way. The kids should have to pay something. He asked the Mayor if the City can give away free electricity. Mayor Piazza answered no. Mr. Picard stated then this shouldn't be different. We can't run our business with free registration. Bronc talked about setting up a fundraiser to help these kids. You can set up a fund either run by the City or QSA. Mayor Piazza stated he likes that idea better than just paying it from their discretionary fund. That way the kid has a vested interest and is part of the program to get involved to raise the funds for their registration. Mayor Piazza stated he also agrees with Mr. Gene Sellers that public funds should not be used for this.

-04 introduced by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. and seconded by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. to authorize Ike to look into amending the contract with QSA, at a later date, to allow any Council member the right to use their discretionary funds in the City Sales Tax to pay registration for underprivileged children. The motion carried unanimously.

Gene Sellers, Engineer

- *Discussed the DOTD sidewalk project. They are meeting this week with FHWA. The timeline to let the project for bids is December 2018 or January 2019.*
- *Discussed the drainage study in District A. The major problems are high extensive rain in a short amount of time, trash placed in the middle of the ditch, culvert size in the ditches are not the correct size, drop inlet grates openings are too small and the open ditch sections need to be excavated to invert of all culverts to allow more water to flow.*
- *Will be ready to authorize bids for the electrical control system at the stormwater pump/sewer pump station at the next meeting.*
- *For the sidewalk on State Street, we are still waiting on the easement from Dollar General. Ike stated we need to go through the home office. Glenn Lege would like to do the entire project all at once.*
- *Will receive bids for the carwash sewer extension on the By-Pass on 9/4/18 at 10:00 AM at their office.*

Clay Menard, Public Works Director

- *Recently went to the City of Rayne for the demonstration of the culvert cleaner. He attended with Richard Sysak, Marlon Batiste, and James DeRouen. The City of Kaplan and Eunice were also there. It may have some applications where we can use it when cleaning open ditches. It took them 3 hours to clean 80 feet. It takes three people and a backhoe operator. Many times, it pulls the culverts right out of the dirt and they have to be replaced. There was one place where it pulled the homeowner's bushes out. They were not going to replace them. He did video the process and encourages all who did not see the video to see it. If you have closed drainage, you have to dig up the culverts to utilize the apparatus. You can only use it on concrete pipe and not corrugated pipe. Councilwoman Broussard stated she did see the video and it creates a bigger problem.*

Mayor Mark Piazza

- *The ground breaking for the terminal building at the airport is this Friday from 11:45 AM to 12:45 PM. The public is invited.*

Police Chief Bill Spearman

- *We will be having a sobriety checkpoint Friday evening from 9:00 PM to 3:00 AM somewhere in the City. David Hardy stated this is part of the LHSC grant and is 100% refundable. Chief Spearman stated we have received this grant due to the hard work of David Hardy.*
- *We conducted an operation this past Friday. Under City ordinance, he has to bring this to the Mayor and City Council to discuss liquor licenses. John Castille distributed a packet with all the particulars. Friday evening, they conducted an underage operation where we had an alcohol and tobacco agent and an operative to attempt to buy alcohol. The operative was under the age of 21. During the operation we went to just about every store in town. Unfortunately, there were four places that were cited. Officer John Castille stated it is in the City Ordinances that permits can be punished by the City Council. Ike stated he would get the documentation, access the situation and make a recommendation to the City Council. This is the first time the City Council has ever been informed of this.*

Councilwoman Terry Broussard

- *Was very proud to present her very first proclamation to Pastor Kevin Williams this past Sunday on behalf of the Mayor and City Council.*
- *Will have a cleanup day for District D on Saturday, October 6, 2018 from 8:30 AM to 12:00 PM.*

Councilwoman Roslyn White

- *Thanked Mr. Gene Sellers for the donation to pay the QSA invoice. She has good things to say about QSA organization. She hopes we can work together to find a resolution.*
- *We did receive notice that the downtown bridge will be closing in the future but we don't have the date yet. As soon as we know, we will notify the public.*
- *Louis Drive has been resurfaced. The hold up on Alan Lane is the mix is not exactly correct. Once they get that corrected they will be resurfacing Alan Lane.*

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

ATTEST:

APPROVE:

Kathleen S. Faulk
Secretary-Treasurer

Mark Piazza
Mayor