

The Mayor and Council of the City of Abbeville met in regular session on July 17, 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  
Richard Primeaux, Engineer  
Gene Sellers, Engineer  
Joseph Vallee, Municipal Civil Service Board  
Gerald Gaspard, American Legion & Chamber of Commerce  
Ronald Darby, Vermilion Parish Police Juror  
Anita Levy, Parks & Recreation Board Member  
Alana Lege, Abbeville General Hospital  
Rosalind Bobb, Life Grief Support Ministry

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

-01 introduced by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. and seconded by Mr. Francis Plaisance to ratify bills paid in the month of June 2018. The motion carried unanimously.

-02 introduced by Mr. Francis Plaisance and seconded by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. to approve the probational appointment of Caleb Mayard to the position of Police Officer in the Abbeville Police Department, pending successful completion of all post-hire assessments. The motion carried unanimously.

*Mayor Piazza asked if anyone had any comments about any of the agenda items prior to action. There were none.*

*Mayor Piazza recognized Ms. Murley Douglas by issuing a proclamation and giving her a key to the City. Ms. Douglas, who has been a resident of Abbeville for 80+ years, is not in the best health and has had to move to Houston with her family. Some of her friends are here in the audience today. We tried to get her back here today. This is our second attempt to issue this to her. Mr. Ronald Darby is a relative of Ms. Douglas and he will accept the proclamation and key on her behalf. Mayor Piazza stated Ms. Murley is a lady that he has known and respected all of his life. She has done a tremendous number of things for this community. Mayor Piazza read the proclamation aloud. He proclaimed July 17, 2018 as Ms. Murley Douglas Day in the City of Abbeville, Louisiana.*

*Councilman Plaisance stated there have been several town hall meetings in the City concerning violence. Violence is of the upmost concern for him and this Council and the community. A new approach has been started. He, Councilwoman Broussard and Chief Spearman had the privilege to attend a revival/rally on Saturday night. Ms. Rosalind Bobb was present for that. The new approach is to go out to the area where the drugs and violence is prevalent and conduct a revival and serve food for the people. We were across from Kings Mart on this one. The next one is going to be on Bailey Street. He will call a committee with these people to visit with them to see if there is anything they can do to support their ministry. He introduced Ms. Rosalind Bobb. Ms. Bobb stated she is from New Iberia. Twelve years ago, her son was murdered in New Iberia right around the corner from her house. She had to stand there and watch him die. It was a struggle but with God she was able to make it. Here it is 12 years later and she has a ministry. The name of her ministry is Life Grief Support Ministry. They have been in existence for 3 years. Abbeville has a good bit of murders and New Iberia has an awful lot. What she does is go out to the families and to the mothers and fathers because she knows the pain, first hand. Without God she wouldn't be able to stand the pain and now today, 12 years later, she thanks Him for her storm. She knew that God had work for her to do but she kept pushing it aside. Now she is full force with it. The scripture to her ministry is Matthew 5:4, "Blessed are those that mourn, for they will be comforted". A lot of people don't realize that God is closer to the broken hearted. She found out the person who murdered her son was a Hurricane Katrina evacuee who had migrated to Houston. He murdered in Houston too. The day she was going to bury her son, she found out his girlfriend was pregnant. God did bless me with a part of him back. She thanked God for this. Now she is on a mission. She meets every second Thursday on the West End Park. Her group is getting bigger and bigger. She goes out to the mothers because she knows the pain first-hand. She has lost her mother, father and a brother and the pain of losing a child does not compare to that. They help with funerals. We had our first fundraiser June 2. For the first 2 ½ years she spent out of her pocket. She worked for the Department of Family and Child Services in New Iberia. She thanks God for her husband. He is always by her side. For the first 2 ½ years she did what she had to do to make sure the ministry would continue to grow. She became a non-profit in May. Now she is asking for donations. When she leaves here, she is committed to Lighthouse Church in New Iberia and Reverend Randall. She thanks God for using her. She visited with a lady whose husband was murdered. The lady didn't know how she was going to make it and didn't know what to do. Ms. Bobb explained to her that God was her help. That is the only help with anything. She would like to come to the Abbeville area more often. Next month, on August 9<sup>th</sup>, she will have her third-year anniversary. It will be at the Steamboat Pavilion on Main Street. She will have several ministers to speak. She will ask Councilman Plaisance to be one of her speakers. She is inviting the citizens and the City of Abbeville to please come and support the ministry. It is not just if a child is murdered, it is also if a family member is murdered. People experience grief in so many other ways than just death. She is asking everyone to support her because her ministry is really growing. She plans on going from city to city and then state to state. That way people will know that they are not hurting by themselves. There is a place to come. She is taking her ministry to the streets.*

-03 introduced by Ms. Terry Broussard and seconded by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. to approve a four-way stop sign at the intersection of S. East and Eighth Street. The motion carried unanimously.

-04 introduced by Mr. Francis Plaisance and seconded by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. to approve a special event permit for Abbeville General Hospital to hold "Making each day count: Suicide Prevention & Mental Health" on September 8, 2018 from 9:00 AM to 12: PM in Magdalen Square, to waive the special event permit fee and the requirement for \$2,000,000 insurance coverage since they only have \$500,000. The motion carried unanimously.

**White/Touchet**  
**Resolution R18-18**

*A resolution authorizing Mayor Mark Piazza to submit an application to the State of Louisiana for the 2018-2019 Louisiana Government Assistance Program and the 2018-2019 Community Water Enrichment Fund Program.*

*The motion carried unanimously.*

*Mr. Gene Sellers stated they received one bid for the State Street sidewalk project. Four people had requested a packet but only one submitted a bid. The bid was from Glenn Lege Construction in the amount of \$20,479.50. The estimated budget for the project was \$36,000 so the bid came in under budget.*

-05 introduced by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. and seconded by Mr. Francis Plaisance to accept the bid in the amount of \$20,479.50 and award the contract to Glenn Lege Construction for the State Street Sidewalk Project. The motion carried unanimously.

-06 introduced by Mr. Francis Plaisance and seconded by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. to accept the recommendations of the hearing officer for hearings held on July 12, 2018 for the following properties: 808 Solomon/demo of structure/demo has already begun, 512 N. East St/demo of burnt house and tall grass/given 5 days to comply, 1915 Society/dilapidated structure and tall grass/demo permit already applied for, 913 E. Oak/dilapidated structure/given 5 days to comply, 1608 Maude Ave/tall grass and piles of wood/given 5 days to comply, 1434 S. Louisiana/junk on property/given 5 days to comply, 804 & 808 N. East St/junk on property/given 5 days to comply, 301 Dutel/abandoned vehicles and grass/given 5 days to comply, 508 Clover/abandoned vehicle/issued certificate of compliance/506 Clover/abandoned vehicle/issued certificate of compliance, 511 Clover/abandoned vehicle/given 5 days to comply, 506 S. Guegnon/junk items and dilapidated fence/given 10 days to comply, 700 E. Oak St/abandoned vehicle/given 5 days comply, 705 Gauraud/dilapidated structure/given 5 days to comply, 906 Martin Luther King/abandoned vehicle/issued certificate of compliance, 502 Loraine #2/dilapidated mobile home/given 5 days to comply, 707 E. Vermilion/abandoned vehicle/issued certificate of compliance, 607 N. Miles/abandoned vehicle/given 5 days to comply, 206 E. Lafayette St/camper used as resident/issued certificate of compliance, 508 Kibbe/trash container at road/given 5 days to comply, 2015 Primeaux/abandoned vehicle/issued certificate of compliance, and 607 Chevis St/abandoned vehicle/given 5 days to comply. The motion carried unanimously.

*Councilman Brady Broussard, Jr. commended the great job by Donna and Clay with these properties. Councilman Touchet stated the 5 days is not cut and dry. We will have to do other things in order to close the loopholes in our ordinance. Councilwoman Terry Broussard stated she spoke to Ike and asked him to set up a meeting with Donna and Sarah in order for her to get a clear vision of what is going on. Clay Menard stated out of the 22 violations, 6 had already complied prior to the hearing. Only 6 or 8 of the property owners did not show up for the hearings. Councilman Brady Broussard, Jr. stated sometimes our due process system does work.*

-07 introduced by Mr. Francis Plaisance and seconded by Ms. Terry Broussard to accept the revised plat for KFC. The motion carried unanimously.

Clay Menard, Public Works Director

- *Discussed the culvert cleaning tool used by the City of Rayne. Mayor Piazza stated Councilwoman Broussard had contacted him last week about their apparatus for cleaning culverts. He contacted the Mayor of Rayne, Charles Robichaux. He offered to give us a demonstration and show us how to use it. He went above and beyond what he expected. If the City of Abbeville was willing to pay for the materials, the City of Rayne would fabricate the apparatus. The material cost is about \$1,900. We have an appointment set up in Rayne. They want to do it when there is water in the ditch. When they fit us in, Clay and a couple of our City employees will go over there for a demonstration. There is also a film they can show them that will teach them how to use everything. We will pursue it. It will be beneficial to our jar cleaning program which we usually do in the winter time. They have been using this for 2 ½ years. In their blighted property program, if a structure is torn down and abandoned, they will go in and look at the property. If there are broken or the wrong sized jars in the ditch, they pull them up. Just cleaning a jar or a ditch is not the answer to everything. You need an engineer to go in and do a study to make sure the jars are the right size and everything is sloped and draining the way it is supposed to go. The second thing you have to do is make sure that we have a good working relationship with our Police Jury and our Drainage Board because the outfalls of the ditches, once they get to the City limits, is so important because that is where the big ditches are. If the drainage board is not doing their job to keep the outfall clear, then we have nowhere to drain to. It is a concerted effort between all parties to accomplish the drainage goals that we may have. Resolving drainage issues is not something that can happen overnight. You have to take it one step at a time. Mr. Sellers was showing us that they did a drainage study of the entire City back in 1968. It was very interesting.*
- *Councilman Touchet asked Clay about the automatic switch for the generator for the retention pond. Mr. Sellers stated they would have to decide which one you want to run when the generator kicks on. You can choose either the pond or the lift station. The cost estimate is pending but will probably be around \$20,000 for one switch and \$35,000 for two. It is much cheaper than buying another generator. Mayor Piazza asked for the cost estimate to be discussed at the next meeting.*
- *The tree trimming contractor that was hired to remove trees from the electrical lines will move in sometime this week.*

Bill Spearman, Police Chief

- *We had a joint operation with the task force Saturday night. About a dozen officers came out. We made several arrests, cleared up some City court warrants, made some traffic stops and did get a few drugs off of the street. We plan on doing more of these operations. He wanted to thank the Sheriff and the task force. With the task force we are combining efforts now which means a lot more people on the streets. For further operations, we have talked to the State Police and Probation and Parole and we will have larger operations.*
- *Ask Shaun, with the Abbeville Meridional, to do a public announcement for the new four-way stop sign to inform motorists. He also asked Clay to notify him when the stop signs are in place. Clay Menard stated he would let him know as well as Councilwoman Broussard when the stop signs are in place.*
- *He just got back from the Chief's training in Shreveport. He met with a lot of other Chiefs to discuss problems. We are working on things between our cities. He made a lot of good contacts. One of the contacts he made is a group that publishes safety books. We will be getting one that discusses scams, one that discusses active shooter in the school, and bullying. They do all the fundraising themselves. He would like to use the picture from the swearing in to use in the books. The Mayor and Council were ok with that.*

- *Councilman Touchet told Chief Spearman that he was proud of him and his entire department. He went into Snap Fitness last Sunday. He met one of his officers and he looked very tired. The officer stated they had a very busy Saturday night but he said the thing that was most impressive than anything was that they had their Chief with them. Councilman Touchet stated that he has not, in 16 years, seen such gratitude from someone because their Chief was right there with them. The cooperation that Chief Spearman is putting forth to work with the Sheriff and all of the other law enforcement agencies is tremendous. He will keep Chief Spearman in his prayers. You guys are doing a phenomenal job.*

Jude Mire, Fire Chief

- *Thanked Mayor Piazza and Councilman Francis Plaisance for allowing us to stay in Councilman Plaisance's camp on the West side of the Bayou while the bridge was closed. We were allowed to stay there free of charge. Councilman Plaisance stated that at no time would he have charged the City for that. Rumors have been circulating that he was charging them so he wanted to clear that up. He wanted to make sure the West side was taken care of. Thank you Chief for having a truck on that side. He was happy to allow them to use the house to accommodate that.*

Councilman Francis Plaisance

- *The Cake and Ice Cream Festival is this Saturday from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM at Comeaux Park.*

Councilwoman Terry Broussard

- *Thursday, Louisiana Heat, Bryan and Bridgett, leave with their team for Mexico. She asked for prayers for safe travel for them.*
- *This coming Saturday, at Math Depot, she will begin a school supply drive. NAUW will partner with her July 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> and August 4<sup>th</sup> at Super One Foods to accept donations for the Back to School Supply Drive.*

Councilman Brady Broussard, Jr.

- *We have jobs coming to our City. Sassy Suds on the By-pass just started construction. Kentucky Fried Chicken will take 90 days with a pre-fabricated building that is assembled on site. For anybody that is looking for a job, we have some new businesses coming to town.*

Councilman Francis Touchet, Jr.

- *Thanked the Mayor for following through by requesting the jurors to have a meeting about the trash pickup. The reason why he brought it up is that he looks at his district first, his district will always come first, since those are the complaints that he had. The overall City will come second. Each of us has a part in taking care of our districts. If there are issues that come forth then we need to take them to the table. Overall, different things come about for the City and we will handle those things individually in different ways. He hopes that we get to a point that we have some type of understanding of how this will proceed. From what he understands, we will not have a meeting with the jurors. Mayor Piazza stated that is correct. They have sent a letter that if we want information then we should attend the next public works committee meeting. Unfortunately, most of us, including Clay, will be at the LMA Conference in Lake Charles so he has asked Ike to attend on our behalf. So, we will be represented at that meeting.*

Councilwoman Roslyn White

- *She thanked the Mayor, Councilman Plaisance and the Fire Chief for putting together a plan to look out for the citizens on the West side. It is much appreciated.*
- *The Christian Service Center on Chevis is starting their home mission tomorrow at 8:00 AM. This is a great program where local groups of children go out into the community and do projects for people in need. They will be doing projects from 7/18 – 7/21. Both the Erath and Vermilion Catholic football teams will be participating. We applaud their efforts. The Christian Service Center will also be having a Women’s Outreach on Saturday where they give supplies and teaching to women in need. Women who are pregnant can receive access to resources. That will be 8:00 AM to 3:00 PM. They will also be doing a food drive at the same time at Super One Foods, Saturday, from 8:00 AM to 3:00 PM. They are in need of food and monetary donations for the Christian Service Center. It is also Super One Foods grand opening. We are very fortunate to have them in our community. What they do at the Christian Service Center is awesome.*

There being further business to discuss, Mayor Piazza declared this meeting adjourned.

ATTEST:

APPROVE:

Kathleen S. Faulk  
Secretary-Treasurer

Mark Piazza  
Mayor