

The Mayor and Council of the City of Abbeville met in regular session on June 16, 2020 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: Ike Funderburk, City Attorney  
Jude Mire, Fire Chief  
Bill Spearman, Police Chief  
Clay Menard, Public Works Director  
Tracette Hillman, Municipal Employees Civil Service Director  
Richard Primeaux, Engineer  
Pastor Mideate Derouen, Greater Pleasant Green Baptist Church  
Andy Veazey, Candidate for District Judge  
Gerald Gaspard, Chamber of Commerce & American Legion  
Charles Dill, Planning Commission & American Legion  
Deanna Dixon, youth programs in City  
Brian Ford, Boys & Girls Club  
Scarlett Brown, Juneteenth Celebration  
Dwayne Briggs, Police Department complaint

*Mayor Piazza asked Pastor Mideate Derouen to lead the assembly in prayer. Mayor Piazza asked Mr. Gerald Gaspard to lead the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance.*

-01 introduced by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. and seconded by Mr. Francis Plaisance to approve the unclassified office assistant job description. The motion carried unanimously.

*Mr. Andy Veazey stated he is a candidate for the Division C seat in the 15<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Court. Judge Ed Broussard is retiring at the end of the term. The election is in November. He has an even temperament. He has seen great judges and horrible judges. As a public servant, you really do have a fiduciary role to the public. It is critically important for our judiciary to understand to exercise professionalism to the attorneys that practice before them. It is not an easy job. It is important that parties that come before our judiciary are shown the respect that they deserve. Ethically, he can't make any promises to anyone about how he would rule on any case that comes before him. That is ethically prohibited from any judge. But, if he is fortunate enough to be elected, he can be a more positive role model in the community. The 15<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Court is comprised of Lafayette, Vermilion and Acadia Parish but in this particular division, the candidates only run in Vermilion Parish. It is the entirety of the parish.*

-02 introduced by Mr. Francis Plaisance and seconded by Ms. Terry Broussard to ratify bills paid in the month of May 2020. The motion carried unanimously.

*Mayor Piazza asked if there were any public comments on any agenda item. There were none.*

-03 introduced by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. and seconded by Ms. Roslyn White to table the agenda item for Ms. Cathy Walker to request the formation of an "Inter-Parish" agreement with the Vermilion Parish School Board, the City of Abbeville and the Vermilion Parish Police Jury for the purpose of allowing Co-Operative Prevention Resources to renovate and manage the Herod property for the goal of implementing an "Enterprise Zone" for the benefit of the community, city, parish and state because Ms. Walker was not at the meeting. The motion carried unanimously.

*Ms. Deanna Dixon discussed the need for youth programs in the City. Ms. Dixon stated that there are a lot of kids getting killed on the streets very violently. Her goal is to divert the youths' attention to a positive mindset. We will not see a change until there is a change. She has been studying deviant behavior. She knows a lot about that because she has caused the same problems when she was young. Once she moved to California, she finally understood what she was doing. She didn't see the choices that she was making. She would like to see mentoring programs started. She believes she would be good for a mentoring program because she has been that person in jail and that youth that has had problems and made bad choices. She believes she can help them. She would like to offer a free class to the youth and teach them how to handle their emotions, anger, rage and social economics. She would like to offer classes for adults and children on how to control anger, make good choices and how to handle their emotions. When she was growing up, they had a skating rink and a swimming pool. We don't have anything now. All they know is selling drugs and getting the money. They will kill anyone to get it. We need to build trust between blacks and whites and between the police and the community. People are living in fear. She asked the Council to look into block grants to open things like the skating rink, swimming pools and bowling alleys. Mayor Piazza introduced Mr. Brian Ford with the Boys and Girls Club. He asked Mr. Ford to be here tonight because he felt Ms. Dixon has a lot to offer and she and Mr. Ford could work together on this. The Boys and Girls Club needs all the volunteers that they can get. Ms. Dixon stated she had visited with Mr. Ford. Mayor Piazza asked Mr. Ford to discuss some of the programs they offer. Mr. Ford stated that Ms. Dixon did come by the Club in the middle of March. We have been handing out grab and go meals for the last six weeks. The meal is in a box and you have 7 breakfasts and 7 lunches. We have been working on that since the shutdown. Traditionally we offer the free afterschool program from 3 PM to 7 PM and we provide free bus transportation. It is \$10 to join the Boys and Girls Club. We are about to open Monday for the summer program. We have had to put a lot of things in place so our costs have increased. Every child will have their own supplies and they have had to hire a sanitation specialist. We are having to reduce the number of kids to about 50 so they can keep everything spaced out. They are putting about \$100,000 into the facility. They are repainting the entire inside of the facility. All the lighting has been updated. They have also done some drainage work behind the building. Teens are one of their biggest concerns. We do have a variety of programs for teens. We took a group of teens on multiple college tours. We feel like if you have a plan for college then you need to see what a college looks like and you need to know early on what you have to do to get there. The teens who attended the tours are in 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grade. We have many community partnerships and are always looking for other opportunities to partnership with the community. It takes a large group of people to come together to make something happen. Ms. Dixon asked about those teens who are not going to college. Mr. Ford stated they are not set up for one-on-one mentoring, like Big Brother, Big Sisters. We do have conflict recognition programs. It would be a great idea to be able to do something for parents. We have a lot of young parents who could use some assistance dealing with the stress of parenting and financial instability. Ms. Dixon agreed that parents need to learn how to effectively communicate with their children. Mr. Ford stated there are a lot of resources on their website. Councilwoman White stated that the Christian Service Center began a program last year where they reach out to women in crisis pregnancies. That*

*resource is available to young single mothers. They can get some diapers, wipes and other goods. They also offer counseling too. Mayor Piazza stated the Christian Service Center also offers help in learning how to manage your finances. Mr. Ford stated they recently acquired some screen-printing equipment. This allows them to screen print their own t-shirts and we will also teach the teens how to do this. This teaches them a trade. Councilman Plaisance stated the City of Abbeville does not have a recreation tax. It failed twice. This limits us on what we can do with recreation. It takes a lot of money and it is difficult because we do not have a tax. Councilman Touchet stated a lot of the teens having issues are because the parents are not doing what they are supposed to do. The teens need mental health screenings. They are being traumatized and we need to make sure they get help. Ms. Dixon agreed that we need to change the way they are thinking.*

*Ms. Scarlett Brown wanted to hold a Juneteenth Day Celebration on Saturday, June 20, 2020 from 12:00 PM to 7:00 PM at McKinley Scott Park. It is a family event and no alcohol will be allowed.*

-04 introduced by Ms. Terry Broussard and seconded by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. to approve a special event permit to hold Juneteenth Day on Saturday, June 20, 2020 at McKinley Scott Park from 12:00 PM to 7:00 PM and to waive the permit fee and the insurance requirements. The motion carried unanimously.

*Mr. Dwayne Briggs discussed confidentiality during the pandemic when reporting an incident to the Police. He had an incident with the police and he wanted to report that to the police department. He felt there should be someone in leadership to address the issue. It shouldn't be out in the open and it shouldn't be addressed with the officers present. He did not discuss this problem directly with Chief Spearman but he did speak to Councilwoman Terry Broussard. She spoke to the Chief on his behalf but there has not been any follow up. Councilwoman White apologized that this happened to Mr. Briggs but she is sure now that the Chief if aware of this problem, he will take care of it.*

*Mr. Gerald Gaspard complimented the Abbeville Police Department on their very professional response to a crowd control situation at the American Legion Hall on Saturday, June 13, 2020. They did a very good job getting the crowd off of the property. The Chief is doing a fantastic job.*

-05 introduced by Mr. Francis Plaisance and seconded by Ms. Terry Broussard to submit the names of Carlton Campbell and Dwayne Briggs to the Abbeville Harbor & Terminal Board of Commissioners to fill one vacancy. The motion carried unanimously.

**Touchet/B. Broussard**

**Resolution R20-11**

*A resolution adopting the millage rates for the tax year 2020.*

*The motion carried unanimously.*

-06 introduced by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. and seconded by Ms. Roslyn White to approve a Class A, B and R liquor permit for Amore' Pizzaroma. The motion was put to a vote and the vote thereupon was as follows:

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

Therefore, the motion carried.

-07 introduced by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. and seconded by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. to award the contract for abatement of rubbish from the property located at 609 N. Gertrude Street to the low bidder, Brown's Demolition, in the amount of \$250.00. The motion carried unanimously.

-08 introduced by Ms. Terry Broussard and seconded by Ms. Roslyn White to award the contract for cutting of grass and weeds and removal of overgrown brush from the property located at 813 Dutel Street to the only bidder, Tony Landry, in the amount of \$1,000.00. The motion carried unanimously.

*Councilwoman White announced the free COVID-19 testing sites. This is being organized by the National Guard throughout Vermilion Parish. It started this past Monday and it will continue through July 10, 2020. This has been shared on the City's Facebook as well as the agenda packet. It is free to the public. It is a drive-thru testing site. It is self-administered. We do not yet know the turnaround time for results. There are certain dates at different facilities.*

**Touchet/T. Broussard**  
**Resolution R20-12**

*A resolution authorizing the Mayor to establish the City's policy and procedures for the safety of City employees and the public during the pandemic.*

*The motion carried unanimously.*

Mayor Mark Piazza

- *Discussed the Peace Walk held this past Saturday. It was a very spirited event. All the pastors and churches were together walking through the neighborhoods of the City. It was a great day for Abbeville.*

Councilman Francis Plaisance

- *Asked Chief Spearman if the Police Department has a juvenile officer. Chief Spearman answered yes. It is John Castille.*
- *Commended Councilwoman White for keeping the Council and the public informed.*

Councilwoman Terry Broussard

- *Discussed the Peace Walk held Saturday. She thanked the Chief for working with Levy and the ministers and priests from the different churches. She was proud of her City. There was a lot of love for each other regardless of skin color. On both aisles, we have to learn to reach out and learn to love and respect each other. We have to have a forgiving employment system. A lot of youths made mistakes at a very young age and it is with them forever. We need to believe in giving second chances.*
- *She asked Chief Spearman about Crime Stoppers. She would like to set up something where we can work with them to assist us with some of the unsolved murders. Chief Spearman stated that it takes money. You have to offer a reward. You have to have private donors. Councilman Broussard stated it is done through private donations and corporate donations. You have to work with the television stations and sign up with the national organization. What you put into it is what you will get out of it.*

Councilman Brady Broussard, Jr.

- *The first Farmers' Market of the year is this Saturday.*

Councilman Francis Touchet, Jr.

- *Asked Ike to research the availability of training for the Police Department for learning how to deal with social and emotional trauma needs and social sensitivity.*

Councilwoman Roslyn White

- *The Peace Walk was a great event. It was a step towards healing for the community. It was eye opening for some of those that participated to see the whole community and not just the part they live in.*
- *Rotary moved their Comedy Night to this Saturday. It has been moved to the Delcambre Shrimp Festival building. It begins at 5:00 PM. It is an outdoor event. They are only doing pre-sold tickets.*
- *Blush Boutique opened downtown on 117 Concord Street.*

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

ATTEST:

APPROVE:

Kathleen S. Faulk  
Secretary-Treasurer

Mark Piazza  
Mayor