

The Mayor and Council of the City of Abbeville and the Abbeville Parks and Recreation Board met in a joint special session on October 11, 2016, at 11:00 A.M., at the A. A. Comeaux Recreation Center located at 300 A. A. Comeaux Memorial Drive, Abbeville, Louisiana, with the Honorable Mark Piazza, Mayor presiding for the City of Abbeville and Honorable James LeBlanc, Chairman presiding for the Abbeville Parks and Recreation Board.

City Council Members Present: Council Members Francis Plaisance, Mayor Pro-Tem, Brady Broussard, Jr., Wayne Landry, and Joe Hardy

Board Members Present: Anita Levy, James LeBlanc, Steve Delino and Lawrence Williams

Members Absent: Councilman Francis Touchet, Jr.
Chuck Sonnier, Parks and Recreation Board member

Also Present: Tony Hardy, Police Chief
Ike Funderburk, City Attorney
Denise Mire, Interim Parks and Recreation Director
Raymond Frederick
Gale Luquette
Rocky Russo

Mayor Piazza asked Councilman Francis Plaisance to lead those in attendance in prayer. Mayor Piazza asked Ms. Anita Levy to lead those in attendance in the Pledge of Allegiance.

-01 introduced by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. and seconded by Mr. Francis Plaisance to approve the probational appointment of Taylor Jones and Randall Simon 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 stated item number two is to discuss the future of the Parks and Recreation Department. This is actually our third meeting. We discussed this topic in a City Council meeting. We also had one joint meeting of the City Council and the Parks and Recreation Board. This is our second joint meeting. We can continue the way we have been since we created a Parks and Recreation Department in-house. We have had four Parks and Recreation Directors. There a couple of different approaches we can take. He opened up the floor to the public and to the Council for any ideas. We need to make a decision on this and move forward. Councilman Francis Plaisance asked about removing the Civil Service designation from the position. Councilman Brady Broussard, Jr. stated he sees the merit of that. We have been in a situation recently where Civil Service rules have prevented us from acting on certain issues. He believes the position should fall under the Mayor's control and an appointment with Council ratifying. We hope the Civil Service board will consider that. Councilman Plaisance said it would give us more flexibility for us to operate with the Recreation Director and he agrees the Mayor should be on the one to oversee the position. Mayor Piazza stated with this the Parks and Recreation Director position will continue and we will have a full-time director that will take care of all parks and all areas of recreation. Councilman Broussard stated this will not affect anything but the classification of that employee. Ms. Anita Levy stated this is a good idea.

Every time we hire a Parks and Recreation Director, we are restricted as to what we can do with him because he is under the Civil Service rules. Pastor Steve Delino asked what are the positives about being under the Civil Service Department. Mayor Piazza stated the Civil Service system affords the employees certain liberties that protect them as an employee. If you are appointed you serve at the pleasure of the Mayor and Council. They can be removed from that appointment at any time without recourse for appeal. There is also a lot of leniency when you are appointed as to punching a time clock and hours of operation. There are pros and cons. This person would still answer to the Mayor and Council. If they are removed from Civil Service then the requirements for the job go away and anyone the Mayor and Council feel like they can hire, they are free to do so. If they are Civil Service, then the Civil Service Board can put stipulations in there that might require a college degree or they might have to have 10 years of experience in a recreation program somewhere else. They can impose these rules and regulations that can go away if they are not a Civil Service employee. The salary is determined by the Mayor and Council. Councilman Plaisance stated the termination process is a lengthy process under Civil Service. Depending on the situation, you may not want to deal with the lengthy process because you are dealing with kids. The qualifications of the position may eliminate someone that doesn't have those qualifications but may be doing a great job or could do a great job for the program.

-02 introduced by Mr. Francis Plaisance and seconded by Mr. Wayne Landry to recommend to the Municipal Employees Civil Service Board to remove the position of Parks and Recreation Director from the Civil Service classification. The motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Piazza asked what are we doing with the current league we are operating under. Councilman Plaisance stated there are no Babe Ruth teams around to play. Councilman Broussard thought it would be a good idea to have the interim director research other leagues that are popular.

-03 introduced by Mr. Wayne Landry and seconded by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. to authorize the interim director to research options for league play for baseball. The motion carried unanimously.

Councilman Broussard stated he hopes we continue to keep all options open to the organizations that showed interest. We want to keep the door open for anyone who wants to do that. Mr. Lawrence Williams stated one person won't change it. We need committees to help the new director. Mr. James LeBlanc stated that we need someone who understands what is going on with our kids. Discipline is our largest problem. Pastor Steve Delino stated we need to stay focused. We can entertain other organizations to oversee with our children's best interest at heart. We don't want to cause confusion. Councilman Broussard stated it has to be local organizations. Mayor Piazza stated it will take 1 or 2 individual dedicated to a particular sport. We had a strong track program with Kevin Dartez and Brandon Mitchell.

The rest of the meeting was the Parks and Recreation Board meeting. The Mayor did not adjourn the special meeting at this point.

PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD MEETING

-01 introduced by Ms. Anita Levy and seconded by Mr. Steve Delino to accept the minutes from the regular meeting held on July 19, 2016. The motion carried unanimously.

Mrs. Denise Mire stated she purchased the tables for tennis tables. We have advertised the availability of table tennis and people have come by to show interest. Mr. Rocky Russo stated he was in the Square last Saturday. People came by and we had a good time. He is going to St. Thomas More tomorrow. We have an opportunity here. Would like to put together a power point presentation. Mrs. Denise stated the hall is open Wednesday, Thursday and Friday for the lunch hour, Tuesday and Thursday from 5-8 and on Saturday from 9-3 for table tennis. Ike reminded Mr. Rocky Russo that the City has a sign ordinance and we do not allow signs on the City right of ways. He would give a copy of the ordinance to Mr. Russo.

Mrs. Denise Mire stated new signs for the City Parks are in but they have not been put up yet. Councilman Broussard asked if we have no smoking signs in the Parks. Mrs. Denise stated some of them have. Mayor Piazza stated all City Parks are smoke free zones

The Parks and Recreation board requested for basketball court coverings for McKinley Scott Park and Graceland Street Park. Mayor Piazza stated they have not had much luck applying for a capital outlay grant. We will not be able to fund that 100% with the City budget. So he would like one of our engineers to research other grants that may be available for these projects through Louisiana Parks and Recreation. Ms. Anita Levy asked for McKinley Scott Park to be first in line for the project.

Mr. Lawrence Williams provided an update of football. They are on their 4th game. We play travel football. We have 3 flag teams too. Next game is in two weeks.

Mrs. Denise Mire discussed the basketball registration. It is going on now until 11/30/16. We will use the J. H. Williams gym.

Mrs. Denise Mire discussed the skateboard competition in the fall and spring. She spoke with a guy from Abbeville that opened up a skate shop on the bypass. They would put on a skate competition in the fall and spring. It would cost \$5.00 to compete. The winner gets the money collected from the registration. He wants to host more. Kids are here at the skateboard park until 11:00 PM. If he doesn't want to go through it, she will contact the skate shop in Lafayette.

Mrs. Denise Mire discussed soccer. She will be getting together with Raina Henderson. She used to run the soccer program here. Hope to have registration in December. A lot of people are interested. We would have to make the equipment from pvc pipe.

Mrs. Denise Mire requested the following for the 2017 budget:

- Outfield fence repair of Badon Field.*
- Outer walls repair of Theriot Field Concession*
- Area on football fence needs repair.*

Mr. Steve Delino asked about sub-committees for each sport. Mrs. Denise Mire stated they already have that in place.

The next meeting for the Parks and Recreation Board will be on January 10, 2017.

-02 introduced by Mrs. Anita Levy and seconded by Mr. Steve Delino to adjourn the Parks and Recreation Board meeting. The motion carried unanimously.

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

ATTEST:

APPROVE:

Kathleen S. Faulk
Secretary-Treasurer

Mark Piazza
Mayor