

The Mayor and Council of the City of Abbeville met in regular session on October 17, 2017 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, Mayor Pro-Tem, Brady Broussard, Jr., Wayne Landry, Joe Hardy and Francis Touchet, Jr.

Members Absent: None

Also Present: Jude Mire, Fire Chief  
David Hardy, Police Lieutenant  
Ike Funderburk, City Attorney  
Clay Menard, Public Works Director  
Richard Primeaux, Engineer  
Gene Sellers, Engineer  
Gerald Gaspard, Chamber of Commerce/American Legion

*Mayor Piazza asked Councilman Wayne Landry to lead the assembly in prayer. Mayor Piazza asked Councilman Francis Touchet, Jr. to lead the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance.*

-01 introduced by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. and seconded by Mr. Wayne Landry to ratify bills paid in the month of September 2017. The motion carried unanimously.

-02 introduced by Mr. Francis Plaisance and seconded by Mr. Wayne Landry to approve the probational appointment of Hunter Luquette and Michael Spencer Leon to the vacant positions of Firefighter with the Abbeville Fire Department pending successful completion of all post-hire assessments. The motion carried unanimously.

-03 introduced by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. and seconded by Mr. Wayne Landry to approve the probational appointment of Lee Schexnaider to the vacant position of Wastewater Superintendent at a pay rate of \$21.00 per hour. The motion carried unanimously.

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

**Plaisance/Landry  
Resolution R17-23**

*A resolution requesting funds from LA DOTD to complete the airport improvements as described in the Capital Improvement Program Application.*

*The motion carried unanimously.*

-04 introduced by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. and seconded by Mr. Wayne Landry to award the contract for the demolition of the structures at 624 Breaux Avenue to the low bidder, Russell Alexis, at a cost of \$2,500.00. The motion carried unanimously.

Gene Sellers, Engineer

- *The Police Jury is keeping the same contractor for the road overlay. Schlessinger should be completed by the end of the year. The same contractor is doing the work on Coulee Kinney and Schlessinger.*

Clay Menard, Public Works Director

- *Discussed the demolition at 406 S. Lamar. Progress has been made. He is checking it daily. The owner is working on it daily. She piles up the material on the property and then she is hauling it off. They are adhering to the rules.*
- *Bayou Fencing has accomplished the fence work as discussed at the new park. Now that this is complete, Josh can begin plowing.*

Mayor Mark Piazza

- *Thanked the employees for the fantastic job they did cleaning up after the Cattle Festival. This is the best cleanup crew we have had in years. The Police Department were there all weekend long. There were no issues.*
- *We have a new telephone system at City Hall. He thanked Councilman Broussard for encouraging us to look into new technology. He is always looking for ways to modernize City Hall. The citizens will have easier access to us. For example, yesterday, Shirley received a voicemail on her office telephone. The voicemail was forwarded to her cell phone so she was able to retrieve it immediately instead of the next day. It was a customer that had a water leak. This allowed us to react quicker. The new phone system is cheaper than our old one and the money will stay in Vermilion Parish.*

Councilman Francis Touchet, Jr.

- *He was blindsided by the media regarding 2014 Wabash. The people complained about the house to our tax department. He did not know a complaint was filed. Since there is electricity at the house, it was not considered abandoned according to our ordinances. Some of the windows are broken and the house is in bad shape. Mr. Funderburk stated there are a lot of houses in that situation that people live in. He and the Mayor drove by this house today. There is a car parked in the garage. Some of the windows are boarded up but not all of them. The property is assessed. The utility bill is sent to the person that the property is assessed. It is impossible for Donna to make a determination from here in that great detail. Someone has to do an onsite inspection for every call that comes in to be sure the house is not occupied. That is not feasible. What Donna did was what she was supposed to do. Now that we have done an onsite visitation it is possible for us to do due process procedures that are provided for in State law and in our code to get the situation under control. In order for a demolition permit to be issued, the first thing they have to do is have the utilities disconnected. Then we have to do inspections to make sure our electricity, water and sewer is disconnected and also the gas. We do not offer gas service so that is not under our control. Councilman Touchet asked if the ladies in the tax department could log every complaint then build a spreadsheet by district, list the complaint and provide a copy to the Mayor and each City Councilman weekly. Mayor Piazza thought that was a good idea and he would relay that information to Donna. He added that the Councilman in that district can help Donna by letting her know if the premises are occupied. There are a lot of poor people in our City. He and Ike drove by five houses that were in much worse shape than that house there and he knows that people are living in them. We have to be careful about people's rights. If they live in there, then that is their home. Clay stated that the definition of an abandoned house, according to our ordinance, is a structure that is unoccupied, has no utilities and is in a dilapidated state. Ike stated that the health department cannot go into a house, they can only look*

*outside. Councilman Touchet asked if the usage could be checked too. Mayor Piazza stated that this can be done. Each residence will be different. Working together with better communication should solve this problem.*

**Councilman Wayne Landry**

- *He is very disturbed about the synthetic drug problem in his district. He would like to meet with the Mayor and the Police Chief to discuss this. People at the corner of Schlessinger and Martin Luther King Jr. Drive are walking around like zombies. He feels the responsibility to do something about this. Mothers are looking to him for a solution. Lieutenant Hardy stated there have been 20 cases lately. Mayor Piazza asked Lieutenant Hardy if they have received complaints about the grocery store. Lieutenant Hardy stated they are getting complaints in reference to people hanging out in front. Councilman Broussard stated the Chief is keeping a list of the complaints for the store. When the data is sufficient Ike will advise us. Ike stated we have to be in compliance with State law and have sufficient evidence in order to revoke a liquor license. Mayor Piazza added they may have to commit a crime before we can revoke the license. Lieutenant Hardy stated the Chief has made the synthetic drug problem a priority.*

**Councilman Brady Broussard, Jr.**

- *This Saturday there will be a Farmers Market in the Square.*
- *The cleanup after the Cattle Festival was the best ever. Downtown recovered so quickly. He thanked the employees.*
- *So happy to see Lieutenant David Hardy back at work. You make the department better by your presence.*
- *Thanked Mr. Gerald for being here to represent the Chamber of Commerce and the American Legion.*

**Councilman Francis Plaisance**

- *Thank Clay and the City employees and the Abbeville Meridional for everything they all did for the Cattle Festival.*

-05 introduced by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. and seconded by Mr. Wayne Landry to enter into executive session to discuss pending or threatened litigation. The motion carried unanimously.

-06 introduced by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. and seconded by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. to reconvene the regular meeting from executive session. The motion carried unanimously.

*Mr. Funderburk stated they had received a letter indicating the possibility of litigation if we were not able to resolve it. We discussed that in executive session and we are attempting to try and find a meaningful resolution to the problem. He asked for a motion from the Council to explore and work through options B and C.*

-07 introduced by Mr. Wayne Landry and seconded by Mr. Francis Plaisance to authorize the City Attorney to explore and work through options B and C as discussed in executive session. 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