

The Mayor and Council of the City of Abbeville met in emergency special session on April 5, 2019 at 10:30 A.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., and Roslyn White

Members Absent: Councilman Francis Touchet, Jr.

Also Present: Bill Spearman, Police Chief  
Ike Funderburk, City Attorney

*Mayor Piazza stated we are here today for an emergency special meeting. We are here to address the crisis and emergency in the Abbeville Police Department personnel. Recent events have caused a situation that created this emergency in an already struggling department. On behalf of the City council and himself, our hearts and prayers go out to the family and to the fellow officers of our officer that was involved in the shooting. He turned the floor over the Chief Spearman since he requested this meeting.*

*Chief Spearman stated that because of the situation where he normally has 5 people on the shift, he now has 3 people. He will have to move different people around. Thank goodness, right now, the Southwest Chiefs of Police and the Louisiana Chiefs of Police are supporting us by sending extra people from out of town for an extended period. During this time when the officers come in, I have to bring those in front of you and there are rules on how he can give them reserve commission so they can have power of arrest. He would like to give them a blanket commission under auxiliary police and make them reserve officers since we are not paying them. They would have powers of arrest when they are over here and working for us. He has a sign in sheet and all their information. This would help him. A lot of these guys used to work here but they are coming from other agencies. This would be one hurdle to go over. The next hurdle is a lot of the officers will need counseling. He needs the Council's blessing to find someone to do this. A lot of the guys are shaken up. Some of this he can do without spending money but some of this he will have to spend money. Mayor Piazza asked Ike what the appropriate motion would be for the Council to make. Ike stated we would need to waive the restrictions that we have imposed on the auxiliary officers that are available at one time in order to bridge this emergency situation. It would have to be a short-term waiver of that and the process in which they are hired.*

-01 introduced by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. and seconded by Mr. Francis Plaisance to approve a short-term waiver of the hiring restrictions and number of officers that are imposed for auxiliary officers in order to bridge the emergency situation. The motion carried unanimously.

*Councilman Broussard wanted to express his deep appreciation, prayers and love for each of the Police Department personnel at this time of crisis. This goes out not only to the injured police officer but to everyone who has carried the role of protecting our lives and property and those of our citizens. He hopes you continue to come to us with any needs that you have and Chief, your leadership is very much appreciated at this time of crisis. What each of you represent for Abbeville cannot be quantified for all the departments that have responded to your needs from throughout the State of Louisiana. That is something that he is so proud of. Councilman Plaisance stated*

*there is so much trauma involved in something like this that it is important to have counseling for everyone. Councilwoman White asked on behalf of Councilman Touchet if the City is paying for the officers that are coming in. Chief Spearman stated the City that is sending them is paying them. He feels that when this crisis is over, the City of Abbeville, should put some event together for all of these agencies that are helping us right now. Councilwoman Broussard told Chief Spearman that she supports what he needs in times like that. It is dangerous out there. Mayor Piazza asked Chief Spearman to extend our gratitude to assisting agencies. He has received calls from Mayor's in the surrounding areas. The response has been overwhelming. Chief Spearman stated these agencies that will be helping us will be in cars with us because they do not know the street or have a radio frequency. Being down to two or three units on a shift, calls will be slow and we will not be able to handle some things like escorts. If your constituents call you, please explain that we are doing our best. We will get to them as quick as we can. Mayor Piazza stated the public has a clear understanding of the crisis in the Police Department. It is the Police Chief's job to prioritize the needs and the safety of public in your department so you handle that as you see fit.*

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

ATTEST:

APPROVE:

Kathleen S. Faulk  
Secretary-Treasurer

Mark Piazza  
Mayor