

The Mayor and Council of the City of Abbeville met in regular session on May 21, 2019 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  
Lee Schexnaider, Wastewater Plant Superintendent  
Richard Primeaux, Engineer  
Gene Sellers, Engineer  
Michael Couvillon, Vermilion Parish Sheriff  
Thomas Vallot

*Mayor Piazza asked Mr. Thomas Vallot to lead the assembly in prayer. Mayor Piazza asked Sheriff Michael Couvillon to lead the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance.*

*Sheriff Michael Couvillon stated he started his career in 1982 with Sheriff Euda Delcambre. At that point in time Sheriff Delcambre had approximately 55 employees. The starting salary was \$450.00 per month. In 1984 after Sheriff LeMaire won, he increased the department to 85 employees and the salary was increased to \$1,200 per month. In 2004 after he was elected, he was able to expand the department to 135 deputies. Now deputies start at \$2,800 per month and after one year, if they successfully complete the police academy, the salary is increased to \$3,500 per month. The patrol division is broken down into 7 zones. You have 4 shifts per zone. Each shift has a lieutenant, a sergeant and a dispatcher. Last year we answered over 13,535 calls for service. The parish jail houses 150 inmates. 142 males and 8 females. When the jail is full, we send them to overflow facilities throughout the State. The jail is the worst problem being the Sheriff. The detective division consists of 15 employees. Last year they handled over 800 cases and tagged over 3,000 items as evidence. The civil division serves criminal and civil subpoenas. Last year they served over 23,000 subpoenas. We collect fines, court costs and occupational licenses. We also collected, this past year, over \$32 million of property taxes. This \$32 million is divided up into about 10 different taxing bodies. The school board collects about 41%, the Police Jury about 22%, the drainage board about 15.66% and the Sheriff 9.62%. The narcotics task force, since he became Sheriff, made over 5,000 narcotic cases, seized over 40 vehicles and seized over \$200,000 of illegal narcotic drug money. He thanked Mayor Mark Piazza and the old board that was there in 2004 and the new board that is here today, for allowing us to keep this drug task force in operation. If we save one child, then it is worth having it. The marine division has two 7 and 7 deputies. Last year they rescued over 40 boats. We rescue the person, not the boat. This has decreased our expenses tremendously. In the future, we plan on providing all of our enforcement division with body cameras. We plan on attempting to find funds to expand our deputy education throughout the high schools. We plan on assisting the school board to find*

*grants to provide resource officers in our schools. We are working on something called "Crime Mapping" for the public. The public will be able to access their website and check to see if any homes have been burglarized within a radius of a certain number of miles. This will be similar to the sexual predator program we already have in place. We plan on expanding training for our deputies at the new training facility that will be opening soon. He has been working for the Vermilion Parish Sheriff's office for over 37 years. He worked 15 ½ years in the undercover narcotics division. He was assigned to several federal task forces that brought him to other states and even to Mexico. He worked for the two previous sheriffs. He worked through two major hurricanes and worked closely with the Mayor and previous administrations when 40% of the parish was under water. He was the Sheriff that started the active shooter program in schools. They did not have training before that. He has learned all divisions of the Sheriff's office. He loves being your sheriff. We are fiscally responsible. We have over 1,028 years of law enforcement experience working for you right now. He humbly asks for everyone's support in the upcoming election on October 12, 2019 for the re-election to the position of Vermilion Parish Sheriff.*

*Mayor Piazza stated to the Sheriff how much we appreciate his spirit of cooperation with our Police Department. The task force is such a successful venture and we appreciate the fact that you have brought all the municipalities in the parish to work with you on this task force to help with fighting crime in Vermilion Parish. He thanked Sheriff Couvillon for that.*

*Mayor Piazza asked if there were any comments from the public regarding any agenda item prior to action. There were none.*

-01 introduced by Mr. Francis Plaisance and seconded by Ms. Terry Broussard to approve contract change order #2 for an increase in the time for the Sewer System Extension Project at Alvin Street and Dear Lane. The motion carried unanimously.

-02 introduced by Mr. Francis Plaisance and seconded by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. to approve partial payment number 1 in the amount of \$45,550.30 payable to Teche Construction for the Sewer System Extension Project at Alvin Street and Dear Lane. The motion carried unanimously.

**Touchet/Plaisance**  
**Resolution R19-14**

*A resolution authorizing the Mayor to execute an act of acceptance from Teche Construction Company, Inc. pertaining to the completion of the contract for the sewer system extension project at Alvin Street and Dear Lane.*

*The motion carried unanimously.*

-03 introduced by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. and seconded by Mr. Francis Plaisance to submit the names of Gerald Gaspard, Ronald Gaspard, Lasonya Robertson and Joey Songe to appoint two individuals to the Abbeville Fire and Police Civil Service Board. The motion carried unanimously.

-04 introduced by Mr. Francis Plaisance and seconded by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. to approve the annual contracts for debris removal and for professional engineering services for natural disasters. The motion carried unanimously.

**Touchet/T. Broussard**  
**Resolution R19-15**

*A resolution authorizing the Mayor to execute an intergovernmental agreement with the Vermilion Parish Police Jury to pave the parking lot at the City Event Center.*

*The motion carried unanimously.*

-05 introduced by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. and seconded by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. to award the contract for the addition of a new headworks mechanical screen at the Wastewater Treatment Facility to the apparent responsive low bidder, TYBE Company, at a bid of \$298,500.00. The motion carried unanimously.

*Councilwoman White provided an update on the status of the controlled burn of vegetative debris at Mount Carmel Elementary. We granted the variance about two months ago. We were going to do that during Easter break when the children were out but the weather did not permit us to that. We also had some personnel issues that hindered that. She has followed up with Sister Janet as well as the coaches, the Fire Department and the drainage board. We have outlined a plan for them to attempt the burn after June 7<sup>th</sup> when school is out and when the kids are not practicing. Chief Mire has reached out to the drainage board. Chief Mire stated he worked out the schedule with the drainage board. That Friday (the 7<sup>th</sup>) seems to be a good day and hopefully within two or three Fridays we can get it completed.*

Jude Mire, Fire Chief

- *He had four employees that were planning on retiring. Since the tax has passed, all four of them have decided they will stay another 3 years.*

Councilwoman Terry Broussard

- *Thanked everyone for attending the meeting and thanked Sheriff Couvillon for visiting tonight.*

Councilman Brady Broussard, Jr.

- *Reminded everyone about the Daylily Festival to be held on June 1, 2019 in Magdalen Square.*
- *On June 8, 2019 we will have a free movie in the Square. It is "The Blob" which was filmed in Abbeville.*
- *Encouraged all the public to support our newest downtown business, Brewbacher's. It will open this week.*
- *Parents, school is out so please keep track of your children and keep them safe.*

Councilman Francis Touchet, Jr.

- *There will be a press release tomorrow about him. He is leaving the State of Louisiana Department of Education as of July 1, 2019. He will become the Associate Superintendent of the Lafayette Parish School System. They have a budget of \$500 million that he will be in charge of. They have over 4,000 employees. He will begin that position on 7/1/2019. He will be closer to Abbeville and will not traveling as in the past. He has two years until he has 30 years of service. He will be able to finish off those two years in style.*

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

ATTEST:

APPROVE:

Kathleen S. Faulk  
Secretary-Treasurer

Mark Piazza  
Mayor