

The Mayor and Council of the City of Abbeville met in regular session on August 18, 2020 at 5:30 P.M., at the A. A. Comeaux Recreation Center located at 300 A. A. Comeaux Drive, Suite 200, Abbeville, Louisiana 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
Jason Hebert, Police Lieutenant
Richard Primeaux, Engineer
Gene Sellers, Engineer
Don Landry, Candidate for District Attorney
Gerald Gaspard, American Legion & Chamber of Commerce
Russell Alexis, Russell's Lawn Service
Paul Bourgeois, Police Juror
Wayne Touchet, Police Juror

Mayor Piazza asked Councilman Francis Plaisance to lead the assembly in prayer. Mayor Piazza asked Mr. Gerald Gaspard to lead the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. Don Landry stated he is a candidate for District Attorney. He has a lot of ties to Vermilion Parish. His Mother's family is from Vermilion Parish. He has practiced law for a lot of years. He is the City Attorney for the City of Broussard. He was the Town Attorney for the Town of Erath. He loves the spirit and work ethic of the people of Vermilion Parish. After the hurricanes they were already getting things done and not waiting on the government. He has 34 years of experience with the District Attorney's office. 14 of those were with Nathan Stansbury and 20 were with Mike Harson. This is an opportunity to do what he always wanted to do which is be the District Attorney. He brings a lot of life experiences, a lot of practical experiences and a lot of common sense. His work in the District Attorney's office allowed him to help a lot of people. He is about prosecuting the serious felony offenders but he is also about trying to help people. We need to use some common sense when we evaluate some of these cases. We can help people. Here in Vermilion Parish, there are too many pending murder cases. We need to address this. We need to swing the bat sometimes. We don't have to win every single case but we have to try them. When elected to this office, he will be in Vermilion Parish a lot. We will address the concerns with felony prosecution. His cell phone is on his card and he will not change it. He will work with elected officials. With cooperation we can get this parish going with prosecution. He will evaluate every case. Mayor Piazza stated he is glad that Mr. Landry mentioned prosecuting the tough crimes. He read in the Abbeville Meridional that we had a person of interest under arrest and was in the parish jail for several months on a murder charge. He was in jail on a \$500,000 bail which was reduced by a local judge to \$25,000. This is very discouraging. Come to find out, he was a person of interest in Acadia Parish too. They arrested him immediately and he is now being held on a \$750,000 bond. This case was pending from 2015. He was waiting for 5

years to be tried on murder. Councilman Plaisance added that the bond has now been reduced to \$100,000 so he bonded out. He is out right now on the street. Mr. Landry stated that he met with the mother of the victim and other family members. She is devastated and he can feel for them. This makes me want to work even harder. Five years makes no sense. We have to oppose continuances unless there is a very good reason for it. We have to bring the case to trial. He will supervise the office and make sure this happens.

-01 introduced by Mr. Francis Plaisance and seconded by Ms. Roslyn White to accept the resignation of Michael Touchet from the position of police officer in the Abbeville Police Department. The motion carried unanimously.

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

-03 introduced by Ms. Roslyn White and seconded by Mr. Brady Broussard, Jr. to deviate from the agenda to authorize the Mayor to execute an intergovernmental agreement with the Vermilion Parish Police Jury to overlay three streets: North East, Hawthorne north of Graceland and Nugier west of Alphonse. The motion carried unanimously.

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

Mayor Piazza stated the contract for Russell's Lawn Service ends on November 30, 2020 and he has exhausted his total amount allowed by the contract. When we agreed to the sum to pay Mr. Russell, we agreed to pay \$800.00 per cut then there was a stipulation that the annual amount was not to exceed \$21,600.00. As of his last cut, he will be right at \$21,600.00 and the contract doesn't end until November 30, 2020. We need to either add some additional money to the contract so he can continue to cut a minimum of 3 times per month or the grass will get very long because we do not have the manpower on our staff to do it. He would probably need to cut at least another 6 or 7 times. Mr. Alexis stated the weather caused him to have to cut more and go over the contract total. We were keeping it maintained. Councilman Plaisance stated it is not necessary to have the grass cut there every week. At one period, he cut it five times in a row. We don't need to do that. Three times a month should be sufficient. There were too many cuts. Councilman Touchet suggested that we increase the annual contract amount for this year to \$30,000.00 but have someone from our staff monitor and give permission for each cut over the three. Councilwoman White agreed that a work order should be put in for each cut over the three per month. It should not be cut five times in one month. That is excessive.

-04 introduced by Mr. Francis Touchet, Jr. and seconded by Ms. Terry Broussard to increase the annual contract amount for Russell's Lawn Service to \$30,000.00 for the current year's contract and to make sure someone is supervising the frequency of cuts over three. The motion carried unanimously.

White/T. Broussard
Resolution R20-15

A resolution authorizing the Mayor to execute an intergovernmental agreement with the Vermilion Parish Police Jury to overlay three streets: North East, Hawthorne north of Graceland and Nugier west of Alphonse.

The motion carried unanimously.

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

ATTEST:

APPROVE:

Kathleen S. Faulk
Secretary-Treasurer

Mark Piazza
Mayor