

**OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS**  
**ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST PARISH COUNCIL**  
**TUESDAY, MARCH 27<sup>TH</sup>, 2018**  
**CHAIRMAN LENNIX MADERE**  
**VICE-CHAIR LARRY SNYDER**

The Council of the Parish of St. John the Baptist Parish, State of Louisiana, met in Regular Session in the Joel McTopy Chambers, LaPlace, Louisiana on Tuesday, March 27, 2018, at 6:30 PM.

**CALL TO ORDER:**

**PRESENT AT ROLL CALL:** Kurt Becnel, Councilman District I, Julia Remonet, Councilwoman District II, Lennix Madere, Councilman District III, Marvin Perrilloux, Councilman District IV, Michael Wright, Councilman District V, Larry Snyder, Councilman District VI, Thomas Malik, Councilman District VII, Jaclyn Hotard, Councilwoman-at-Large, Div. B.

**ABSENT:** Larry Sorapuru, Jr.

Councilman Wright led the Prayer. Councilman Becnel led the Pledge.

Legal Counsel, Keith Green, Jr. was present.

**PUBLIC COMMENT - AGENDA ITEMS ONLY (2 minutes per citizen)**

Garrett McMurray and Rae McMurray were present to speak about residential billing. Please see the attached document.

**INTRODUCTION OF BUSINESSES:**

**Lennix Madere/Patricia Triche - Presentation - (Carry Over 3-13-18) St. John the Baptist Parish Early Childhood Community Network**

Patricia Triche stated, "Good evening I see some familiar faces. My name is Ms. Triche, I'm the Director of Early Childhood Head Start for St. John the Baptist Parish School Board, and we thought we'd want to get the word out about Birth to 5 Early Childhood Education in St. John the Baptist Parish. We have programs for every income level in our community, both through the child care centers that are under the LA Department of Education, as well as in the school system. ACT III calls for the establishment of the LA Early Childhood Care and Education Network, which unifies childhood education programs. As you know brain development pretty much is over with by the age of 3, most of the brain development and so the Department of Education is really starting to look at infant through 5 year old education. This statewide network applies to 65 local early child community networks, St. John the Baptist Parish School Board is over St. John the Baptist Parish Early Childhood Community Network. It's very important that you understand that whenever a childcare center now takes money, any kind of federal state money, they're accountable to the same standards that the school system is now with the LA Department of Education. So basically, myself as a lead agency and St. John the Baptist School Board, we go out and actually observe in these childcare centers to make sure that they have the standards that's necessary for education. So we want to let the public know enrollment is now open for the 2018-2019 school year, there are programs available for all income levels, we have unified applications at all schools and we have them on our website. Applications can be turned in at all school sites, we have programs at the schools which are 4

year old programs: West St. John Elementary, Emily C. Watkins, 5<sup>th</sup> Ward Elementary, Lake Pontchartrain Elementary, and we're going to be currently moving to St. John Child Development Center to Garyville Magnet. We have programs available in childcare centers which over: Infant through 5 year old at Garden of Eden, Little Leaders, Devine Hands, Children of God, Wells Wallace, Kids of Distinguished, Kids of Distinction, and Terrance Day Care. At Little Leader and Kids of Distinction, there's actually a tuition free 4 year old program that parents can enter and get their kids in school. And I have a bunch of packets here for you, if you have any constituents that are interested, all of the child care centers have CCAP, which is called Child Care Assistance Program, and as long as they are in school, or they have a job for so many hours, they can get assistance on their childcare, and also eligibility requirements, the schools, their times and a flyer about head start. So we just wanted to provide you with some information and let the public know that early childhood is very important."

Councilman Madere stated, "Okay thank you. We may have some comments from any council members, or questions?"

Patricia Triche stated, "You're welcome."

Councilman Snyder stated, "Ms. Triche, I didn't know these day care centers run under your jurisdiction also. They always did that way?"

Patricia Triche stated, "It's something new, and this is in the 3<sup>rd</sup> year. We have, Louisiana is one of the first that gives actual performance profiles to every school, and the child care centers that are under us. And the ones that I listed for you, we actually are supporting them, we just wrote a Grant for Eighty-eight Thousand Dollars (\$88,000), most of the child care centers I listed are going to have Tier 1 curriculums, which are research based curriculums. And actually I'm going to get trained next year, we're going to start actually observing infant classes. We observe infant, toddler and pre-school classes and they have to raise to a specific standard, and you could on line at LA Believes, which is the State Department of Education and you can get the score of any of these centers."

Councilman Snyder stated, "Good. You say that the brain development, it ends at..."

Patricia Triche interrupting stated, "It doesn't end, but most of brain development in anybody, most of it occurs between birth and 3 years old. And so its research based, and we have to get we have to start educating our little ones. A lot states are way ahead of us, some states have mandatory 4 year old educations in their school systems. I know that Mr. George is really a firm believer in education for our younger, so if you know we don't have a wait list for 4 year olds. So we want 4 year olds in child care or in the school systems in school where there is an actual curriculum and they're being taught with structure and it's a whole process by which we observe them through their interactions, through the environment, through classroom management, through everything in the child care center. And as a matter of fact, they're going to take part in Louisiana Teacher Leader Summit in the end of the year, we send them to trainings, we want them to do right by our children of St. John Parish so we work together."

Councilman Snyder stated, "Good, thank you ma'am."

**Natalie Robottom - New Business - LaPlace Skate Center**

Administration request the above item be removed from the agenda.

**Natalie Robottom - Proclamation - April as Keep St. John Beautiful Month**

Natalie Robottom, Parish President read the proclamation for April as Keep St. John Beautiful Month.

**Natalie Robottom - Proclamation - April as Fair Housing Month**

Natalie Robottom, Parish President read the proclamation for April as Fair Housing Month.

**Natalie Robottom - Proclamation - April as Child Abuse Prevention Month**

Natalie Robottom, Parish President read the proclamation for April as Child Abuse Prevention Month.

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

**ITEMS:** Approval of Minutes - March 13<sup>th</sup>, 2018, Regular Meeting

**MOTION:** Councilman Wright moved and Councilman Perrilloux seconded the motion to approve the consent agenda items consisting of Approval of Minutes - March 13<sup>th</sup>, 2018, Regular Meeting. The motion passed with Councilman Sorapuru absent.

**PUBLIC HEARING ON ORDINANCES:**

**18-04** (Public Hearing Held) An ordinance approving the re-subdivision of Parcel B, Sugar Ridge Subdivision into Parcels B-1 and B-2, Sugar Ridge Subdivision, located in the area generally bounded by Cinclair Loup, West Airline Hwy., Belle Terre Blvd., and N. Sugar Ridge Rd., and containing municipal addresses 1830 and 1840 W. Airline Hwy., LaPlace, LA as shown in a survey prepared by Stephen P. Flynn, P.L.S. on August 31, 2017 (PZS-17-1176) (N. Robottom)

Alex Carter stated, "At the request of the applicant, Administration recommends removal of this item from the agenda."

**MOTION:** Councilman Snyder moved and Councilman Wright seconded the motion remove Ordinance 18-04 from the agenda. The motion passed with Councilman Sorapuru absent.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

Councilman Malik stated, "I would like to make a motion to accept the recommendations of the finance committee."

**MOTION:** Councilman Malik moved and Councilman Becnel seconded the motion to accept the recommendations of the finance committee. The motion passed with Councilman Sorapuru absent.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

There was no old business.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**Larry Snyder - Financing of tap water projects in Water Districts 1 and 2**

**MOTION:** Councilman Snyder moved and Councilman Becnel seconded the motion to TABLE item: Financing of tap water projects in Water Districts 1 and 2 and place on the agenda for the April 10<sup>th</sup>, 2018 meeting. The motion passed with Councilman Sorapuru absent.

**DEPARTMENT/ENGINEER REPORTS:**

**Larry Sorapuru - (Tabled 03-13-18) Council's possible withdrawal from the River Parish Tourist Commission**

The above item will remain TABLED in Councilman Sorapuru's absence.

**Larry Snyder - (Tabled 03-13-18) Update on pending, planning and zoning litigations**

The above item will remain TABLED by the request of Councilman Snyder.

**Lennix Madere - Update on drainage and road repair in District III**

Verdell Kindrick stated, "All items identified on East 26th Street have been completed. This includes the installation of 3 yard drains at the designated locations and the re-sloping of a driveway apron. Improvements of the driveway aprons on Melius Dr. are still underway and should be completed within the next two weeks, weather permitting. The 2018 Road List has been submitted to the Council and Parish Engineer to develop cost estimates."

Councilman Madere stated, "I got a smile today. I saw the list for the road repair and I pretty much agree with it. You know I could have barked a little bit and asked for warm water to, one or two more..."

Natalie Robottom interrupting stated, "Can you say that louder? A little bit louder, little bit louder, and over and over and over."

Councilman Madere stated, "Oh, I'm going to agree with it for now, I agree for now. I could have barked a little louder but I'm pretty satisfied, I'm pretty satisfied with the amount of money and the amount of street that they during in my district. And I know we can put on the next fiscal year, road repair we can add a couple of more streets. But the ones you have listed, are definitely the ones that really need some repair that was damaged during the construction of the drainage project because those roads were definitely torn up. Only one question, you said on 26<sup>th</sup> you said you're going all the way to the curb, right? From curb of 26<sup>th</sup>?"

Natalie Robottom stated, "We'll have them take a look at it, but it seems like from the curb forward, is in fairly good shape. So that's what I think Joseph responded today, and we asked that if they see anything other than what we noticed to please let us know. I do, I would like to let Ms. Remondet know, we did look at several streets in your area, however they're in that project area, so rather than damaging them and having to come back and do them. We do have them on 2019 list, and several of the other ones as well. I want to thank Mr. Travis Perrilloux who actually took me around to take a look at some of the ones on the list. We actually added some and added some for future years, of course we're trying to you know get the ones that are the most damaged and the most frequently used. But we are going to continue doing this. There's about 14 on the list right now, depending on what Mr. Savoie comes back with, if there's additional money we'll add additional roads, if not, we'll have to make some adjustments."

Councilman Madere stated, "Additional roads sounds like us."

Natalie Robottom stated, "Now there's a, you know we had a good visit in that area."

Councilman Madere stated, "Okay now concerning the drainage project, I heard the report but I have two things to add to it. Not add to it, I showed Mr. Verdell the picture yesterday and I'm going to pass it over to administration to look at it. That's 361, the lady called and said this is how they left her property. They did a little insert drain, okay so I just took a picture of it so they need to go back and address that area, and address that area you know, you know they just threw..."

Natalie Robottom interrupting asked, "What's the address again, 361?"

Councilman Madere stated, "Three sixty-one (361)."

Verdell Kindrick stated, "Three sixty-one (361)."

Councilman Madere stated, "And they just threw some slab..."

Natalie Robottom interrupting asked, "On what street I'm sorry?"

Councilman Madere stated, "On East 26<sup>th</sup>. They just went down there and threw some slab of grass down there and no kind of pattern you know, cut a slot you know in her yard for the drain you know so, they need to address that. Okay and one other thing, when we took the walk through, okay they told me that they did, it was two (2) individuals complaining about them moving the property lines they had their property surveyed, and one they put it back the other one they didn't. Okay but they told us they did but they didn't. And that address is 538 on East 24<sup>th</sup> Street."

Natalie Robottom stated, "I have it."

Councilman Madere stated, "Okay so they have to put her property line back cause you know that's a survey she paid for. So the other guy the other person they did it."

Verdell Kindrick stated, "Ok."

Councilman Madere stated, "Okay so thank you."

Councilman Snyder asked, "Is that one of the objects on the punch list?"

Councilman Madere stated, "Yes, yes."

Councilman Snyder asked, "Punch list?"

Councilman Madere stated, "Yeah. It's been on the punch list, well put it like this; it's been on the punch list for 6 months, I told them about it you know."

**Larry Snyder/Lennix Madere - Update on certified motion directing the administration to request information from the Tourist Commission on the process to withdraw our membership from the commission**

Natalie Robottom stated, "I think you guys got a copy of the letter. I don't know"

that we've gotten a response but you got the letter."

Councilman Snyder stated, "We got the letter that you sent to the Tourist Commission and that's what we asked them to do, now it's in their court."

Councilman Madere stated, "Okay we satisfied."

Councilman Snyder stated, "I know I'm satisfied with that till our next movies come on."

Councilman Madere stated, "Alright thank you."

**Thomas Malik - Update on the Utility Billing Cycle - electronic and manual readings**

Blake Fogleman stated, "As discussed with Councilman Malik, a new meter reading process was implemented on March 1st with objectives of: 1) Obtaining consistent billing cycles (approx. 30 days); and 2) Conducting actual reads rather than averaging. Using the new schedule, approximately 70% of all meters will be read manually in a 30 day cycle, including customers with previous adjustments. We anticipate that 100% of the meters will be read manually in a 30 day cycle within six (6) months."

Councilman Malik asked, "What's the total number of meters that we have?"

Blake Fogleman stated, "It's roughly 17,300 is the number that I use. I use a higher one just because I know it's a number of accounts, right. And so, what's active what's not active, but the last one I used is 17,300."

Councilman Malik asked, "So what's the total number of meters, that actually reading as of the latest?"

Blake Fogleman stated, "I haven't got this month's totals cause we're still working through the end of this month. But I'm again, I'm using from when I started whenever I set this in place in March, it's roughly 6,000, 6-7,000, in between there is what's reading electronically. And we've picked up this month you know almost equal to that in manual reads."

Councilman Malik asked, "What's your daily expectation for manual reads?"

Blake Fogleman stated, "They're roughly reading an average of 250."

Councilman Malik stated, "250."

Blake Fogleman stated, "Depending on how many personnel I can break free. That's three (3) full-time meter readers and then some supplemental people. There's a temporary that works half a week and then there's a couple of other people that do other jobs that we pull in whenever we get to bigger cycles to try and knock out."

Councilman Malik asked, "So that's three (3) dedicated to manual reads only?"

Blake Fogleman stated, "Yes sir."

Councilman Malik stated, "Ok. Couple things, do you have any plans to improve your website?"

Blake Fogleman stated, "Yes sir. And I know we discussed that at link, we're trying to add what we can to it as far as the, I mean like the new I think it took a while last year to get up the rates, the rates that are up right now are 2018 rates. When I took over in December were looking to update the Utilities website as a whole, but with this kind of being under utilities as well, I think we kind of took a step back and said let's refocus and kind of merge those websites, and kind of bring it full circle and have it all integrated. Unfortunately that hasn't been just yet so."

Councilman Malik asked, "So this would also include items to assist the residents in reading their bill, understanding how water usage is, you want to put all that stuff in there too?"

Blake Fogleman stated, "Yeah I've been developing some of just the water usages, just some numbers. It's just to get perspectives on what to expect and it may be high it may be low, but at least put you in the ball park so that people can understand what they expect to use in a household on a given day or a given month for that matter. We also discussed I think you and I discussed potential of putting something on that may generate a bill or usage generator, a calculator on there that's some discussions we're trying to have and trying to see if you can go in and plug in your consumption and it would generate a potential bill for you and see."

Councilman Malik asked, "I completely forgot to look but do you have the updated charts? The updated rate chart for 2018?"

Blake Fogleman stated, "Yes sir. So the 2018 rates are there and I spoke to a few residents on it, there's another chart that they have seen in the past and that I'm trying to make sure I get that up. It's one that actually calculates it all there. So it goes down and actually calculates if you use a 60, if you use a 70, it gives a cost next to it. Rather than having to calculate it out you can just find the number on it and it spits out a number for that usage. I think in the past the parish has put that up and were trying to facilitate that as well."

Councilman Malik stated, "Okay...let's see let me ask you something. The digital versus the analog, how many of these things how many of the digitals are dying per month? What percent do you think we're losing?"

Blake Fogleman stated, "I don't have that and I'd have to go back and look at. I'm trying to get this month's totals of what was actually picked up and then I can go back and do a historical check on that. I know for a while because we were running estimates, for a while that was the number of actual reads we were getting a month. So it shouldn't be a difficult number to access."

Councilman Malik stated, "Do you know have any idea of how many registers have been replaced in the past couple of years?"

Blake Fogleman stated, "Based on my original conversation when I was just sitting third party, I know at the time of I think when Ross got here, which I guess was a year and a half two years ago there was two to three thousand that were already replaced at that point. I'd have to track the numbers since then."

Councilman Malik asked, "But the analog is continuing to work?"

Blake Fogleman stated, "Yes sir."

Councilman Malik stated, "So it sounds like the expectation is that as you go through each month, they're going to be able to increase the number of manual reads per month."

Blake Fogleman stated, "That is absolutely my expectation. And I think there is going to be a time where there may be some barrier right, and at that time we want to get there. I think if we would have tried to read a 100% this month in 30 days, I think we would have gotten there and I think we could have done it, I think it was with the current staff and a normal work load I think it was not able to be consistently held back at that you know at that, I think we would have fell behind at some point and I think we would have been back at the same point. So my intent was try and get a baseline of this month, and unfortunately it takes a whole month to get data point in this you know is this billing system, and so we have that data point now. So we plan on the same personnel going to the same routes, they're seeing their numbers they read last month, you know starting April 1<sup>st</sup>, they're going to know where they're going and they going to know what numbers they read last month and we're going to try and shoot for a better number than last month."

Councilman Malik stated, "Correct me if I'm wrong. But you said your expectations is to get a 100% read in a 3 month period?"

Blake Fogleman stated, "I put 6 months down, the Parish President actually pushed me to try and put a number down it's hard to do with one data point, but absolutely want to shoot for that. In 3 months I'm certainly going to access where we stand, and then I think make a bigger decision or presentation to you guys as far as what I think we need to achieve that, if not just moving forward."

Councilman Malik asked, "With the, which I think is a good start. I guess the big thing is this in speaking with a lot of residents, they've had eleven (11), twelve (12), sometimes eighteen (18) estimations in the past 18 months. How far back do you retain historical data?"

Blake Fogleman stated, "Electronically in the current system it's 18 months. There's a manual back-up, we actually were investigating that today. I was trying to see how they would manipulate it and get into the archives and get in to all that. It's a very manual heavy process, but they do have it and I went to most recent back, so I didn't go I mean we made it into I think I was in thirteen (13) today when I was looking at it. But I have a feeling it goes a lot further back because they were just basically taking snap shots before they lost the data on the eighteen (18) month, they would take a snap shot of it and archive that. So it's very, archived it's very manual and it's something were pushing to get away from so that we can have better data or more usable."

Councilman Malik stated, "Yeah I guess the big concern is that if I'm a resident with, I don't know pick a number, 13! Thirteen (13) months since my last actual reading, I can actually go to my register, take a look at it, and I can find out my exact usage for those 13 months. I think in some cases we're going to find that we had residents that were overestimated and then under estimated."

Blake Fogleman stated, "Yes sir. I've seen both of those."

Councilman Malik stated, "I think I probably the only one that you're dead on, but for the 17,299 other residents of the parish, I think this really warrants an audit of each and individual account."

Blake Fogleman stated, "We're handling it case by case, I'll say that. And I think that and again, if we would have read a 100% in this month, I think there would be a bigger concern because that would be a lot more of these accounts would be drawn to the surface. And I know a lot of people have waited patiently for a long time for a solution and I think we're getting there, but to process those in a timely manner with the number that we would have to process I think is a difficult thing. So starting with this increase 30% or 35% increase in actuals we're doing, we're trying to set a baseline on how we handle these cases or we're trying to understand these cases on a case by case and I think we're going to move forward month to month with these additional actual reads that come in the upcoming months, we'll have a better understanding of how this is going to work and how we're going to process these you know each one at a time."

Councilman Malik asked, "Are your employees having difficulties locating some of the registers?"

Blake Fogleman stated, "They are."

Councilman Malik asked, "How are they finding them?"

Blake Fogleman stated, "Well right now we're actually, the intent is not to spend as much time on locating individual meters as I was looking at it, everything is worth on point and I know that's just a very basic way of looking at it. If I'm spending four (4) hours trying to look for a meter, there's maybe forty (40) more meters I could be actually reading and getting that correct. We are generating a list of ones that they can't find, and we do intend from utilities maintenance standpoint to try to assist them and to get those uncovered and move forward."

Councilman Malik asked, "So you're like probing around?"

Blake Fogleman stated, "They are, I mean they have in the past and I think in though it may have not been as structured in the past they have located some of these meters and they have assisted in moving this along. Some of these personnel do know where these meters are, it's because of what they have been doing for the last 2½ years even though it hasn't been as structured as what we're laying out right now. So we've actually made a lot of progress with some of these people that know what where these are, they located one last year at some point, because there was an issue with the meter and they've actually locate it and it helped us move right along into this process now. But as it stands today, we're trying to get the number of meters that are uncovered, and as many as we can read of those, and along the way we're going to try handle some of these ones that are buried and try and tackle those alongside of it. But the goal is to try and get everything that we can put our hands on read, that's the big immediate goal."

Councilman Malik stated, "But essentially March the 1<sup>st</sup> is, that's your first data point?"

Blake Fogleman stated, "Yes sir. And I think you'll see and I think you'll see on the billing on when those bills come out, the dates are all correct, the dates match the due dates they're given 15 days. If you take your current bill from March and compare it to the bills previously, you'll see that those dates don't the days due on consumption but the dates that we have printed on those bills are going to show a little bit of a gap. And again, because I hit the reset button on March 1<sup>st</sup> to start reading again."

Councilman Malik stated, "Ok."

Blake Fogleman stated, "Consumption wise it hasn't changed, but there was some manipulations of those dates to try and expand and give people more time to pay because of the way they were trying to run the billing system previously."

Councilman Malik stated, "I spoke with a resident who is in Butch's District, whose eighteen (18)..."

Blake Fogleman interrupting stated, "I saw a few of it."

Councilman Malik stated, "Yeah, let me ask you. How are you going to calculate that to, so that it's fair to both the resident and the parish?"

Blake Fogleman stated, "I don't know that there's a dead on solution right now, but I would say it that we're going to know next month exactly what they use. And that's what we're going to go off of. If this is what they've been paying and I have no way of telling them that they have used anything more or less of this water over the last eighteen (18) months or twenty-four (24) months, we don't know how far back that goes. That could have been dead since '08, you know and that's all they've ever known is estimated bills. What we're trying to do is get that baseline, and that's what the hard part is to get to jump from that estimate to that actual. But from March to April, we know what they're going to use and that's and I guess that's what we're kind of caught in that flux right now between estimates and actuals and trying to find out it's a case by case when it comes to those, sitting down with that resident understanding what that resident's household is like, what they're using and trying to adjust five of the numbers that's coming up on that bill when we get an actual reading."

Councilman Malik stated, "Ok. I've also received a number of complaints about the quite frankly these rude employees of course I'm saying you know, it's describing this person. Do they have name tags or anything?"

Blake Fogleman stated, "Um I don't think everybody does, cause I think we interact with a lot of different people. And not everybody and there may be even some people that sit in the back that were never intentionally intentional to be in front of personnel that I've heard in front of residents that are now because of our situation. So I don't think that's a bad idea."

Councilman Malik stated, "Yeah you know we're all here to you know serve the residents. Even though they are our boss and I don't see the problem with; Good Morning, Yes or Thank You Very Much, Yes Ma'am kind of answers. But in some cases it's, I've never experienced it, I've never had to come in and complain about bills or anything but in some instances there's almost a feeling of; You're Bothering Me, Go Somewhere Else kind of attitude with some of the employees. Which I don't think should really be tolerated, you had something yes go ahead."

Councilwoman Hotard stated, "I just have a question."

Councilman Wright asked, "Blake, how many meter reader do we have right now?"

Blake Fogleman stated, "We have three (3) full time manual meter readers, we're currently utilizing two (2) meter readers to do electronic reads, they flip flop duties and that's kind of our floater, and then we have one that does disconnects and reconnects."

Councilman Wright asked, "How many did we have when you came in as Director?"

Blake Fogleman stated, "Um I didn't really know but I'm just trying to piece

everybody, I think roughly it was the same amount. To be honest with you I think it was. They were doing different duties but I think it was roughly the same amount."

Councilman Wright asked, "You and I have led to discussion about your plan and I've told you that I am cautiously optimistic. But start of this discussion with you and I was a resident who had their water bill after I think 7 months, 7 or 8 months after estimation, and I know it was a \$700 and I think Rob you were at the meeting, almost \$800 water bill. My concern again was just like everybody's, the length of time that it takes to estimate the bill. The same resident after we had this meeting a discussion the same resident got another estimated bill, I was on the same billing cycle I got an estimated bill and somebody on the other side the billing cycle on the another whole other neighborhood, different highway got an estimated bill who was I think 10 months estimated. So even with the estimations they're not consistent within their own billing cycle. So that's why I had request last week, I wanted to know what that individual bill (and I'm still waiting on that information), about that individual billing cycle, what days were they supposed to be reading those meters and I want the GPS reports for those days. If I have to get them for every hour of those days, please give it to me. But I want to know where were they for that billing cycle, and why were they not reading every meter? Why is there inconsistencies even when we're on the same cycle on the same street?"

Blake Fogleman stated, "Right. So okay so I know the case that you're speaking of and I know we've talked about internal as well is, there are some that request rereads and that's this specific case that may not fall within a route, which you know depending on the cycle I have 5-10 routes in each cycle right? But, may not fall on the route that I, to keep us on a 30 day, what we're having to do is; allocating X amount of days per cycle depending on the size of it. So if I can't get to every meter, we're moving on. And I have to because I have to get to the other cycles to give a 30 day bill. So that 70% is not from Number 0 to 70%, that 70% is from the start of each cycle to a certain point in that cycle. Because again, if it's 7 days that I'm allocated to go electronically read that area and that fits in a 30 day cycle of me getting a bill out then I have to stick to those 30 days. I will say this is the past and when I discuss this, that is where they were trying to do manual reads previously, they were getting caught. Cause they were staying in that cycle, try to complete a complete cycle and they were pushing back the next cycle and the next cycle the next cycle and they have to; oh we got to hurry and estimate everything. So even through a one month billing it wasn't consistent, so the first half of the parish would be read, the second half of the parish would be completely all estimates. But then you didn't do the same cycle, you didn't do consistently do the same thing the next month the next month to get better at it. So, there is going to be some of that inconsistency in the sense that if I didn't get to that route, it's unfortunately going to be another estimate one month. My expectation is that I'm going to attempt to get to that next month. And then it would be consistently if you read last month you should be read this month and consistently from that point forward. And we only would be billing on that to go from 70% to more. I would have to take a look at those specific addresses cause I did see it and see exactly what routes they fell into, and if I even cause I have a log that I know where everybody was and how many meters were read and that and when they completed that route. I don't have to go to GPS so much as to look at that, and if it doesn't collate, then I would go to something and say, wait a second they said they completed something maybe I need to go look at a more on GPS. But at that point for our discussion or for a further discussion with that situation, I think I can look at my charts and tell you, this is where they were this is what they read, you're in route whatever,

yeah we read half of that I couldn't get to all of them because I had to cut them off to move to the next cycle to keep us on track."

Councilman Wright asked, "And I could understand that, but when you're talking total different geographic areas and some, one part of that same billing cycle is getting an actual reading every month and they may have a few estimations but then the other side is getting constant estimations for seven (7), eight (8), nine (9), ten (10) months, that sounds more than poor planning, it's poor management. So, you know please provide that information and I would like to see the GPS reports for those days they were supposed to be reading that billing cycle."

Blake Fogleman stated, "Okay."

Councilwoman Hotard stated, "Thank you Councilman Madere. I have just a couple of quick questions. The first, and I've asked this for a while and I know Blake you just got in, but I requested this even over a year ago. But at what point will we have a true billing, like an online billing system? Such as when I go to my Entergy account, I log in I see what my last bill was, my consumption, my bill it sends me an email, you know Jaclyn; Hello your bill is ready for view. When will have that capability implemented?"

Blake Fogleman stated, "With any implementation with a new program or a new system it's all billing side or I'm sorry meter side, that is built in to a lot of those newer AMI Programs which is automated programs and they service that all in house. Currently we go through 3<sup>rd</sup> party and it has nothing to do with our software that we deal with. Munis is supposed to come online and when Munis comes online I know on the billing end, it's going to help us a lot. I don't know on the customer portal, I think it's more of a financial software for the parish government. We would have to go 3<sup>rd</sup> party and but the other, the only other option is to go with the, it's when the meter program comes online. So it's when whatever is decided on, on the path forward with the meters and whatever decision is made there that's when that's going to be built in. I don't know that's there anything I'm not very satisfied with the current whatever we're using, but I know we're trying to get to that next step where, because the customer portal is where it's at. It's where somebody can go in and even go in and look at their daily consumption to try and check and it can send a flag if it gets over a certain many of gallons in a day and send you an email. Like those are the types of things where we're getting at so that we can provide that information cause it's that's where we are in 2018, is wanting that instantaneous data. And certainly with the concerns that people have had of our system in the past. You know we want to build that confidence back. So it is just tied to whatever next upgrade we do Ms. Hotard, I think that's where it's going to be."

Councilwoman Hotard stated, "Let me ask this or say this. Whether we upgrade to a new water meter or whether we go back to a manual read, no matter what method we use to actually read the meters, we still need to implement a billing system that allows the customer portal. So, I don't want to feel like until we decide which direction we're going, which my question two and three are going to build on that, we should have whether it's through 3<sup>rd</sup> party and I even suggested that over a year ago, it's, there's no word that I can actually say on TV right now to describe the system that we have. Customers should be able just like all the other utilities to go in and see the bill, because then this whole issue that we have now where the bills are getting out on time, they're not getting mailed, you're getting an erroneous disconnect notice, for those of us who do use that use technology you would be able to at least log in and see ok, this was really

done in era. You know this was current, it would actually take some of the calls from the Utilities Department if we could have it. So the, and I'm saying that to say the answer isn't it depends on which direction we're going with the billing system. I want to know whether it's through CFO, when will you come to the Council or CFO or Natalie come to us and say; This is the 3<sup>rd</sup> party we can use or this is what we can use to have regular online billing systems for our customers. Just as all of the other utilities have them. The system we have like I said, there's no word that I can say now even when you want to go and actually pay, you get kicked out, your password's got to be updated, so I mean its nonsense and all of the utilities just work so beautifully. So I mean it's possible and it's not even 2018 technology, this is you know 2005 technology we're just behind it. So when will we have something presented to us to say, this is what we could do, this is what it's going to cost, we're already paying this 3<sup>rd</sup> party company two dollars (\$2) every month to collect the payments, I want an answer on that."

Blake Fogleman stated, "So I will say in the short term it's a 9 month process."

Councilwoman Hotard asked, "To come to us with a recommendation?"

Blake Fogleman stated, "To be able to implement to, for any newer technology to engage to the level of what you're asking for based on the AS400 system that we are operating, that is the most basic we can do, I mean with bill it's in my opinion to top it out with producing the bills that it produces on a given month."

Councilwoman Hotard asked, "So its 9 months from the date that you all actually decide to implement a system?"

Blake Fogleman stated, "Well that's the next module in Munis that is supposed to be implemented in the parish and with the financial system."

Councilwoman Hotard stated, "So you're saying 9 months from today we're going to have a customer portal where..."

Blake Fogleman interrupting stated, "We're going to have a software that it's going to give us, in conjunction we can have that, yes. Because we would have a software that would allow us to the billing side to generate what it needs to generate to integrate with a 3<sup>rd</sup> party system that is maybe a little more up to date than what we're currently working with, yes."

Councilwoman Hotard asked, "You want to answer that?"

Councilman Madere stated, "Wait, wait, wait a minute once again. I'll let him answer that. Okay, he already spoken to that he wanted to speak next. So I'm going to control that."

Councilwoman Hotard stated, "Well I just want to make sure that maintain the floor because I have two other questions."

Councilman Madere stated, "I got you. I got you I saw him."

Councilwoman Hotard stated, "You got it."

Robert Figuero, CFO stated, "Thank you Councilman. To answer your question, the current billing utility system will not allow us to do what you want. So we have to upgrade our system. Again you said 2005 technology, this technology is from

1980."

Councilwoman Hotard stated, "Yeah."

Robert Figuero stated, "So it can't possibly do what you are looking for it to do. With that said, the parish has purchased a new RP software program that will get us to that point or allow us to do that. However, it has to be implemented. We just finished implementing the financial aspect of it, and the next module that we have purchased already is the billing utility aspect of it. However, from the time that we began the implementation of it, it's a 9 month implementation. So from the time we start implementing that process we're estimating 9 months just to get it up and running, because again you're talking about implementation, training, conversion, everything has to be done manually from the old system to the new system, so it's a very cumbersome process. And this is our consulting company that we purchased the software from, it's telling us 9 months what to do implantation. So from the time that we start that implementation I'm not going to say 9 months exactly from that day, because as with this financial software when we left live on January 1<sup>st</sup>, we had our bumps and bruises and then we're still working through a lot of processes and we're getting there, but again it's a time it's a cumbersome process that will take time, but it has been purchased. It's just a matter of when we started implementing and was impossible for us to implement simultaneously, because again you have to have influence of financials side of the house first prior to bringing in the utility billing portion of it, so again that is on the table, we are in the process of getting to that point where we can start that implementation and hopefully in the fore civil future we we'll start implementing that. But again, it's a 9 month implementation from the start of that process."

Councilwoman Hotard stated, "Thank you and whenever I mentioned 2005 I wasn't talking about our technology, I was talking about the capability, yet the rest of the world has been able to have online logins at least as long as I can remember to login into Entergy, and ATMOS and AT&T. So it's not like this is a 2018 technology that just happened a month ago and I'm expecting you to have it rolled out tomorrow. This is something that's been out there for a long time. But again, the question, When? I don't want a long paragraph. I want to know when will we have it available where our customers can login, see their bills and get an email if they subscribe to the system that says; Hey your bill is ready, go online to pay it. When will we have that?"

Blake Fogleman stated, "I will check with our current system to see if there's any upgrades we can get through that in the interim. But as it stands from what we're looking for is 9 months and we can do a coincide with that 9 month process."

Councilwoman Hotard asked, "But 9 months from when? 9 months from right now? Jackie put it on the agenda, I will, just provide me with a date in two weeks. Cause I don't want you to keep giving me this long, long, long answer."

Councilwoman Hotard stated, "I have two more questions. The second thing, we asked, this council asked at several meetings a few meetings most recently, to get a report from administration on whether not we were going to look at manual reading, or go back to I mean go back to manual reading or continue with purchasing of the software, we even brought up if it means us redoing let's say the job descriptions so that we can attract the candidate or if we go the route of contractors. That was, I wasn't at the last meeting so that's at least a month ago that we've made this request. Are you ready to deliver to us a report on

which way we need to go, what's the cost on both routes and have we actually looked at having outside contractors read the meters in the interim?"

Blake Fogleman stated, "To your first question, no we're not ready."

Councilwoman Hotard stated, "Not ready to provide..."

Blake Fogleman interrupting stated, "To present anything officially. I will say we've have had conversations with plenty, plenty of people. Including 3<sup>rd</sup> party contractors or private utility companies that use 3<sup>rd</sup> party contractors, so we've had lot of that discussion. I got some rough numbers, I am currently waiting on somebody to give me an official number from a company for the exact number of meters we have, but I got a rough estimate of like a \$1.50 to \$1, I think it was a \$1.25 to \$1.50 a meter is what I was told you know just in a conversation. But that's nothing official that I've gotten on paper, that's not a proposal, of course that's having access to every meter that's having it all above ground, that's having it ready to walk up to and read, which we know that's not the case currently. So there is a lot of factors in that, but we're not ready officially, but we are working on it."

Councilwoman Hotard stated, "Let me say this and I know Blake you just came into this, but I requested this information probably a year ago. To give us a side-by-side comparison, this was when we were actually putting RFP's, it's like you're a broken record up here. It gets exhausting, you get tired of coming you're talking about the same thing it's like you're useless, but almost a year ago I asked for a side-by-side comparison because we as a body are going to be asked to vote to purchase a new meter system, very expensive millions of dollars without really having the knowledge of is this the way to go. Can we afford a Cadillac system, we can afford a Cadillac but can we afford to maintain it, do we need to go back to manual reading? That's over a year ago. We should at least have received some information so that we can know which direction we're going. We still don't know which direction we're going, right now! And we asked to have the road map a year ago. So I'm asking, put that on the agenda too. At the next meeting provide to us (and it requested a year ago) so this is a timely request. Provide to this Council, Option A, Option B and C: Option A) Would be manual readings with employees; Option B) Electronic Readings; Option C) Manual Reading with contractors. And we want to be able to look and see how much this is going to cost us, what direction we need to go in. Right now we're just spinning our wheels, I can't even tell the public what we're going to do tomorrow. It's not that we have not asked for it. So that's what I'd like to get in two weeks; Option A, B, and C, and if there's anything else that you all would like to add to it that will help us in that decision making process, please provide it but at the minimum I'd like that information."

Blake Fogleman stated, "If you don't mind as I get closer to putting that on paper, I may reach out to you just try to fine tune and see if there is anything else you'd thought of and want to add, absolutely."

Councilwoman Hotard stated, "Thank you."

Councilman Snyder stated, "Let's bring this discussion down a little bit to a level where probably about 75% of our people who is listening can get a better understanding of what we're doing. Are we still getting erroneous readings often? Like a lady came in here last week and had an \$1800 bill?"

Blake Fogleman stated, "Well the issue is not erroneous in a sense that it's just

a random number. In some cases it's a sku'd number and what we're seeing is that when we're converting, when we achieved till we read 5,000 more people this month than we have in the past. Of the, when we read those 5,000 they had gotten estimated bills up to a certain point. And we've talked about it, it may be eight, ten, twelve, fourteen months. If we either underestimated or overestimated, that number is going to look a little crazy. Because that actual read is going to make up the difference one way or the other, whether it's going to be I mean we've seen some that showed a negative consumption for a month. Because we've overbilled in the past and had to sit down and do an adjustment and do a credit you know on the opposite end. More than likely we're hearing a lot of the ones and they're saying, I have a high bill and that's because we've underestimated for so many months. So yes, we are having those and we're going to see unfortunately we're going to see more of those, because as we continue to get from estimates actuals, that's going to happen more often. The goal of the consistency that we're going to read you actually from month to month is that we're not going to allow that to happen again. We're not wanting to get flipped back into any and Councilman Wright eluted to that, where we don't want to slip back in to, I'm going to come read you on time, we're going to go through this process and figuring out your bill and working with you in trying to correct it and I'm going to go right back into estimating to month to month to month to month. Cause as soon as I get another actual, you going to come to me again and with the same issue and we don't want to perpetuate that issue."

Councilman Snyder asked, "So what really is an estimated bill? How do you estimate a bill?"

Blake Fogleman stated, "The estimated bill is based in it's in our software, it's in AS400 actually performs an estimation based on historical data that it does have."

Councilman Snyder stated, "In layman terms."

Blake Fogleman stated, "The program does it, and takes its history and tries to calculate the best, best closest estimation to what your water usage would be for that month. And it's obviously not always right. Except for Mr. Malik's case. I mean I know it's unfortunate I don't mean to laugh about it, because it's a serious situation that we're trying to work on so..."

Councilman Snyder stated, "I heard one of our constituents came and mentioned the fact and it kind of aroused my attention a little bit, the fact that, every month the last bill is going to drop off so you know what's going to happen to the estimate? You know I was looking at an estimate when we started having these problems. I think Mr. Madere and I talked about that and I went back and looked at my bill for 18 months on the computer and I could have averaged my bill. You know I could have averaged it out, and I thought maybe that maybe that was an average, but now we're saying we the computer doing this work or the software doing this work and that's how we get these estimates, maybe that's how we're getting these erroneous rates. With the average, are we getting erroneous readings or we're just getting readings because it was averaged one week and next month it was read manually?"

Blake Fogleman stated, "Yeah and what I've been working on and what I've seen since you know I've gotten engaged that your second explanation. When we go from estimations to actual, is when that bill and some call it a spike and some call it erroneous reading, but that's when you see a consumption that is not consistent with a monthly use. And on one way or the other, it's a consumption

that's not consistent which then turns a bill into a bill that's consistent with a single monthly use in a normal household. And if you've been making up for old bills you know under billing in the past, or it's you get a credit because you're not you get basically zero because you know we've overestimated you for so long. So it's on both sides of the...

Councilman Snyder interrupting stated, "If I then got into this, if I then got into this this I don't know what you want to call a paranormal whereas now I got this bill here for \$300. It's not, three hundred dollars (\$300) is a lot of money, some people it's not very much some people it's a month's income, if I would have gotten into this situation whereas now I can't pay all this bill, and if I don't pay it, I still get the added charges, am I right? The penalties? Each month that I carry a bill or I try and pay a little bit on it, I still get the added charges? Am I right?"

Blake Fogleman stated, "Yes from a program standpoint. So the program automatically does that. And then it's not to say that that's..."

Councilman interrupting Snyder asked, "So I'm getting charged a penalty if I don't pay the whole bill?"

Blake Fogleman stated, "Well that's a case by case discussion, you're being charged on the bill. It's not to say that you're going to have to pay that. It's just saying that that's it's nature of the program, it's going to run any outstanding bill and run a penalty on that bill. We will work case by case, and we work with individuals to inform that in certain cases that's not going to apply if we're open and honest and we work with each other on these bills."

Councilman Snyder asked, "And we've got people and I understand where you're coming from, and I'm trying to make a point here is that, you know penalties can keep add up, people just can't catch up. Now, there is situations you say as where we just stop, we don't charge the penalties? But they can come in and talk to Norma."

Blake Fogleman stated, "Right. The difficulty is that if month to month if it's a bill that needs to pay it off be paid off over time and if it's month to month, that is us stopping and adjusting the penalty every time that bill goes out. And what like to do in a conversation or in an agreement or anything we sit down and talk with a resident on, is say that; hey I'm more worried about if you say \$300 Councilman, I'm worried about that \$300. So when you're satisfied paying that \$300, then we'll talk about any of this extras, the penalties. But that is on a case to case, case by case. It has to be something that you can't just be ignored obviously if you're just not paying your bill. This is on a specific case that you're discussing on a bill that came out that it was higher because of a leak, or because of the situation we're currently, you know anything like that that's brought to Norma's attention or the staff's attention, we'll work with that individual resident and work toward."

Councilman Snyder asked, "So they got to come in and get that done?"

Blake Fogleman stated, "Yes sir. To be aware that that is on the books and we're tracking everybody now, we're trying to put everybody on a list that we're working with so that we can ensure that we're closing these things out and moving forward down the line with actual accurate reads. That's what we're working towards."

Councilman Snyder asked, "And we do have people on plans now?"

Blake Fogleman stated, "We do have some, but I mean we've discussed on several meetings that those don't always work out in the favor of anyone for that matter, because they don't people don't hold to it and it's we've tried historically."

Councilman Snyder stated, "I'm looking down there and I think I mentioned this before, is that we're not going to collect the money that's owed to us unless we do something. And if we keep putting penalties on it, then they're going to keep going up and I understand that. They didn't pay the bill it's high, so you got to do something. I'm still and advocate of, coming up with plans you understand that? I mean I don't know if you even thought about this, but I know I mentioned it a couple of times, but have you even gave it any thought, that's entirely up to you but we're still having problems over here. And that, why can't we have a plan whereas you pay this bill off, but here's your regular bill. You've got to pay both, you've got to pay both every month. Now if you miss paying them, then we're going to cut you off. This to me would help us collect some of the money, because I know what's going to happen, people just going to get somebody else to put a meter in their yard and they're going to change the name and that's going to be it. We going to lose that money..."

Natalie Robottom interrupting stated, "Mr. Snyder that's how it's supposed to work. Just what you said, they're supposed to pay their current bill..."

Councilman interrupting Snyder asked, "Well you're saying pay your current bill, like a \$500 bill..."

Natalie Robottom interrupting stated, "Like the month bill. Pay your bill for the month, okay which is your current bill. And then typically you know it doesn't make sense for you to enter into an agreement at an amount they can't pay. So that's where the individual discussion comes in. If you have a \$300 back bill, how much can you pay of this a month? It might take you 6 months, but you got to pay it over 6 months, but you also have to keep your bill current. That's it how it's supposed to work. And again if you're on a payment plan you're not supposed to be penalized, but those all require some individual work. We had several meetings on this and there are some plans in place, for those of you that are talking about the estimates are a problem. Again, it was decided at this council meeting to use estimates when the employees were not keeping up and we had to get bills out, and people were getting bills after 45 days or 50 days, it's like we got to get a bill out, and that was discussed at this meeting. However, when you go back and look, my direction has been clearly what all of you say would work. If you're going to start averaging higher bills, so you can't use that, because the regular one is probably dropped off. So you have to go back and find the actual readings, what is your typical bill? Whether if that's through the resident or in your system. If you only have 3 actuals and those actuals say \$69 month, then that's what their bill is. And that's what they're being directed to use. You're right, if you estimate for 12 or 14 months, you're going high numbers because it's including those estimates. So we're to track back to actual readings and utilizing those readings to determine what you're actual bill should have been over the 12 months."

Councilman Snyder stated, "I think Mr. Madere brought that up about a year ago? Saying the exact same thing, and what you're saying right now. I mean let's look at bills for 8 months or so and what that average is? I really wouldn't mind doing that on my bill. And if you give me 9 months, get an average for 9 months and give me the average, I'm satisfied with that. But it seems like we're not

doing that, you just said it a little while ago and I heard a lady in here said it earlier is that, we're going with 18 months the lower bill dropped off the higher bill come on now your average going to jump up here or it then went down this way."

Councilman Malik asked, "Roughly how many phone calls, how many people do you have coming in here specifically about their utility bill?"

Blake Fogleman stated, "By the last I looked I think it was about a week ago we were getting I say anywhere from 20-60 calls, and I would have to get with Norma to see how many people she's seen in the last week or so."

**Thomas Malik - Update on the formula used by the Utility Department to calculate monthly residential charges**

Councilman Malik asked, "Explain to me the formula you use to calculate these bills. If what I'm asking is, if I had 18 month's worth of fake readings, how are you figuring that out?"

Blake Fogleman stated, "I know we had we had a lengthy discussion the other day and I say it's on a case by case basis depending on what that situation is. Whether it's eight, nine, ten months, thirteen months, whatever it is, if we run averages and look at it every individual basis is coming up with something different. I've started and stopped in the last 2 weeks and I think these two can contest to it very whole heartedly in every step I take in a direction I think I have it solved, we're coming up with different issues. And it's not necessarily just the calculation itself, it's the processing time, it's the manpower, it's to get this as a one unit running. I don't have that answer, I don't have that set formula that says this is how it's we calculate it. I don't. And we're continuously working but I don't have something that is a magic goal at this point."

**MOTION:** Councilman Becnel moved and Councilman Perrilloux seconded the motion to suspend the rules to amend the agenda to give the employees a half of day on Thursday, March 29<sup>th</sup>, 2018. The motion passed with Councilwoman Hotard and Councilman Sorapuru absent.

**MOTION:** Councilman Becnel moved and Councilman Perrilloux seconded the motion to declare Thursday, March 29<sup>th</sup>, 2018 as a half day holiday for the parish offices. The motion passed with Councilwoman Hotard and Councilman Sorapuru absent."

There was no executive session.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

Parish Buildings - Security

Any and all pending legal matters

**INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES:**

**18-05** An ordinance amending Chapter 2, Section 21 of the St. John the Baptist Parish Code of Ordinances to establish and define the St. John the Baptist Parish Precinct Boundaries, Merge and Consolidate Precincts, and Establish Precinct Polling Places Change polling location for Precincts 2-3 from Parish Health Unit 473 Central Ave, Reserve, La. to St. Peter School/Lacour Center

188 W. 7<sup>th</sup> Street, Reserve, La (J. Remondet)

- 18-06** An ordinance amending ordinance 17-50 relative to the annual Operating budgets for the St. John the Baptist Parish Juvenile Detention Fund, Fire Services Fund, Economic Development Fund, 2009 Bond Fund, 2015 Bond Fund and Isaac CDBG Recovery Fund for the fiscal year beginning January 1, 2018 and ending December 31, 2018 (N. Robottom)
- 18-07** An ordinance approving the re-subdivision of a portion of Farm Lot 31 of Woodland Plantation lying south of US Hwy. 61 - East Airline Hwy. and north of the L&A Railroad into Lots 31-A and 31-B of Farm Lot 31 of Woodland Plantation, located in the area generally bounded by East Airline Hwy., the Kansas City Southern/L&A Railroad, Robin St., and Mallard St., LaPlace, LA as shown in a survey prepared by Stephen P. Flynn, P.L.S. on October 31, 2017 (N. Robottom) (PZS-18-1183)
- 18-08** An ordinance approving the re-subdivision of Tract 1 of Star Plantation Subdivision into Tracts 1A and 2A of Star Plantation Subdivision, located in the area generally bounded by the Illinois Central Railroad, Hwy. 44, West 19<sup>th</sup> St., and West 20<sup>th</sup> Street/Terre Haute Plantation, Reserve, LA as shown in a survey prepared by Stephen P. Flynn, P.L.S. on February 16, 2018. (N. Robottom) (PZS-18-1186)
- 18-09** An ordinance amending St. John the Baptist Parish Code of Ordinances, specifically Chapter 14 - Fees and Charges and Chapter 36 - Streets, Sidewalks and other Public Places to modify standards, fees, and related items pertaining to the installation and maintenance of culverts within the public right-of-way or Parish servitudes (Parishwide) (N. Robottom)

**PRESIDENT REPORT:**

Natalie Robottom stated, "Thank you to all of the volunteers and organizations along with Economic Development who had a hand in a successful Easter in the Park event on the East Bank and West Bank last weekend. Special thanks to Pastor David Ford with Celebration Church, the Westbank Civic Association and Economic Development Department for their efforts. It was a great way to kick off - Spring and enjoy an Easter egg hunt, refreshments, Easter Bunny photos and more. Congratulations to the 14 year old All-Star team for winning the 14 Year Old Biddy Basketball Regional Tournament last week. The tournament was hosted in Slidell and the team went undefeated! Great job! Most of the players on this team have been involved in Recreation since they were 5 years old and they will not be returning, so we to want to thank them for their participation and dedication to the department and also thank their families. The roster, names, photos and more are on our website at: [sjbparish.com](http://sjbparish.com). Congratulations to Jamie & John Angotti on the recent grand opening and ribbon cutting of the Buttons and Bows Playground. The new 18,000 square foot indoor playground is located at 2021 West Airline Highway in LaPlace and features a playground for infants and toddlers, a virtual reality playground, a snack station, arcade games and 11 play rooms. For more information on pricing and parties, visit Buttons & Bows Indoor Playground on Facebook or call (985) 359-2697. Thank you to Grambling President Rick Gallot and Southern President Dr. Ray L. Belton and their staff for coordinating a recruiting visit in St. John Parish recently. The staff joined the Superintendent, School Board members and alumni for visits at both West St. John

High and East St. John. We had a nice lunch to end their visit in the River Region. Last week we held a productive meeting on the Westbank regarding the upcoming public safety complex and trail projects in Edgard and Lucy. The Sheriff and Fire Chief joined us for the discussion on the public safety complex and overall it was good meeting with informative questions and discussion. Thanks to all who attended. Congratulations to Thomas Gross III, who recently won the Regional Spelling Bee at Xavier University. Thomas is the first student to do so from St. John Parish. He attends LaPlace Elementary and has earned a fully paid round trip to the National Scripps Spelling Bee in Washington DC. We are so proud of him and look forward to recognizing him at our next Council Meeting. Our partners at the Louisiana Wildlife Federation, CPRA and Lake Pontchartrain Basin Foundation held a successful public meeting last night to discuss the Maurepas Swamp Diversion Project with the community. Residents were invited to share their issues and concerns with the project as well as ask questions. It was a very productive meeting and a necessary one as we move into the design phases of this project that will help replenish our natural swamp barriers. Earlier today, a dedication ceremony was held at St. Andrews Fire Station with the Fire Department and family and friends of District Fire Chief Spencer Chauvin. With the leadership of the Fire Department and our state delegation, the three (3) mile bridge on I-10 was named the "Spencer Chauvin Memorial Bridge." Signs are in place and it is a fitting tribute to Spencer, who lost his life in 2016 on the bridge. He will never be forgotten. Tomorrow, Wednesday, March 28<sup>th</sup>, 2018, the Council on Aging Director Cheryl Parquet, staff and representatives of the Parish will host a grand opening and tour at the new Senior Citizen Center in Edgard at 10:00 AM. Senior citizens, community members and the general public are invited to view the new facility, which is now furnished, and a new gate and serving door was also added to the facility. We look forward to seeing you there. I recently joined community leaders and officials around the state for Leaders Against Litter. The event is used to kick off to beautification efforts in the Spring and Belle Terre Blvd was the selected thoroughfare for the Golden Litter Grab. Thanks to Greg "ZA" Maurin and the Economic Development staff for spearheading this event. Also thanks to representatives from United Way, Marathon, Ingram Barge, Tourist Commission and Administration for helping in these efforts. We recently received notification we have been approved as a Certified Local Government from the National Park Service. We received notice last time that our application was pending and today received a confirmation of our approval. This leverages as a Parish and give us the opportunity to access historic preservation grants, funding and special program dollars. We will join the state in recognizing National Community Development Week, next week, April 2<sup>nd</sup>-6<sup>th</sup>. During this week we recognize the CDBG program and the CDBG-funded projects and programs that have greatly improved the quality of life for residents in our community. Since 1986, the Parish has been a participant in this much needed program receiving more than \$52 million in CDBG funds to support public infrastructure, economic development, and housing programs so for that we are thankful. Household Hazardous Materials Collection Day is scheduled for Saturday, April 7<sup>th</sup>, 2018 in the New Wine Ministries Parking Lot in LaPlace. This is a much anticipated event and allows residents to clean out their garages and houses and get rid of paints, solvents, tires, batteries, oils and more that can't just be thrown out to garbage. To view more information on what will and won't be accepted, visit [hhmd.com](http://hhmd.com). Please mark your calendar for the Annual Spring Clean Sweep on Saturday, April 21<sup>st</sup>, 2018. We will meet at Thomas F. Daley Memorial Park at 8:00 a.m. to stage a parish wide cleanup until 11:00 AM. After the cleanup, everyone is invited back to the park for food and music. To register for Clean Sweep, please visit the Parish website at [sjbparish.com](http://sjbparish.com) or call Terri Abadie at (985) 652-9569. Remember, we need your help in keeping St. John Beautiful. On Sunday, April 8<sup>th</sup>, the Timbermill Association will be holding the

5th Annual Sings and Strings Festival from 11:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m. in the Garyville Historic District along Museum St. and Historic Front Street. Great music unplugged, along with crafts and a cook-off will be featured. High school students and their families are invited to Career Link at the Reserve Technical College on Wednesday, April 18<sup>th</sup> from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. This event is an opportunity for students to receive more information on employment opportunities with local business and industries. It will be a "one-stop" shop for parents and students to learn about technical education and careers. This is a great event for high school students deciding on career paths or looking for technical education options. We would like to again remind the public of restrictions regarding the Mississippi River levees in relation to the ongoing high water conditions. The River is now over 16 ft. at the Carrolton Gauge and remains a very high threat until it decreases to 11 ft. During this flood fight, NO digging activity and/or subsurface work of any kind is allowed within 1,500 feet of the levee centerline. This includes, but is not limited to pile driving, excavation and trenching. Driving and soliciting on the river levees is prohibited. There will be zero tolerance for unauthorized parking and driving on the levees. Thank you. **Just a reminder** - Parish Offices will be closed on Friday, March 30<sup>th</sup> in observance of Good Friday. I want to wish everyone a Happy Easter and may it be an enjoyable one with your friends and family! Thank you.

**ADJOURNMENT**

At 8:30 PM, Councilman Perrilloux moved and Councilman Malik seconded the motion to adjourn. The motion passed Councilman Sorapura absent.

/s/Lennix Madere  
COUNCIL CHAIRMAN

/s/Jackie Landeche  
Council Secretary