

OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS
ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST PARISH COUNCIL
TUESDAY, JULY 23rd, 2019
CHAIRMAN THOMAS MALIK
VICE-CHAIR MARVIN PERRILLOUX

The Council of the Parish of St. John the Baptist, State of Louisiana, met in Regular Session in Council Chambers, St. John the Baptist Parish Government Complex, 1811 W. Airline Hwy., LaPlace, Louisiana on Tuesday, July 23rd, 2019 at 6:30 PM.

CALL TO ORDER:

PRESENT AT ROLL CALL: Larry Sorapuru, Jr., Councilman-at-Large, Div. A, Kurt Becnel, Councilman District I, Lennix Madere, Councilman District III, Marvin Perrilloux, Councilman District IV, Larry Snyder, Councilman District VI, Thomas Malik, Councilman District VII, Jaclyn Hotard, Councilwoman-at-Large, Div. B

ABSENT: Julia Remondet and Michael Wright

Councilman Madere led the Prayer. Councilman Perrilloux led the Pledge.

Legal Counsel Keith Green, Jr., and Christopher Cortez were present.

MOTION: Councilman Sorapuru moved and Councilman Perrilloux seconded the motion to return to regular session. The motion passed with Councilwoman Remondet, Councilman Madere and Wright absent.

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

There was no public comment at this time.

INTRODUCTION OF BUSINESSES:

Natalie Robottom - Recognition - Jamaine "Jamie" Smith - 1st Female Post Commander of LaPlace VFW Post 3337

Natalie Robottom, Parish President, recognized Jamaine "Jamie" Smith - 1st Female Post Commander of LaPlace VFW Post 3337.

Natalie Robottom - Recognition - St. Charles Catholic High School - 2019 LHSAA Division II Baseball State Champions and Wayne Stein - Class 3A State Baseball Coach of the Year

Natalie Robottom, Parish President introduced St. Charles Catholic High School - 2019 Division II Baseball State Champions and Wayne Stein - Class 3A State Baseball Coach of the Year. The Parish President and Council congratulated everyone for claiming their first title in school history at the State Tournament in Sulphur on May 18th. Congratulations to all and good luck in the near future.

Natalie Robottom - Proclamation - Recognizing the Importance of the 2020 U.S. Census

Natalie Robottom, Parish President, read the proclamation for Recognizing the Importance of the 2020 U.S. Census.

CONSENT AGENDA:

ITEMS: Approval of Minutes - July 9th, 2019, Regular Meeting; Robert Figuero - Monthly Financial Report (June 2019)

MOTION: Councilman Perrilloux moved and Councilman Becnel seconded the motion to approve consent agenda items consisting of Approval of Minutes - July 9th, 2019, Regular Meeting; Robert Figuero - Monthly Financial Report (June 2019). The motion passed with Councilwoman Remondet and Councilman Wright absent.

PUBLIC HEARING AND ADOPTION ON ORDINANCES:

19-28 (Public Hearing Held) (Tabled 07-09-19) An ordinance approving the re-subdivision of Lots 870D, 871D, 872D, 873D, 874D, & 875D, of St. Andrew's Boulevard Extension, into Lot 870E, St. Andrew's Boulevard Extension located in the area generally bounded by St. Andrew's Boulevard, Belle Terre Boulevard, and Portrush Drive, LaPlace, LA, as shown in a survey prepared by Seth Mosby, P.L.S. on May 1, 2019 (PZS-19-1218) (N. Robottom)

MOTION: Councilman Perrilloux moved and Councilman Sorapuru seconded the motion to remove Ordinance 19-28 from the TABLE. The motion passed with Councilwoman Remondet and Councilman Wright absent.

Rene Pastorek stated, *"This re-subdivision request was approved unanimously by the Planning Commission at its June 17th meeting and by the Utility Board at its June 4th meeting. Based on consistency with the zoning district requirements and the goals of the Comprehensive Plan. Administration recommends approval."*

MOTION: Councilman Perrilloux moved and Councilman Sorapuru seconded the motion to approve Ordinance 19-28. The motion passed with Councilwoman Remondet and Councilman Wright absent.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Councilman Becnel stated, *"I ask that the minutes of the finance meeting are accepted."*

MOTION: Councilman Becnel moved and Councilman Perrilloux seconded the motion to accept the minutes of the finance meeting. The motion passed with Councilwoman Remondet and Councilman Wright absent.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business.

NEW BUSINESS

Larry Sorapuru - Resolution - R19-22 - A Resolution ordering and calling a special election to be held in the Parish of St. John the Baptist, State of Louisiana, to authorize the extension and rededication of a special tax therein; making application to the State Bond Commission in connection therewith; and providing for other matters in connection therewith

Councilwoman Hotard Gaudet stated, *"Thank you. I'll yield to President Robottom first, and then I'll ask my questions after if that's okay with the Chairman."*

Councilman Malik stated, *"Yes absolutely."*

Natalie Robottom stated, "It's my understand, that the Bond Counsel wasn't able to make it tonight, but we did have some conversation with him regarding this Resolution that I think they sent us, so we weren't familiar with it. But, in the body of the report, it's rededicating three (3.00) mills, but based on your conversation with your Financial Consultant and your Bond Attorney, they did not recommend that amount, because I think it left the Library somewhat short. The documents that we had based on what you guys were attempting to generate, the document I have was they recommended two (2.00) mills. And in the Resolutions and documents you put forth, you're recommending a rededication of three (3.00) mills. Now again, we weren't engaged in this, and I think Robert actually spoke to the Bond Counsel who said he just attempted to meet what you guys requested to get to the twenty-five million dollars (\$25,000,000). However, the reason we looked at the millages we didn't want to leave anybody short, we were trying to take the excess (I'm not sure that's what you guys did). Now you may be aware that's what you're doing, but if you're not, I just wanted to bring that to your attention."

Councilwoman Hotard Gaudet stated, "Thank you, and those were some of the questions that I had, and also Mr. Sorapuru if you could you know, just explain a little bit to the public what you're looking to do, and address that concern that we have now that the Library will be short based on the information from our Bond Counsel/Bond Attorney's that actually prepare this language."

Councilman Sorapuru stated, "In the discussion I had with the Bond Attorney, three (3.00) mills would, I mean the Financial Advisor three (3.00) mills would give us a twenty-five million (\$25,000,000,) to do the water - the Lions Water Plant, the line to Ruddock and additional Well at Ruddock, if the Council choose to do that. But this rededicating the millages that Library have three (3.00) mills, extension of those three (3.00) will give us twenty-five million (\$25,000,000). As far as the Library being short, I never had any discussion about anybody about how they were running short. We had this on the agenda I think about a year ago we spoke about it, the Council was aware of what we've been trying to do since I've been here for the past three (3) years. We've been having conversations, I know drinking water is very important to us, the Library is also, and I have no intent to try and cut the Library short. But if we don't increase the capacity of that plant, that Lions Plant, we're going to be in big trouble down the road at some point. This is not costing us any extra money this is just a rededication; the tax payers won't see any new taxes being put on for the water plant. That's my thinking as far as the information that we got from our Engineer, the past three (3) years."

Councilwoman Hotard Gaudet asked, "And in light of this information, would you be okay to TABLE this, so we can make sure we don't leave our Library short, or?"

Councilman Sorapuru stated, "Well I don't think we can TABLE it, I think the timeframes have to be voted on tonight in order for us to get it on the Special Election in the fall. Which would be the second primary election in November, yes."

Councilwoman Hotard Gaudet stated, "Yeah it would I mean, I don't know what would be more harmful to the public if we put off the election until the spring or if we leave our Library short. I'm not really sure, but I don't I just don't want to do anything that's going to adversely affect the library system based on the information from the, our bond experts."

Councilman Sorapuru stated, "Well and I can understand that Ms. Hotard, and if we

need to go back with two (2.00) mills, if you want to instead doing two (2.00) mills/three (3.00) mills we can do two (2.00) mills, that would give us some money to get a good bit of it done. But Twenty-five I mean twenty-five million (\$25,000,000) was really a bench mark estimate of what needed to be done, and possibly having extras in Capital Projects if we're going to do like insulation, electrical, heat tracing and different things in the plant. And repairing the Control Room that's in dire need of renovation right now. That's my thinking."

Councilwoman Hotard Gaudet stated, "And I'm not sure if we can simply amend it tonight, because I would say that a change from three (3.00) mills to two (2.00) mills is substantive, so I don't know if we can just amend it tonight and approve it, that might be and Bond Counsels' is not here to answer that question. But I just don't know if it's that simple and I don't you know, I get where you're going and I agree we have to make some upgrades in those areas for sure, I just don't want to adversely affect any other department."

Councilman Perrilloux stated, "Yes that was my questions what I was going to ask what Ms. Gaudet asked Larry about this, we didn't have anybody from the Library here as representation. And I don't remember it being three (3.00) mills..."

Natalie Robottom interrupting stated, "It wasn't."

Councilman Perrilloux stated, "A pardon me."

Natalie Robottom interrupting stated, "It wasn't."

Councilman Perrilloux stated, "Yeah, I don't remember nobody from the Library being here to give us what their budget is. And three (3.00) mills, I don't know where the three (3.00) mills came from at that time neither. So, I'm trying, I'm for TABLING until I get the information to pursue that; yes, do we need to increase the water capacity? Absolutely! Should've did it 5 years ago, but yes! Do we need to get water from the source for LaPlace? Absolutely! But it cut into the department short, the Library short, because I think I think their budget is six million (\$6,000,000) a year, I'm not sure but don't quote me, I heard Six million dollars (\$6,000,000) a year is what they need a year to run the library system and their staff and their people. So, without them being here for me to ask a question, I think we should TABLE that and move on and let it go to the fall election. My opinion."

Councilman Sorapuru stated, "Okay..."

Natalie Robottom interrupting stated, "I do have something else to add. Just a question..."

Councilman Malik interrupting stated, "Hang on! Hang on! You're after Mr. Madere. I'm writing everybody down as they flag in."

Councilman Madere stated, "Yes I just spoke to Mr. Sorapuru and I think he agree that you know, we don't want to do anything to harm the Library, and if we really want to get on this agenda for this meeting, we can once we found out the information that we're looking for we could have a Special Meeting maybe, you know to go ahead and approve it, if you really want to get it on the ballot for this election. You know so there's no need to rush in it and make a vote tonight. You know find what the affect is going to be, and then if need be, we can have a Special Meeting to do this."

Natalie Robottom interrupting stated, "Yes, I think Mr. Perrilloux you were referencing not hearing those numbers that's because those numbers changed. When we originally looked at this, and again, our recommendations were not taken into account relative to the projects that you guys are putting forward, neither was the amount. When we started this, our goal was to try and shore up some of the troubled funds that the parish has, that are barely making it. And the initial amount that you guys came up with was twenty million (\$20,000,000), therefore the Bond Attorneys came up with two (2.00) mill. But now you've increased that to twenty-five million (\$25,000,000), so all they did was come up with how many mills it would take to satisfy a twenty-five million-dollar (\$25,000,000) bond. There was no input on any of the projects, obviously you guys don't know anything about it with regard to the mills, I know we were not consulted about it and obviously this was not how we saw this going. Again, based on your financial consultants and your bond attorneys, looking at the revenue that's generated by the library, how much they spend annually, the recommended overage or additional amount was right at a little under two (2) mills, so they round it up to two (2) mills, of course they did what you asked for. You asked them to generate a rededication that would fund twenty-five million dollars (\$25,000,000) of projects. Well in order to do that or possibly do it, because I don't even know that this three (3) mills will get you there, they had to increase the millage. But the number started, and this was just last year, the amount of money you guys said y'all needed for these water improvements was twenty million (\$20,000,000) now it's twenty-five (25). So again, I don't know where you'll are getting these numbers, what they're based on what the projects are based on, but based on the information we were provided the last time, three (3) mills is excessive and was not the recommended amount by the folks that you guys consulted relative to the millages as they exist now."

Councilman Sorapuru stated, "Yes and I don't have a problem, we can TABLE this item and I ask the Chairman that we have a Special Meeting to go over the numbers on what we need to do with this water plant, with this water situation."

Councilman Malik stated, "I think it would also have to include somebody from the Library, if they would be able to have a, their budget."

MOTION: Councilman Sorapuru moved and Councilman Snyder seconded the motion to TABLE Resolution - R19-22. The motion passed with Councilwoman Remondet and Councilman Wright absent.

DEPARTMENT/ENGINEER REPORTS:

Larry Sorapuru - (Carry Over 06-11-19) Discussion regarding Parish Health Insurance - Employee premiums

The above item will be carried over to the next agenda.

Julia Remondet/Lennix Madere - (Carry Over 06-25-19) Update on CN Railroad Station concerns

The above item will be carried over to the next agenda.

Marvin Perrilloux - Update on the installing of the filters at the Lions Plant

The above item will be carried over to the next agenda.

Lennix Madere/Larry Snyder/Larry Sorapuru - Discussion regarding the additional janitorial services being utilized for the administrative offices

Councilman Madere stated, "Yes. We just want to know from Administration, is there one janitorial service in this building, or do they have two (2)?"

Natalie Robottom stated, "Actually you have a contract with one (1). Janitorial Service that was selected pretty much in a hostile environment with people being escorted out the Council Chamber, and we since received a couple of threats. So yes, there's one (1) that was selected for the entire building, and there's a separate service being provided to the Administrative Suites."

Councilman Madere stated, "Okay now you're saying being provided, free of charge?"

Natalie Robottom stated, "No."

Councilman Madere stated, "Okay, so how did that become possible, when the contract was given for the service of this entire building and if there was any threat or anything that was taken place that should have been turned over to the proper authority. Okay and that's not even what we're discussing tonight about, about that, that's a whole separate item. Okay, what authorization that another janitorial service was given the upper portion of this building? Without recommendation from the Council who gave a Certified Contract, whatever the atmosphere was voted upon and they accepted the contract for this entire building. And now we are paying twice for something that should have been paid for one (1) time."

Natalie Robottom stated, "Actually it's not the whole upper building, and two (2) it's being paid for out of Professional Services, which is in the discretion of the Parish as long as you're not exceeding the threshold for bidding, and I'm not sure how's its being spread, Mr. Figuero actually handled that, but it's being funded across several departments. And again, because this meeting..."

Councilman Madere interrupting stated, "I understand that what you're saying I just, how do you pay twice?"

Natalie Robottom stated, "We're not paying twice."

Councilman Madere stated, "Yes you are! The contract that these people received was for the entire building, it was budgeted by Administration for a hundred and twenty thousand dollars (\$120,000) for the year..."

Natalie Robottom stated, "Right."

Councilman Madere stated, "For the cleaning of this entire building, top floor bottom floor! And they're going to receive their money..."

Natalie Robottom interrupting stated, "That's right."

Councilman Madere stated, "But we're also paying an additional money to clean offices that's already under contract."

Natalie Robottom stated, "That's right."

Councilman Madere stated, "Okay! That's wrong."

Natalie Robottom stated, "Well again..."

Councilman Madere interrupting stated, "No, no, nope, that is wrong."

Natalie Robottom asked, "Do you want an answer?"

Councilman Madere stated, "It's simply wrong to pay twice."

Natalie Robottom stated, "Okay! Well you guys wanted to pay double."

Councilman Malik stated, "Well yeah."

Councilman Madere stated, "Wanted to and what actually happened is two (2) different things. And what you're doing is something that's actually happening."

Natalie Robottom stated, "Right."

Councilman Madere stated, "You didn't want to pay twice, you actually paying twice!"

Natalie Robottom stated, "No actually."

Councilman Madere stated, "So if somebody wanted to do something and actually doing something, is two totally different things. I may want a million dollars but I don't have it! Okay, so this building is under contract to Star Maintenance, top floor bottom floor, in between, it belongs to them. And for Administration to pay double is not right, it's not using taxpayers' money wisely. You can take that money and put some drainage culverts in my district."

Councilman Sorapuru stated, "Yes, this was called to my attention Ms. Robottom exactly why is that happening, why are we paying this other company to do this, the rooms?"

Natalie Robottom stated, "Again, it's obviously on film it's in your minutes. The performance at this Council meeting to me was threatening it was loud, it was out of hand, and again I wasn't comfortable. And am still not comfortable, because it was adversarial at the time and it continued to be based on actions in this Council Chamber. So being it's my office the funding was in the budget, Mr. Figuero actually spread out some of the Professional Services across, different departments and after the performances in these meetings with having my office served by that service. My Office."

Councilman Sorapuru stated, "And I think Mr. Madere is eluding to, is the fact that we're paying a price for something we had no control over at some point and the contract was given. We were not aware of any other situation that you were struggling with, with the situation involving you personally, and I guess this is not a personal thing with me either, but the fact that the dollars are flowing twice and that's our concern. There are some other concerns we need to talk about hopefully we can we need to get there and resolve this without having to have a question mark about why you're doing certain things."

Natalie Robottom stated, "Right. I think it was fairly clear and obvious to all of you in here too, the we did not impact the budgeted amount, we said we had a hundred and twenty thousand dollars (\$120,000) budgeted for this contract, which is what we're paying for it. The other services are again, coming out of other line items that have that money available, whoever's in the office in January may be more comfortable, but the situation as it played out in this Chamber over several meetings was threatening and hostile."

Councilman Madere stated, "Yes. Ms. Robottom, we done had several meetings since I've been on this Council where people done got out of hand and all kind of stuff. Okay, I didn't hear anyone threaten anybody, I heard a lot of talking about the item I didn't hear anybody say they was doing any physical harm to anybody. Okay, every time we have a disagreement in this Council with constituents or council members or administration, we not going hire certain security guard after every meeting. I didn't hear anyone being physically threatened I heard a lot of discussion, okay from both sides. I'm a use Donald Trump - on both sides, okay both sides. The other guy got up here and did a lot of fussing himself, along with the people from Star Maintenance over several meetings every one of us was here. I never felt threatened, I don't think anybody on this council felt threatened. Okay, and if it was a threat that you thought that this company had, well they wouldn't have been allowed to clean any portion of this building. Okay and then the fact, I don't know how much money you paying these other people, but this council asked administration to find some money to put in Star Maintenance but yawl refused to do it, and that led to all the confrontation and all the disagreement. Because this Council asked months ago to find extra money and you said it was not possible..."

Natalie Robottom interrupting stated, "No I didn't say that."

Councilman Madere stated, "Oh, you didn't find it!"

Natalie Robottom stated, "I didn't, because it wasn't..."

Councilman Madere interrupting stated, "Now I'm just...let me finish. Okay, the bottom no additional money came forward. But when Star Maintenance got the contract, all of a sudden additional money came forward. So, if it came forward to clean the building when you felt uncomfortable, it came forward to finish this problem we had months ago that dragged on and on. Okay now, this is a live meeting you have to explain to the constituents how they're paying twice for something that was voted on to clean once that's all I'm saying."

Councilman Perrilloux stated, "Yeah a..."

Natalie Robottom interrupting asked, "You want me to answer it Mr. Perrilloux before you start?"

Councilman Perrilloux stated, "Go head."

Natalie Robottom stated, "First of all, I didn't say I was threatened. I said it was threatening, and two I forwarded information to all of you about a threat to one of our employees. And a copy of something that was sent to all of you with no response, but that was forwarded to you all when it occurred. Two, you asked me to find additional money for that line item, which I declined because the amount of money we had budgeted we could get the job done for that amount. Now, one of the partners came in afterwards while we were in the negotiating phase and asked for a few more dollars for them to hire somebody at night, and what we did was allow for them to have that extra money for the additional people within their contract by freeing them up from cleaning the suite that I'm in. Now again, I don't know what you were witnessing, but I witnessed a Security Guard escorting someone out, I witnessed yelling from the at you all, I witnessed beating on the podium next to me with references to me and that was all problematic for me. Again, within the scope with day-to-day operations, we're staying within our budget, we've not exceeded any line items we're not exceeding an amount that would require some type of procurement, although Mr. Figuero is the one that is

handling that, and we anticipate it'll be till the end of the year."

Councilman Perrilloux stated, "Well you answered the question I was going to ask. But I'm when it was brought to my attention, I think I called Robert and we discussed it, but I'm not going to say why, but I understand it was the CFO, CAO, your office, and Baileigh's office that's being cleaned by this new contract. And I'm, at the opinion we had already paid which I didn't approve the first time, we had already paid a janitorial to clean the building. So, they were under that contract to clean the whole building and I remember getting the email that threatening but I thought that was all settled, that person was put out of here or whatever, I thought that was something that was settled. So, (pardon me I don't know what threatening things we have going on now to be duplicating services, so I don't know where the Council want to go with this or what the intent of further with this action item on the agenda. Mr. Madere or Mr. Sorapuru?"

Councilman Malik stated, "It's an action item."

Councilman Perrilloux stated, "No it's not an action item, but I don't know if they're going to take action."

Councilman Madere stated, "Not at this time. We just need to know how much are they being paid. Yeah, we'd like to know from the Administration, how much are they being paid to clean these buildings at the remainder of the year?"

Robert Figuero stated, "Currently they're on a purchase order for one thousand five hundred and twenty-five dollars (\$1,525.00) a month."

Councilman Madere stated, "Okay so that's about an additional seven thousand dollars (\$7,000) or six thousand dollars (\$6,000). Right?"

Natalie Robottom stated, "It's through the end of the year."

Robert Figuero stated, "Through the end of the year, yes."

Councilman Madere asked, "Because they've been doing this from how long?"

Robert Figuero stated, "Since I believe May."

Councilman Madere asked, "Since May?"

Robert Figuero stated, "Yes."

Councilman Madere asked, "Okay so they're paying additional thousand dollars (\$1,000) for five (5), how many offices?"

Natalie Robottom stated, "Oh there's more I mean they're not all full, but yes."

Councilman Madere asked, "Okay so everyone of every person in your administration on that floor felt threatened that they clean?"

Natalie Robottom stated, "No not everyone. It's not the entire floor its Administrative suites, that includes offices, bathrooms, conference rooms, and..."

Councilman Madere interrupting asked, "Could you explain to the Council just what it is you're fearing?"

Natalie Robottom stated, "You guys allowed for it, and if you want to see what I fear go back and find the video tape that showed you what I fear..."

Councilman Madere interrupting asked, "I just I just saw a video tape of an argument between the Council and everyone else, okay I just asked you what it is that administration is fearing? Retaliation or something?"

Natalie Robottom stated, "Again..."

Councilman Madere interrupting stated, "Okay, that's all I asked."

Councilman Perrilloux stated, "Just one more question. Ms. Robottom you say you was threatened, according to what you said so why just if we're paying, why just not your office and not the rest?"

Natalie Robottom stated, "Again, its access to all of our offices."

Councilman Perrilloux asked, "You mean going through the door and just?"

Natalie Robottom stated, "Yes you know again, if you look how typically I'm there late okay, I'm there late a lot of times by myself. And again, the situation was very public, and I was uncomfortable and so to avoid continued issues, the area where my office and several of my administrative staff are, are the areas that's um off-limits. Now, as I said I had conversations with one of the owners about possibly a little bit more money to offset some of their night hires, I felt by doing this and not changing the amount of their contract that that would provide them that additional money they needed for nighttime service and also meet my need. So, we didn't adjust the budget line item, and they were compensated enough to hire I think somebody to work at night, and it also made me more comfortable with my office and I guess my hours, hours that I work not having to deal with it."

Councilman Perrilloux asked, "Would it been cheaper to have a police officer?"

Natalie Robottom stated, "Probably not."

Councilman Perrilloux stated, "Okay and again, now I don't know where the Council is going with this, if they want a get more information, I know it was just brought to my attention and I just wanted to see where we were going with it tonight."

Councilman Snyder stated, "Yes I'd like to discuss...we're finish with that one?"

Councilman Malik stated, "We're finished, never to return again."

Councilman Snyder stated, "I'd like to ask the Council to amend the agenda to we can discuss the sign Ordinance. Look like we got some issues with it according to some of the emails I read today. So, I'd like to make a motion to just to amend the agenda and suspend the rules, yes let's do that. To discuss the Sign Ordinance, the new sign ordinance because actually this is this politics stuff is starts so we going see a lot of violations, and according to the law a lot of things can happen and you see violations with Planning & Zoning."

MOTION: Councilman Snyder moved and Councilman Madere seconded the motion to suspend the rules on the agenda to discuss the political signs. The motion passed with Councilwoman Remondet and Councilman Wright absent.

Councilman Snyder stated, "Yeah thank you, thank you. Well actually we were privileged to some information that was it came down I guess I guess from Planning & Zoning with some rules that the Supreme Court made as far as signage is concerned, around this time of year I guess that's what they were speaking about. And I actually asked, I don't know if the District Attorney had a chance to look at it, but I asked them to look at it because we may ask them some questions. Now, I see that the Administration then told us that we got to do something. Well, if this is the Ordinances, and the ordinance needs to be tweaked some kind of way, I'm sure the rules came down to the administration or somebody should've looked into this because these are some big changes. Cuz I think one of the rules I think as far as the sign ordinances is concerned, I'm talking about from the Supreme Court is that you can only have one sign on the property. You know I've seen signs already where you got three (3) or four (4) on one piece of property. You know, is that legal? According to them that's not legal. Now I don't know whether they're talking about just one-person sign or they're talking about three (3) different people sign where you can only have one (1) sign on the property, I don't know. And that's why I asked the District Attorney to kind a look into that, you know because these things are happening right now and we need to know a little bit more about it. And I see where the administration asked/say that's our responsibility so I just want to know how much responsibility we got here. What we're supposed to do about this?"

Natalie Robottom stated, "I just wanted to, I think sent a memo...when this process started Mr. Snyder, we were actually attempting to amend the sign ordinance for new developments, businesses that put up temporary signs, and we went through the Economic Development Board, we went through I think the Planning & Zoning Board, and got input. But the goal was not to have those temporary signs for developments that extended forever. You know there was a timeframe for how long you could leave you temporary sign up before installing your permanent sign. And at the point, Planning & Zoning would have been aware because they're in the permitting business, so they would have known and that's not signs in neighborhoods and you know they're primarily business signs. So, the original ordinance was written to address those types of signs, and then the Supreme Court ruling. Because there was a separate ordinance for campaign signs/political signs that's allowed for 90 days and was very specific. But the Supreme Court ruling came down and said; no, you can't have a separate Ordinance for political signs from your regular signs. Therefore, its kind of fell within the sign ordinance that we intended for businesses and not necessarily for political signs. So, we started to get some questions early on...how early can we put out signs, can we put this number on a lot, and I think there's a violation within 60 days. If we're talking about business signs, yeah, we can measure how long that signs' been up on a lot if exceeds 60 days. If we're talking about individual signs/yard signs we don't know when they're going up, so who can measure 60 days to say that they're in violation when you don't know when they were put up. And then the discussion came up, can you take out and take it out and you get another 60 days? So I think we said it a couple of weeks ago, just like it became a question mark and we just needed your guidance on one, do you want to amend this and do something different; do you want to go back to your 90 days a for all signs but as I said, our recommendations was for 90 days, but based on recommendations from Economic Board and Planning Board, they reduced it to 60, and of course that's problematic for these political signs. So, when we sent it, it was just for guidance and you know in terms of what you guys thought, in terms of enforcement it would be extremely difficult especially when you're talking individual yard signs throughout the parish."

Councilman Snyder stated, "You know this what I have from Rene that sent this to

us...

Natalie Robottom stated, "Right."

Councilman Snyder stated, "And it did say like for instance limited one sign per development of a site. What does that mean? Does that mean I can only one sign there or can I put five (5), I can't five (5) of my signs on a piece of property? Or can three (3) of us up here have signs on that one (1) piece of property?"

Natalie Robottom stated, "And you see Mr. Snyder that's what I'm telling you. That wasn't written for political signs, it was a development site. For example: Flora is doing a PUD, well they couldn't put 15 Flora signs on their site. So, it's one development so they were entitled to one big sign and they restricted the size of that sign. But because when it was written and approved, we weren't taking into account political signs, it doesn't necessarily fit. But based on the information from the Supreme Court, we can't discriminate political signs and other signs but that obviously doesn't fit the political signs."

Councilman Snyder asked, "So are we with this? I'm still kind of in the dark here a little bit you know, where are we with it? I mean if we like for instance, we're not discriminating so we, I got three (3) signs on a piece of property, now I need a permit to do that?"

Natalie Robottom stated, "No. Actually there's language in it that says those signs do not need a permit. It's..."

Councilman Snyder stated, "Okay. See, you see, this is what I'm talking about."

Natalie Robottom stated, "I know, but I did send it like a few couple of weeks ago, and asked for some input, I didn't say it was an agenda item, you know I didn't say it was an agenda item. I just said look, hey we're anticipating some problems with this, we started to get some calls you know, we're not sure about enforcement, so if you're not prepared then maybe the discussion shouldn't take place. But..."

Councilman Snyder interrupting stated, "Or maybe the discussion shouldn't take place. But I noticed your emails you put it right on our back! You said we got to do this."

Natalie Robottom stated, "I asked for guidance I asked for guidance, Ms. Hotard said she wanted to/it needed to go to Legal..."

Councilman Snyder interrupting stated, "This is through the Planning & Zoning..."

Natalie Robottom stated, "Right."

Councilman Snyder stated, "And they wrote this up this is what they sent me, but you put this back on our back look like you then made some changes already. Or made some rules already through Planning & Zoning. You said you went to Planning & Zoning, you went to...who else you went to some business people or something like that?"

Natalie Robottom stated, "No sir. That was when that was approved, what year is that ordinance? 2000 what?"

Councilwoman Hotard Gaudet stated, "Sixteen maybe."

Natalie Robottom stated, "In 2016, that Ordinance was heard by all of those departments. So, we didn't just make up an ordinance, Alex put something forward to address business signs. So, we brought it before the committees that address business, and they altered it from 90 days to 60 days. So again, that ordinance was not necessarily set-up for political signs at the time. But now that there's a Supreme Court ruling that says you can't do something different, cuz we had a whole separate political sign ordinance. You know we had a different ordinance for political signs, but with the ruling they're saying you can't discriminate. So, you know Rene sent that but it was for me..."

Councilman Snyder interrupting stated, "Exactly!"

Natalie Robottom stated, "Okay, that you know I asked him some questions because I started getting questions and I'm like, look I'm not clear on this you know who are we going to enforce this, you know residents are asking or officials who are running for office you know are kind of concerned here, how do we even enforce this, and when he you know came up with some of the responses I didn't think that was going to work. So, I asked him to draft something send it to you, to maybe help us with some guidance. Just today I think Ms. Hotard, you said that you thought maybe we need to get Legal involved or yesterday..."

Councilwoman Hotard Gaudet stated, "Well actually I sent some...I'll wait till it's my turn."

Natalie Robottom stated, "But again when she said that, well okay...maybe the Council want to seek Legal advice on this Ordinance."

Councilman Snyder stated, "Well I wouldn't get involved with that because you sent it to everybody and I didn't want to get sued again or get charges brought against me again."

Natalie Robottom stated, "No I had separate conversations, like she had a separate..."

Councilwoman Hotard Gaudet interrupting stated, "I sent it separately."

Natalie Robottom stated, "And Marvin I think I talked to him separately. We didn't go back and forth on email, they actually called."

Councilman Snyder stated, "Well I didn't want to say anything. But in know if I come here tonight, and I could say what I want to say about this thing. And there was an amendment in 2018? What was that amendment?"

Councilwoman Hotard Gaudet stated, "I think it was in sixteen (16). I believe it was sixteen (16)."

Councilman Snyder stated, "No, it was amended in 2018 according to this. Unless I read this wrong. I may have read it wrong, but according to this there was an amendment in 2018, that a, what it said? Sixteen (16) was the ordinance and was further amended by Ordinance 18-31. So that mean that was amended in 2018, and I think it was right after some election or something like that? What was that amendment? This what you sent."

Natalie Robottom stated, "I know Mr. Snyder but it wasn't on the agenda, so we didn't bring our documents pertaining to the sign ordinance. So, I would be going from memory. But I do have a file with political signs and this sign ordinance,

and I know Rene has some documents. Because before sending it to you, we did try to go out and figure out how can we do this and be fair or is it enforceable or you know how do we respond to candidates who are asking us questions about their signs when this ordinance is not clear. And so that's why we sent it initially to try and figure out what are your wishes. You know I don't think what's in that document are your wishes, because it wasn't initially drafted to deal with political signs. It was drafted to deal with business signs, development signs, like future hotel coming, those kinds and there was lots of discussion. Cuz it went through several meetings, and you guys did too. So, at the time when we were talking business signs there was plenty of discussion, it went through all its course, and people were onboard as it pertained to those signs. I don't think there was any discussion during those times about political signs. But since we have to apply that to the political signs, I don't think it fits. That's just my opinion, which is why I sent it you know to you all to see how y'all felt about it."

Councilwoman Hotard Gaudet stated, "Thank you. And just a little bit of history, in 2004 is when we introduced the Political Sign Ordinance. And it was in response to the public's concern that often times campaign signs would get put up a year prior you know to the election, and so they'd be up for a long time. And so, what we did at that time was make them 90 days prior to the primaries, when you could start putting up campaign signs and then I believe they set a time limit as to how long they could be up after the election was over, because that was another problem. After elections were over everybody would just leave their signs up and so that was the problem in 2004. What happened in 2016, I believe and then further amended in 2018, it was a recommendation from Economic Development, because small business owners wanted to be able to advertise-let's say if they sold school uniforms and they wanted to advertise for a sale, or they had a seasonal business where they wanted to say it's a Christmas sale, and they didn't want to/they wanted to be able to have temporary signs because at the time the ordinance did not allow for temporary signs in overlay districts. Though we wanted to accommodate those businesses who wanted to you know advertise a sale or something like that. And so the sign ordinance for temporary signs was amended, there was no language about political signs, and so with the email that came through it's now saying that; because that the Supreme Court has made some rulings that you can't differentiate between any type of sign that what we passed in 2016, would also apply to political signs. I actually replied to Rene directly in the email because the concerns that I would have is one; and I brought that up, because we're citing Supreme Court rulings, I believe that's why the Attorney's would have to look at it. Because, often times when they say you can't you know treat political signs differently or these types of things differently, they're looking to protect the political process. So if you have rules that allow for a little bit more of a liberal interpretation of a political sign, that's something that is allowable, versus when you're trying to be more restrictive and limit the public's ability to be for or against any type of political issue, it doesn't have to be a candidate it could be an issue. And so, some of the questions that I sent to Rene on how we even address what we even have on the books, because as it relates to political signs one, you know I mentioned to Rene, we have this thing we call 'Due Process'. And so, you just can't enter private property and remove anything without due process. So that brings up another question as if it's a political sign, how do you serve a campaign that may not be registered with a Secretary of State, or it's not a resident it's a private individual, so how do you serve that individual and give them their due process? And another thing I mentioned to Rene again is the calculation of the time, you know there have been signs that have been put up for at least a month now,

did we mark them, if they picked them up and moved them. So obviously we know none of that is going to work we are going to have an election this is what all of this is built upon, and so when I had him on the phone I even mentioned, if you're go into Jefferson Parish they've had signs up for a very long time. So, they obviously and Orleans and all of our surrounding Parishes, they have something on their books that either hasn't been challenged or isn't in conflict with what the Supreme Court has said that you can do as it relates to political signs. So I mentioned to him, I said you need to go back and look at what we do have on the books not only as it relates to political signs, but even this applies to a business, but we don't have a way of service of process and all of these things then we probably need to take a second look at that as well. Because as a business owner let's take the political element out of it if we know if we move a sign or we do these small little things then we've got a loop hole in it all of that needs to be addressed, not just as it relates to political signs. So, to recap you know the reason why the changes were made for temporary signs was to help small businesses, to be able to advertise seasonal things and not have to be burdened with violations in overlay districts for temporary signs. The reason why I said about having legal look at is because we talk about the rulings from the Supreme Court, there has to be something that is allowable because there are elections. Even a bond issue if we have a bond issue coming in the spring election, there undoubtedly will be signs in support of or in opposition to that and you can't prohibit the public from speaking about those items. So, I know it's a legal question to look at what we have and how do we accomplish it, not just for these types of elections. Sometimes the Real Estate Commission puts things on the ballot and they advertise that, schools have propositions, they advertise for and against. And so, we will have to figure out why do we have this conflict in our Ordinances that other parishes don't have, or there's some disconnect? And again, I have further concerns like I said not only for political signs but even for businesses, how do you, you know we have an enforcement you know issue. And I did reply to Rene individually, because I agree I don't like going in the group text messages. And I asked him, how will you enter pry the property without due process? You know you have to...just like a grass violation, we don't just go cut grass! We got to send certified mail, we have to wait so many days we have to get it back, by that time the issue is over. So, we need to like I said, engage Legal and have them look at what the Supreme Court said, because I do believe they said we can't treat them differently, but I believe the intent is that they don't want us to try and restrict Freedom of Speech. That's what the issue is. And so, if you have laws that even smell like a restriction of Freedom of Speech that is it has to be met with a strict scrutiny. In our case, what we would actually have for our political signs is a little bit more liberal than what we have for our businesses. So, we're not actually oppressing speech, we're allowing it for a longer time than what we have for our businesses. So, I don't know if we can just apply that one ruling to what we have on our books right now because it's not a, it's not more restrictive it's less restrictive, and that is what the intent of all of the courts are is we don't want to restrict speech. I actually think that if some of those laws that we have on the books were met with a challenge, we'd probably loose. You know we can go on and on even with that protest, when we got some of that information about prior restraints, it's problematic too it's not this issue but...anyway. It's something that legal needs to look at so that we can make sure that we are not doing anything like to restrict speech, because I think that's what the Supreme Court real intent is, that's why I said to your email today, that since Supreme Court was cited we need to have our Attorneys involved in it to make sure that everything we have is correct. And that whatever we do have on the books is realistic and is able to be enforced. And not just for our elections it's coming up in an election season, it's timely, but for any other thing that comes up with bond propositions with

anything that people want to advertise that is political in nature, this is going to affect that directly."

Natalie Robottom asked, "Can I answer her question?"

Councilman Madere stated, "Wait, wait, wait a minute."

Councilman Malik stated, "No, he's been identified."

Councilman Madere stated, "Want I want to say is, we have an Ordinance on the book that's unenforceable. First of all, cuz I agree with you when you say who's watching when someone puts a sign down, 60 days or 90 days, and what's the violation on who's going pick it up. Okay there's signs all over the parish, okay and there's signs been up a month some just went out. Okay so that's an unenforceable ordinance. Okay now I think Legal can get involved but the person that should have been involved, is Rene. Because Alex Carter wrote the last one and then we found out that it wasn't any good according to the Supreme Court, you can't treat any signs differently. So, Rene should have been working on that, maybe we won't have it in place for this election, but future election. Okay he should have got with Legal and someone and come up and change and bring a recommendation to this Council. Because I know myself and I don't think anyone up here have the capability of writing that ordinance for political signs. Okay that's his job he should be doing that, and he should've got with Legal once this thing went down and get this thing solved. Cuz we have something on the books that unenforceable, can't be enforced at all. You know, so right now we're operating with the political atmosphere with no guidance and no laws that can be enforced, that's exactly what we're dealing with right now. So, I think Mr. Rene, you know since he's not capable/able of riding with me he got time to do this, okay and have it done right. I give my time to him."

Natalie Robottom stated, "Back to Ms. Hotard. As I said I don't have my documents with me, but in the, do you recall how the enforcement mechanism was in the political ordinance, cuz I recall us picking up signs and bringing them...I don't know what you know I don't know if we've violated due process or not, but in past years if you put signs in illegal locations..."

Councilwoman Hotard Gaudet interrupting stated, "That's the ones we picked up. Signs that were on parish servitudes (CROSSTALK)..."

Natalie Robottom stated, "Ok, ok! But we did pick them up and put them and like I think state, the state picks 'em to! You know if you were on the state servitude, so again I don't have it with me if you're recalling that's what it was, but I know we picked up signs. With regard to Mr. Madere's comment, it wouldn't make sense for us to draft an ordinance without y'all input. Okay, our request to you all is, how do y'all want to move forward, we didn't ask you to write it. We just ask you for your guidance and what do you want to see in this ordinance? Do you want to try and go back to 90, do want to be less restrictive, you know...I'm sorry what?"

Councilwoman Hotard Gaudet asked, "Are y'all going to write the Ordinance?"

Natalie Robottom stated, "I think he's asking Rene to, to amend it you know..."

Councilman Madere interrupting stated, "With advice."

Natalie Robottom stated, "With advice from them. But again, I understand that..."

Councilman Madere interrupting stated, "In his expertise..."

Natalie Robottom interrupting asked, "Can I finish? Can I finish?"

Councilman Malik stated, "Hang on a second please."

Councilman Madere stated, "Okay let her finish go head don't want it back."

Natalie Robottom stated, "Again, all I I'm saying not in terms of the legalities of it, but the content. What do you all want? That political sign ordinance was initiated in 2004 by a Council that chose to respond to something. All we did was ask y'all, how do y'all want to move forward we didn't ask y'all to write it. We asked for your guidance and how we can move forward either in amending it, obviously we don't think it's enforceable, I've said repeatedly we don't think it was intended for political signs it was basically for the business community, that's where it started in Economic Development, but we're at a point now where we have to do something. So that's all we ask y'all we didn't ask y'all to write it. It's just like what do you all want to see? Do y'all want us to be more lenient, do you want to go back to the 90 days? Again, not the specifics of the language, yes, he could look in other parishes and see how it's written, but we're trying to get your wishes you have to vote on it, we can write whatever we want. Y'all have to vote on it so we're asking for your input and guidance. Now you don't have to give it to us tonight, but now that's it's been brought to y'all attention y'all familiar with the documents, if you want to share some information with Rene so he could do a little research, and then obviously you guys are asking Legal, I don't know if y'all need to vote to ask them to look into the Supreme Court ruling or what, but you know that's the aspect of it. We definitely were not familiar with, so we are going to have to get that information..."

Councilman Malik interrupting stated, "I think at the end of the day I mean we can sit all evening and discuss it. But first of all, what we have to do is get is get Rene, and opinion from the District Attorney for the Supreme Court ruling, and then discuss what we want to do and remain in compliance with Federal Law. But for the rest of the evening I mean we can be here all night talking about this thing and we're not going to accomplish anything. But I think we have to go back outside of this and move on and let's start with what exactly the Supreme Court ruling mean."

Councilwoman Hotard Gaudet stated, "Before we leave since I'm asking, so you guys are going to draft an ordinance, Rene is going to draft an ordinance to address this issue?"

Natalie Robottom stated, "Actually we're asking for yawl input, and what yawl want to see so he could look at it, compare it with what other parishes are doing. Again, it wouldn't make sense for us to draft an ordinance for yawl, and then yawl have to approve it with no input."

Councilwoman Hotard Gaudet stated, "I just want to make sure that we can request that, because I'm thinking about other you know (what is it that we've asked for an ordinance to get introduced on the blight), and so I'm just wondering if Rene can only work on this specific ordinance or?"

Natalie Robottom asked, "Actually you're asking me, right?"

Councilwoman Hotard Gaudet stated, "Yeah I'm asking you."

Natalie Robottom stated, "Like this is just discussion right, and I direct him? So yes! This is something that we are actually, again, we're seeking assistance. Okay that's what we did, we sought your assistance, and understanding that, yes that department does write them, but again, we don't want to write something that you're opposed to. So again, if you have some ideas if you're familiar with some other parishes, if you know something that you think will work that maybe he can go look at, then that's fine to. But what are your wishes?"

Councilman Malik stated, "Well that's my wish is that we understand the Supreme Court. Now in Jefferson Parish they're very lenient, you go and get a permit for every sign, but Jefferson Parish has not adopted the Supreme Court ruling with regards to..."

Natalie Robottom interrupting asked, "Political signs to?"

Councilman Malik stated, "Yes, everything yeah! I'll look into it, and that's the answer that I was given."

Natalie Robottom stated, "Ok."

There was no executive session.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Parish Buildings - Security

Thirkettle Corporation d/b/a Aqua-Metric Sales Company vs. St. John the Baptist Parish, Docket No. C-74027

Any and all pending legal matters

INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES:

19-30 An ordinance approving the rezoning of approximately 1,070 acres of land between the Upper and Lower Line of LaPlace Plantation Subdivision, situated in Sections 14, 66, 67, 68, 69 and 70, Township 11 South, Range 7 East, located in the area generally bounded by Belle Terre Blvd., the Vicknair Canal, St. Andrew's Blvd. and approx. 3,000 ft. North of Interstate 10, LaPlace, St. John the Baptist Parish, LA, to the Planned Unit Development District (PUD), including Preliminary Approval for development and approval of a Development Agreement, in accordance with La R.S. 33:4780.21, et seq. for the provision of efficient services and infrastructure to the public, as shown in Exhibit 1 attached and as shown in the plans prepared by Duplantis Design Group, LLC on January 17, 2019 (PZR-19-1130) (N. Robottom)

19-31 An ordinance approving a conditional use permit for construction of a new telecommunications tower on the Laurent Tract, located West of the Mississippi River in the area generally bounded by Highway 640, Highway 3127, the Union Pacific Railroad, and the Parish Line, as shown in Exhibit 1 attached (PZR-19-1140) (N. Robottom)

19-32 An ordinance approving the rezoning of Lot 1 of the Alexander

Allen, Sr. Tract, located in the area generally bounded by the St. James Parish Line, LA 18 and LA 3213, containing municipal address 5877 Highway 18, Wallace, St. John the Baptist Parish, LA, from the Commercial District One (C-1) to the Commercial District Three (C-3) zoning district, as shown in Exhibit 1 attached (PZR-19-1150) (N. Robottom)

ADJOURNMENT:

At 8:17 PM, Councilman Perrilloux moved and Councilman Madere seconded the motion to adjourn. The motion passed with Councilwoman Remondet and Councilman Wright absent, and Councilwoman Hotard Gaudet no vote.

/s/Thomas Malik
COUNCIL CHAIRMAN

/s/Jackie Landeche
COUNCIL SECRETARY

The meeting can be viewed in its entirety at www.sjbparish.com.