

OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS
ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST PARISH COUNCIL
TUESDAY, JULY 26th, 2011
CHAIR RONNIE SMITH
VICE CHAIR CHERYL MILLET

The Council of the Parish of St. John the Baptist, State of Louisiana, met in Regular Session in the Joel McTopy Chambers, LaPlace, Louisiana on Tuesday, July 26th, 2011, at 6:30 PM.

CALL TO ORDER:

PRESENT AT ROLL CALL: Haston Lewis, Councilman District I, Lucien Gauff, III, Councilman-at-Large, Div. A, Cheryl Millet, Councilwoman District VII, Ronnie Smith, Councilman District VI, Jaclyn Hotard, Councilwoman District IV, Charles Julien, Councilman District III, Danny Millet, Councilman District II, Steve Lee, Councilman-at-Large, Div. B, Darnel C. Usry, Councilwoman District V

ABSENT: None

Councilman Julien led the Prayer and Councilman Millet led the Pledge.

Legal Counsels Kerry Brown, Tom Daley and Billy O'Reagan were present.

Ronnie Smith/Raphael Neal – Presentation – (Carry Over 7-12-11) Youth Planning Board

Raphael Neal, Juvenile Probation Officer, was present representing the 40th Judicial District Court Children & Youth Services Planning Board for St. John Parish. He commented that the board meets once a month and was put into place by the state. The judges are over this board. He is coming to the council trying to get support and membership for the board. It is a non-funded board. The board's vision is to create an environment in St. John the Baptist Parish for children to reach their full potential. The board's mission is to serve the children of St. John the Baptist Parish by coordinating services and resources to empower them to become responsible and productive citizens. The committee meets on the fourth Tuesday of each month at the LaPlace Library from 1:30 until 2:30 PM. They are asking for support from the people of the parish. Anyone interested in being a member of the board just needs to be present for the meetings.

Natalie Robottom – Presentation – Philip Rebowe, Rebowe & Company Final Audit of 2010 Budget

Philip Rebowe, Rebowe & Company, was present at the meeting. He commented on the final audit for St. John the Baptist Parish for the year ending 2010. He explained that there were three unqualified reports, which mean clean reports and that the finance department for the parish has gotten the award for the last 8 years.

Ronnie Smith/Terrence Mitchell – Presentation – Elevation Masters

Councilman Smith asked that this item be carried over to the next

meeting.

Natalie Robottom – Presentation – St. John Sheriff's Office Young Marines

The St. John Sheriff's Office Young Marines were on hand to accept a plaque from the Parish President and the Council for their dedication and hard work for the Parish of St. John the Baptist. The Young Marines were instrumental in the recent Veteran's Luncheon and the 4th of July Parish Celebration. They are always on hand and ready to help whenever it is requested of them. This is the third class of young marines and a new class will be starting this Saturday. They gave a long listing of their upcoming events for the parish and invite everyone out to join them in their goal of making St. John the best that it can be.

Ronnie Smith/Troy Brown – Candidate District II Senate

Troy Brown, Candidate for Senator for the newly created District II, commented that he is from Prairieville but has a home health business in St. John the Baptist Parish. So he is a local businessman here. He hopes to bring new hope and direction to the senate and welcomes any and all questions, comments or concerns anyone may have regarding his candidacy.

Consent Agenda

Items: Approval of Minutes July 12th, 2011, Regular Meeting

MOTION: Councilwoman Usry moved and Councilman Julien seconded the motion to approve the consent agenda items consisting of Approval of Minutes July 12th, 2011, Regular Meeting. The motion passed with 8 yeas and 1 abstaining (Lee).

PUBLIC HEARING ON ORDINANCES:

11-18 (Carried Over 05/24/11) an ordinance to provide for sale of adjudicated properties. (N. Robottom)

The administration asks that this item be carried over again.

11-26 (Public Hearing Held) An ordinance introducing the annual operating budget for the St. John Parish Health and Human Services Department for the Fiscal year beginning January 1, 2011 and ending December 31, 2011. (N. Robottom)

Natalie Robottom stated, *"Based on audit recommendations and you noted that Mr. Rebowe referenced the HHS Department and the increased revenue within that department, based on their findings they recommended separating or making a separate budget for health and human services. The budget has been worked on with the staff. It was introduced at the last meeting. Instead of including it with general fund under the president's office, it will now be a separate budget as are many of the other agencies. We are recommending approval."*

Councilman Lee asked, *"Is this something new? Obviously it is new or is it because the dollar amount reached a certain level?"*

Natalie Robottom stated, *"It is. It is a combination. It wasn't ever required. Now they have more money because of the grants so it is necessary to have them operating under a separate budget. As you can see from the graph he showed you, the increase in federal funds and a lot of that was HHS and the recommendation was to make it a separate budget."*

MOTION: Councilman Lee moved and Councilman Lewis seconded the motion to approve Ordinance 11-26. The motion passed unanimously.

11-27 (Public Hearing Held) Be it ordained, by the St. John the Baptist Parish Council in a public meeting held on July 26th, 2011, which meeting was conducted in accordance with the open meetings law and additional requirements of Article VII, Section 23(C) of the Louisiana Constitution and R.S. 47:1705 (B), that the taxing authority adopt the millage rates, on all taxable property shown on the official assessment roll for the year 2011 and when collected, the revenues from said taxes shall be used only for the specific purposes for which said taxes have been levied. (N. Robottom)

Natalie Robottom stated, *"Annually the parish council is required to adopt millage rates on all taxable properties shown on the official roll. The taxable value for the 2011 tax roll is estimated to increase by about twenty million dollars compared to 2010 therefore administration is recommending adopting the same tax rates as in 2010."*

Councilwoman Hotard asked, *"I just have a question and I am looking at the notes here and I know we did this maybe year before last we rolled back some of our mills. It says here that the taxable value of the 2011 tax roll is estimated to increase by twenty million compared to 2010. Did we look at the opportunity to possibly roll back some of our millages to save the tax payers any money?"*

Natalie Robottom stated, *"Actually we considered all of that in making this recommendation and at this time this is what we feel is best."*

Councilwoman Hotard asked, *"Do you know what additional revenues will be generated from the increase in the twenty million dollars compared to 2010?"*

Vince Lucia, Financial Manager, stated, *"With the increase in the tax roll it will generate for the parish council about a half of a million dollars in total with all the millages combined."*

Natalie Robottom stated, *"That isn't just the parish that is all the dividing sections that it goes to so we don't get that total."*

Vince Lucia stated, *"No the parish council gets a total of \$500,000.00 but we have separate funds that have portions of the millage rates."*

Councilwoman Hotard asked, *"So the twenty million dollar increase is going to net us the parish \$500,000.00?"*

Vince Lucia stated, *"Yes an estimated \$500,000.00. The final taxable value is not in place yet. Within the next few months we will have the final amount but based on what the Assessor gave me at this point that is what it will generate."*

Councilwoman Hotard asked, "Did we look at rolling back any of our millages?"

Vince Lucia stated, "No."

Councilwoman Hotard asked, "Is this something that we have to adopt tonight?"

Vince Lucia stated, "Well I would hope we would tonight because we have to turn it in to the assessor's office for him to send it to the state."

Councilwoman Hotard stated, "I know I believe it was year before last we actually had the opportunity of rolling back some of our millages. Maybe you remember when we did that to save a little bit for the tax payers with what they are paying in taxes on their homes and sometimes it isn't a whole lot but even if it is just a little bit it is still a savings to the tax payers."

Vince Lucia stated, "That was in our debt millage a couple of years ago."

Councilwoman Hotard asked, "But we didn't look at that this year?"

Vince Lucia stated, "No that was based on the general obligation bond millage. It was as 16 mills and we reduced it down to 14.5 mills and that is where it still is at this point."

Councilwoman Hotard asked, "Would this have been an opportunity for us to look at rolling some back since the values would have been increased so that the parish doesn't net any additional money but instead of netting additional money just pass on the savings to the tax payer?"

Natalie Robottom stated, "I think part of our concern is millages are one part of our revenue. What we can tell you to date is that sales tax which is a huge part is down by 21% of 17%. So looking at the total picture in our revenues as some are going down this is an opportunity for us to maybe balance it off and that was our consideration. Obviously this is the council's decision. It was introduced at the last meeting and we are going to respond to the council's pleasure but this was a recommendation based on looking at the total picture. This is one portion of our revenue. The other portion that we depend very heavily on is down."

Councilwoman Hotard stated, "I apologize for not bringing it up sooner. I just got the report today at about 3:00 PM and I didn't realize that the increase, the taxable value of the property in the parish was increasing by so much. I would have asked sooner but okay."

Councilwoman Millet asked, "Is this going to be an increase to the residents?"

Natalie Robottom stated, "No, not at all."

Councilman Lee stated, "I just want to thank Mrs. Robottom I thought there were some points well taken here. It is good that the public

understands what actions were taken. Mrs. Robottom and I have had this conversation before realizing that we have one pot that the money goes in and we have been told before and she has told us again tonight that sales tax is going to be down substantially. It is money that I think is very difficult for a parish that has our type of budget, which is rather small compared to surrounding parishes to give up. So I am going to support the continuance of the millages that we are carrying at this point."

MOTION: Councilman Millet moved and Councilman Gauff seconded the motion to approve Ordinance 11-27. The motion passed with 7 yeas and 2 neas (Hotard & Lewis).

INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES:

11-28 An ordinance granting approval to further extend the Conditional approval of River Oaks Subdivision, Phase V, Lots 205-239, 245-252, 264-282, and Parcels H-11, H-13, C & D, for an additional twelve (12) months, located south of proposed Woodland Drive right-of-way, west of Vicknair Canal, east of St. Andrews Boulevard, and north of River Oaks Subdivision, Phases II and III in Sections 66 and 67, T-11-S, R-7-E, LaPlace, St. John the Baptist Parish, Louisiana (N. Robottom)

11-29 An ordinance granting approval to further extend the valid period of time of Conditional Subdivision approval for an additional twelve (12) months for Belle Terre Commercial Subdivision, Phase I, Parcel A, Lots 1-13, Parcel B, Lots 1-22 & Parcel C, Lots 2-9; Phase 2, Parcel B, Lots 23-49 & Parcel C, Lots 10-44 & Phase 3, Parcel D, Lots 1-39, Parcel E, Lots 1-42, Parcel DS-2 & Parcel DS-3, situated in Sections 69 & 70, T-11-S, R-7-E, LaPlace, St. John the Baptist Parish, Louisiana (N. Robottom)

11-30 An ordinance to re-subdivide a portion of a 32,000 + acre tract into LC-3 through LC-6, along Dutch Bayou, located in Section 3, T-10-S, R-6-E Southeastern Land District East of the Mississippi River, St. John the Baptist Parish, Louisiana (PZR-1012) (N. Robottom)

11-31 An ordinance to re-subdivide a portion of a 32,000 + acre tract into a 1.005 Acre Tract along Hope Canal, located in Section 78, T-11-S, R-6-E Southeastern Land District East of the Mississippi River, St. John the Baptist Parish, Louisiana (PZR-1013) (N. Robottom)

11-32 An ordinance to re-subdivide a portion of a 32,000 + acre tract into LC-1 and LC-2 along Dutch Bayou, located in Section 3, T-10-S, R-6-E Southeastern Land District East of the Mississippi River, St. John the Baptist Parish, Louisiana (PZR-1014) (N. Robottom)

11-33 An ordinance to re-subdivide a portion of a 32,000 + acre tract into a 1.071 Acre Tract along Hope Canal, located in Section 37, T-10-S, R-6-E Southeastern Land District East of the Mississippi River, St. John the Baptist Parish, Louisiana (PZR-1015) (N. Robottom)

11-34 An ordinance granting approval of the revocation of the right of way 29.3 feet wide designated as West 25th Street on a plan or sketch made by M.L. Donaldson, approved by A.S. Lasseigne, C.E. dated May 8, 1948 showing the subdivision of the property of Jules J. Haydel Sr. situated in Section 29, T-11-S, R-6-E, Garyville, St. John the Baptist Parish, Louisiana; whereby that portion of the right-of-way of West 25th Street is no longer needed for a public purpose (N. Robottom)

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Councilman Lee stated, *"The finance committee met at 6:00 this evening. We addressed ten different items and I would ask at this time that one of my fellow council members make a motion to approve those actions taken by the council in the finance committee."*

Councilwoman Millet stated, *"As much as I wasn't here for most of the meeting I am going to abstain from voting."*

MOTION: Councilman Lewis moved and Councilman Millet seconded the motion to accept the recommendation of the finance committee. The committee approved to grant administration authorization to award the contract for the Garyville Fire Department Expansion to Double E Construction Services, LLC of Reserve in the amount of \$63,750.00, approved to grant administration authorization to award the design and inspection contract for Wastewater Collection Repairs to Professional Engineering Consultants in an amount not to exceed \$155,470.00, approved to grant administration authorization to renew the property, general liability, and management liability insurance for the 911 Communication's District, approved to grant administration authorization to renew the Commercial Property insurance for the St. John Airport, approved to grant administration authorization to execute a Joint Release by and between St. John the Baptist Parish and Grove Properties, LLC, approved grant administration authorization to execute change order No. 1 in the amount of \$84,699.59 for the REGALA Park Gym, approved to grant administration authorization to execute contract amendment No. 1 with Meyer Engineers for the REGALA Park Gym in an amount not to exceed \$9,000.00, approved to grant administration authorization to execute change order No. 1 in the amount of \$111,072.00 for the Lions Water Plant Expansion, Phase VII, approved to table change order No. 1 for the Reserve Drainage Project, and approved to authorize a certificate of substantial completion for the Reserve Boat Launch. The motion passed with 7 yeas and 2 abstaining (Cheryl Millet & Lee).

DEPARTMENT/ENGINEER REPORTS:

Charles Julien – Update on the lighting for LA 3179

Councilman Julien stated, *"I am trying to find out where we are with the lighting on the new road. I see we do have our representative here from Entergy. I am not sure if she is here for that purpose or not. I see some lights have gone up. I am just trying to find out how long it will be before we get more up."*

Natalie Robottom stated, "Obviously Mrs. Sheila Butler and Entergy work very closely with us. In the absence of our project administrator we have requested Riverlands Surveying draft a proposal based on information obtained from Entergy and Entergy representatives on a design for that project so that we can submit it to DOTD. Once that is approved then we will begin the project but there are some in the immediate area of the homes on that street."

Councilman Julien asked, "Those were put up by the developer?"

Natalie Robottom stated, "That is correct."

Councilman Julien stated, "I saw some going up. Thank you."

OLD BUSINESS:

There was no old business.

NEW BUSINESS:

Cheryl Millet – Sales Tax Holiday

Councilwoman Millet stated, "I put this on the agenda because I really just wanted to remind all the residents of the parish to take advantage of the school supplies waiver of sales tax by the state coming up on the 4th & 5th of August. So please take advantage of that. It is for the benefit of the parish."

Ronnie Smith – Overturn Planning & Zoning on a trailer placement for Tia Clayton – 227 Chad B. Baker, Reserve

Councilman Smith ask that this item be removed from the agenda

CORRESPONDANCE/COUNCIL BRIEFS

Councilman Gauff stated, "Tomorrow night Wednesday at the LaPlace Library at 6:00 PM Mr. Ernest Hill, he is an author from Baton Rouge, and he will be there for a book signing. I sponsored this to bring something different to the parish as far as arts and education. So I would like you all to come out and support that please."

Councilman Lewis stated, "I would like for administration to check with AT&T and see how we can get the internet system throughout the parish, especially on the West Bank. A lot of people want the internet and they can't even get the internet system. I don't know how you go about getting it through Comcast or AT&T or what you need to do. There are people who really want to know what they need to do. The little internet that they are getting is very slow and some people get it at a fast rate. I would like to see that we get somebody here to explain it to us on TV so everybody can hear what is going on."

Councilman Julien stated, "I just wanted to notify the parish that we do have several teams in Tennessee participating in the national baseball tournament. We want to wish them well while they are on their trip. The other thing I have is a communication and it reads the New Program and Beech Grove Baptist Church are preparing for their second annual Christian Block party which will be held on August 13th, 2011."

This event has been very unifying for the community and Christian fellowship. It will start at 3:00 PM and go until 7:00 PM."

Councilwoman Hotard stated, "I would like to remind everyone that the public schools do resume on Monday, August 8th. So just be mindful that the kids will be back in school. I would also like to send congratulations to Maquai Hollins she was just made a Honey Bee for the New Orleans Hornets. She is a very bright, beautiful young girl. Congratulations to her."

Councilman Smith stated, "Ms. Hotard did let you know that school starts August 8th for all students except for kindergarten, they start on August 11th and the high school starts August 8th."

Councilwoman Millet stated, "I just want to remind everyone that the St. John Theatre is putting on the play Dirty Rotten Scoundrels and it was absolutely fantastic, well attended. The cast was great! The entertainment value is fantastic and I urge everyone to go out it will be playing this weekend so please make an effort you will be thoroughly impressed and surprised."

Councilman Smith stated, "The one other item that I wanted to comment on is Saturday there was a casting call held here for Mrs. Black Louisiana. It was held at David Lee's Boutique on Airline Hwy. The casting calls are still open if anyone is interested in having their daughter participate please contact the boutique."

Councilman Gauff stated, "I do have one more thing I would like to say. Thank you very much to Pastor Neil Bernard and New Wine Fellowship he and his members went out Saturday, myself included and cleaned up, cut grass and picked up trash throughout the Reserve Housing Development. Many of the residents came out and lent a hand. We started from River Road and went to the rail road tracks. We did the entire development. So he and his community over there really need to be congratulated and thank you for the help."

PRESIDENT'S REMARKS

Natalie Robottom stated, "Mr. Lewis I would like to follow up on your questions regarding internet. We are in the process of applying for a broad band grant to help with that. Those funds are specifically to target rural areas and to get connectivity. There is another opportunity possibly in the works coming in from St. Charles Parish. We are going to continue to work with that. I also spoke with a representative from RTC who is going to come in and discuss some opportunities there and options for us. We have not been able to resolve this and it is a concern for all of us but we are looking at least three avenues right now to try and resolve it so we are going to stay on top of that. I just wanted to invite everyone but this is specifically across the river. We are having the ground breaking for the West Bank Airnasium. It is this Friday, July 29th, at 10:00 AM at the site. Everyone is invited to attend. I think you have invitations. We sent some out electronically as well. We will be out there. It was held up slightly, along with some of our other projects, because of the water on the Mississippi River but we are ready to get started and we are looking forward to completing that project. The True Light Baptist Church in Garyville is hosting a back to school health fair this

Saturday, July 30th. The first 100 children will receive free school supplies. All residents are invited to attend. Medical screenings and information will be available as well as activities for the children. Mr. Willie Clement is beginning an organization or attempting to pull together all veterans for a meeting. The meeting date will be August 31st, at the St. John Parish Central Library at 2:00 PM. The meeting is to propose a plan for a Louisiana Veteran's Festival. This meeting will be held to receive input and suggestions on this plan. All Veteran's are encouraged to attend. Please call Mr. Clement at 985-536-4725 for questions and more information. We will put his information on our website for contact and we applaud Mr. Clement for reaching out and making this effort. Obviously we will have our young marines and the sheriff's office working with him as well as this organization to put on the parade that we are working on for this fall. We would like to congratulate one of our Reserve volunteers, Adam Tamplain, from the Reserve Volunteer Fire Department for being named fire fighter of the year in the American Legion Post 159 of Reserve. We would also like to congratulate Mr. Chuck Wisher, he has been here before and Mr. Lind of LaPlace who won a number of awards at the recent senior Olympics. The play at the St. John Theatre tickets can be purchased at Allied Express in LaPlace or you can visit the St.JohnTheatre.org website for more information regarding the play. The Central Union Missionary Baptist Church association hosted a back to school youth rally this past weekend at Garyville Magnet. We were very fortunate to have the acting superintendent on hand to speak to the children, Mrs. Alias Tyler made a special trip to Garyville along with our superintendent, Dr. Courtney Millet to again encourage all of the students to get ready to go back to school and to bond together in that unity and to understand how far they can actually reach. We were fortunate enough to hold a hurricane preparedness meeting for our faith based organizations. We are attempting to organize with regard to support after an emergency. The first meeting was almost a month ago and our next meeting is Thursday, August 4th, at 3:00 in the chambers. We are reaching out to all of the organizations to help provide support on re-entry after a storm as they have done in the past with helping with the food, clothing, storage space and several other options and we ask that they provide what they can and we are going to develop a system to manage that. So again we want to remind you of that meeting."

There was no executive session.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Property/Casualty Insurance Agent – 1) Claims, any/all property, casualty, and Workman comp claims 2) Claims, procedures and disposition 3) Coverage's, any/all material changes

Cable Franchise Agreement

Any and all pending legal matters

ADJOURNMENT:

At 7:45 PM, Councilman Julien moved and Councilman Lee seconded the motion to adjourn. The motion passed unanimously.

/s/Ronnie Smith
COUNCIL CHAIRMAN

/s/Jackie Landeche
Council Secretary