

OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS
ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST PARISH COUNCIL
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 2008
CHAIR JACLYN HOTARD
VICE CHAIR RONNIE SMITH

The Council of the Parish of St. John the Baptist, State of Louisiana, met in Regular Session in the Edgard Courthouse, Edgard, Louisiana on Monday, November 10, 2008, at 6:30 P.M.

CALL TO ORDER:

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

ABSENT: None

Councilman Smith led the prayer. Councilwoman Millet led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Bill Hubbard, Parish President was present.

Legal Counsels Barry Landry and Kerry Brown were present.

Consent Agenda

Items: Approval of Minutes October 28, 2008; Permit Approval - Krewe of du Monde - Mardi Gras Parade - Sunday, February 22, 2009 - Noon; Permit Approval - Fireworks following playoff games - St. Charles Catholic Football Booster Club (11/14, 11/21, 11/28/08); Authorization for Parish President to enter into an agreement with the Pontchartrain Levee District to participate in the annual bonfire program.

MOTION: Councilman Smith moved and Councilman Millet seconded the motion to approve the consent agenda items consisting of Approval of Minutes October 28, 2008; Permit Approval - Krewe of du Monde - Mardi Gras Parade - Sunday, February 22, 2009 - Noon; Permit Approval - Fireworks following playoff games - St. Charles Catholic Football Booster Club (11/14, 11/21, 11/28/08); Authorization for Parish President to enter into an agreement with the Pontchartrain Levee District to participate in the annual bonfire program. The motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC HEARING ON ORDINANCES:

08-61 (Public Hearing Held) An ordinance for re-subdivision of Lot WG-2A into lots WG-2B, and WG-2C Section 8, T-11-S, R-8-

E, LaPlace, St. John the Baptist Parish, Louisiana. (Dan Nitschke PZS-08-023) (B. Hubbard)

MOTION: Councilwoman Usry moved and Councilman Millet seconded the motion to approve Ordinance #08-61. The motion passed unanimously.

08-62 (Public Hearing Held) An ordinance to Amend Section 18:19 Speed Bumps: The placement of "Speed Bumps" on parish roads as a traffic-control device to regulate the speed. (B. Hubbard)

MOTION: Councilman Julien moved and Councilman Smith seconded the motion to approve Ordinance #08-62. The motion passed unanimously.

08-63 (Public Hearing Held) An ordinance amending Ordinance 07-71 relative to the annual operating budget of the St. John the Baptist Parish Water Distribution System, Recreation, Health Unit, Solid Waste, Ambulance, ARC Maintenance, Juvenile Detention, Criminal Court, Convention Center, Council on Aging, Road Lighting, Mosquito Control, Parish wide Sewerage Construction, Garyville Volunteer Fire Department and Office of Fire Services for the fiscal year beginning January 1, 2008 and ending December 31, 2008. (B. Hubbard)

MOTION: Councilman Smith moved and Councilman Lee seconded the motion to approve Ordinance #08-63. The motion passed unanimously.

08-64 (Public Hearing Held) An ordinance amending Ordinance 08-15 relative to the annual operating budget of the St. John the Baptist Parish Economic Development for the fiscal year beginning January 1, 2008 and ending December 31, 2008. (B. Hubbard)

MOTION: Councilman Lee moved and Councilman Julien seconded the motion to approve Ordinance #08-64. The motion passed unanimously.

08-65 (Public Hearing Held) An ordinance amending Ordinance 08-16 relative to the Annual Operating Budgets of the St. John the Baptist Sales Tax District, Public Works, Wastewater, LaPlace Volunteer Fire Department, Reserve Volunteer Fire Department, West Bank Volunteer Fire Department, Communications District, Airport and Public Safety for the fiscal year beginning January 1, 2008 and ending December 31, 2008. (B. Hubbard)

MOTION: Councilman Smith moved and Councilman Millet seconded the motion to approve Ordinance #08-65. The motion passed unanimously.

08-66 (Public Hearing Held) An ordinance amending Ordinance 08-17 relative to the Annual Operating Budget of the St. John the Baptist Parish General Fund for the fiscal year beginning

January 1, 2008 and ending December 31, 2008. (B. Hubbard)

MOTION: Councilman Lewis moved and Councilman Smith seconded the motion to approve Ordinance #08-66. The motion passed unanimously.

08-67 (Public Hearing Held) An ordinance introducing the Annual Operating Budgets for the St. John the Baptist Parish General Fund, Special Revenue Funds, Enterprise Funds and Parish wide Sewerage Construction Fund for the fiscal year beginning January 1, 2009 and ending December 31, 2009. (B. Hubbard)

MOTION: Councilman Smith moved and Councilwoman Millet seconded the motion to approve Ordinance #08-67. The motion passed unanimously.

08-68 (Public Hearing Held) An ordinance to amend Section 10:1 of the St. John the Baptist Parish Code of Ordinances by adding the following: B. Any person, persons or firm who possesses a valid occupational license for the operation of a business in St. John the Baptist Parish and/or any owner of commercial or industrial property in St. John the Baptist Parish shall maintain his or her business property in such a manner so as to prevent the accumulation of trash, garbage or debris on his or her property, and shall take all reasonable steps to prevent any type of litter, trash, garbage or debris located on his or her property from being placed upon the public highways, streets, ditches, roads, sidewalks or other public areas of the Parish of St. John the Baptist, or upon the properties of adjacent land owners. (C. Millet)

Kenny Ridland, Longwood Court, stated, "Does this amendment or ordinance include that green space in front of businesses that are made up by the highway right-of-way? Most businesses their front property line is only about 20 or 30 feet from the frontage of their parking lot. The rest of it is highway right-of-way and most of these businesses are subject to wind flow through the corridors on which the business is established like Airline Highway, Belle Terre Boulevard or New 51. Depending on how far from the highway right-of-way line they are, trash can build up in one night, because traffic flow through there is 24/7."

Councilwoman Hotard stated, "Councilwoman Millet, this is your ordinance. Do you want to address that?"

Councilwoman Millet stated, "We are mainly concerned with properties that are adjacent to the buildings, as far as on the highways and what have you. The ordinance is to mainly keep the store fronts clean and the parking lots clean."

Kenny Ridland stated, "Because depending on where the business is, trash can build up in a day, in a few hours."

Councilwoman Millet stated, "We are mainly concerned with their properties, the business properties. We cannot enforce

anything that is not on their properties."

MOTION: Councilwoman Millet moved and Councilman Lee seconded the motion to approve Ordinance #08-68. The motion passed unanimously.

INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES:

No ordinances were introduced.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

There were no committee reports at this time.

DEPARTMENT/ENGINEER REPORTS:

Dale Wolfe - Personnel Matters

Councilman Wolfe stated, *"I would like to ask the administration or both, the council chair lady, to give me an update on the position that is supposed to be open in the council office. I am hearing all kind of stories that we don't need this and we don't need that. Just explain to me what do we need."*

Councilwoman Hotard stated, *"I don't know any information about it. I don't know if administration or Mrs. Cadon has something. I know at one time they had posted a position and they were looking at applications."*

Councilman Wolfe stated, *"You see I am getting very upset about that. At one time we had two legislative assistants. When we advertised for one, there were folks in the council office and some of the council people saying that we don't need that position. But when we had those two positions, I didn't hear not one person saying that we didn't need that position. That position went from legislative assistant, to clerk, to receptionist, to zero I guess. We are not going to have any peace and I am talking to the council, I am not talking to administration. We aren't going to have any peace until we hire that position. Now we select, for our purposes, a council chair. That individual should communicate with the council. That individual, he or she, doesn't make a decision for this council. Now, the mere fact Jaclyn that you are telling me that you don't know anything about it means to me that you could care less about staffing the council office. I want to know from you, right now or administration right now, when will we fill that position? Keep in mind that the council chair is only one person and one person only. He or she does not speak for me. So I want you to speak for this council right now and tell me and let me know when we are going to hire this individual, tonight."*

Councilwoman Hotard stated, *"I would like to ask administration to make a comment on that. The last that I spoke with administration about it, I asked for an update. They said that they had individuals who applied for the*

position. They were interviewing individuals. That was really it. That was the last that I got from them. I never instructed them to hire or fire anybody. I don't have that authority. I don't hire or fire anyone. The last that I did speak with administration they had applicants and they were setting up interviews and they were going through the process that any other position would go through."

Bill Hubbard, Parish President, stated, "I suggest maybe we get together again and talk about this. This issue is several months old. If the council feels like you all need an additional person in the council office, then it is really not my position to question what the council wants and doesn't want. I just try to make things happen for you. So if this is something that you all feel that you need than let's get together after the meeting. We will re-post the job and do what we have to do and make it happen."

Councilwoman Hotard asked, "What happened to the applicants that had applied for the job originally?"

Bill Hubbard stated, "That was several months ago Jaclyn. I really don't know. Maybe Stacey knows more details on it, but that was several months ago. If I had to guess, with all the civil service rules, we are going to have to re-advertise and go through the process again. What happened to it? I don't know. We have hired so many people since that time. I suggest that we get together after this meeting and we come to a decision and we roll with it."

Councilwoman Hotard asked, "Was there a decision made, maybe in the Department of Human Resources to not fill the position?"

Bill Hubbard stated, "No."

Councilman Wolfe stated, "Bill, I don't have any gripes with you. I have it with this council. Sometimes we sit down and act like we don't understand what is going on. This position, we talked about this position when this council first took office. We get lost in the shuffle, so to speak, that is what they want me to believe. I believe that folks, Steve, around this table want to do what they want to do. As long as I am sitting here it is not going to go that way. We are going to be fair to everybody. We are going to be kind to everybody. I resent some of the council members saying we don't need this and we don't need that. This council decides what we need for the council. I am very upset about this. You all get what you want to get. We have an office that we so claimed for the council members. We are taking up space, that as far as I am concerned, we should be taking up. All of that goes on. As long as I am sitting here, as long as we have a council chair, that chair is going to communicate with this council and it should be that way. The chair, she or he, doesn't speak for this council. I know they aren't going to speak for me. At our next meeting I intend to see that that position be advertised and no longer than six weeks we have an individual

in the council office. Sometimes we have sickness between the two employees in the council office. I have known some days when we have had no one in the council office. No one, so get your two heads together and get it going. I don't want to be rude, but I don't apologize for anything I have said here tonight. You are smart enough to do what you want to do and dumb enough to do what we are supposed to do. I don't want to hear anything from the council office about we don't need this and we don't need that, unless nine members say we don't need this or we don't need that. I know you all don't love or like to hear me preach, but I am preaching here tonight. I came to preach. Crookedness and deceitfulness I am not going to tolerate and I am only one individual. I am going to say what I have to say and do what I have to do. You all make folks say things that they don't want to say. Now you all get together on your way home and talk about it. I have said what I had to say here tonight."

Councilman Julien stated, "I would just ask that maybe we have a little more communication. I don't think Madame Chair this is no disrespect to you. I can't point any fingers, but maybe a little better attempt to communicate. I was under the impression that we were preparing to fill the position and then all of a sudden nothing happened and months went by."

Councilwoman Hotard stated, "I can tell you the last that I spoke actually with Buddy, he said they had applicants. They were interviewing people. They were in the process of filling the position. There were two individuals actually in house and that was actually the last I heard on it. I thought one was going to be the one to receive the position and that was the last that I heard of it."

Councilman Julien stated, "Again I thought that the position was being filled. Whenever asked I guess we will tell them that now we will be advertising for that position again, right? Will we advertise for that position again or will we just accept the applicants that we had?"

Bill Hubbard stated, "As I said earlier, it is not my job to say what the council needs or doesn't need. If the council decides that they want to advertise for another position in the council office than we will get together and do what we have to do to get it done. Look I will say this, this is several months old. I am not saying that I didn't drop the ball. Maybe it was administration that dropped the ball. I am just saying that is a possibility too. We will just pick it back up and run it back in and do what we have to do."

Councilman Wolfe stated, "I am not going to let you say that you dropped the ball. You didn't drop the ball."

Bill Hubbard stated, "I might have."

Councilman Wolfe stated, "There are nine of us that dribble the ball. We dropped it."

Councilman Lee stated, "We do need to conduct our business properly. I thought we did. I believe this council took action on this and directed the administration to begin the process and communicate with our two chairs to get it done. I think we voted on it. What I would like to see tonight is that we direct our secretary, to go back through the minutes, get with administration and confirm what I suspect is that we did take action on this. If we did not, let's be prepared to vote on it and give it to administration at the next meeting. That is how we take care of this, than it will be over with. I would like to put that on the agenda or put my name next to Mr. Wolfe's on the agenda for the next meeting to make sure that we get to the bottom of this. It is probably something that was an oversight. Let us verify that we don't need to give administration direction again. I don't think that we do, but if so let us go ahead and do it."

Charles Julien - Contracts

Councilwoman Hotard stated, "I have been instructed by Councilman Julien that he would like to remove this item from the agenda."

Charles Julien - Policy for Emergency Housing Situation

Councilman Julien stated, "I am wondering if administration could basically look into creating an emergency housing policy or plan. After the storm, we have housing situations come up and people are homeless and we don't have an emergency situation in place. I am wondering if the administration can come up with something and inform me so that people in my district, when I am faced with these questions, I would be better prepared to answer the questions. Maybe even come up with a policy."

Pat McTopy, Chief Administrative Officer, stated, "As you are aware, the parish had no evacuation plan prior to Gustav. With the help of several members of the council and administration, and the school board, the parish was able to put together and evacuation plan and in fact evacuated several hundred people out of the parish. I am not going to say that it wasn't without problems, but considering the quickness that it was put together in, it worked. Mr. Boe, Mr. Oncale and myself have already discussed the need to make it a more formal plan so that whatever problems that we did have, we will analyze it, critique it and try to curtail whatever problems may have occurred with the last evacuation."

Councilman Julien stated, "I am speaking of maybe housing type situations, if that could maybe be looked into."

Pat McTopy stated, "It is my understanding that St. John Parish cannot provide for any approved housing because we are south of I-10. The Red Cross would not have an approved housing. Mr. Oncale is more familiar with that than I am. It won't be approved housing."

Councilman Julien asked, "Still, is there something that we can do? Maybe look into for an emergency situation?"

Pat McTopy stated, "We can address that yes."

Councilman Lewis stated, "Mr. McTopy answered some of the questions that I wanted to ask. What I was looking at, you go into other parishes and they use schools and all for evacuation people to go in. Here we have schools that are in pretty good shape. It looks like we could put some people in there and have some place for them to stay even I know this is sort of a rough part of the state. But if the storm is not hitting directly we have a lot of people leaving the parish and going maybe about 40 to 50 miles from here and going into a school over there. They could be staying right here instead of making all those expenses. Not only that, some people can't afford to leave."

Councilman Smith asked, "Mr. Julien, are we talking about emergency housing during a hurricane? Or are we talking about emergency housing situations period? Could you clarify that for me?"

Councilman Julien stated, "Emergency housing situations."

Councilman Smith stated, "Okay, I thought that is what it was. It seems like we went off of the subject. You are saying that if Jane or Jon Doe's house burns down and they need somewhere to say...

Councilman Julien stated, "And they are homeless, we have to have something in place. I guess we can't just give everybody a place to stay, whenever they say I need some place. I think we have to have some sort of emergency situation in place because I am sure that other areas deal with that kind of stuff, just something to look into."

Councilman Smith stated, "If we are going to look into that, administration could you possibly get with the housing authority or the director of the housing authority. I know they don't have a plan in effect or if one can be developed you may have to go through them and work hand and hand with them and Ms. Elois to see if we can come up with something to assist the people if something happens."

Councilman Wolfe stated, "First of all, when you are talking about HUD, they have no emergency plan for housing. That is the federal government. I guess you would have to go on the federal level and talk to our congressional folks. Secondly, you are talking about evacuation and folks leaving the parish. I would hope Paul would get up and explain why we don't have a facility whereby we can house our people and keep them out of harms way. The parish is in such a situation whereby we would have flooding and we are under the national level in terms of floods and evacuation. I just think that we, as a whole, need to get together with all parties, our

state and federal delegation and try and come up with some funds whereby we can build a building whereby we can house about five to ten thousand people. We can get the money, I would assume, on a federal level, using some of our money as seed money. But we do need to have a place in St. John where we can house our people instead of having them evacuate to other parts of the state and out of state really. There should be some plan whereby we can at least take care of especially the people who are home bound or etc. Right now I would just ask Paul to come up and explain to people of St. John the Baptist Parish or whomever is here, the reason we don't have a shelter. The reason I just said shelter is that it just came to my mind."

Bill Hubbard stated, "Dale, I apologize Paul is not here tonight. He is the authority on that being the EOC Director and all. Ronnie might want to comment on some things that we have been working on. Ronnie worked with us side by side during the storm. We know we have some issues that we need to address. Ronnie, you want to expand on it? I will just let you take the ball and run with it."

Councilman Smith stated, "Mr. Wolfe, as Mr. McTopy touched on, because of where we are located, south of I-10, the Red Cross won't give us any assistance. I don't think the Federal Government will give us any assistance to house people here. I have contacted some of the neighboring parishes and got some outlines on their emergency evacuation plans. I am actually in the process of trying to put something together to present to administration so that they can actually look at it and complete it where we are working with the school board system to have transportation out of the parish where we have a facility where we will house our people. We will know exactly where we are going. We will have a location to house them and a way to feed them also. That is in effect and I think Mr. Hubbard had already spoken to someone at the Port about looking into possibly building a building like you are saying. They are actually looking into that if Mr. Hubbard would like to expand on that."

Bill Hubbard stated, "Ronnie is correct. We have been talking to the Port. Joel Chaisson, the Judge, has informed me of a facility that was built in Mobile. It is a multi-use center. We have been looking at doing a couple of things for recreation here. I have talked to these guys. This center can double or triple its use. We could have basketball courts, which would take care of some recreation. We can also house up to 7,500 people with a full kitchen facility and it is federally funded. This is something that we are looking into. It is going to take a little time to put together. One thing that I did learn during this storm, which was my first two storms actually, is that we do need to be self sufficient. I took a lot of heat with the electricity. I know people were hot but we are sort of at Entergy's mercy there. The state with the MRE's, the Red Cross with food and water and all of these things that we were helping these state agencies take care of, they just didn't get here in a timely manner. Anyway

like I said we learned a lot during this storm. I would like to be a whole lot more self sufficient for next year and the year after and the year after that. We are working on it. Dale I will get with Paul and we will make sure that he gets with you and maybe at the next meeting he can explain the housing a little bit better."

Ronnie Smith - Montgomery Watson/GE - Report on the NANO filtration project

Ray Rials, MWH, stated, "As of a couple of weeks ago, GE and MWH did go back and inspect the equipment, to make sure that there was no hurricane damage. The middle of last week, the parish re-established their station facilities, the communication towers that send signals to the station. Cade, with GE, is in this morning. He is re-establishing the system and re-commissioning it. The steps are to flush it, to confirm that the signals are sending the ones that they need to and to re-test, send the test off and get an approved test."

Cade Gibson, GE, stated, "Per MWH's contract with GE, after thirty days if the system is not turned over to the parish, we have to resume flushing and getting a new bacterial test. So I don't anticipate that being a very big problem. It took what two and a half weeks last time? I don't look at that at all. We have had it soaking in a solution that actually kills bacteria. So it should actually kill that stuff. It was not in there anyways. I am looking at by the end of the week hopefully. It depends on how I can flush it out and what the bacteria test looks like and again we are going to take it twice a day through out to make sure that we have zero bacteria in the system."

Ray Rials stated, "Our approach at this time is it has been a long and winding road for all of us. We don't want to cut any corners these last few days. Let us just do it right. Get you the right sample. Get you a good test. Put the water in the system and we are almost there."

Councilman Smith asked, "Would you say by the end of the week or the end of next week our water system will be up, unless we run into some problems with DHH or what?"

Ray Rials stated, "With no anticipated stags, yes by the end of next week. That would be conservative."

Dale Wolfe - Update on Edgard Ferry from state delegation Jody Amedee, Elton Aubert, Joel Chaisson, Nickie Monica and Gary Smith

Councilwoman Hotard stated, "Mr. Wolfe, I have a portion of this letter here, would you like for me to read it? This is a letter from Kevin Reed, DOTD, sent to Senator Amedee's office. It says 'there are currently multiple issues preventing the Department from resuming ferry operations at the Reserve/Edgard location: 1. The Department has attempted

to re-establish the electric service on the west bank side (Edgard) of the landing. To re-establish the service, the original land owner must sign off on the right-of-way documents for Entergy to proceed. Although the land was granted as servitude to St. John Parish in 1967, the nearby church actually owns the land and has not agreed to sign these documents as of yet. According to Pat McTopy (St. John Parish CAO), the parish's legal counsel is currently working with the archdiocese's attorney to resolve the issue. 2. The Department is not currently sufficiently staffed with the required U.S.C.G. licensed personnel to support the location. Efforts are being made to hire and train new qualified personnel. 3. The boat for this location is not currently operating, but repairs are being conducted and should be completed within 2-3 weeks. Given the nature of these issues, predicting a timeline to resume operations is quite difficult, but it is our intent to resume service at the location as soon as these items are resolved.' This was from Representative Aubert, Senator Amedee, Representative Smith and Senator Chaisson."

Councilman Wolfe stated, "We also have some Representatives here in person and I really appreciate it. I would like them to come up."

Representative Nickie Monica, stated, "Tonight, we have Mr. Roy Quezaire here with us tonight and Kevin Reed, who is the project manager of this project. You know for many years we have been having problems with this Reserve/Edgard Ferry and it is time that we resolve it. It always seems like when they take something away for a little while, it goes away. I am committed, as Representative of the people on the East Bank, of maintaining the service. I understand there are some legal issues that need to be resolved and I know that the archdiocese is involved. You know for about the last forty or so years they have been letting the state and the parish use it and as you know the value of that batture has gone up significantly every year. So it looks like they want their share. Hopefully we can resolve that issue. Mr. Roy Quezaire is going to address the council and hopefully answer all of your questions."

Roy Quezaire, Legislative Liaison for DOTD, stated, "With me is Engineer, Kevin Reed, who is assigned to this particular project. First and foremost on behalf of Secretary Bill Anchor, the Secretary for the DOTD, he sends his regrets that he can not personally be here for this meeting. Also he is of the understanding, as well as the department, how sensitive this subject matter is and has been for many years. I can personally tell you as a representative for sixteen years on the West Bank of St. John the Baptist Parish that there were many challenges through those years and we always fought and did our best to keep the services going to the best of our ability. Here we are today. A little over a year now this community, the East and the West Bank, has been without the services of the ferry that has been a part of and one of the focal points of this parish and a kinship to every citizen in

St. John Parish and surrounding parishes. We are very aware of the 11,000 vehicles and the 1,800 pedestrians that use this ferry on an annual basis. As the numbers and the statistics so indicate. We are also aware that it takes an additional nine to twelve miles to travel to the Veteran's Memorial Bridge to cross and travel from one side of the river to the other. We are very aware of that. We are committed, as a department, to restore the services of the ferry, as the citizens have been accustomed to receiving. However there are some obstacles, which Councilwoman Hotard read, from a communication from the department today that was issued this afternoon. There are some obstacles that are preventing us from bringing forth the services as we have in the past. Let's dissect and discuss them in accordance to how they were read. 1. The Department has attempted to re-establish the electric service on the west bank side (Edgard) of the landing. In order to do that, we have to have the signed servitude from the original land owner, which is the adjacent church, St. John the Baptist Catholic Church. It is my understanding in 1967, as it was so read, that was permitted and the power company connected the electricity and we were able to have electrical services to operate the ferry. As we speak, unless something has happened between 1:00 today and now, the documents have not yet been signed. So we do have an issue and I am sure legal counsel is being steadfast in his efforts to work with the parties to make sure that we get the legal documents signed in accordance. That is obstacle one. The second one is that the Department is not currently sufficiently staffed with the required U.S.C.G. licensed personnel. Now that is a leap. Not anybody can just go and operate a ferry or be a deckhand on a ferry. You have to be certified and recognized by the United States Coast Guard before you can fill any of those occupations or job classifications on any particular ferry. Well we have had a challenge as a department for quite a few years. The private sector pays more than the public sector, than state government. In years of old, DOTD ferry operations have been a training ground and a wonderful recruiting ground for the private sector, which pays a lot more than what the state rate pays as an employee regardless of what classification you are on a ferry boat. The tug boats, the pilots association, all of those we are in constant competition with the private sector. Now we are still aggressively pursuing and trying to get people that are interested in becoming employed and working on the ferries. We have four ferries that we are operating. New Roads, Plaquemine, White Castle isn't operating as we speak and Reserve/Edgard and we have challenges all the time in keeping personnel because the private sector is taking them away from us. So we are aggressively pursuing that. The third item which is the smallest hill to climb is that there are some repairs that need to be taken care of and within 1-2 weeks we will have those repairs done. We won't have any mechanical problems to speak of. So those are the challenges that we are faced with as Councilwoman Hotard read and I just walked you through each one of them. We are very serious about restoring the services. We must make sure that the i's are dotted and the

t's are crossed and all three of those challenges that we are faced with now. I am going to bring up Mr. Kevin Reed, he is the technical person or the individual with the experts that is really hands on with the project."

Kevin Reed, Engineer, stated, "To elaborate a little bit on what he was speaking of, as far as the Coast Guard positions, the licensed positions. On each boat, for it to be in service, because it is a Coast Guard inspected vessel, it requires a licensed Coast Guard personal of a captain and an engineer to be on ship. What we are able to pay is \$4,301 monthly for these particular positions. In a private industry these guys can make \$600 to \$800 a day. So we face two issues there. We face the issue of not being able to recruit these individuals to come to work for us. Plus we are periodically losing these individuals to the private sector. What we are doing on that front is we are working with our Human Resources section to try to work through Civil Service to raise those pay scales, but there is a process to that and there are some limitations as to how much that pay scale can be raised. The other thing we are doing on that front is we are taking some of our staff, we are trying to be pro-active, and we are sending them to some schools to try to certify them with these licenses. Then again that is a pretty lengthy process. It can take two to two and a half years. So as far as I am concerned that is the primary issue from our end. The other issue is obviously getting the situation worked out on the West Bank with the electrical service re-establishment. That is where we stand right now. We are pursuing all of these items and as soon as we can get them resolved we will put the location back in service."

Councilman Smith stated, "Mr. Reed, it was brought to my attention that the boat that we had here was moved and taken to another location and the boat that is broken is actually from another location."

Kevin Reed stated, "That is correct. The boat that was moved from this location actually was in Plaquemine during Gustav and took some pretty extensive damage. We do have two other vessels that would be capable of running in this location that we would be able to move here which is our intent."

Councilman Smith asked, "Is it the same size?"

Kevin Reed stated, "Yes, it is a seventeen car ferry."

Councilman Smith asked, "My other question is the personnel that were working here when our ferry was shut down, were they laid off or did they go somewhere else?"

Kevin Reed stated, "What we did was give them the opportunity to work at some of our other locations during that period of time. We have one that transferred as a result of not wanting to make that commute and we still have as far as the engineers, we still have one of them around. As far as the captains, we have one that transferred because of the

situation and we still have one that is an employee. They are currently still being given the opportunity to work at some of the other locations so that when we put this one back in service we will still have them employed."

Councilman Smith asked, "My only other question is it seems like our situation is out of the state's hands. My question is if we get this resolved tomorrow, how long do you anticipate it being before you have qualified personnel to operate the ferry?"

Kevin Reed stated, "Honestly if I could answer that question I would, but I can't predict if we are going to hire an engineer or not. We are advertising currently. I can't predict if it would be next month or 2-3 months from now. We are going to continue to advertising. We are going to continue training. As soon as we get another individual on board we will move forward with it."

Councilman Smith stated, "Thank you, my only other question would be to administration. Can we get an update from our attorney if it is even legally possible on what steps have been taken to move this situation forward with the electricity?"

Kerry Brown, Legal Counsel, stated, "Roughly a month ago the council actually voted on the issue concerning the servitude. You unanimously voted to go ahead and institute litigation against both Entergy and the Roman Catholic Church for their failure to allow us to place the servitude right where it was before or at least within the same vicinity. I want to say two weeks ago that suit was in fact filed. Service was affected on the Roman Catholic Church on November 6th and we are simply waiting for service to return on Entergy right now. So it is in process. It is moving forward. If Entergy is served tomorrow within two weeks we will be set to have a hearing date. So we are simply waiting to get the confirmation and we are moving forward."

Councilman Lewis stated, "There is a lot I can talk about and I am glad that he said what he just said because after we voted to get a declaratory judgment. I read a lot of stuff about what has been going on with this ferry and a lot of discussion, but until we get with the land owners and the people that are involved we are not going anywhere. I think the more we put this in the public it is going to be harder to resolve because the land owner is looking for certain things. I think we had forty years on that and I don't know how long we have left on these forty years. Now we might have five years left, we might have two years left. I don't know exactly what date they leased it to us. I know that they are not being paid. The way I am hearing is that they want to get paid because they might be a chance for them to lease the batture out and it is getting worse than that, the people that live on either side of the batture they are going to want to get paid too. It is going to get worse than that because when we cross the river anything else might happen."

Councilman Wolfe stated, "I would just like to say thanks to the people that emailed us and brought us up to date as far as what is going on with the ferry. I would like to thank Mr. Monica, Mr. Quezaire and Mr. Reed for coming out here tonight and taking your time to inform us. I really appreciate it."

OLD BUSINESS:

There was no old business.

NEW BUSINESS:

There was no new business.

CORRESPONDENCE/COUNCIL BRIEFS

Councilman Wolfe stated, "I think tonight I would just like to ask that administration, maybe Jackie can poll the council and get a committee of members to meet with administration in terms of a shelter for St. John the Baptist Parish. I think it is much needed. It has been needed. I think we are way behind time in terms of a shelter. I think we have the money available or we can get the money to build a shelter to take care of the needs of the people that reside here in this parish. Can someone bring me up to date on the gentleman that made a presentation on patching our streets at our last meeting?"

Bill Hubbard stated, "Mr. Wolfe I want to say that last week Mr. Cliff, the Public Works Director, met with this gentleman and he has some information for us to look at and if we can do business with him, we will do business with him."

Councilman Wolfe stated, "Okay, I appreciate it."

Councilman Lewis stated, "I guess everybody knows that I have the largest district in the parish. With this year coming up I am going to be begging you like the devil for all the help you can give me. I have a lot of streets and a lot of cleaning up to do. I will need your help. I appreciate whatever you can do."

Councilman Wolfe stated, "I just think Haston that this council needs to either get a vehicle for the at large member. I don't know about you Steve, but using your own private vehicle is hard on the pocket. Gas has gone up and everything else is going up. Somehow this council needs to start taking care of this council. It is a big job. Especially representing Division A & B and some of the larger districts that we have especially district one whereby Haston you have to do all the West Bank and then have to come over to the East Bank. So we will have to make some provisions for ourselves in terms of car allowance or whatever. Let's get together and just bump our heads and see what we can come up with. It is hard, really hard."

Councilman Millet asked, "I would like to ask administration if they can draft a letter to the DOTD about Highway 54 and US 61 in Garyville and see if we can get a traffic signal out there with the increased traffic that we are having right now. I know we looked into it. I am not sure what happened."

Councilman Julien stated, "I would like to commend the administration and Mr. Clifford Bailey on picking up the debris that we have. I know we have some other stuff left but I want to commend them for getting some of the stuff done in District III."

Councilwoman Usry stated, "I would like to congratulate the athletic football teams from the high schools for their play off status and wish them well this week in their play off games."

Councilwoman Millet stated, "I would just like an update on the exit ramps at Belle Terre. If you could get that for me I would appreciate it."

Councilman Wolfe stated, "I forgot tonight we were supposed to put the public on notice and especially the Sorapuru Family. We had dedicated this room to Mr. Sorapuru. Somehow we lost communication and his picture got lost in the shuffle. So hopefully at the next council meeting in Edgard, we are going to re-invite the family to attend the meeting. Hopefully his picture will be ready and we will do what we did for Joel McTopy on the East Bank and have it done properly. Maybe we can have some refreshments Mr. President, so that we can sort of entertain the people that will come to the meeting."

PRESIDENT'S REMARKS

Bill Hubbard stated, "Thank you council members. I appreciate everyone tonight supporting our budget amendments and the new budget for next year. If you did have a chance to go through it, as I am sure you did, you will notice that next year we are planning additional overlays throughout the parish and a whole lot of ditch cleaning. We are way overdue for that. I just appreciate you all supporting those issues. I would also like to remind everybody that tomorrow is Veteran's Day. So if you are in Wal-Mart or Matherne's wherever you shop and you see a veteran wearing their cap, just thank them. Freedom isn't free and we have to thank those veteran's."

There was no executive session.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Employee Back Pay

Dale Wolfe - Personnel Matters

Property/Casualty Insurance Agent - 1) Claims, any/all property, casualty, and Workman's Comp. claims

2) Claims, procedures and disposition 3) Coverage's, any/all material changes

Cable Franchise Negotiations

Any and all pending legal matters.

ADJOURNMENT:

At 7:28 PM, Councilman Smith moved and Councilman Julien seconded the motion to adjourn. The motion passed unanimously.

/s/Jaclyn Hotard
COUNCIL CHAIR

/s/Jackie Landeche
COUNCIL SECRETARY