

SPECIAL MEETING
OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS
ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST PARISH COUNCIL
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 20TH, 2013
CHAIR JACLYN HOTARD
VICE CHAIR LENNIX MADERE

The Council of the Parish of St. John the Baptist, State of Louisiana, met in a Special Meeting in the Joel McTopy Chambers, LaPlace, Louisiana on Wednesday, November 20th, 2013, at 6:00 PM.

CALL TO ORDER:

PRESENT AT ROLL CALL: Art Smith, Ranney Wilson, Lennix Madere, Marvin Perrilloux, Jaclyn Hotard, Michael Wright, Larry Snyder, Lucien Gauff

ABSENT: Cheryl Millet

Councilman Snyder led the Prayer. Councilman Perrilloux led the Pledge.

Legal Counsel Jeff Perilloux and Carl Butler were present.

Budget

Natalie Robottom, Parish President gave a power point presentation on the St. John the Baptist Parish 2014 Budget Presentation (See attached presentation).

Vince Lucia, CFO, stated, *"If you have your big package in the summarized budgets you are going to have for each one well first of all general fund is on its own and all the special revenue funds (incorrect paperwork given to the council) if you would look on page 64."*

Councilwoman Hotard asked, *"What fund are you in? I brought my full budget. If you tell us what fund you are looking at we can reference it in our budgets. The budget I brought doesn't have page numbers. It is the first budget you submitted."*

Vince Lucia asked, *"The general fund budget?"*

Councilwoman Hotard stated, *"Yes that is what I am looking at."*

Vince Lucia stated, *"Right that one but I am asking you to look at page 64."*

Councilwoman Hotard stated, *"These don't have page numbers on them. I brought my budget."*

Councilman Snyder asked, *"What fund is it?"*

Vince Lucia stated, *"General fund is the first fund. In the meantime if you have the general fund budget itself in detail we can start with that which is on page 78 with all of the line items. On the summary they have the net fund balance difference is a positive \$39,715.00 and on the summary schedule of course it isn't going to be detailed out but*

for each section of it you can review it and go to the detailed portion if you have any questions about that."

Councilwoman Hotard stated, "I'm sorry Mr. Lucia we are actually looking at this detailed general fund right here, the number that you just referenced where did you pull that number from?"

Vince Lucia asked, "The fund balance number? I am referencing this budget."

Councilwoman Hotard stated, "The number you are referencing should be on this sheet too if it is coming from the general fund. I have the budget here so what line item are you referencing? They should still be the same from the packet to the budget."

Vince Lucia asked, "You don't have any page numbers on that one right?"

MOTION: Councilman Perrilloux moved and Councilman Wright seconded the motion to take a recess. The motion passed with Councilwoman Millet absent.

MOTION: Councilman Gauff moved and Councilman Wright seconded the motion to go back into regular session. The motion passed with Councilwoman Millet absent.

Vince Lucia stated, "Okay now you can compare 2013 to 2014 on the general fund but at this point I am discussing the 2014 general fund and you might have the original introduction of the budget and of course they are not numbered you still have the same information that I have here and the net effect of the general fund is a positive \$39,715.00 and the actual final general fund is proposing to be at \$2,301,000.00 at the end of the 2014 year."

Councilwoman Hotard asked, "Is that after the transfers?"

Vince Lucia stated, "Yes everything is included in that final number. So the bottom line is of course you have all of the separate line items for each section of the general fund and it appears that if you look at the previous years the fund balance has been increasing pretty readily for the last four years and it is a good sign for the parish overall especially when we are talking about debt refunding and so forth that is the main fund that everyone reviews and looks at any questions?"

Councilwoman Hotard asked, "Do you want us to wait until you go through it?"

Vince Lucia stated, "I guess we will wait until we go over everything okay that is fine. The next section is special revenue funds and of course you have in your package all of the different funds and they all included with the information that you all have. The package that you received today from us on page 6 we have 25 different special revenue funds. You may want to just review all of the funds and whatever funds that you have any questions about for the future and we can go ahead and answer some of those questions."

Councilwoman Hotard stated, "All of the special revenue funds are included in the budget."

Vince Lucia stated, "We also have the enterprise funds which are mosquito abatement, solid waste, water distribution system and the waste water account and with those we are not including in the fund balance effect the depreciation but all four of those funds are very healthy at this time and of course if you look at the detail of it we can discuss that a little further also and of course we have the debt service funds and that as you know you have in your packet all of the different debt funds and our total debt package is sound. We don't have any problems paying the debts and we have all of our funds totally in place to continue to pay the debts in the future. The capital project funds that is the parish wide sewerage construction fund and there are several sewer projects that take place in that particular fund and the revenues from that fund come from the sales tax district which is the 1% sales tax money that transfers to that account to do some capital projects."

Councilman Perrilloux stated, "I need to get man power before I give raises."

Natalie Robottom stated, "Well those people are already getting raises but there are 6 new people that are going to be hired to work in public works. There is also a capital outlay line item for additional equipment and the bond issue that just passed includes the equipment that you just named. So all of the things that you requested are being done we have increased the number of people in the department, we purchased equipment this past year and we have more money budgeted in this budget for more equipment plus there is money available for the large pieces of equipment in the bond issue so we think that addresses what you are asking for."

Councilman Snyder stated, "Along with Mr. Perrilloux I have seen us advertise for operators and mechanics. I have never seen us advertise for everyday laborers. I don't know how we do that but I witnessed something today where a couple of good laborers would have helped..."

Natalie Robottom stated, "I don't know that that is a position on the scale."

Councilman Snyder stated, "Well there may not be but then maybe that is where we can help at or maybe that is where someone can help at."

Stacey Cador stated, "We do have a maintenance position which is typically a laborer position however the department has found that at times it might be wiser to hire a higher skill level then maintenance and the department at times assigned

Councilman Perrilloux stated, "Let me get my questions out of the way. I know the first time we had this meeting the first thing I said was freeze the raises and here is why I said that because I see we are short equipment in the parish, we are short of people in the parish, we are 15 people short in two departments, we don't have the necessary equipment. The work is out there. I am looking at the overtime that is getting ridiculous. I am showing all of this overtime that should mean that I don't have enough people to do the work or the directors just have a poor work structure. I don't know but that was my problem and now you want me to give a 5% raise across the board. I am not good with

that. I wasn't down with that. I need to explain where and why did that 5% come from because I am not down with giving a 5% raise every year and we don't have the man power to do the work in the parish. So I want to get that out of the way quick because I have done read all kind of negative in the paper about this and that so I am here to discuss it. I want to know where this 5% came from and why do we have to give 5% all the way across the board. I don't know."

Natalie Robottom stated, "Mr. Daley isn't here I think he was doing some work in Reserve and I see your attorney isn't here either..."

Councilman Perrilloux stated, "Yes he is right out the door."

Natalie Robottom stated, "Okay it is my understanding that he gave the council a copy of an ordinance that was passed by the council that suggest that 3-5% is awarded to the civil service employees annually as a CPI or cost of living increase. The 2% that makes the 5 comes based on the scale that is adopted by the civil service board and the council that allows each employee for each year of service that they go up about 2% so that is where the 5% has come from each year a combination of an ordinance that was passed by not this council but a council that suggests yearly it is 3% and 2% is garnered with each year of experience now since I have been around in 2004 it doesn't really apply to the employees who are topped out at year 15 however every council has chosen to say well just give everybody 5% rather than stopping at the end of the scale. So the recommendation was based on precedence and history with regards to the overall 5%. I don't think your motion actually affected unclassified or civil service and I am not sure is your objection to everybody or just the unclassified?"

Councilman Perrilloux stated, "My intention was to parish president and non-classified workers and I know the verbiage wasn't correctly..."

Natalie Robottom stated, "I don't know."

Councilman Perrilloux stated, "I can change the verbiage but I am not down with giving a 5% raise. You said that was done in history than that is bad history. I don't see this parish growing as far as industry. I think we are a poor tax parish..."

Natalie Robottom stated, "Again can you clarify for me..."

Councilman Perrilloux stated, "I don't see we are growing industry as far as jobs..."

Natalie Robottom stated, "Not that like who are you talking about..."

Councilman Perrilloux stated, "Well non-classified I am assuming are the directors..."

Natalie Robottom stated, "Okay and that was \$55,000.00..."

Councilman Perrilloux stated, "That is what I am assuming non-classified workers are and maybe legal can clarify for me if not that is what my assumption of it was..."

Natalie Robottom stated, "That is but in your original remarks you said"

you weren't down with anybody getting 5%. So are you not referencing the classified employees?"

Councilman Perrilloux stated, "5% every year I think until we grow as a parish and grow financially we are just giving all of the money and we have nothing coming in as far as I see that is my opinion."

Natalie Robottom stated, "Okay and again I still didn't quite get you are you saying that everybody shouldn't get the 5%?"

Councilman Perrilloux stated, "I am talking about the non-classified now civil service workers I guess we would have to discuss that but my motion was for the parish president and non-classified workers and I am assuming non-classified workers were directors that is what mine was at the time."

Natalie Robottom stated, "Okay just you started your conversation with you didn't think anybody should get it."

Councilman Perrilloux stated, "Well let me correct myself that is what I was talking about because I don't see us growing where we can afford to be giving 5% raises every year on top. I just can't see it. I cannot see it."

Natalie Robottom stated, "Okay well obviously y'all have discussed this and I will give you a little history. In 2007 as all budgets pass there was a 5% salary increase for all employees, directors and civil servants that went into effect in 2008. There was a salary study done by that administration and raises of \$5,000.00 were given in September and an additional amount the following May because it was determined that the pay was not equitable to all of the surrounding areas and that exceeded 5% it was about \$7,900.00 and of course that was in addition to what they received at the beginning of what they received in 2008. So again there was a study that was passed that suggested that the salaries are inconsistent with our neighboring parishes. Since that time when we had a change of administration rather than just compounding salaries that were in place since many of these employees were new I reduced some of the salaries because if you had been here 20 years doing a certain job and I brought you in new I didn't start you at that salary. Your salary was based on what I thought you deserved and your qualifications. So right off many of the salaries went down. We didn't continue to perpetuate what was done from 2008 to 2010 and again as we brought new people in their salary was based on their qualifications and experience in the job. So again and I think you were all provided a chart that showed that we didn't necessarily just keep what was in place it was based on what they brought to the table and we can provide that to you again. With regards to you don't see the parish growing obviously what we presented to you suggests that the revenues increase and they are going to continue to increase and our debt has decreased. So what I am suggesting is that we have managed extremely well since 2010 with a steady decline in debt and a steady increase in revenue and we are anticipating based on the taxable value of our property an additional increase as well as Marathon rolling on the tax role that is from the assessor's office that is not us. We have also managed to refinance which saves the parish debt payment over time and that has been quantified by our bond attorney to be at least 2.5 to 2.7 million dollars in savings to the tax payers over the next several

years over the life of those payments. Additionally this council just approved and I think they went to closing last week an additional savings of \$500,000.00 which is about \$50,000.00 over the ten year period. So again all things that we have put in place to put the parish in a better position financially. Additionally what you will find is that Hurricane's Katrina, Gustav and Ike that were kind of pushed aside we were owed money for that and what we have done through today is brought in 2.3 million dollars from boxes that this parish had written off. So again when you talk about the parish going down that is not happening. Our audits have been very good as Vince showed you our fund balances have been increasing. We have created and fixed problem funds that were historically problems like recreation that we are pleased to say that they have a very healthy fund balance which is allowing us to hire two more people in recreation and pay for them out of recreation and you are starting to see what happens when you have a department that funds itself. In animal control again improvements there with a problem fund so I am not sure what you are referencing with regards to where the parish is going but we are in regular site selection visits with potential industry there will be 83 billion dollars of investment from New Orleans to Baton Rouge and we are prime sites for that. What we attended this week that is coming. It is coming because of the river, the rail, the roadway as well as the price of natural gas and we are continuing based on the qualifications and the competence of the people that we have working for us to solicit and attract those kind of projects and there are several on the table right now. So again I am not sure what you are referencing but everything that we are getting is that the growth is coming and we need to be prepared for it, we need our infrastructure repaired for it and we need to get our work force prepared for it because we will not be able to handle or provide all of the workers necessary for the amount of work that is coming this way."

Councilman Perrilloux stated, "I agree we need to get our work force together but it hasn't gotten here yet but I still say because I know Councilman Snyder passed legislation of all this wrong practice that was done in the past that we are trying to get away from to reform this parish to get away from the bad practice as you stated was done in the past. So when you wrote the 5% in the budget I was not in agreement with that. I was not. It shouldn't have been done like that. I think it should have been done differently."

Natalie Robottom stated, "Okay and again I have a charge based on the charter and every parish president and every budget has been presented this way. My charge is to present a budget to you. You have the authority to amend and adjust that budget which is what your rights are but that doesn't restrict my ability to present to you my budget. Now of course I discussed publicly what my plans were. I don't think \$55,000.00 out of a 61 million dollar budget and hundreds of millions of work that we are doing and have been done should cause the divisiveness that I am hearing that civil servants can get 5% but the qualified competent workers who are not entitled to overtime, they do not get overtime they get comp time that is capped off at 125 hours when some of them have 300 hours a year but can't use it because of the amount of work whereas our civil servants get time and a half every time they step out after work. So again these are the individuals who are leading and completing the work that you are seeing that is generating the dollars, bringing in the savings, getting the additional revenues that would not be here had it not been for this

administration. So again we are talking about and have been again you know this budget is 61 million dollars and we are talking about \$55,000.00 again. A whole meeting on November 6th, for \$55,000.00 in one swift motion with the signing that took place last week we saved this parish \$500,000.00 in one move enough to pay for those \$55,000.00 in raises for nine years and that isn't even to account for all of the other stuff that has been done and again we are talking about a 61 million dollar budget and it is unfortunate because last week when we needed help pushing a bond issue that I want to thank the people for passing we were discussing a \$55,000.00 salary increase which totally confused the voters to think that the bond issue was related to this \$55,000.00 which one if it wasn't there it wouldn't have been recommended. If our budget wasn't sound it wouldn't have been a part of it. Again it is about fairness. It is about equity. We are talking \$55,000.00 when historically and I don't know Ms. Hotard you were here, I know Mrs. Millet isn't here I asked Stacey and she couldn't tell me when the council did the study and just gave the employees \$7,900.00, \$11,000.00 was that with council action or how did that work? Just when I started going back was when I found you got a raise in January; you got one in October and then again in May that exceeded sometimes \$10,000.00 so again how were that done? We are not asking for that. We are asking for compensation for our workers for the year that they worked or the time that they worked just like everybody else. If you are hired as a civil servant in July or August in January you get a raise too. So again we are just asking can you treat us the same way because one we are not entitled to overtime but we are here at night. We are here on Saturdays. We are doing our jobs. All of the events that we are having to do since the storm and again we are earning comp time but there is a cap on it. So you can't use it because we have so much work to do you can't leave. So the one group that isn't entitled to be compensated for their extra time is the one that you want to deprive a cost of living increase?"

Councilman Perrilloux stated, "I am not depriving anybody of the cost of living increase at all..."

Natalie Robottom stated, "That is what it is described as..."

Councilman Perrilloux stated, "I said we can't afford to give 5% every year..."

Natalie Robottom asked, "And what is that based on? What is it based on this year?"

Councilman Perrilloux stated, "It is based on I am not going to get into it detailed right now. I am not going to get into it right now. I said 5% and you said comparing to other parishes St. Charles has a 132 million dollar budget and St. James has 62 million they are growing everything I see is growing and we are just looking out. For me we are just giving raises of 5%. I am not good with that. I am not denying anybody because I am fair for everybody. I am equal pay in the workplace so I am definitely fair and I fall into the category you and your directors fall into because I am management. So I fall into that group. I understand perfectly. I understand what it is not to get raises or not to get anything. I understand that. So it isn't anything personal against anybody but all the negative was put in the paper before it came to this council to say what we feel like we are going to

give the parish president and the directors a raise automatically just 5%. Nobody said that. It is like stuff being done without coming to talk to us. I want communication. I want it open crystal clear. I want to hear from you and talk to us that is what you need to do is talk to us and ask why I am doing this there are several reasons because I see unfairness across the board a bunch of it and it has to stop and you perfectly said you don't want to do the stuff that was done in the past but perfectly some stuff I see you doing as in the past and we are trying to reform this parish to make it better and grow that is what I am hear for and that is what the rest of the council members are here for and every time we try to talk and get some conversation going I hear negative the council this, the council that it isn't the council if you have something it is between that person and it needs to settle don't bring me into it but all of this foolishness going on saying Mr. Perrilloux is blocking raises. Mr. Perrilloux is looking out for the parish and will always look out for the parish and the working man. I will always do that and I am a fair person."

Natalie Robottom stated, "Well we appreciate that but basically the motion that was made doesn't treat everybody fairly and that is the contention."

Councilman Perrilloux stated, "We had got to speak about civil service workers yet because I was asking I think the ordinance says 3 to 3.5 and I think former council member gave the percent of 1.5 to make it 5 and we just kept that same practice from my understanding and I could be wrong."

Natalie Robottom stated, "That is not correct. That is wrong. As I just explained it is the scale that is adopted by the civil service board there is about a 2% gap for each year of service you provide so the 3% that is by ordinance combined with the 2% for each step equals 5 again they are both approved by the council that is the action that has been taken. Again at some point the council has to adopt the scale none of this is done if you say we are not giving them 5% then don't adopt a scale that supports the increase but historically and again you know I am going to speak for all of the employees we have all been working and we have demonstrated sound management of the budget. It is growing. There was a huge increase in 2008 & 2009 but that went down but we have still managed when other people are in trouble passing taxes and asking us for money we are doing great now are we doing as good as we need to be at absolutely not but that is coming for us but we need to have the infrastructure and everything else we need in place to do that. All of these dollars that are coming to us and I know you all can't make all of the meetings but 30 million dollars in projects that is huge for us, 32 million dollars in CDBG dollars that is already 62 million, 11 million in hazard mitigation funds to make repairs to the parish add that. I was in Baton Rouge and we are going to get some more money again but it requires a team of people to manage that and what you have around you is the work. Mrs. Millet is not here but it was my understanding and she did tell me that this is the do nothing parish. She explained to Mr. Randy that we do nothing. Well I am here to say that we do plenty. The 27 million dollar bond issue that was approved those projects were done from 2010 until now. There was one project done before I took office Walnut Street. The rest of those projects were done by this administration and that is not to include installing a road program for concrete and asphalt that you can look back and see

what was done with your money a regular maintenance program and asking for input on additional road and we are going to do some more roads coming up and a million dollars in road work every year in addition to the 2.2 million that is available to do roadwork in the bond issue. Again that isn't falling from the sky somebody is doing that work and I am telling you the team that is put together in this room that you are depriving and I know you may not mean to but the bottom line is by passing an ordinance that gives civil servants a cost of living raise and purposefully and it was offensive we read it over and over this council wanted to make sure this group didn't get a raise. Not only did you pass an ordinance but you passed motions on top of that just to be careful to make sure it didn't slip through just to make sure this one small group that attends every meeting for you, that provides all of the information that you need on every project that you rely on constantly to provide information to your constituents that you need would be the group that you decided they don't deserve a raise. The 5% \$55,000.00 let's not get it twisted; it is \$55,000.00 worth of raises. It is not anything that is going to break this council. Again if you want to look at overall you have to look at the entire picture there are \$300,000.00 worth of raises overall. We are talking about targeting \$55,000.00 in raises out of a 61 million dollar budget."

Councilman Snyder stated, "Mrs. Robottom you are making a big thing out of it..."

Natalie Robottom stated, "No y'all are making a big thing out of it..."

Councilman Snyder stated, "You are making a big thing out of it..."

Natalie Robottom stated, "This is you second meeting about it."

Councilman Snyder stated, "This is not our second meeting. Our second meeting is on the budget that we are trying to budget for the people of our parish. It isn't on just this..."

Natalie Robottom stated, "That is all y'all discuss and that is all y'all discussed in the last meeting."

Councilman Snyder stated, "We did not say we were not going to give anyone a raise. We said we wanted to have control of it and that is our responsibility..."

Natalie Robottom stated, "You froze it okay."

Councilman Snyder stated, "That is why."

Natalie Robottom stated, "So it is controlled."

Councilman Snyder stated, "It is controlled for one year."

Natalie Robottom stated, "Right."

Councilman Snyder stated, "After that we froze it because after we passed the ordinance we hear all of this going on and see the newspaper that says they can't do that. They can't do this. They can't do that. They are stupid they don't know anything about a budget. I am hearing all of this and I know it is true you are saying we are all stupid. I

let you talk for 15 minutes and I agree with Mr. Perrilloux and he is right this parish is not going financially. We can say well it is going to look good here or there. This is supposed to be coming. We have to go by advalorum. We have to go by things that we know are coming. Now if the other things come in that is gravy then we can do some things and hire some people. Sure we can make some predictions but we keep talking about giving these raises and giving these raises to the people that got in here on contracts. Those people came in here knowing that we pay them well because they are getting paid well compared to some of these other people. They are getting paid well and they came in on a contract not on the fact that in a year I am going to get a 5% raise or a 10% raise they came in here well that is good pay I am going over there I am going to leave my job. I am going over there that is good pay with nothing to tell them they were guaranteed a 5% raise for four years, 20% of \$75,000.00 in four years...

Natalie Robottom asked, "Is this it?"

Councilman Snyder stated, "Is this it?"

Natalie Robottom stated, "Again the last meeting was all about salaries."

Councilman Snyder stated, "Oh in other words we need to move on from this?"

Natalie Robottom stated, "I would imagine so. Okay there is 61 million dollars or 59 million dollars of the budget and you are on \$55,000.00..."

Councilman Snyder stated, "No you are on \$55,000.00 not us..."

Natalie Robottom stated, "You had a whole meeting on \$55,000.00 and you are back on it again..."

Councilman Snyder stated, "You are the one on the \$55,000.00..."

Natalie Robottom stated, "I am done with it..."

Councilman Snyder stated, "You have all of those people out there now none of them were here last week but all of them are out there now like little soldiers..."

Natalie Robottom stated, "We told you we couldn't come last week..."

Councilman Snyder stated, "I know you told me we had a meeting scheduled for 3:00 PM that day with you."

Councilwoman Hotard stated, "Thank you for saying that."

Natalie Robottom stated, "That wasn't a budget meeting Ms. Hotard..."

Councilman Snyder stated, "It was about the budget..."

Natalie Robottom stated, "We told you we were not prepared and of course you did nothing but..."

Councilman Snyder stated, "It was about the budget when you wanted to

meet with us."

Natalie Robottom stated, "Well we are here now and again are we still on that. Is there anything else that you are concerned about that might affect the people that you represent other than \$55,000.00 that you are denying the people who work here is there anything there is not one question that we received other than from Mr. Gauff not one from you about the people that your represent not a one."

Councilman Perrilloux stated, "Let me answer why you didn't get questions because Judge Daley told us not to send emails to get answers for questions that is why you didn't get any questions because I am always sending you questions for answers..."

Natalie Robottom stated, "Well he didn't tell us that and then you offered to come for a meeting and didn't come but you met in the council chambers."

Councilman Perrilloux stated, "We told you why."

Councilman Snyder stated, "I sent you an email telling you why I didn't make it."

Councilman Perrilloux stated, "Legal told us not to."

Natalie Robottom stated, "Then you scheduled another one this week."

Councilman Snyder stated, "You are reaching. You are reaching."

Natalie Robottom stated, "I am not reaching. Mr. Perrilloux spoke with Randy and Vince and said that he would come and then didn't come. Individually you can come and ask. The questions that you are asking tonight you should have been had the answer to that budget has been done since October 27th and again you are following your leader who has jammed you in a corner every other parish meets with their administration and they discuss the budget so they are not up here asking these kind of questions they have an idea of what they are voting on. Again you are not prepared to vote on a budget because you haven't spent the time with us to know what is in the budget and that is the fact."

Councilman Snyder stated, "Your directors don't know what is in the budget why aren't any of them coming up to explain the budget..."

Natalie Robottom stated, "They know what is in their budget they don't know the whole budget because it is my job to present the budget and this team presented it."

MOTION: Councilman Wright moved and Councilman Perrilloux seconded the motion to take a recess. The motion passed with Councilwoman Millet absent.

MOTION: Councilman Gauff moved and Councilman Wright seconded the motion to go back into regular session. The motion passed with Councilwoman Millet absent.

Councilwoman Hotard stated, "I would like to say a two quick things if

you have your cell phone on ring or on vibrate if you could even take it off of vibrate with the microphones it makes it difficult when the minutes are being typed and if we can just try and speak one at a time I know this is an emotional thing for some reason but if we could just try and keep it low for everybody you know everybody is raising their voices it is not one single person but try and keep it calmer as we proceed. Councilman Snyder you still have the floor."

Councilman Snyder asked, "I see this organizational chart are we going to hire a recreation director and when?"

Natalie Robottom stated, "We will and two other positions."

Councilman Snyder asked, "When will this director be about what time would he or she be in?"

Natalie Robottom stated, "Actually Mrs. Poche is doing an excellent job and so we are looking at the key positions she requested and how we are going to manage the rest because Mrs. Poche is a civil servant and is paid as such so she gets overtime and we are very pleased with the changes that are being made but at the current rate many of our civil servants receive in payment what our directors get and I know you guys get a copy of that on a monthly basis but we are at a point now where most of them or several of them make more than my CAO or CFO."

Councilman Snyder asked, "You said we are going to get a director?"

Natalie Robottom stated, "Yes."

Councilman Snyder asked, "Is that salary included in your line item for salaries for directors? The directors not Mrs. Poche?"

Natalie Robottom stated, "Yes all the positions are available."

Councilman Snyder asked, "Well what happens to that money if we don't get a director?"

Natalie Robottom stated, "It stays in recreation. It has its own fund in recreation remember we created a fund for recreation with a millage."

Councilman Snyder stated, "Okay with the fire department they are hiring two new employees I don't quite understand that I'm sure it is because I am stupid but the fire department hired two new positions funded by the LVFD."

Natalie Robottom stated, "That is correct."

Councilman Snyder asked, "How does that work? Do they just hire with people with public money I know they have their own money that is directed to them. Explain it to me because I don't know how that works."

Natalie Robottom stated, "A couple of years ago there were problems with some of the funds and what we found out was the paid personnel has a tax and so does the volunteer fire department and the volunteer fire departments get a certain amount allocated to each one Garyville,

Reserve, LaPlace and the West Bank obviously LaPlace has the bulk of residents and get the bulk of the money so they have a very healthy budget and fund balance. At the time we had escalated up to I think 42 paid fire fighters and found out that our budget could not handle the paid fire fighters so we scaled it back and presented a plan to reduce the number of paid employees, we didn't fire anybody, but when they left we didn't replace them and we attempted to contract personnel to fill all of the overtime. I remember you complained about overtime and how we were exceeding and eating into the fund balance each year so we attempted to manage that by stabilizing the number of fire fighters and then making up the difference for when they were out or ill or additional help by contracting that did not work but because the LVFD actually had enough money and we were actually going to put two fire fighters in the LaPlace station they transferred money and agreed to pay for paid fire fighters to be housed in the LaPlace fire station. So those are the two again. It is a safety issue we thought we could manage it by contracting people to fill in that didn't work out as planned we thought it was in our best interest to have the two original paid fire fighters in LaPlace because they are the larger area and we were covering a different section of the parish provided the funding for that."

Councilman Snyder stated, "Okay the communications department only has one person in it?"

Natalie Robottom stated, "Yes sir you have one person that is paid out of communications and the rest you know there are more people in finance you put them where there is money available especially if they cross funds. Mrs. Annette who also works with communications as a receptionist is paid for in waste water. Again she crosses every budget you have to decide where the position is going to come from and so she was funded there. Our finance manager again who deals with money across all budgets instead of dividing and pulling little bits of dollars out of everyone she is assigned to waste water the healthy budgets that can fund that. Again many of the personnel were paid for in funds because they didn't have any funds. We didn't have an animal shelter fund. We didn't have a recreation fund all this time so their people were paid for out of other departments but as we try to fund these appropriately then the dollars come from within their budgets."

Councilman Snyder asked, "Is that for recording purposes so that we can try to get every department to work by itself or be an entity in itself whereas it has its own budget and there are just paid people working in that department. Is that what we are trying to do?"

Natalie Robottom stated, "That is the goal but some of them don't have a funding source for example like the council you all don't have any funds coming in for the council so you are in general fund as a line item like health and human services we include their director in some of their budget under general fund because the amount of money that they have coming in through HHS doesn't cover the number of people that P&Z doesn't generate enough money to cover everyone that works in P&Z so that budget is included in the general fund. There is no money coming in for communications and they are used throughout the entire parish so it is under general fund. So the ones that are there for example don't have a source of revenue so they are included under general fund but you know you have millage's for animal shelter and

recreation and all those other things that is why they have their own budget. A source of revenue and then you charge the expenditures to that revenue source."

Councilman Snyder asked, "Is there some way we can get something written up because I look at this and I see some miscellaneous line items are very high. I know we have one."

Natalie Robottom stated, "You do have one and you have requested that before and I think they provided you with the miscellaneous."

Vince Lucia stated, "We can provide that to you again."

Councilman Snyder stated, "Yes do it again. I tell you what I am going to send you an email on what line item I want the miscellaneous to be sent to me and to the council. I see all the departments have it more or less and some of them kind of jump out at you and I just want to see what that is but just send it to everybody."

Vince Lucia stated, "I will get it out to you."

Councilman Perrilloux stated, "I just want to make a comment. I did call to schedule with Mr. Lucia but with my work schedule and his meetings we couldn't get together and I apologized to Mr. Lucia today and told him that we would sit down but he and I did talk but it was just a conflicting of my schedule and his meetings and we couldn't get together today because he was preparing for tonight. I just wanted it to be clear that I did speak with him about it."

Vince Lucia stated, "Yes I spoke to you about that today and you indicated what your issue was that isn't a problem."

Councilman Gauff stated, "I guess I will go back a little and say I really don't like the way things have gone but it seems we have gotten conflicting information. We were asked to send in some questions for answers and be prepared. I like to get things ahead of time. I like to be prepared so I will ask a lot of questions ahead of time then we get an email from our DA and he said that he thought we were in violation of the open meeting laws by asking questions. Don't ask questions. So I made calls from New Orleans, Kenner, St. Charles, judges and lawyers and I have gotten conflicting answers so we have all gotten conflicting answers on what we could and couldn't do. When could we meet? Could we meet individually? Some say that is all they do. Most say that is all they do they meet individually. We said we couldn't do it and we were told by the DA that we couldn't do it. So the meetings came or were set up and this is where we are again with another meeting discussing the budget. I had sent in questions before and I still have quite a few questions and I guess since we are going through the budget I would like to ask more of these questions that I had line itemed out. The first one would be for P&Z what I would like to see is for us to add a line item that identifies demolitions and adjudicated properties. Can we add that to the budget? Is that something that we could do? I want to add more money to that because it seems like every year we are talking about what we can't do as far as demolishing homes or it is a lengthy process to go through the legal system and I figured if we put money into some of these or into this line item then that is something we can do. It is only legal that is stopping us. I guess sometimes I

felt your hands were tied as far as making a decision if we would just go and tear it down public safety wise. I now Ms. Sutherland would say that she sent inspectors out to demolish homes but if public safety or the inspector says you can't do it then you wouldn't have it done I thought some of that would be a financial issue and that is why I put it...

Natalie Robottom stated, "None of it is related to finances."

Councilman Gauff stated, "Okay so none of it is financial what about adjudicated properties then? We have had discussions or I have had discussions with Ms. Sutherland about the process that we passed we have had issues with adjudicated properties and maybe some of our constituents didn't want to put that money up front and then find out that they couldn't afford to go through with the adjudicated properties process so if there were funds there that we could set aside then maybe some of those properties could come off of the book and be put back into commerce."

Natalie Robottom stated, "That would be a legal process for how you would use that so clearly if that is something that you want to work out with your attorneys."

Councilman Gauff asked, "Okay so that is not something that needs to be put into a budget either?"

Natalie Robottom stated, "It could be but with a policy on how to spend it additionally I think you were at the meeting we added money to the CDBG dollars to the demolition and blighted so again we have some opportunity there to use some grant funds for it but we have never held up on demolishing a building because of funds so that is not an issue. It is about the legal right to be able to do that and any decision that I make will be made by me typically with legal advice in terms of what needs to be demolished and I don't take that lightly."

Councilman Gauff stated, "Okay the program with the Baloney's and one of the discussions that I have had with Ms. Sutherland dealt with the fact that there were some funding issues and I have had one of my constituents call and say that he would have to put \$6,000.00 out there before the process could be completed and then he may not even get that piece of property. So that is a lot of money for him to invest and not be able to get that property and we were just thinking or I was thinking if there were some funds set aside so that some of these properties we could just assist it would help our constituents and it will help us because eventually you would be getting property taxes on those."

Angelic Sutherland, Director of P&Z, stated, "Right the issue was people would call and want to know what the property will costs and we can't give them an amount until there is an appraisal done on the property and it was the way the ordinance is written it is their responsibility to pay upfront for the appraisal so that we could even set a price on the property so I think that was some of the issues that they were having and when we discussed it you are right there is no funding source for that but as Mrs. Robottom said that is up to you guys to put money in there if that is the case."

Councilman Gauff stated, "That is what I am asking."

Angelic Sutherland stated, "You would have to change the ordinance because the ordinance dictates who pays for it. The other thing is and maybe this is where your demo was coming from in the line item. The P&Z budget doesn't contain the line item that pays for the zoning violations that is in the public works budget where it says zoning violations is where our demolitions and grass cutting because initially code enforcement was in public works when it was transferred to P&Z they are under my supervision but they still get paid out of public works because P&Z doesn't have a sufficient funding source."

Councilman Gauff stated, "That is why I had the question in public works what were the violations?"

Angelic Sutherland stated, "Those are the demo's, grass cutting, all of the code enforcement violations get paid out of that line item."

Councilman Gauff stated, "Okay so the only way I can create that is through ordinance? I would have to change the ordinance?"

Angelic Sutherland stated, "Yes you would put the money in the budget but then you would have to change the ordinance to reflect that the parish is going to front or put that money up front. It would be just a little tweaking I don't think it would be that much."

Councilman Madere stated, "On the same issue that Mr. Gauff is talking about I heard the parish president say that money isn't the problem as far as demolishing the buildings it is the legal aspect of it that we get held up some time in the courts but what about the individual buildings where it just takes the parish president and SCP to go out and take a look at it because we have several houses that meet those qualifications and I think we need to get rid of those and not wait for those to go to court and I could think of two of them specifically."

Natalie Robottom asked, "Are we talking budget?"

Councilman Madere stated, "We are talking budget. You just mentioned that so I wanted to clarification."

Natalie Robottom stated, "The clarification is that the decision rests with the parish president and I can get assistance from SCP, from inspectors and whoever else to help me make that decision and usually legal is involved and I do not take it lightly and I have not found a case to demolish any at this point and I know which one you are talking about..."

Councilman Madere stated, "No you don't."

Natalie Robottom stated, "Well it doesn't matter because the choice rests with me."

Councilman Madere stated, "Yes it does matter because that is what it is all about that isn't the one I am talking about and I will show you those at another date but it is not the ones you are talking about."

Natalie Robottom asked, "Is that about the budget?"

Councilman Madere stated, "Yes it is about the budget. The money comes out of the budget."

Councilwoman Hotard stated, "Legal is saying that the actual policy isn't topic but I guess the discussion of if you want to put money in the budget to fund demolition or those types of things."

Councilman Madere stated, "I just responded to what I heard that money wasn't a problem as far as demolishing that is why that question came up I didn't make the statement I just replied to it."

Councilman Snyder stated, "In public works I see where we cut \$600,000.00 out of street maintenance. Is that because of the work we did this year and because there were some funds coming in from some other place because we ran out of money sometime early this year with street maintenance."

Brian Nunes stated, "We didn't necessarily cut street maintenance what happened is we ran over last year so we added more money to what was in the budget. The original number was closer to 1 million but we had some additional over so we were able to transfer some money into that line item so it is not reflective of what the actual item was at the beginning of the year it was closer to a million so we didn't necessarily cut it was even with what the 2013 budget was."

Councilman Snyder stated, "Well I am looking at 1.6 million in 2013 and 1 million in 2014."

Vince Lucia stated, "The council adopted a budget amendment to that fund that is why the numbers went up higher than what the original ordinance was it was originally 1 million also and we amended it to compensate for the additional work being done."

Councilman Snyder asked, "So if we want 1.6 million dollars in there for streets can we do that by amending the budget?"

Brian Nunes stated, "Mr. Snyder I would just like to remind you that there is money in the bond issue for streets. I believe it was about 2.2 million which is not reflective in that number so there is more than just that is in that budget."

Councilman Snyder asked, "There is additional money where?"

Brain Nunes stated, "In the bond issue."

Councilman Snyder stated, "I understand that but this is the budget that we are talking about not the bond issue. The bond issue is somewhere else in my head right now. I am talking about this bond issue if we need to put more money in it then we need to at least go up to 1.3 million I would think and you get it wherever you are getting it right now to make the 1.6 and I would like to put that in a motion."

MOTION: Councilman Snyder moved and Councilman Madere seconded the motion to amend the public works budget line item street maintenance from 1 million dollars to 1.3 million dollars.

Councilman Wilson asked, "Is there other money available from funds from the storm that could also be put in there?"

Councilman Snyder stated, "I don't think we can put that in our budget."

Natalie Robottom stated, "Actually there are a couple of things Mr. Snyder if you are interested in road work right now we provided you with a list of roads and the estimated costs and between the bond issue which is a minimum of 2.2 million and the million there that is 3.2 million within 2014 for road improvements which is significantly more than has ever been provided. Again the budget was very carefully calculated again it is a projection. If you spend more than 3.2 million dollars there is always the option to amend and add more dollars based on the roads that you are providing that doesn't appear to be the case and the ones that are projected for 2014 as well as we are still pursuing some road improvement funds through FEMA but the list that you guys were given with the estimates, I think Chuck still has a few to do, will not surpass the funds available."

Councilman Snyder asked, "Well did you stop doing work on the streets this year because of a shortage of money?"

Natalie Robottom stated, "Yes this year but next year will have three times as much."

Councilman Snyder stated, "It will have 1.3 million dollars for sure because I am putting it in the budget."

Natalie Robottom stated, "And 2.2 million."

Councilman Snyder stated, "That is fine let's vote on it."

Councilwoman Hotard stated, "Let's clarify that so we don't get challenged again. Mr. Snyder made a motion to amend the budget."

Jeff Perilloux stated, "That is the proper way to do it."

MOTION: Councilman Snyder moved and Councilman Madere seconded the motion to amend the public works budget line item street maintenance from 1 million dollars to 1.3 million dollars. The motion passes with 7 yeas, 1 absent (Millet) and 1 against (Gauff).

Natalie Robottom asked, "Where is the money coming from?"

Councilman Snyder stated, "If it came from the general fund or wherever the other money came from take it out of there. Where did it come from?"

Vince Lucia stated, "It came from the sales tax district."

Councilman Snyder stated, "Well then take it from the sales tax district and make that an amendment to my motion. If we want to we can make this parish go forward but if we don't work together it is going to be the same as it has always been."

Jeff Perilloux stated, "You need to amend the motion to select the fund

that it is going to come from by amending the motion that was already made to state where the money is coming from."

Vince Lucia asked, "Can I make a suggestion? I don't have a problem opposing to do that but in my opinion once the budget is adopted that is fine but I would prefer to wait to see if the money that we are getting from the bond issue will help us out with that. I guess the bottom line is I am trying not to use anymore sales tax money unless it is absolutely necessary because this calendar year we have to make a transfer from the sales tax district for \$900,000.00 for the additional street work and the equipment that we purchased. So I am just recommending if we need the money for next year then we can amend it next year. That is my opinion."

Councilwoman Hotard asked, "Do you have money in Economic Development?"

Vince Lucia stated, "No."

Councilwoman Hotard stated, "So you don't have a fund balance?"

Vince Lucia stated, "Well we have a fund balance but I would rather not use that for roads and bridges."

Councilwoman Hotard asked, "How many transfers do we make out of economic development? I guess my point is that we do transfer money out of economic development so basically what you are saying right now is that we shouldn't make this amendment and do it next year when we do have monies in the budget."

Vince Lucia stated, "Yes and another point is that we have dedicated funds from the sales tax district for water and the waste water system so I would rather take it out of that fund but I would rather wait until next year to see how far we go with the maintenance. That is my opinion but if you want to go forward with it that is up to you."

Councilman Snyder stated, "Yes I do."

MOTION: Councilman Snyder moved and Councilman Madere seconded the motion to amend the previous motion to designate that the funds will come out of the sales tax district. The motion passed with 7 yeas, 1 absent (Millet) and 1 against (Gauff).

Councilman Gauff stated, "I would like to ask public safety or out of that fund what equipment do we buy yearly? There is \$30,000.00 I was just wondering what equipment did we buy?"

Jobe' Boucvalt stated, "We purchased a truck."

Councilman Gauff stated, "\$30,000.00 for a truck? It says equipment it didn't say vehicle. I was wondering what it was."

Jobe' Boucvalt stated, "That is the line item for the homeland security emergency preparedness vehicle that pulls the trailer and sirens if we have to move them around that is the vehicle that went under water in Isaac and we had to replace it."

Councilman Gauff stated, "Okay I didn't see vehicle or I missed it."

Councilman Snyder asked, "Insurance didn't pay for that vehicle?"

Jobe' Boucvalt stated, "The vehicle was used and we replaced it with a new vehicle with insurance money and with grant money from homeland security."

Councilman Gauff asked, "Why is the deficit getting larger under public safety? It just continues to get larger. Are we taking money out? Why is that?"

Jobe' Boucvalt stated, "Well if you look at the \$30,000.00 that is part of the deficit but if you look back in 2012 revenues that is where money went in."

Councilman Gauff stated, "I meant in general \$173,000.00 why are we losing so much?"

Jobe' Boucvalt stated, "You have an increase in salaries, retirement, benefits are increasing and we had a cut back of a grant that we get from homeland security that was cut by about \$40,000.00 this year so that increases your deficit when you don't have money coming in."

Councilman Gauff stated, "Okay the public works fund, the \$601,000.00 is this for a cost sharing or what was that for? I see Hurricane Isaac cost share was that a percentage that we pay or something we pay?"

Something was told to Councilman Gauff not by the podium and I cannot make out who is talking or what they are saying.

Councilman Gauff stated, "Okay that makes sense I just didn't know."

Councilwoman Hotard asked, "Mr. Lucia or Mr. Nunes I am in the public works fund right now if you could identify on the revenues on miscellaneous income we had a large increase there could you tell me what that is? It was \$22,935.00 that one line item under miscellaneous."

Vince Lucia stated, "That was budgeted but I would have to look at the current budget. I know normally, well 2012 I don't know what all of the miscellaneous revenues were but we can detail that out for you but normally we get the LWCC dividends and split them up among certain departments."

Councilwoman Hotard asked, "Is that the only thing in miscellaneous income? I am just asking why it was such a large increase and what all contributes to that line item."

Vince Lucia stated, "We would have to research that a little further."

Councilwoman Hotard asked, "On the expenditure side on professional services you have an increase of \$125,000.00 to \$150,000.00 what comes out of that line item or do you know what that increase represents?"

Vince Lucia stated, "Well we have professional line items increase due to the Royal Engineering contract and we pay out of several different funds."

Councilwoman Hotard asked, "Is that the bond management contract?"

Vince Lucia stated, "No disaster recovery."

Councilwoman Hotard asked, "The line item right underneath that engineering services, what engineering services get paid out of that?"

Vince Lucia stated, "C.J. Savoie."

Councilwoman Hotard asked, "So only Chuck comes out of that line item?"

Vince Lucia stated, "We have other I mean right off hand I would have to research that one too but Chuck is in there for sure but we don't have that data with us right now but we can email you that information."

Councilwoman Hotard asked, "Okay on the line item for the fuel and oil you are showing that we are budgeting \$70,000.00 more dollars do you know the reason for the increase in that?"

Vince Lucia stated, "Well actually we review that on an annual basis and of course the fuel fluctuates up and down but what we do is all of the expense comes from the roads and bridges department and we have the other departments reimburse that line item as the months go on."

Councilwoman Hotard asked, "Is the cost of fuel next year going to be more expensive is that why you put \$70,000.00 more?"

Vince Lucia stated, "The reason why we increased it somewhat based on the fact that this year so far we are probably going to exceed what we have now."

Councilwoman Hotard stated, "Okay so it will be over \$310,000.00 but you don't know if it will be \$380,000.00."

Vince Lucia stated, "But again we didn't have all of the reimbursements posted yet so it is kind of hard to give you a factual number at this time."

Councilwoman Hotard asked, "Let me just ask a hypothetical situation let's say that line item there for fuel and oil it is \$310,000.00 for 2013 and \$380,000.00 for 2014. If we amend the budget to put it at \$350,000.00 where do you put that other \$30,000.00 or do we need to tell you where to put it? I am just asking going forward so that if we do amend certain line items that are a decrease then where do we need to tell you to designate those funds so in a situation like with the motion with Mr. Snyder we may want to put more money into another fund and take another fund down."

Vince Lucia stated, "Well if you look at the net fund balance for 2014 I would recommend to reduce that negative debt."

Councilwoman Hotard stated, "Right that is why I said not specifically that line item but it could come out of a line item in a budget that has excess. The next item under capital outlay for 2013 it was \$689,000.00 now it says \$450,000.00."

Vince Lucia stated, "Okay that was one of the amended budgets that we did this year."

Councilwoman Hotard asked, "So when we are amending it for 2013 you put the actuals in 2014?"

Vince Lucia stated, "The reason why we did the amendment is because we had requests to purchase new equipment so that is what we did."

Councilwoman Hotard asked, "So should it be an increase or a decrease?"

Brian Nunes stated, "We had increased it last year based on needing equipment and the purchase of the Capt. Bourgeois property so they had to transfer some more money into that fund now the new number reflects more of a reality."

Councilwoman Hotard asked, "Okay so this year is a more artificially inflated number because of the purchase of the property? Do you plan on purchasing more equipment this year for 2014?"

Brian Nunes stated, "Yes absolutely."

Councilman Snyder asked, "Our share of the Hurricane Isaac cost share for next year is going to be \$600,000.00 and that is going where?"

Brian Nunes stated, "That is really reflective of the culvert cleaning cost share I think that project was somewhere around 2.4 million so that is our 25% coverage."

Councilwoman Hotard asked, "In the public works budget the code enforcement line item showed \$96 on 2013 and it is \$74 is that with the office fully staffed?"

Vince Lucia stated, "That was a change in the contract amount on the code enforcement officers."

Councilwoman Hotard asked, "Is that because we added new officers and they were lower than what some of the other officers were?"

Vince Lucia stated, "Right correct."

Councilman Snyder stated, "I think our code enforcement officers should work an additional 2 hours a day with what we have going on right now it might be a good time to put some money in that account to let them work 6 hours instead of 4 hours right now they are doing a lot of work."

Councilman Wilson stated, "I think those people should be hired as permanent employees but can we get them to work 8 hours?"

Councilman Snyder stated, "I just think 4 hours is good but it is not enough 6 hours will give them a good time because they could do a lot more work because now we are going to start getting more income coming in if they can do better and more work that is what I think because they write up all of the violations. How much went on the tax roll this year for fines?"

Angelic Sutherland stated, (Not at the podium) "\$80,000.00."

Councilman Snyder stated, "That is coming from a few years back 2012 and 2013 so you know that \$74,000.00 there for salaries I don't know what Angelic might need but why not go about \$20,000.00 over that and give those people 6 hours if they want to work 6 hours it will be there if it is not there they can use it for something else in that department I guess but we are talking about a 6 million dollar road, \$20,000.00 isn't a lot to give. I don't see any eyebrows going up."

Councilman Wilson asked, "How much money did we spend to contractors to go and cut grass and clean properties off?"

Angelic Sutherland stated, "You are talking about code enforcement violations right? They get paid per the ordinance .03 cents a square foot."

Councilman Wilson asked, "No how much did we pay last year? Does it come under a professional service?"

Angelic Sutherland stated, "In 2012 it was like \$67,000.00, in 2013 it was budgeted \$66,000.00 but I don't know where we are at at this point."

Vince Lucia stated, "It is in the monthly report that Julie sends out under public works under the zoning violations that is a combination of grass cutting, vehicle towing, any expenses for demolition."

Councilman Snyder asked, "All of that is initiated by code enforcement?"

Angelic Sutherland stated, "Yes."

Councilman Madere stated, "Before you go you said the tax roll with Mr. Joseph, did we work out all of the bugs with that as far as collecting it has all that been worked out. I heard you said it was \$80,000.00 for the last two years?"

Angelic Sutherland stated, "That is what I recall off of the top of my head I looked at it today and I remember it being around \$80 or \$81,000.00."

Councilman Madere asked, "So we don't actually know how effective this process is going to be yet?"

Angelic Sutherland stated, "No the tax bills went out maybe two weeks ago and I did talk to Vivian in the Sheriff's Office and they have already started receiving payments from people paying their tax bills but I think they are going to give me monthly reports on what they collect so I actually can't give you that right now an amount of how much we have actually started collecting. I don't have that."

Councilman Perrilloux stated, "We are going to reserve that and look into it further as far as increasing code enforcement maybe a few more hours a week but we will sit down with you and see what type of money it is and where we will get it from so we just reserve the right to

talk about that."

Councilman Wright asked, "Mr. Nunes I have a question for you under public works fund. Under drainage projects I noticed in 2011 we spent \$462,000.00 and 2013 we only budgeted \$310,000.00 and now we are budgeting \$325,000.00. Is there any specific projects or is that just general everyday maintenance and drainage projects in public works?"

Brian Nunes stated, "A lot of things come from that we haven't spent a good bit of that this year but I have that earmarked for those pumps for Red Bud and Crevasse and actually that is moving forward. I know it isn't a budget discussion but just an update for you and we planned on using some of that for the Haydel project before we had the property issues but in general it is for that type of project a drainage project that is more than just installing a culvert and we identify those as needed and that is the line item it comes out of."

Councilman Wright asked, "Okay so like the canal spraying does that come out of that or is that a separate line item?"

Brian Nunes stated, "I believe we do pay that out of that."

Councilman Wright asked, "Okay in your honest opinion \$325,000.00 we can obviously spend more do you think we need to put more money into that line item?"

Brian Nunes stated, "It is hard to say because when the pumps go down and we have to get those repaired that comes out of the drainage line item. It is an estimate the way it is right now. I think \$360,000.00 is a fair number. We sat with Mr. Lucia about it because it was at \$310 and we asked him to increase it a little bit and we did get another \$15,000.00 in there I anticipate it will be enough especially with all the drainage work we are doing in the bond issue and the recent bond issue that we also completed I think that is sufficient for 2014."

Councilman Wright stated, "Okay and what we can do is just revisit it next year and if something happens with the pumps and we have problems and you are taking a lot of money out of those line items we can put more money into it so that we can get some regular everyday drainage problems taken care of."

Councilwoman Hotard stated, "I am going into the EDC fund for the EDC special projects \$50,000.00 in there?"

Torri Buckles, Director of EDC, stated, "Those are for the Farmer's Market, the operations of the Farmer's Market."

Councilwoman Hotard stated, "Is that how much it is going to cost to operate the Farmer's Market?"

Torri Buckles stated, "We don't have the exact number right now there were some figures that were changed in regards to some of the building costs that originally we had projected but those are other costs on a weekly basis just to operate the Farmer's Market and that also includes other things such as marketing efforts to promote the market as well."

Councilwoman Hotard asked, "Did you spend that \$50,000.00 from 2013?"

Did all of it go to the Farmer's Market?"

Torri Buckles stated, "All of it was planned to go to the market and just to give a recap the USDA didn't approve the use of the previous building that had been purchased so this money was set aside in the event that we needed to purchase a new one but as we reported about two months ago they did approve that we could use that building so we no longer have to use that specifically for that anymore."

Councilwoman Hotard asked, "I have to ask Mr. Lucia something really quick, when will you have the budget amendment so that we can actually see the actuals on 2013? It would help and be a better guide."

Vince Lucia stated, "Honestly it will probably be in the first meeting in April and it has always been like that because it takes us about 90 days to finalize everything."

Councilman Perrilloux asked, "Mrs. Buckles just one question while we are in EDC, events for \$110,000.00 and then you have the festival event that is all in the same \$210,000.00 is that two different events?"

Torri Buckles stated, "Typically all of our special events are things like the 4th of July or MLK celebration or anything that isn't related to the festival. The second line item that you are referencing is festival expenses those are just dollars set aside for the Andouille Festival."

Councilwoman Hotard stated, "Thank you and that was actually one of the items that I had highlighted. For your office and operating expense it is a small increase but it is a higher number are we purchasing any new equipment?"

Torri Buckles stated, "Once we fill the position that we intend to advertise for we anticipate that we might need additional office furniture for that person."

Councilman Perrilloux asked, "Beautification I see we went up \$20,000.00 did we identify what we are going to do with that or just as it comes?"

Torri Buckles stated, "It is actually a combination of two things some of the money has been set aside for the Keep St. John Beautiful program and as I have discussed with Councilman Wright we are opened to taking suggestions from the council with respect to projects in your district that you would like to see move forward and in addition the EDC has also expressed that they would like to see certain signage throughout the parish updated and that is possibly money that we could utilize for that funding as well and also we received a request for garbage cans along the levee and certain other areas to the parish as well."

Councilman Wright stated, "That was actually my next question going into that I know we had talked about it at a meeting some time back to actually have some of our parish buildings and entrances to the parish to hire someone to do some landscaping for that. Have we moved forward with that at all? I know we requested that a long time ago to come out of this line item or we were debating it."

Torri Buckles stated, "We have not moved forward with contracts if that is the question that you are asking specifically about that."

Councilman Wright stated, "I know we had Sunken Gardens that Progressive Waste actually adopted that."

Randy Vincent stated, "We did utilize some of those funds for that purpose."

Councilman Wright asked, "So I guess just my question is since there is an increase and you probably didn't use as much last year we can use that to kind of maintain some of our parish entrances and maybe beautify them a little more and maybe even hire somebody to maintain that on a regular basis."

Randy Vincent stated, "We started late in the year to utilize those funds so moving into 2014 we will start earlier in the year."

Councilwoman Hotard stated, "On the business development line item there is a decrease of \$100,000.00."

Torri Buckles stated, "Correct last year when we requested an increase in the EDC budget it was for \$300,000.00 for creation of the business development line item and it actually involved several areas one was creation of a business one stop website, trade studies, updating our business training centers and also the business incentives. We have anticipated that because we still have not issued a contract for the business one stop development that phase I which is what we anticipate which is development of the site questionnaire and what have you it is going to take a little bit longer to go through all of those phases so rather than budget the full amount for the full site development this actually only accomplishes one phase of development so we decreased that budget by \$100,000.00 taking that into consideration."

Councilwoman Hotard asked, "So the \$200,000.00 is going to cover the first phase?"

Torri Buckles stated, "Partly well the first phase but it also includes continued funding for the business training center and also for the business incentive programs that we are working through with legal."

Councilwoman Hotard asked, "Okay is it possible at some point when you have a little bit more of that finalized just to pass something along to us and then also I know Councilmen Perrilloux and Wright touched on beautification and I had that as one of my questions. Do we have any plans in place for any of the dollars right now?"

Torri Buckles stated, "Well there was a beautification study that was created several years ago so I think that gives us a good working document because areas have already been identified and this is both on the East and the West Bank and then again we talked about signage throughout the parish and certainly updating our entrances because we want them to look very friendly, we want to look like a very welcome place when people come into St. John so those are the areas that we have also and then also through the holiday season you are probably starting to notice public works is beginning to put up decorations along 51 and Main Street, River Road and we need more snowflakes and

things just to make it look more holiday like so we are utilizing the budget that you have right now to purchase those and also again for next year to continue to add to it."

Councilwoman Hotard asked, "So you are in the process now of purchasing the snowflakes?"

Torri Buckles stated, "Yes."

Councilwoman Hotard asked, "Is it possible next week if you have some time available I would like to get with you to go over some of the ideas that I have for some of the beautification."

Councilman Wilson asked, "How many employees do we have working in EDC?"

Torri Buckles stated, "Actual employees are myself, Terri Abadie and we are working to put another position out and we actually have one additional employee that is being paid out of the budget right now through grants and a contract employee."

Councilman Wilson stated, "The reason why I am asking is this is for Economic Development and all it is doing is being transferred to everywhere else and I don't know what is being done as far as Economic Development but this thing was passed and at one point the parish built a building for the sock factory and it didn't last but about 5 years or so but it put jobs for a couple of hundred people for that period of time but right now all of the money is being transferred to everything under the sun and there is nothing happening in Economic Development with salaries and we are sending the money somewhere else. I was just wondering why we need more people to do that."

Torri Buckles stated, "Just for clarification when you say there is nothing happening in EDC you mean the money that is being spent or do you mean program delivery?"

Councilman Wilson stated, "Are we talking to any industries to try to locate them here?"

Torri Buckles stated, "Yes sir as a matter of fact there is about 1.7 billion dollars' worth of economic development projects that are planned for St. John some of those projects are actually still going through the permitting process right now so we have not announced those projects simply allowing those businesses to go through the processes necessary. We have a business intention rate that is hovering around 95% right now and that is not happening by accident that is happening because we have put in the business retention program about two years ago where we visit businesses on a monthly basis, we actually take very good records of ways that they could continue to improve and then in addition we also opened a business training center several months ago which is designed to help those businesses get additional training support to continue to grow their business. So there is a lot that is going on here. I would probably say one of our biggest accomplishments is the site selection program. We did have site directors that came on prior to 2012 but on an average I have about 4 site selectors that come and look at all of the properties that we have whether it be industrial or commercial properties including a number of hotels so yes there is a

lot in the works I wish that I could speak very publicly about the projects that are coming but if you give us two more months I think that you will begin to really see...

Councilman Wilson stated, "I think that you could speak to the Council members and let us know what is going on because all of the billions of dollars of business you are talking about is not happening here. It might be happening in St. James Parish and hopefully we may get some jobs and stuff out of it but we need to get businesses here."

Torri Buckles stated, "I will share with you what I could the reason why you see a lot of those projects going to St. James is because several years ago they made a conscious effort to fund Economic Development within the last two years this department has changed. It went from a department that was focused on tourism to a department that is focused on business retention those things again don't happen by accident you start seeing progress where you put your efforts too and two years ago again not to say that it wasn't a primary focus but it wasn't the focus that is my focus and the focus of this administration."

Councilman Wilson stated, "Well the focus of the Economic Development tax that was passed was to create jobs here, to get businesses here to locate here, to hire employees from here and pay taxes here and I don't see where much of this is happening and this is a nightmare what is going on here as to what it was meant for when it was voted on by the people."

Torri Buckles stated, "Perhaps Mr. Lucia can speak to it being as he has been here much longer than I have but it is my understanding that this has actually been the historical use of the dedicated sales tax and it has been about 16 years."

Councilman Wilson stated, "Excuse me I am not beating on you this didn't just happen and it got way out of control years ago. I am just asking so that we can do something to help fix it."

Torri Buckles stated, "I just wanted to clarify because I think we all understand but in general the public doesn't understand the use of the funds that they understand that it is something that has happened historically and not just recently."

Councilman Wilson stated, "Well I mean historically it was put there and it was at any one point and time when the money wasn't spent on Economic Development at the end of the year then it could be put into these other departments but this is happening before the fact now. It is going everywhere and there is nothing there for Economic Development so if we had somebody come in tomorrow and we had to spend 2 million dollars to purchase a piece of property or something and lease it back to these people so that they wouldn't have to come up with that money and you don't have it there to do it and this is what the spirit of the tax was when the people passed it. Me personally I would rather bring it back to the people and ask them to take it off and put it somewhere but ask for where we want to put it, it is a slush fund that is what they think of it. I mean that is what I hear. We are using it before we are getting it."

Councilman Madere stated, "I understand what the people voted for and I understood previously that this wasn't happening but I think this administration and this council is working toward that goal of what it was actually put there for and it isn't going to happen overnight because it wasn't done previously they didn't concentrate on business retention or attracting businesses so it is going to take time but we need to keep focusing on that and trying to draw more industries to the parish which should have been done years ago and basically everything that we are doing now from canal cleaning to drainage to everything else are things that should have been concentrated on previously but this council is trying to come up to speed on all of these items and I think economic development is going to grow but it has to be concentrated on and worked on all the time."

Councilman Perrilloux stated, "I agree Councilman Madere and also with what Councilman Wilson said we have to support you in this department but there are a couple of questions that I have you said there are only two employees you and Mrs. Terri because I am looking at the salary that is allocated is that just for you two or is somebody else in there?"

Torri Buckles stated, "It also includes our grants administrator."

Councilman Perrilloux asked, "Another thing I am looking at your professional fees just up and down and up and down for 2014 it is \$100,000.00 explain that professional fee to me."

Torri Buckles stated, "A portion of these are for the small business services through Eliza Eugene and we also run other professional fees for other events and services that we need for the remainder of the year but the vast majority of that is for the professional contract for Ms. Eugene."

Councilman Snyder asked, "You mentioned something that the communities may use some money that you have saved up for beautification what type of things do you mean in a subdivision that can use some of that money because right now I know the boat launches are taken care of by the sheriff's."

Torri Buckles stated, "These are for your main corridors so as we get off of our main entrances and interstate systems at every point between maybe Reserve and LaPlace you will see signage that says welcome to LaPlace so we mean those types of projects."

Councilman Snyder stated, "I thought you said something about subdivisions."

Torri Buckles stated, "No sir, not in subdivisions not at this point yet."

Councilwoman Hotard stated, "Thank you Councilman Madere and definitely Mr. Wilson I can appreciate your comments I know for a long time the EDC fund and the tax wasn't utilized all the way but I will say even prior to Mrs. Buckles coming on there were some things that were being done especially with site selection and stuff like that for industry but I do believe we are moving in the right direction with EDC. I definitely know just from talking to you this is what you do and this

is what you know you have a passion for it so I definitely appreciate where you are coming from and I agree with it and in the pass it maybe was not everything it could be but I do look forward to more that we are doing with that if you could definitely keep us posted on what is going on with the small business development center and those type of things just so that we can stay abreast of what is going on and get that information to our constituency as well."

Councilman Wilson stated, "I don't have a problem with what we are doing with it. I have a problem of when we are doing it with it and the next thing we all have our own little problems or things that we are looking at but I think we need to get organized and start in one department and finish that department and go to the next. It is hard for the administration to keep up with it. It is hard for us to keep up with it. We need to do one department and do everything we need to do in that department and then move on to the next one and do it that way but if we keep going back and forth we will be here forever and it is hard for all of us."

Councilman Snyder stated, "Mr. Wilson you are right about that we will be here all night. My issue is in public works again. I think we hired a sign person in public works and part of his responsibility is to take care of our street signs. The reason why I say that is because he has to have other responsibilities other than signage. I know he was hired as a sign person, not an operator."

Brian Nunes stated, "Just the signs are pretty much a full time job."

Councilman Snyder stated, "The reason why I say that is this we have I have written a work order since year before last to do some signs. We only have \$21,000.00 in street signs and if most of his job are signs and I would like to know what signs because I wanted my stop signs changed because you can't see them anymore and not one of them have been changed. I could be wrong but I want all of them changed on Cambridge Drive. When it rains you can't see them and people pass them up."

Brian Nunes stated, "We change the street signs and the stop signs and the speed limit signs."

Councilman Snyder stated, "Okay those are the things I am talking about if we can't get these things done we might have a money problem with only \$21,000.00 in the budget for it and that kind of jumped out at me cause we hired somebody to do that probably making \$30,000.00 a year."

Brian Nunes stated, "I can't comment on the salary right off the top of my head but yes."

Councilman Snyder stated, "Well they are civil service and everyone starts at least at \$10.00 an hour"

Brian Nunes stated, "We did have a back log with the signs because of the Hurricane that is understandable we had a lot of work orders but if it is something that has been there for over a year that is something that I need to investigate."

Councilman Snyder stated, "I am worried about that line item if we only

have \$21,000.00 in it. Do we need to put more money in there or something?"

Brian Nunes stated, "We didn't exceed that this year and I don't anticipate exceeding it by the end of the year so that is why we didn't adjust it too much."

Councilman Wilson stated, "I have said this numerous times before we have 65 vehicles on the highway and again I ask why is it so much of a problem to have these people have a notebook to write down all of the problems that they do see and turn them in to the public works department and Tracy will see that it gets to where it needs to go. I don't think that is too much to ask. We wouldn't have to hire anybody to do that they see the streets every day. They see the same problems every day."

INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES:

There were no ordinances to be introduced at today's meeting.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

There was no 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

Parish Building - Security

St. John the Baptist Parish vs. Roussel Welding and Metal Works, Inc., et al. Case No. 64187 Div. B

Any and all pending legal matters

ADJOURNMENT:

At 8:48 PM, Councilwoman Hotard moved and Councilman Wright seconded the motion to adjourn. The motion passed with Councilwoman Millet absent.

/s/Jaclyn Hotard
COUNCIL CHAIRMAN

/s/Jackie Landeche
Council Secretary

