

OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS
ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST PARISH COUNCIL
TUESDAY, MAY 24th, 2011
CHAIR RONNIE SMITH
VICE CHAIR CHERYL MILLET

The Council of the Parish of St. John the Baptist, State of Louisiana, met in Regular Session in the Joel McTopy Chambers, LaPlace, Louisiana on Tuesday, May 24th, 2011, at 6:30 PM.

CALL TO ORDER:

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

ABSENT: Charles Julien

Councilman Gauff led the Prayer and Councilwoman Usry led the Pledge.

Legal Counsels Tom Daley, William O'Regan and Kerry Brown were present.

Consent Agenda

Items: Approval of Minutes May 10th, 2011, Regular Meeting; Permit Approval – Block Party – 1507 Delta Rd – 5/28/11; Council re-appointment of Faith Farlough to the South Central Louisiana Human Services Authority

MOTION: Councilwoman Millet moved and Councilman Millet seconded the motion to approve the consent agenda items consisting of Approval of Minutes May 10th, 2011, Regular Meeting; Permit Approval – Block Party – 1507 Delta Rd – 5/28/11; Council re-appointment of Faith Farlough to the South Central Louisiana Human Services Authority. The motion passed with Councilman Julien absent.

PUBLIC HEARING ON ORDINANCES:

11-18 An ordinance to provide for sale of adjudicated properties. (N. Robottom)

Councilman Smith stated, *"The administration request that this item be carried over to the next agenda."*

INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES:

11-19 An ordinance amending ordinance 11-17 to include an omitted precinct. (R. Smith)

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Councilman Lee stated, *"The finance committee met at 6:15 this evening."*

We had a limited agenda four items to pass or to hear on behalf of the council. I ask at this time from one of my fellow council members/finance committee members to make a motion to ratify actions taken."

MOTION: Councilwoman Usry moved and Councilwoman Hotard seconded the motion to accept the recommendation of the finance committee. The motion passed with Councilman Julien.

DEPARTMENT/ENGINEER REPORTS:

Charles Julien – Small Business, local business/diversity program

The above item will be carried over to the next agenda. Councilman Julien was absent.

Charles Julien – Update on local business participation on Bond Issue items

The above item will be carried over to the next agenda. Councilman Julien was absent.

Ronnie Smith – drainage back up in Cambridge

Councilman Smith stated, "I had a situation in the back of Cambridge where we were having some blocked culverts. We actually had standing water. I contacted administration and immediately Mr. Cliff Bailey came out with one of our inspectors. They took pictures and did what had to be done. We found out what the problem was and blew the culverts out again. The drainage has now been cleared. We found that there was a collapsed culvert and that culvert at this time is being either replaced or repaired. So at this time I would like to thank administration for their quick actions. Mr. Bailey thank you also."

Ronnie Smith – Renewal of contract with Strategic Impact, LLC

Councilman Smith requested that this item be carried over to the next agenda.

Ronnie Smith – Weatherization Program/Home Repair – criteria for funding

Marie Brown-Mercadel stated, "The Housing Mitigation Program is funded by the Office of Community Development prior to this administration there were public hearings and a decision was made to allocate 1.3 million dollars in funding for owner occupied residences that were damaged by Hurricanes Gustav and Ike. The funding includes money for the contracts that you all approved earlier for the engineers, the contract to access eligibility and also for the contractors that are going to be performing the work. To date we have received about 364 applications. The program is planning to repair 20 homes on the West Bank and 40 homes on the East Bank. Priority was given to adults 60 years and older that are determined to be head of household. When we look at the applications there are 119 residents on the East Bank and 97 on the West Bank that meet the criteria of being ages 60 and older. So there are income requirements that have to be met. They have to have lived in the house during Gustav/Ike. All the taxes need to be current.

If they live in a flood zone they have to have flood insurance that cannot actually be purchased as part of the \$15,000.00 in funding for each home. It cannot be a mobile home. It has to be a single family residence. All the property taxes and mortgage payments must be up to date on the property. Since we know that with the volume of applications that we have received about the number of people over 60 we know that the people that are going to get chosen for this program are going to be the residents that are over 60. We are working with the contractors who help us access eligibility. We contracted that piece of it out. So the contractor is going to be looking at a variety of things. One the income, all the requirements I previously spoke of and we are also looking to see if they received funding from another source during Gustav/Ike if they used those funds for the stated purpose be it FEMA money, even road home money during Katrina, insurance money or any other programs. They have to show that if they got \$10,000.00 to repair a roof that they used the \$10,000.00 to repair the roof."

Councilman Smith stated, "The reason this was put on the agenda is I had a constituent come to me and their concern was that they didn't want say Garyville or Mt. Airy to be left out okay and I couldn't give them a direct answer on how those particular homes were going to be chosen. Their comment was, I know they are going to have over 200 applications with only 60 homes to be given out. How are they going to determine it? So I appreciate you giving that explanation so that the public basically has an idea and they don't feel that oh you forgot about Garyville or Mt. Airy or something like that again and it isn't that. It is actually a criteria that has been set up."

Haston Lewis – Update on West Bank drainage canals

Councilman Lewis stated, "I have been having trouble with two canals for at least about seven years. The company Canal and Bayou Becnel, we have trouble getting a permit. I want to know what it takes to get those permits. It looks like every time I got to do a job on the West Bank I have trouble with permits. I want to know what it takes to get one. If you have any trouble I want to know what you need me to do to help you get it because nothing is happening. All you have to do is tell me what you want me to do and I'm going to go to work with you."

Angelic Sutherland, Assistant to the Parish President, stated, "Well Mr. Lewis I actually have an update on more than just those two canals but if you would like to hear the entire update I will go ahead and proceed."

Councilman Lewis stated, "Well I would rather they take their own canal and handle it because they are getting theirs done. Mine isn't getting done. They don't have a problem that is why they are not saying anything. I am sure that they don't have a problem because I've been checking on them. That is straight from the horse's mouth."

Angelic Sutherland stated, "An update on actually the canals that were cleaned by the Lafourche Basin Levee District. The Moll Canal, West Line Canal, East End Canal, Columbia Canal, Guss West Line Canal, Gason Canal and the Golden Star Canal (Pleasure Bend), the Cousin Canal has been started but is not completed. As you recall about three to four months ago the parish entered into contracts with the two engineering firms Krebs, LaSalle and Royal Engineering to secure the permits for 23

of the canals and the Company Canal was one of the canals on Krebs, LaSalle's list. The permit applications for those canals were submitted last week by both firms. So now we are just waiting to get approval and those permits are administered. The front portion of the Company Canal is currently being cleaned by the Public Works department. They are cleaning the portion that didn't require a permit."

Councilman Lewis stated, "Those other canals you were talking about over the river the Cousin Canal and I think by Granier those were maintenance work. You need Corp permits to handle those canals like I'm talking about to dig the mud and reshape them up again. Sometimes they have to do some litigation with the land and different things like that too. I am pretty much on top of that."

Angelic Sutherland stated, "Also our parish engineer, C. J. Savoie, is working on the permit for the Bayou Becnel."

Councilman Lewis stated, "I talked to Chuck about that too. That has been dragging for a long time. Chuck was on the job and they took him off of the job."

Angelic Sutherland stated, "Further updates will be provided as they are received, so we will be sure to keep you informed."

Councilman Lewis stated, "Bring me up to date every month on that."

Angelic Sutherland stated, "I will Mr. Haston, personally."

OLD BUSINESS:

There was no old business.

NEW BUSINESS:

There was no new business.

CORRESPONDANCE/COUNCIL BRIEFS

Councilman Gauff stated, "I think the only thing I would like to say is that with all the work we have going on with the contractors. We just need to stress to them that our constituents are our main concern and that housekeeping, a constant housekeeping, needs to be done to make sure we don't back up issues such as a pile up of old culverts or trash in constituents yards. So that is just some of the things that I would like to tell some of the contractors. Just kind of stay on top of the housekeeping issues that we have in the parish."

Councilman Lewis stated, "I would like for administration to bring me up to date on the river again. I like to keep up with the river while it is high like it is."

Councilwoman Millet stated, "I have a couple of items. First off I want to let people know that the dumpster on St. Andrews has been a huge success in District VII. However as of late people have been putting things in the recycle bin that can't be deposited there. We have found tires and computers. Remember that there are certain items that can be put into the recycle bin and if you have a box please cut it up and put

it inside the bin. The items left outside the bin are not picked up by SWDI they are just left there and it makes the area look more like a dump site. So please be responsible in our recycling efforts. Also I would like to wish everyone a very Happy Memorial Day and remember all those who have fallen on behalf of our country. Also just to let everyone know that the Country Club Bridge is now open. A great job was done. I want to thank the administration for their efforts and the contractors that chosen to do so. Thank you."

Councilman Smith stated, "The only comments that I have for today is this past weekend a local soccer association that kind of partners with the parish sent five teams to the regional tournament. There was a 6 year old boy's team, an 8 year old girl's team, a ten year old girls and boy's team and twelve year old boys. All five teams qualified for the world championship which is going to be held in Disney in January. So I wanted to congratulate those kids. The members of the River Region Fire which is an affiliate of the Chicago Fire Junior soccer association. So again this is their first year in operation. They sent five teams out and all five teams qualified for the world championships. So congratulations."

PRESIDENT'S REMARKS

Marie Brown-Mercadel stated, "Parish President Robottom is taking a much deserved vacation this week. I am sure she is somewhere trying to watch this meeting on the computer. She wishes to congratulate all students completing the 2010-2011 school year. She sends a special congratulations to those students at the top of their class for academic achievement. She also wants to send congratulations to Judge Madeline Jasmine and the drug court staff who celebrated ten years of operation in St. John Parish. Recent graduates and current participants in the program were exposed to information about the history and success of the program. She wants to also send a special thanks to Ms. Elois and Myra Valentine and the staff who helped administer the application process for the Housing Mitigation Program. As I mentioned earlier, they assisted with and accepted over 360 applications over a two week period. She held her first brown bag luncheon on Wednesday May 11th, at the West Bank Community Center and she wants to thank all of those that attended. We had about thirty people in attendance. She also wants to thank the parish employees and staff members for assisting in making this a success. A schedule of the future brown bag meetings which will be held throughout the parish, those dates will be placed on the community calendar on our website and those will be provided to residents as they are scheduled. As Councilwoman Millet mentioned the Country Club Bridge was completed just in time for the summer. She wants to thank all the residents especially those on Country Club Drive for their patience and cooperation during the project. The Greenwood Bridge project is scheduled to begin tomorrow. During construction a portion of Greenwood Drive will be closed to through traffic which will affect residents in the surrounding area. The work is scheduled for completion by the end of the summer but during construction residents are asked to use caution in the construction area. Access to the Greenwood Park will be from Carrollwood Drive. Please stay tuned to Channel 15 and the parish website for an update on conditions of the Mississippi River. The opening of both the Bonnet Carre Spillway and the Morganza Spillway relieved much of the pressure on the levees down stream and reduced the threat of over topping. The river in Reserve

crested at about 24 feet and is expected to remain at this level through the middle of June. Today's river level reading was 23.5. Our office and the Sheriff's Office will remain in daily communications with the state, the Army Corp of Engineers and both the levee districts to monitor the water level of the river. Updates will be provided as they occur. As a reminder the following precautions must remain in affect, no digging or subsurface work including poul driving, excavation and trenching is allowed within 1,500 feet of the levees center line. Driving, biking and walking on the levees are also prohibited. Residents are asked to stay off of the levees until further notice. The LaPlace Volunteer Fire Department is hosting their annual meet a firefighter tonight at Sicily's Pizza until 9:00 PM. Kids 12 and under eat free. Demonstrations of fire trucks will be available for children to explore. Our third quarterly all staff meeting for employees will be held this Thursday, May 26th. Hurricane preparedness, employee safety and performance evaluations are just a few of the topics that we will be discussing. A grand opening for the locally owned Riverside Primary Healthcare will take place Saturday, May 28th at 12:30. The facility will offer immunizations, physicals, family planning, vaccines and urgent care and will accept uninsured patients. The facility will open to see patients on June 1st. The hours of operation will be Monday & Saturday 9:00 AM until 5:30 PM and Tuesday through Friday 8:00 AM until 8:30 PM. Hurricane season begins June 1st. President Robottom strongly encourages all residents to review and complete their emergency plans. Please visit our emergency preparedness webpage for a list of hurricane preparedness materials and recommendations. The 2011 Louisiana Hurricane preparedness sales tax holiday will take place on Saturday May 28th and Sunday May 29th. On these two days shoppers can purchase specified emergency supplies free of the 4% sales state tax in preparation for Hurricane Season. Wal-Mart has scheduled a grand re-opening and ribbon cutting ceremony for Friday June 3rd, at 8:30 AM. Please join in the celebration in observance of Wal-Mart's new and improved look. President Robottom also wants to wish everyone a safe and Happy Memorial Day weekend and reminds everyone that the parish offices will be closed on May 31st in recognition of the holiday."

William O'Regan, Legal Counsel, stated, "For the record I want to announce the name of the case. It is Cambre versus St. John Parish. I would like to discuss that in executive session."

MOTION: Councilman Lee moved and Councilwoman Usry seconded the motion to go into executive session. The motion passed with Councilman Julien absent.

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

There was no action taken as a result of the executive session.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

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

Cable Franchise Agreement

Any and all pending legal matters

ADJOURNMENT:

At 7:05 PM, Councilwoman Usry moved and Councilman Lee seconded the motion to adjourn. The motion passed with Councilman Julien absent.

/s/Ronnie Smith
COUNCIL CHAIRMAN

/s/Jackie Landeche
Council Secretary