

**OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS**  
**ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST PARISH COUNCIL**  
**TUESDAY, JULY 22, 2008**  
**CHAIR JACLYN HOTARD**  
**VICE CHAIR RONNIE SMITH**

The Council of the Parish of St. John the Baptist, State of Louisiana, met in Regular Session in the Joel McTopy Chambers, LaPlace, Louisiana on Tuesday, July 22, 2008, at 6:30 PM.

**CALL TO ORDER:**

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

**ABSENT:** Dale Wolfe

Councilman Smith led the prayer. Lexis Smith led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Bill Hubbard, Parish President, was present.

Legal Counsels Jeff Perilloux and Kerry Brown were present.

**Bill Hubbard - Proclamation - Declaring July 29<sup>th</sup>, 2008 as "Be Thankful for your Vision Day"**

Bill Hubbard, Parish President, commented, you have pretty much said it all already. We have a proclamation to the Southern Eye Bank, who are celebrating their 61<sup>st</sup> Anniversary of giving sight and has restored the sight of an estimated 25,000 people. The president then proclaimed July 29<sup>th</sup>, 2008 as "Be Thankful for your Vision Day".

Phillip Castillo, Southern Eye Bank, stated, *"We do want to thank the members of the community who are already donors. I know that so far this year we have had seven (7) people donate from the parish and it has helped fourteen (14) people renew their vision. I think our vision is one of the most precious gifts that we have and to be able to share that when we pass away is a great thing to our community everywhere. So we really thank you for the proclamation. We want to encourage people to keep registering to donate."*

**Dale Wolfe/Stephanie Nellons - Presentation - Connect CTY**

Stephanie Nellons, Connect CTY, gave a brief power point presentation on Connect-CTY explaining that this service allows local government to reach thousands with one phone call without having to invest in or maintain hardware, software, or additional phone lines. The government could quickly and reliably reach your entire community using just a

telephone. She did explain that the St. John School board is already using this program, along with St. Charles Parish. She explained that Connect-CTY service is a fully hosted, fully managed Application Service Provider (ASP) from the NTI Group, Inc. that allows municipalities to deploy a complete, time-based notification system quickly and easily without having to invest in or maintain hardware, software or additional phone lines. Users benefit from NTI's superior call routing, throttling, and load balancing expertise and receive the backing of dedicated Client Care Specialists who assist with training, retraining, data transfers, technical support, tips, and proactive usage analyses to ensure the system is being utilized to its fullest capacity. She asked the council to consider this service. Councilman Smith thanked her for the presentation and asked her to forward all of her information to the administration. Councilman Smith asked, per Mr. Wolfe, that if possible could the administration come back at our next meeting and give us a recommendation on your feelings on this issue.

#### **Bill Hubbard - Presentation - Performance Contractors**

Chet Ferachi, Performance Contractors, Inc, stated, "We came out here to say a few things about what we have going on at the Marathon/GME project. We basically wanted to come out here and let you all know that we will be staffing a large amount of people for this project. We are here to do business in your parish. We want to hire local residents in your parish. We want to spend money in your parish. We want our guys staying in your parish. Very briefly, Performance Contractors has been in business for over twenty-five (25) years. We are privately owned and operated. We are right down the road thirty (30) miles down in Baton Rouge. We feel like we are a local contractor. We have been doing business here for years and years at Marathon and Valero. So we have been around the block a little bit. I wanted to get to know you guys and ladies as well and to let you know we have a lot of opportunities coming up. We are doing some great things from a training stand point. LTC has done a great job opening their doors up to the residents along with Associated Builders and Contractors out of St. Rose. So we have a lot of opportunities for unskilled people and skilled workers as well. So very briefly, we didn't have a big presentation. We just wanted to come out and say hello and wanted to get to know everyone. If you have somebody you identify throughout your parish and your area, feel free to give us a call. It is only twenty-five (25) minutes to our personnel office. It is a simple drive. You come in and fill out an application. If they are qualified, we want to help you out and put these guys and ladies to work."

Chris Weber, Louisiana Technical College, stated, "I am representing LTC - River Parish Campus. We joined partnership with ABC in St. Rose to help with this project. We are doing a specialized training for Performance out there on the job. We are training people and putting them to work. So far at this immediate time we have put at least 10-12 people that came through the campus working with Performance. Two (2) of them are out of the parish and the rest are in St. John Parish. We have full classes right now going on. We are going to work with them. We are going to train people. We are going to bring their salaries up so that they can afford to have a decent living."

Chet Ferachi stated, "Just to touch on that, we roughly have over five hundred (500) employees at Marathon. Ten percent (10%) of those are

coming from the River Parish area. So we are tracking and keeping up with that. Marathon is very focused on us hiring local residents. We want to hire local residents. With fuel prices, it is much easier for someone to drive fifteen (15) minutes to work here at Marathon. Again we expect our major staffing to take place within September or October. So like I said feel free to pick up the phone and give us a call and we will get the process going."

Councilman Smith asked, "Could you kind of elaborate and tell our viewers approximately how many employees you are planning on hiring?"

Chet Ferachi stated, "Right now we have roughly 550. We expect to get up to 1,500. When I say employees let me make sure I am clear on one thing. We are a mechanical construction company. I mean pipe fitters, welders, iron workers, mill rights, mobile crane operators, helpers, laborers, there are opportunities for entry level people. We need qualified skilled craftsman. We all know that. There is going to be a large amount of unskilled laborers that we are going to need on this project as well. So to answer your question, we are expecting up to 1,500 and it could exceed that."

Councilman Smith asked, "One other question, approximately how long will this last?"

Chet Ferachi stated, "We are expecting this to last anywhere from 10 to 12 months and it could go longer. From a mechanical stand point, that is what we are looking at."

Councilwoman Millet asked, "Is this union, non-union or both?"

Chet Ferachi stated, "We are a non-union shop. I appreciate your time and thank you for allowing us to come out and speak."

#### **Bill Hubbard - Presentation - Rebowe and Assoc. - 2007 Audit**

Phillip Rebowe, Rebowe and Assoc., stated, "The audit was completed last month and the report was filed with the administration, reviewed with the administration, filed with the legislative auditor and other appropriate agencies. So the audit is complete. We have issued several financial documents, but what I have taken the liberty to do, as I have done in the past, is done a financial presentation. We shortened the 130 pages that we have in our complete financial report to a couple of pages here that highlights the result of the audit and some of the financial trends of the parish. So if you look at your financial presentation starting on page one, the audit reports that we issued, I am pleased to report that we issued unqualified or clean opinions on the financial statements of St. John the Baptist Parish for the year ending December 31, 2007. Historically we have been able to do so and this year again we have issued unqualified or clean opinions as they are referred to. So there were no findings with respect to the financial statements. We did issue some other reports that we had some minor findings. One was the compliance finding dealing with the state budget law that we have had in the past. It is very minor, but you can see here on item two on page one. In addition there was an internal control finding that we have had in the past too. It is a repeat finding related to the parish's fixed assets. As you remember we have had a long history with the fixed assets. There has been an improvement

and the inventory and accounting of fixed assets, but we have one last step to go with doing a complete accounting of the fixed assets. We are advising the parish to take that last step and to kind of consolidate and enter all this into an accounting software package. The parish has taken our recommendation and we hope to be working with the parish in the next couple of months to eliminate this finding once and for all and we won't have an internal control finding related to fixed assets hopefully next year. So we are headed in the right direction. I would also like to point out to the council that in this audit we have applied to the government finance officers association to again receive the certificate of excellence from them. The parish now over the last five years, has gotten the certificate of excellence and financial reporting from this association. There are some 3,000 counties and parishes from around the nation and less than 10% of those get that award which evaluates the financial report and the condition of the parish. So St. John should be proud that it has gotten this award for the last 5 years. This report will be submitted again and I believe we will meet the findings and the parish will get a certificate again for the year 2007. Just briefly turning to some of the financial numbers on page two, I present a statement of assets for the period ending December 31, 2007 compared to 2006 and 2005. The statement of net assets basically shows your assets and your liabilities and a positive trend would be for your net assets to be growing. As you can see in 2005 they were a little bit over 1.3 million dollars and in 2006 it went to 181 million and in 2007 it was at 185 million. So last year we had approximately a 4 million increase in your net assets. Again that is a very positive trend and relates mostly to the acquisition of capital assets by the parish last year. So there again you can see what your balance sheet looks like at the end of the year. On page three is a detail of the capital assets that I just mentioned and at the end of 2007 you had over 200 million in capital assets. So again that is a positive trend up about 7 million from 2006 and most of that was in infrastructure and buildings that was added by the parish last year. On page four we are pointing out some funds that had some deficiencies in 2007. There were about five funds that had a deficiency. Most of them are very small. As you can see the general fund, roads & bridges, criminal court, recreation and senior citizen tax fund had small deficiencies. Most of them had fund balances to absorb that except the criminal court fund, which has historically been a problem and now has a small deficit balance at the end of the year. Looking at page five it is just a historical trend of sales taxes and last year the taxes increased close to 1.5% over 2006. So you can see the sales taxes were a little bit over 18 million dollars. On the next several pages we just show some bar graphs over the last three years of your general fund and the fund equity, special revenue funds and the enterprise funds. These report mainly positive trends. As you can see your general fund was roughly at about .5 million dollars at the end of the year and that is pretty equivalent to what it was last year. Your special revenue funds were very equivalent to what they were last year, about 24 million dollar fund balance. Your enterprise funds, which are mainly your sewerage and water, your mosquito control type funds. They also were very equivalent to prior years. There were really no significant changes there. The last bar graph shows your debt obligations and the debt per capita and as you can see our debt actually went down from the last couple of years slightly. Our debt per capita was a little bit over 1,300 and for a parish the size of St. John with around 50,000 in population that is a very positive number. The parish is definitely on

*the low side of other parishes and counties given its population in relation to its debt issuances. So that basically concludes my presentation. I know I went through a lot of information quickly. There is a comprehensive financial report that you have access to that gives you all the detail that I talked about. Feel free to call me and I will be happy to explain anything to you that you might need explained."*

Councilman Smith stated, "Mr. Rebowe again I want to thank you for the great job that you and your company do in support of our parish and the way you help us prepare and keep our finances in order. I also feel that it is in order for me to congratulate administration for doing a fine job. Vince a personal congratulations on a job that is very well done thank you."

### **Consent Agenda**

**Items:** Approval of Minutes July 8, 2008, Regular Meeting & Special Meeting; Danny Millet - Appointment of Darwin Pittman to the Recreation Board.

**MOTION:** Councilman Smith moved and Councilman Julien seconded the motion to approve the consent agenda consisting of Approval of Minutes July 8, 2008, Regular Meeting & Special Meeting; Danny Millet - Appointment of Darwin Pittman to the Recreation Board. The motion passed with Councilman Wolfe absent.

### **PUBLIC HEARING ON ORDINANCES:**

**08-37** (Public Hearing held)(Tabled 7-8-08) An ordinance to re-zone Lot 6, of Fagot Subdivision from C-3 to R-1, situated in Section 19, T-11-S, R-7-E, LaPlace, St. John the Baptist Parish, Louisiana. (B. Hubbard)

**MOTION:** Councilman Lee moved and Councilman Julien seconded the motion to remove Ordinance 08-37 from the table. The motion passed with Councilman Wolfe absent.

**MOTION:** Councilman Smith moved and Councilwoman Millet seconded the motion to accept Ordinance 08-37. The motion passed with Councilman Wolfe absent.

**08-38** (Public Hearing held)(Tabled 7-8-08) An ordinance to re-zone Lot 58, of River Road Terrace, Annex "B" from R-1 to R-3, situated in Section 28, T-11-S, R-7-E, LaPlace, St. John the Baptist Parish, Louisiana. (B. Hubbard)

**MOTION:** Councilwoman Usry moved and Councilman Lee seconded the motion to remove Ordinance 08-38 from the table. The motion passed with Councilman Wolfe absent.

**MOTION:** Councilwoman Usry moved and Councilman Lee seconded the motion to accept Ordinance 08-38. The motion passed with Councilman Wolfe absent.

**08-39** (Public Hearing Held) An ordinance amending Ordinance 97-16 to read it is unlawful for any owner, developer, lesser, lessee or owner's agent of any property to erect, construct, locate or maintain any basketball goal, batting cage, football goal post, volleyball net, or any

other like athletic equipment (movable or immovable) within fifteen (15') feet of a public highway, street or roadway. (R. Smith)

Mike Carter, LaPlace, asked, "What is ordinance 97-16? How does that read?"

Mike Henderson, Planning and Zoning Department, stated, "97-16 basically says the same except for the fact that it refers to the property law and in many areas of LaPlace the property line actually ends at the sidewalk. Where in other areas it actually ends at the street, so to be fair and there is that 3 foot of servitude that basically the home owner cuts the grass and keeps it clean and all that good stuff. So what we have found is that there is a little bit of a challenge some time in identifying one area is a sidewalk and the next area is a street. So we are just trying to be consistent with this. I spoke with Mr. Smith about the potential of being fair with everyone. We had come to the conclusion that maybe the right thing would be to measure it from the street as opposed to the property line."

Councilwoman Hotard asked, "Is this ordinance going to make it stricter or make it where some of the basketball goals now can actually be closer to the street?"

Mike Henderson stated, "To answer you question will it be stricter, I think it will be..."

Councilwoman Hotard stated, "Or I guess the main question and some of the calls I had were is this going to allow people to have their basketball goals closer to the street?"

Mike Henderson stated, "It will be fifteen feet from the street. As opposed to fifteen feet from the sidewalk, so you are probably looking at a two to three foot difference."

Councilman Smith stated, "Let me just elaborate on this. The reason as Mr. Henderson was saying, the reason I sponsored this ordinance was because I wanted to make it fair parish wide. I didn't want kids in this part of the neighborhood for it to be measured any differently. So I just wanted us to be on a consistent basis throughout the entire parish."

Mike Carter asked, "What is the penalty if someone is caught breaking this ordinance? Has anyone been penalized for this action thus far under the old ordinance?"

Councilman Smith stated, "Mr. Carter years ago before I even got on the council I did receive a warning/citation from a code enforcement officer. That was years ago before I even knew that this ordinance existed. I know I got a warning myself for my son's goal. I moved the goal at that point and everything was cleared up. So how they are going to handle it now, I can't answer that."

Mike Carter asked, "Has a penalty been established if someone violates the law?"

Councilman Lee stated, "It is a \$100.00 fine."

Mike Henderson stated, "For the first offense, if there is a third

offense it can go as high as \$500.00."

**MOTION:** Councilman Smith moved and Councilman Millet seconded the motion to accept Ordinance 08-39. The motion passed with Councilman Wolfe absent.

**08-40** (Public Hearing Held) An ordinance stating that we the members of the St. John the Baptist Parish Council, do hereby name our meeting chambers in the St. John the Baptist Parish Courthouse building as "The Rudolph S. Sorapuru, Sr. Chambers. (D. Wolfe)

Councilman Lewis stated, "I know Mr. Wolfe isn't here, but I would like to take that up for him. I would like to move on this. Mr. Sorapuru was one of the first minorities in the parish to serve on the Police Jury."

**MOTION:** Councilman Lewis moved and Councilman Smith seconded the motion to accept Ordinance 08-40. The motion passed with Councilman Wolfe absent.

**08-41** (Public Hearing Held) An ordinance to accept Hurricanes Katrina & Rita surge inundation and advisory base flood elevation maps as issued by FEMA as the Parish's official flood elevation reference as they pertain to the unincorporated areas of St. John the Baptist Parish. (B. Hubbard)

Harold Flynn, Jr., LaPlace, stated, "This item was before the last council about three years ago. At that time FEMA representatives were available for questions. What was concluded in that last presentation is that not much science or engineering went into them adopting or creating this line on the map. Now what happens with this line on the map, if you guys didn't see it is one side of the street is required to build at elevation twelve and across the street no change and it can be existing ground or elevation five. What it does if you adopt it is set a precedent for them bringing forward with the new revised FEMA firm maps after the storm that were going to adjust the base flood elevation. We are told that, for the last year, any day, any day and I think there is even some discussion as to the end of this month or even February. We understand that the parish has some grants out there now that could receive funding if you adopt these. Three years ago there were individuals who had road home grants in the system that would have been able to get those grants if it were adopted and they weren't adopted at that time either. It is burdensome to land owners. It will negatively affect growth. The biggest concern is what does it do when FEMA brings forward the revised maps at another time. We would respectfully, I am here with some other folks from the building community and land owners, wish that you not adopt it or find a way to post-pone it until you get the firm maps, the real maps from FEMA. When you get the firm maps differing from these revised maps, you as a council can critique it, get your engineers to review it, question it, have input on it, change it or get answers. With this system you don't get that. So we would like you to wait and use the real system and hopefully something with some real engineering and some real numbers that aren't as negative to the building community come out of the FEMA system. I would be glad to answer any questions you might have. There are other folks here that may want to speak as well."

Phillip Hoffman, LaPlace, stated, "I know the question is going to come

up - why did the other parishes adopt? I am going to tell you the very simple reason to this is Jefferson and Orleans had predominately all of the flooding due to Katrina. When their base flood advisories came out all they had to do was build to three feet above the center line of the street or three feet above adjacent ground. Now with that they had all the flooding, some areas had ten to twelve feet of water. We had no water here and they are asking us to go to twelve feet. So like Harold said, there is no science involved in this. Jefferson and Orleans it was easy for them to adopt because they were already building at two feet above the center line in the street. So for them to go another foot, when they had all of the flooding and if it happens again those houses are still going to have water in them, so I respectfully ask the council not to adopt the base flood advisories and let's wait until the new firm maps come out and then let's see what the science and the engineering says. Thank you."

Joseph Scontrino, LaPlace, stated, "A lot of what Harold and Mr. Hoffman have said so far is accurate. What I wanted to emphasize on is that accepting the advisory base flood elevation impacts the inventory of land that a lot of land owners have by raising the elevation to twelve feet, it will take some of that, a good portion of it, out of potential commerce. The long term effect of that is no development is happening, no taxes are being generated, the short run you might meet what the recovery folks want you to do but in the long run we lose as a community tax base, future development and future growth. I think that is important to a lot of folks that make their livings here. We wouldn't be here if we didn't think that the advisory maps are a little extraordinary in what they are asking us to do to create a twelve foot elevation. When prior to these maps being issued the elevation might have been four and a half to five, so you can see the radical difference between twelve and four and a half to five. We felt like that the impact of these maps on St. John were overly burdensome compared to what some other parishes impacts were. So we ask you guys to please not proceed with the acceptance and consider the economic benefits of moving forward like we are. If you have any questions I would be glad to address them as well. Thank you."

Michael St. Martin, LaPlace, stated, "Just to echo what the guys have said before me, the important issue at hand, we know the grants are very important and we want the parish to get every bit of money that they can from the state or the federal government. What we have in front of us right now, these advisory maps, have no science behind them. It was admitted to us by the FEMA representatives three years ago. We are in a natural cycle of redoing our current maps. That is coming out anytime now. We understand at the end of the month. That has science behind it. An opportunity to appeal, to make recommendations and so forth, so I respectfully request that you hold off any action on these advisory maps and please wait and let's go through the proper process with FEMA and review and analyze the new maps that are due to come out."

Councilman Julien asked, "What would happen if we held off? What kind of penalty would we have to suffer if we tabled it or something like that?"

Jeff Perilloux, Parish Attorney, stated, "Mr. Julien, my understanding is that you would not suffer any penalty, there is not any prescribed

penalty that the parish would suffer. There is a possibility however that some grant monies may not be able to be obtained, but other than that from my understanding there is no penalty."

Councilman Smith stated, "I just wanted everybody to know my standings on this. I understand that the parish may lose some grants or some dollars, but I am looking at the big picture. I think by looking at the big picture by not moving forward with this will have a bigger negative impact as everyone basically stood up and said through construction and the housing industry. As I have said several times before, the housing industry even though it is not booming as it was a little while ago, is still a big part of our community. So I am saying this because I am getting ready to go out of town and if we have a special meeting on this I may not be here and I want my fellow council members to know where I stand on this. I am not in favor of adopting these maps as they are right now. Thank you."

Councilwoman Hotard stated, "I just have a few comments. I agree with what Ronnie is saying. I guess from a different perspective when FEMA came here a few years ago like some of you all said it was really almost like they pulled it out of the sky and asked us to accept it and the governing body at the time asked them to go back and get us some real good data based on some scientific engineering and all of that. They basically just came back with the exact same thing. It is like they took it to the office and sat on it and let it simmer for two years and then they basically come back with the exact same things and you know we are a little bit smarter than that. So from that stand point I really don't appreciate what they did. I think that if we wait for these firm maps to come out it is going to give us a better idea and understanding of how we need to go forward with development and things like that. From an insurance stand point, just from my own knowledge I was a little bit concerned that accepting these advisory base flood elevations as they are now could negatively effect people's flood insurance, premiums and stuff like that and I definitely wouldn't want to see that happen. So those are just a couple of the reasons why I think we defiantly do need to wait on taking any action on adopting these advisory base flood elevations until the firm maps come out."

Councilman Lee stated, "I appreciate your comments Mr. Smith, also yours Ms. Hotard. First I want to thank Parish President Hubbard and his administration, Paul Oncale and others, for bringing this to the council's attention because this is something that has laid dormant now since 2006. When it was brought to their attention, they brought the council members involved. Some of us that sat through these meetings some three years ago or two and a half ago and recall what a brutal exercise of beurocracy it was at the time, that being these advisory based flood elevations. These estimates, because that is what they are people, they are estimates - they are not based on science, facts or anything else, but we were being asked and actually to a certain extent held hostage that if we don't pass these that our grant applications will not be considered. We have heard some dialogue tonight from those people that know the land better than anyone else in this parish. Those are the builders. The ones that build the houses here, the ones that know the property. They are St. John Parish people. Not somebody from Washington DC or somewhere else which many of the LRA people were. What action we have taken since this original meeting was we have called specifically and again I don't want to say we, I don't want to put this

on anybody other than myself. I don't want to speak for any of my fellow council members on this because it is going to be a difficult decision for us to make perhaps. I sent a letter along with a request with the help of Parish President Hubbard to Senator Chaisson. I explained our situation to him and merely asked that good common judgment take place and that being please wait do not force our hand on advisory maps, which are again nothing more than estimates, and force us to put this upon the people of St. John Parish on maps that we, not only the builders and developers, you ask anybody that has lived here for a long enough time if they believe that these are absolutely incorrect. It makes no sense for us to do this. However we are being held two and a half years later hostage to a certain extent. I want to make a couple of comments here. I talked to Senator Chaisson. He has talked to Mr. Rainwater, who is the head of the LRA. He has said that we will continue dialogue this week and he is in hopes that he will get a positive action from Rainwater, that being to grant us an extension on our grant applications. That is the only issue here at all people, is our grant applications. That is all that they have to hold against us, our grant applications. I have got some thoughts on that as well which I would like to share to this group before we finish and before I make my motion to table. That is we are talking about a couple of grants. Specifically their grants, they haven't been guaranteed. A grant is a request for money. Two of these grants I think are realistic. I think we will get them no matter what we do because they are reasonable, responsible and they have very little to do with these Katrina flood maps I assure you, those of us that studied the material. What I told Senator Chaisson, I asked him to speak up on our behalf and all we are asking for is an extension, either an exemption from the advisory based estimates that they have brought out and let us wait till the end of the month. FEMA has told our planning and zoning director that they expect the bona fide real scientific maps that come with a process to be out at the same date December 31<sup>st</sup>. I think it is pretty ironical that our applications are due on that day and so is the LRA's position on these advisory based flood elevations. I contend that we are experiencing the same thing that we experienced over two years ago. There is an attempt being made to force this down our throats and if it was palatable I would open my mouth. I would let them force it down my throat for the four or five hundred thousand dollars worth of grants that we may or may not receive. I reiterate it is not palatable and it doesn't make good sense for us to vote on something that is a guesstimate by some people that do not know St. John the Baptist Parish Property and lets wait on the science which is right around the corner, FEMA has told us this. As a matter of fact the same time we are supposed to get the maps, but when we get these maps they come with a process. I want the public to hear what that process is. It is public input number one. There are public hearings. These gentlemen that spoke tonight on behalf of their property owners and friends and other property owners, they are going to have the opportunity to put their input. Real facts, real surveys, real information not just some maps that were created out of a horrible storm some three years ago. These maps when they are here the process also allows recourse and it also allows most importantly, it allows us to an appeal process. If we accept these advisory base elevations, there is no process. This is it. We are doing what this branch of government says they believe we need to do. I know I have spoken real long and loud on this but this is something that is very important and the way it was pitched to us as a governing body, especially to some of us that were new to the area, it

*was pitched as this is no big deal. You guys just will not get your grants unless you do it. It was pitched as if it was not harmful and would not cause any problems at all. That is why I am glad to hear real people from St. John Parish, not people from Texas, DC, Baton Rouge and other places those people that are trying to push these maps down our throats. I was glad that they had an opportunity to speak tonight. I hope that Senator Chaisson is able to get this extension so that we don't have to jeopardize these grants. So with that in mind I am going to ask this council to table this action to a later date."*

**MOTION:** Councilman Lee moved and Councilman Smith seconded the motion to table Ordinance 08-41. The motion passed with Councilman Wolfe absent.

**INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES:**

**08-42** An ordinance amending Ordinance 08-18 to rename the following Streets: American Spirit Ave. to Sugarcane Road. (B. Hubbard)

**08-43** An ordinance to amend Section 26:156 by replacing it with the Following: SECTION 26:156 REGULATIONS FOR THE INSTALLATION OF CULVERTS, CATCH BASINS AND APPURTENANT STRUCTURES (B. Hubbard)

**08-44** An ordinance to amend Ordinance # 08-26 enacting the following changes to the pay scale based on the findings of a comparative study of salaries and benefits conducted on the St. John the Baptist Parish Council workforce and the approval of the Civil Service Board. Upgrade Equipment Operator I from Grade 3 to Grade 4; Upgrade Equipment II from Grade 5 to Grade 6 Upgrade Equipment III from Grade 6 to Grade 7 Upgrade Equipment Operator IV from Grade 8 to Grade 9 Upgrade Mechanic from Grade 7 to Grade 8 Upgrade Electrician from Grade 7 to Grade 8 Upgrade Carpenter from Grade 7 to Grade 8 Upgrade Wastewater Plant Operator I from Grade 3 to Grade 4 Upgrade Wastewater Plant Operator II from Grade 5 to Grade 6 Upgrade Wastewater Plant Operator III from Grade 6 to Grade 7 Upgrade Wastewater Plant Operator IV from Grade 7 to Grade 8 (B. Hubbard)

**08-45** An ordinance to provide a two percent (2%) increase for all Hourly employees of the St. John the Baptist Parish Council based on the results of a comparative study of salaries and benefits conducted on the St. John the Baptist Parish Council workforce and the approval of the Civil Service Board. (B. Hubbard)

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

Councilman Smith stated, *"I would like to ask that the council accept the recommendation of the Finance Committee."*

**MOTION:** Councilman Smith moved and Councilwoman Millet seconded the motion to accept the recommendation of the finance committee. The committee awarded bid for debris monitoring to Beck Disaster Recovery with a four year contract, approved a change order in the amount of \$6,443.00 for the 500,000 gallon elevated tank, granted a certificate

of substantial completion on the 500,000 gallon elevated tank, approved Resolution R08-21 A resolution of the St. John the Baptist Parish Council approving the application for grant funds from the Governor's Office of Community Development local Government Assistance Program for the structure of the Edgard Water Plant, and granted administration authorization to enter into an agreement with Principal Engineering for structural evaluation of both East and West bound Woodland Drive Bridge at the Montz Canal. The motion passed with Councilman Wolfe absent.

Councilwoman Millet stated, "I would like to ask that the council accept the recommendation of the Insurance Committee."

**MOTION:** Councilwoman Millet moved and Councilman Smith seconded the motion to accept the recommendation of the insurance committee. The committee authorized administration to advertise for proposals for Life, Health and Dental Insurance plans. The motion passed with 6 yeas, 2 abstaining (Hotard, Lee) and Councilman Wolfe absent.

**DEPARTMENT/ENGINEER REPORTS:**

**Dale Wolfe - Personnel Matters**

There were no personnel matters at this time.

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

Ray Riels, MWH, stated, "I think I need to start by apologizing for missing the last meeting. None of us were available. We were out of town, but from what I hear, we could have communicated that more clearly. We are here tonight and I think we are making some progress. We all know there were delays early on with equipment delivery that came on for quite some time and was a real pain. We had subsequent delays related to some of the programming of the unit when it arrived. I am going to give Cade with GE some of the credit for identifying some of those issues and for helping to have GE resolve the issues. Since then we have been basically resolving, fine tuning issues related to making sure the system matches with the water quality of your parish. It is really fine tuning. It is not uncommon with these facilities. I know to you it has been frustrating because of the earlier delays. We are on track at this point to be putting water in the system the week of August 28<sup>th</sup>. The issues seem to be going away. We wish it would have happened faster. We understand that you as a council and your constituents are all anxious to get this on board. Trust me we are all motivated to get it on board too. We want it to get going. We are tired of dealing with these issues. We are working together as a team. We are looking at the week of August 28<sup>th</sup> for start up."

Councilwoman Hotard asked, "So when you say you are looking at the week of August 28<sup>th</sup>, you mean that the week of August 28<sup>th</sup> this is all going to be done?"

Ray Riels stated, "It is planned that the week of August 28<sup>th</sup>, we will be putting water into the parish system through this facility."

Councilman Smith stated, "The week of August 28<sup>th</sup> I am not going to have

any water problems anymore? Don't give me the answer we are putting water in there."

Ray Rials stated, "It depends on how far away you are from the water. We are going to be putting water in the system. It goes through a tank. It goes through your pipes and it will be pushing the water out of your pipes after that point. We will be putting water in the system August 28<sup>th</sup>."

Councilman Smith stated, "Let me see if I can rephrase this question. When is this project going to be complete?"

Ray Rials stated, "August 28<sup>th</sup>, the week of August 28<sup>th</sup>."

Councilman Smith stated, "That is what I needed to hear. Here is my next statement. If this project is not complete by August 28<sup>th</sup> I want all three of you please to come back to the next council meeting. I was really going to go off this meeting because we are a year behind in getting this project completed. You are not the ones getting the phone calls from our constituents wanting to know why we put all of this money into a system and it is still not here. Why they have to purchase water instead of being able to turn the faucet on and drink water out of it. We are going to stay friends until August 28<sup>th</sup>. After that I am not going to be as nice next time."

Ray Rials stated, "Understood sir."

Councilman Millet asked, "How long will it take for the system to be flushed out?"

Ray Rials stated, "I am not sure."

Carla Kenser, GE, stated, "Not knowing the system but typically we go through a series of flushing. We will have to do flushing in various locations. We have seen systems go as fast as just under a month and other systems take a few months. I can't speak to exactly how large the system is."

Councilwoman Millet asked, "This flushing out, is this going to be done prior to August 28<sup>th</sup> or after August 28<sup>th</sup>?"

Ray Rials stated, "Afterwards."

Councilwoman Millet asked, "So it is not going to be in our homes until after it is flushed?"

Carla Kenser, stated, "No it can be, it can be mixed in there. What we are trying to do is get some of the stagnant water out and get it out into the system faster. It won't cause any harm or anything if it blends in that time. The flushing is in areas. I am sure you have a flushing program now where hydrants are flushed in the dead zones of the systems. Things like that. That will continue and that just helps to get that dead water out of there and to get the new water into the system."

Councilwoman Millet asked, "So that will take about a month as well?"

Carla Kenser, stated, "Yes about that."

Councilwoman Millet asked, "So we are looking at September before it is in the houses?"

Ray Rials stated, "If you live right by the plant, it will be in your house the week it gets started."

Councilwoman Millet asked, "So for the whole area of the parish it will be after the 28<sup>th</sup> when the flushing starts?"

Ray Rials stated, "Yes."

Councilman Smith stated, "So are you saying that by October 1<sup>st</sup> we should all have fresh water? So what for Halloween?"

Councilwoman Hotard stated, "I don't know if that will be a trick or a treat, but right now I just don't feel comfortable. It just doesn't seem right to me. I could be off base here, but I am not feeling confident with what I am getting from you two and you sir right there. This is a very important issue. This is very critical to the people who live here in St. John. I don't know where you three live, but I know that if you lived here this is going to be a lot more important than what I personally feel like it has been over the last year. You know this was in completion almost a year ago an estimated date. We have had this item on the agenda for so long and we have talked about it for so long it is tiresome. I hope that what you are saying tonight is very accurate because I am with Ronnie and I mean enough is enough. We can point blame and throw blame all day long, but a year of throwing blame around, it needs to stop at some point and this needs to happen."

Ray Rials stated, "I would like to say that we agree with you. I do not live in St. John. Trust me this has been very frustrating for me too. It has been a tremendous effort for me. I don't like to come here and give you bad news. I have always tried to be honest. We are committed to getting this done. We understand you get the phone calls. We understand that your constituents need to get what they paid for. It has been frustrating for all of us too. We are doing our best for you."

Councilman Lewis asked, "Since I haven't been here for so long, what has been the big hold up?"

Ray Rials stated, "The hold ups have been in three categories. Initially it was delays in delivery of major equipment. The second this was after it was delivered the computer program that operated the equipment had substantial bugs. Cade Gibson, GE, identified most of those and those took a long time to reprogram. The delays of lately have essentially been related to fine tuning the system to make sure that it is compatible with all of the components of the water and of the existing system that the parish presently operates."

Councilman Lewis stated, "Let me tell you why I ask that, if we are having all of these problems to get it done brand new. How much trouble will we have if we have a problem that we need to fix?"

Ray Rials stated, "I would hope that once it gets started, with the time and the care that we put into it that it is not going to be that

difficult to operate. That is why there was so much time put into the program because it generally does operate automatically. The program is the heart of the system."

Cade Gibson, GE, stated, "With your question basically what you are saying is that you want support after the finished product. Our products are in every country around the world. We do have issues with some systems, like anybody else. Our support network, we have over 1,000 people strong in our support network. We grow everyday. Any kind of support after this start up will be no issue at all for St. John Parish."

Councilwoman Millet asked, "Once this system is on target, is it going to work?"

Cade Gibson stated, "The system is working right now. It just does not have membranes in it right now. That is the completion date of the 28<sup>th</sup> that they are talking about to have membranes and be flushed out and running after the 28<sup>th</sup> for it to be flushed to the system of course. Right now the system is running. It is running very well in automatic and it will work very well after we leave."

Councilwoman Hotard asked, "Mr. Rials when you mentioned all the delays, have the delays, the year long delays, have those been the fault of GE or Montgomery Watson?"

Ray Rials stated, "The equipment delivery and programming delays were the result of actions by GE. Montgomery Watson has no equipment to deliver. We did no programming and I don't think that the delays that are going on now are anything but a normal part of a complex facility being started up."

Councilwoman Hotard stated, "Okay, we will go ahead and have you all back on the agenda for the August 12<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> meetings and then you can come back every meeting until we get this thing completed. We want somebody from Montgomery Watson and from GE at these meetings."

### **Charles Julien - Complete/Incomplete work orders in District III**

Councilman Julien stated, "Basically I want to update the people of District III. We are restructuring the burn site to off set the complaints that we have had. We are working to comply with the guidelines, working at the boat launch, cleaning ditches in different parts of the area, 31<sup>st</sup> Street, sink holes that we are dealing with on 26<sup>th</sup> & 27<sup>th</sup>. So we might be slow getting to them, but we are trying to get them all done. I just wanted to let everybody know that we are working on it."

Julia Remondet, EDC Director, stated, "As you can see we have placed one of our marketing brochures in front of everyone's seat. This is a recent publication that we have put together. It shows the infrastructure, the demographics of the parish, the state incentives and some quality of life issues here. If you notice in the back there is a pocket. What we intend to do is for each cluster of industry we are trying to attract we will put something specific to their industry be it retail, food or what not. So this is just a step forward with

*some of our marketing pieces and we expect to continue to add to this."*

Councilwoman Hotard stated, *"Thank you, I think it is a really nice piece."*

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**Safeland Storage, LLC and Future Energy Investments, LLC - (Public Hearing Held)(Tabled 7-8-08) Petition of landowners for establishment of an Industrial Area and consideration of a Resolution designating the immovable property as an Industrial Area**

**MOTION:** Councilman Millet moved and Councilman Lee seconded the motion to remove Safeland Storage, LLC and Future Energy Investments, LLC from the table. The motion passed with 7 yeas, 1 nay (Cheryl Millet) and Councilman Wolfe absent.

**MOTION:** Councilman Millet moved and Councilman Lee seconded the motion to approve Resolution R08-18 Safeland Storage, LLC and Future Energy Investments, LLC - CREATING AND ESTABLISHING AN INDUSTRIAL AREA WITHIN AND FOR THE PARISH OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST; PRESCRIBING THE BOUNDARIES AND LEGAL EFFECT OF SAID INDUSTRIAL AREA; AUTHORIZING THE SECRETARY OF THE PARISH COUNCIL TO TRANSMIT CERTIFIED COPIES OF THIS RESOLUTION TO CERTAIN OFFICERS AND PERSONS; AND TO TAKE SUCH OTHER STEPS AS MAY BE REQUIRED TO CARRY OUT THE PURPOSE AND INTENT OF THIS RESOLUTION. The motion passed with 7 yeas, 1 nay (Cheryl Millet) and Councilman Wolfe absent.

**Nalco Company, LLC - (Public Hearing Held)(Tabled 7-8-08) Petition of landowners for establishment of an Industrial Area and consideration of a Resolution designating the immovable property as an Industrial Area**

**MOTION:** Councilman Millet moved and Councilwoman Millet seconded the motion to remove the Nalco Company, LLC from the table. The motion passed with Councilman Wolfe absent.

Councilman Julien stated, *"Taking into consideration what we are doing here with Safeland Storage and Nalco I just think that as a community and as a parish we have to make them more accountable because I think the people in those areas are being cheated. I think that from an environmental stand point they are getting a lot of the stuff that is coming from those areas, but they are not reaping the benefits. I mean jobs and what is going on in the communities up there. I mean what would make a community say that they want to incorporate, make Garyville say that they want to incorporate, because they feel like they have been treated unfairly by industry. So as we are voting on this and Nalco is saying that they are a good neighbor and maybe Nalco has been a good neighbor. Marathon would say they are good neighbors but when the time comes for these industries to be good neighbors they are not being good neighbors because they are not hiring people from within the area. So as we as a council vote for this and work with them we need a commitment from you all to do a better job working with our community."*

Councilman Lee stated, *"My only comment would be that this resolution/petition from the landowners and we are voting of course on Nalco now. The resolution designating the immovable property as an*

*Industrial Area, it is what it is, as Danny has said many times. It is an industrial area. For us to not vote this as an industrial area would be irresponsible because it is what it is and that is all we have been asked to do since day one. I am glad that the time has come that this council is given the opportunity to vote on something and make something right because it is an industrial area and that is all we are doing with this vote. The public needs to know that."*

*Councilman Julien stated, "As Mr. Lee says it is what it is and it is environmentally unsafe. Environmentally they are just not doing the right thing by our communities and we can say it is what it is and vote on it today I am not saying that we vote against this. The only thing I am asking is for the Safeland Company and Nalco and the people in those areas to not let it be it is what it is. What we have to do is work together to make them do the right thing. If we allow them to come in and split our communities, whether it be District I, District II or LaPlace or the East Bank versus the West Bank, if it is Garyville versus LaPlace they will always win and the poor people will always be left out."*

**MOTION:** Councilman Millet moved and Councilman Lee seconded the motion to approve Resolution R08-19 Nalco Company, LLC CREATING AND ESTABLISHING AN INDUSTRIAL AREA WITHIN AND FOR THE PARISH OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST: PRESCRIBING THE BOUNDARIES AND LEGAL EFFECT OF SAID INDUSTRIAL AREA: AUTHORIZING THE SECRETARY TO TRANSMIT CERTIFIED COPIES OF THIS RESOLUTION TO CERTAIN OFFICERS AND PERSONS: AND FOR THE SECRETARY AND SUCH PERSONS TO TAKE SUCH OTHER STEPS AS MAY BE REQUIRED TO CARRY OUT THE PURPOSE AND INTENTION OF THIS RESOLUTION. The motion passed with Councilman Wolfe absent.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**Pat McTopy - UNO Office of Research & Sponsorship Program:  
Request for contract extension for the St. John Parish Comprehensive  
Land Use Planning Project - Phase III**

*Pat McTopy stated, "As you stated, the parish has an existing contract with the division of planning for the University of New Orleans for Phase III contract. They are requesting an extension. We have in your booklets a copy of their letter requesting their extension and we have here tonight Mr. Wendell Dufour representing the University if there are any specific questions. Essentially it is a six month extension through December 31<sup>st</sup> of this year at no cost to us. We are requesting authorization for administration to execute an amendment to the contract to extend the term to December 31<sup>st</sup>."*

**MOTION:** Councilwoman Usry moved and Councilman Smith seconded the motion to authorize administration to execute an amendment to the UNO contract for the St. John Parish Comprehensive Land Use Planning Project Phase III to extend the term to December 31<sup>st</sup>. The motion passed with Councilman Wolfe absent.

**Stacey Cador - Revised Vehicle/Equipment Use Policy**

*Stacey Cador, Director of Human Resources, stated, "The administration has equipped some of the parish owned vehicles with electronic tracking devices. At this time we are seeking approval of the revised vehicle*

equipment use policy. We felt the need to revise the policy because we added the component addressing the GPS system as well as some disciplinary measures associated with violation of the policy. So at this time we are requesting approval of the policy."

**MOTION:** Councilwoman Usry moved and Councilman Millet seconded the motion to grant approval of the revised vehicle/equipment use policy. The motion passed with Councilman Wolfe absent.

#### **CORRESPONDENCE/COUNCIL BRIEFS**

Councilman Julien stated, "Change is on the horizon St. John. Change is on the horizon. Our administration is doing a good job. We are going to have to find a way Bill to repair the ills of the ailing community that we have from the Garyville Incorporation effort to the West Bank and the East Bank. Other wise we are looking for change St. John."

Councilman Smith stated, "My only comment was about this Saturday's bond issue that failed. I just want to let my constituents know that I am going to do everything in my power to continue to get some of the things done that we were trying to get done by passing this bond issue. Drainage, street repair, recreation, sewerage and most of all we are going to have to find money now for hurricane protection to do something about the levee system that we wanted to build. We voted down this bond issue renewal that is one of the main things that we voted down. I have to take responsibility for this item not passing. The reason I say I is that I mean I as part of administration because maybe we didn't explain to our constituents and to the public enough how important these issues were and why we needed this bond issue passed. So I will take partial responsibility for that. We are going to come back in round two and try to find a way to get something passed so we can get the money to keep our people safe from the floods and stuff that could actually happen."

Councilwoman Millet stated, "I just wanted to ask administration and Jackie to please for the next council meeting could you have some pictures on the wall."

Councilwoman Hotard stated, "About the pictures though a lot of that is not within our control. Some people haven't even taken pictures yet but I asked Jackie to have the ones that we do have to go ahead and put them up."

#### **PRESIDENT'S REMARKS**

Bill Hubbard stated, "Cheryl if your photographs are not ready, I will get some LSU, ESJ or St. Charles pictures up on the wall for the next council meeting. Just to piggy back on what Ronnie said, I would like to thank everybody that did come out and vote this past Saturday. I think 12% of our registered voters did come out and voted so to those thank you very much. We did get one victory out of this which was the mosquito mileage renewal so hopefully we will be spraying for mosquito control and they will be less of a nuisance than what they were in the past. So I want to thank the voters for that. We will go into round two for our bond issue probably next year some time maybe in April we will bring it back up to the voters and we are going to continue doing what we are doing. We are getting things done. We are going to have to

*accept the challenge that we are faced with now, which is going to be to do some creative financing to get some of our projects done. We are going to have to prioritize. Hurricane protection is going to be a little difficult now to go to Washington when they ask us for matching funds and they are going to say well Mr. Hubbard what are you going to do and I am going to say the best we can. So anyway that was a lost, but we are not going to give up. Just a small brief mention the Reserve Theatre has Jekyll and Hyde it is tonight through Saturday night at 7:30PM go out and support your local theatre. There is also a Hurricane Preparedness Seminar tomorrow at the library on new 51 for 6:00 PM, it is open to the public so please come out."*

**MOTION:** Councilman Smith moved and Councilwoman Millet seconded the motion to go into executive session. The motion passed with Councilman Wolfe absent.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

Employee Back Pay

Dale Wolfe - Personnel Matters

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 Negotiations

Any and all pending legal matters.

Councilman Smith left the meeting at 8:20 PM.

**MOTION:** Councilwoman Usry moved and Councilwoman Millet seconded the motion to go back into regular session. The motion passed with Councilmen Wolfe and Smith absent.

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

**ADJOURNMENT:**

At 8:28 PM, Councilwoman Usry moved and Councilman Julien seconded the motion to adjourn. The motion passed with Councilmen Wolfe and Smith absent.

/s/Jaclyn Hotard  
COUNCIL CHAIR

/s/Jackie Landeche  
Council Secretary