

**OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS**  
**ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST PARISH COUNCIL**  
**TUESDAY, July 27<sup>th</sup>, 2010**  
**CHAIR RONNIE SMITH**  
**VICE CHAIR CHERYL MILLET**

The Council of the Parish of St. John the Baptist, State of Louisiana, met in Regular Session in the Joel McTopy Chambers, LaPlace, Louisiana on Tuesday, July 27<sup>th</sup>, 2010, at 6:30 PM.

**CALL TO ORDER:**

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

**ABSENT:** None

Councilwoman Hotard led the Prayer. Councilman Julien led the Pledge.

Legal Counsels Jeff Perilloux & Kerry Brown were present.

**Community Rating System – Presentation – Flood insurance rate decrease**

The above item will be carried over on the next agenda.

**Consent Agenda**

**Items:** Approval of Minutes July 13<sup>th</sup>, 2010, Regular Meeting; Permit Approval – Neighborhood Block Party – Williamsburg Dr. 8/1/10 from 5 until 8 PM; Permit Approval – Block Party – New Pilgrim Baptist Church 8/7/10 from 1 until 6 PM

**MOTION:** Councilman Julien moved and Councilwoman Millet seconded the motion to approve the consent agenda items consisting of Approval of Minutes July 13<sup>th</sup>, 2010, Regular Meeting; Permit Approval – Neighborhood Block Party – Williamsburg Dr. 8/1/10 from 5 until 8 PM; Permit Approval – Block Party – New Pilgrim Baptist Church 8/7/10 from 1 until 6 PM. The motion passed unanimously.

**PUBLIC HEARING ON ORDINANCES:**

**10-18** (Tabled 06-08-10) An ordinance to amend the Zoning Ordinances relative to Residential zoning. (C. Millet)

**MOTION:** Councilwoman Millet moved and Councilman Julien seconded the motion to remove Ordinance 10-18 from the table. The motion passed unanimously.

**MOTION:** Councilwoman Millet moved and Councilman Lee seconded the motion to have Ordinance 10-18 removed from the agenda. The motion passed unanimously.

**10-19** (Public Hearing Held) That section 2:5 of sub-chapter A, "In General" of Chapter 2 of the St. John the Baptist Parish Code of Ordinances is hereby amended to provide for a change in polling place for Precinct 1-3. (H. Lewis)

Councilman Lewis stated, *"This polling place had been moved years ago because of air conditioning and heating issues. This is just putting it back where it used to be."*

**MOTION:** Councilman Lewis moved and Councilman Wolfe seconded the motion to approve Ordinance 10-19. The motion passed unanimously.

**10-20** An ordinance designating and establishing the compensation to be paid to dealers who collect sales and use taxes levied by the Parish of St. John the Baptist, State of Louisiana. (R. Smith)

Councilman Smith stepped down as chair and Councilwoman Millet took the chair.

Councilman Smith asked, *"At this time I would like to table this item, can I get a second?"*

**MOTION:** Councilman Smith moved and Councilman Lee seconded the motion to table Ordinance 10-20. The motion passed unanimously.

**10-21** (Public Hearing Held) An ordinance to revoke and set aside an unused portion of the Martin Street (formerly Seventh Street) right-of-way in favor of St. John the Baptist Parish, Louisiana and to provide for related matters. (N. Robottom)

Mike Henderson, Planning & Zoning, stated, *"The applicants have requested to revoke a piece of property formerly known as 7<sup>th</sup> street and Martin Street. It is unused property. It hasn't been used, from what I understand, for the past eighty years. We did have an admit meeting. We had folks from utilities. We checked with the parish attorney. There is really no need for the property that we can identify from a parish stand point. The road is already where it shouldn't be. It is kind of an awkward situation but the people just want to reclaim their property. Once they reclaim it, they will re-subdivide it and at that time we have a piece of sewer line right there and we will create a servitude to protect our rights there."*

**MOTION:** Councilwoman Hotard moved and Councilwoman Usry seconded the motion to approve Ordinance 10-21. The motion passed unanimously.

**INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES:**

**10-22** An ordinance by the St. John the Baptist Parish Council in a Public hearing held on August 10, 2010, which was in accordance with the open meetings law and additional requirements of Article VII, Section 23(C) of the Louisiana Constitution and R.S. 47:1705 (B), that the following adjusted millage rates be and they are hereby levied upon the dollars of the assessed valuation of all property subject to advalorum within said Parish for the year 2010, for the purpose of raising revenue (N. Robottom)

**10-23** An ordinance by the St. John the Baptist Parish Council in a Public hearing held on August 10, 2010, which was in accordance with the open meetings law and additional requirements of Article VII, Section 23(C) of the Louisiana Constitution and R.S. 47:1705 (B), that the taxing authority voted to increase the millage rates, but not in excess of the prior year's maximum rates, on all taxable property shown on the official assessment roll for the year 2010 and when collected, the revenues from said taxes shall be used only for the specific purposes for which said taxes have been levied (N. Robottom)

**10-24** An ordinance amending Section 113:445(e)(7)f of St. John the Baptist Parish Code of Ordinances by adding the following language, as shown: Temporary detached signs (M. Henderson)

**10-25** An ordinance amending Sections 14-42 and 42-44 of St. John the Baptist Parish Code of Ordinances to read as follows: Residential water meter deposits (M. Henderson)

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

Councilman Lee stated, *"At 6:15 PM this evening the finance committee met. There were only three items. At this time I would ask for a motion from one of my fellow council members to ratify the actions taken by the finance committee."*

**MOTION:** Councilwoman Millet moved and Councilwoman Usry seconded the motion to accept the recommendation of the finance committee. The committee approved to take the bids for the West Bank Park Pavement Improvements under advisement, and granted administration authorization to advertise for health and dental insurance proposals. The motion passed unanimously.

**DEPARTMENT/ENGINEER REPORTS:**

**Dale Wolfe - Personnel Matters**

There were no personnel matters at this time.

**Dale Wolfe - (Carry Over) SSA Consultants for the Presidential Advisory Committee (PAC)**

Councilman Wolfe asked that this item be removed from the agenda.

**Charles Julien - Update lights on E. 22<sup>nd</sup> Street**

Marie Brown-Mercadel, CAO, stated, *"To date, Entergy has installed five electrical service poles on E. 22<sup>nd</sup> Street. The costs were paid by the developer in anticipation of the new subdivision that was to be developed in that area. We have got to go through the process of applying for a permit from DOTD and upon approval Entergy will be willing to work with us to install lighting on those five poles at that time."*

**Darnel C. Usry - Discussion on sale of fireworks**

Councilwoman Usry asked, "I was concerned about firework sales in the parish. How many licensed operators do we have and the cost? How much money are we generating from them?"

Marie Brown-Mercadel stated, "From the period of January through July 15<sup>th</sup>, we issued nine permits at a cost of \$90.00 each. The revenue collected was approximately \$300,000.00. Of that amount it generated \$14,000.00 in sales tax revenue for the parish."

#### **Cheryl Millet – Update on street signs at traffic light intersections**

Councilwoman Millet stated, "We had talked about this when they were putting up the new red lights on the major intersections along Airline Hwy. We had discussed having some street signs put up because in St. John we tend to have signs for people who know where they are going and not for people who don't. So since the opportunity was there I had asked administration to check into that."

Marie Brown-Mercadel stated, "We are planning to install signs at fourteen intersections. The parish, according to DOTD, is going to be responsible for the installation, maintenance and costs of those. They have requested that we set up a meeting with them prior to submitting the application for the permit so that we can make sure that we are following all of the procedures. That meeting has been scheduled and we will provide an update after that meeting has been held."

#### **OLD BUSINESS:**

#### **Stacey Cador – (Tabled 7-13-10) Appointment of Richard Drexel to the Civil Service Board**

**MOTION:** Councilman Lee moved and Councilwoman Millet seconded the motion to remove the appointment of Richard Drexel to the Civil Service Board from the table. The motion passed unanimously.

Stacey Cador, Director of Human Resources, stated, "Legal counsel is satisfied with the language in the letter submitted by the Civil Service System. So if you wish to take action on it tonight we can."

Councilman Lee stated, "I would like to make a motion that we accept the administration's recommendation and the council's approval of it and appoint Mr. Richard Drexel to the Civil Service Board or excuse me ratify an appointment that has been made through the proper channels."

Councilman Wolfe asked, "Can I get a little back ground information on that individual."

Councilman Lee stated, "I would be happy to. When I asked for the table last week we had some issues with the way it was done because the issue was how did it get to this point. District Attorney Tom Daley told us at that time that it complied, Mrs. Robottom said let's go back and make sure we are not making a mistake as to how this recommendation came to pass because as you know the appointment does come from the state civil service board but it requires our ratification and my question was are we doing it properly. That is what I researched. Now Mr. Drexel I have known for some time and as I said at the meeting I just wanted to make sure that we didn't make an error as to how we appointed it. I was not questioning his ability nor integrity because I

*have known Richard for twenty-five years and I think we would be very fortunate to have someone with his credentials willing to serve in this capacity. That is what the table was about. It wasn't about the person it was about the process. Administration and the District Attorney's office cleared that up to my satisfaction."*

Councilman Wolfe stated, "Thank you Stevie."

**MOTION:** Councilman Lee moved and Councilwoman Millet seconded the motion on administration's recommendation to appoint Richard Drexel to the Civil Service Board. The motion passed unanimously.

**Stacey Cadour – (Tabled 7-13-10) Re-appointment of Sarah Tregre to the Civil Service Board**

Stacey Cadour stated, "The administration is requesting that this item remain tabled pending receipt of a letter of recommendation from LSU."

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**Marie Brown-Mercadel – Authorization for the Parish President to sign an agreement with Entergy to use the Regala Park as a staging area for their equipment in the event of a declared emergency**

Marie Brown-Mercadel, stated, "You have the agreements for this and the next two items in your packet. Basically what we are trying to do is get prepared for hurricane season and Entergy will be using the parking lot and the grounds as a staging area so that they can be there and be ready to set up in case we have a loss of power."

Councilman Lewis asked, "I think last time they were parked by John L. Ory or East St. John Elementary. Will we have enough room over there by Regala?"

Marie Brown-Mercadel stated, "Yes we have two additional staging locations as well. We think that there is room there but we also have on the next two items the community center and the library on Hwy. 51 as well."

**MOTION:** Councilwoman Usry moved and Councilman Wolfe seconded the motion to grant administration authorization for the Parish President to sign an agreement with Entergy to use the Regala Park as a staging area for their equipment in the event of a declared emergency. The motion passed unanimously.

**Marie Brown-Mercadel – Authorization for the Parish President to sign an agreement with Entergy to use the Community Center as a staging area for their equipment in the event of a declared emergency**

Marie Brown-Mercadel stated, "Again very similar to the first item, we just want to use the grounds to set up at the community center there will also be a location for a temporary tent for the workers to stay there and also an area set up for feeding and also the atrium will be used if needed for feeding as well."

**MOTION:** Councilwoman Usry moved and Councilman Julien seconded the motion to grant administration authorization for the Parish President

to sign an agreement with Entergy to use the Community Center as a staging area for their equipment in the event of a declared emergency. The motion passed unanimously.

**Marie Brown-Mercadel – Authorization for the Parish President to sign an agreement with Entergy to use the Hwy. 51 Library as a staging area for their equipment in the event of a declared emergency**

Marie Brown-Mercadel stated, *“Again we just want to use the location as the staging area at the library on Hwy. 51.”*

**MOTION:** Councilwoman Usry moved and Councilwoman Millet seconded the motion to grant administration authorization for the Parish President to sign an agreement with Entergy to use the Hwy. 51 Library as a staging area for their equipment in the event of a declared emergency. The motion passed unanimously.

**Mike Henderson – Resolution – R10-30 – A resolution providing support for a Special Use Permit to allow Monicarlo Casino, L.L.C. to develop Monicarlo Truck Stop, a truck stop with video poker, on Parcel A, Section 68, Glencoe Plantation, located at the southeast corner of LA 54 & US 61 in Garyville, LA**

Mike Henderson stated, *“The applicant is requesting the approval of the parish council for a special use permit to develop a truck stop with video poker at LA 54 & US 61 in Garyville, LA. He has gone to the Planning Commission and they did approve his plans. We have met with the engineer and all the people associated with his plans and his development and everyone seems to be okay with it. It will come here and once he comes back we will give him a permit and then it will go back through the process.”*

**MOTION:** Councilman Wolfe moved and Councilman Millet seconded the motion to approve Resolution R10-30. A resolution providing support for a Special Use Permit to allow Monicarlo Casino, L.L.C. to develop Monicarlo Truck Stop, a truck stop with video poker, on Parcel A, Section 68, Glencoe Plantation, located at the southeast corner of LA 54 & US 61 in Garyville, LA. **WHEREAS**, the St. John the Baptist Parish Zoning Ordinance requires both Planning Commission approval and a supporting resolution of the Parish Council for a Special Use Permit to develop a truck stop with video poker; and, **WHEREAS**, Monicarlo Casino, L.L.C. has requested special permission of the Planning Commission to develop such a truck stop with video poker; and, **WHEREAS**, The Planning Commission approved the request at its public meeting of June 21, 2010; **NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the St. John the Baptist Parish Council does hereby provide a supporting resolution for Monicarlo Casino, L.L.C. to develop a truck stop with video poker on Parcel A, Section 68, Glencoe Plantation, Garyville, LA. The motion passed unanimously.

**CORRESPONDANCE/COUNCIL BRIEFS**

Councilman Wolfe asked, *“I would like administration to give me an update on that \$150,000.00 grant that we have to renovate the office of Health and Human Services on Central Avenue. If I caught you off guard I can wait until the next meeting.”*

Marie Brown-Mercadel stated, "We are not prepared to give that update today but I can get you some information and we can update you at the next council meeting or I can call you prior to that."

Councilman Wolfe stated, "I feel good today so okay."

Councilman Julien stated, "I just want to remind everyone about the night out on crime. We are having a block party at the New Pilgrim Baptist Church August 7<sup>th</sup>, 2010 from 1:00 PM until 6:00 PM."

Councilwoman Millet stated, "My husband is home sick and I told him I would tell him that I hope he feels better tonight."

Councilman Smith stated, "Well I hope your husband feels good tonight too. Mr. Lewis, you thought you were getting out of here without me announcing that it is your birthday tonight, on behalf of the council Happy Birthday!"

Councilman Lewis stated, "I hate to tell you my age but I am 72 and I've been feeling pretty good so I can't beat that."

Councilman Smith stated, "The next short item, I know Mr. Julien was being very polite and didn't want to say anything but he took his 13 year old AAU basketball team to Las Vegas and they won the tournament out there. So I would like to congratulate you. My turn, I took my kids to Dallas and we won the National Championship in Dallas. I'm laughing but we had over 85 teams in the tournament that I played in just in my age group and the kids represented St. John Parish, the tri-parish area really well. I promise you out of those 85 teams 70 of them knew who we were by the time we left there. It was all compliments not just on their playing but also on their behavior, attitude and the way they carried themselves. So I would like to thank our kids for representing our parishes well. Thank you."

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

Natalie Robottom stated, "Mr. Lewis now I know why you are so dressed up. I stopped by to visit with you but Happy Birthday to you and again. Congratulations to both of our teams for representing St. John Parish. I have had the opportunity to meet on occasion some of the players and if they behaved the way they behaved in my office and around this building I'm sure they represented St. John Parish very well. I am looking forward to meeting many others. We are very fortunate that Bonnie passed us by this past weekend but please know that we were prepared. Our staff met on Monday, it was a scheduled meeting but we also wanted to review what took place in our preparation for Bonnie and we were glad it passed us by but each lesson is a lesson learned. We are continuing to prepare for any disasters or hurricanes moving forward and we are going to continue to do what is best for all of our residents to make sure that we are prepared and our council and our residents are informed. If there were some things that maybe you need additional information on or problems that may have occurred in our preparation this weekend please forward that to us so that we can take that into account as we move forward. St. John continues to be in contact with our neighbors regarding the oil spill. We have been very fortunate again with not having any oil here but in the event that we do we need to be prepared. We were assigned a liaison through BP to

deal with Parish Presidents associated with Lake Pontchartrain & Lake Maurepas. We are going to continue those talks and making sure that we have a plan in the event it is needed. We are also working with Lafourche and St. Charles for Lake Des Allemands to make sure that plan is in place and we will keep you informed once that plan has been approved. Just to let you know at the NACO meeting the 386 counties involved across the country supported Louisiana's request to remove the moratorium which was due to Louisiana's delegation working really hard to make sure they understood the economic impact to Louisiana not just for drilling but all the service industries. It was hard fought but successful. I would also like to inform the residents that we did receive through the Louisiana Recovery Authority a grant in the amount of \$176,000.00 for a three year period. That is to revisit a comprehensive plan with regards to our existing zoning subdivision guidelines and regulations and to be prepared for resiliency after disasters so we will be looking forward to getting that started. Congratulations to our theatre who presented a successful play this weekend, *The Music Man*, it was very enjoyable, a nice family evening and very well performed. I would also like to thank our PAC members, chairs and all the residents who attended our meeting this past Thursday. There were at least 100 people in attendance. We are almost done. We are over half way there. We have a few weeks left. We are pulling together that report as it is pulled together we will provide a recap to the public as well. We are taking all the comments and questions into consideration. I feel very good about where we are because some of the questions and comments had either been addressed or were being addressed or will be addressed and it is very important that we continue to get input from all of our residents in making sure of our view of where St. John is and where we want to be is a valid one. So we look forward to finalizing that in the next couple of weeks and the report will be available. Just a reminder that this Tuesday, August 3<sup>rd</sup>, is the night out against crime there will be events throughout the parish so please drive with caution and support all your neighborhood parties in the prevention of crime neighborhood by neighborhood. Finally all of you should have received a notice, the Reserve Boat Launch ground breaking ceremony is this Monday, August 2<sup>nd</sup> at 10:00 AM. You are all invited to attend. I know it has been a long time coming. We are excited to get this project started and for those of you who have it there is a rendering on the picture and we look forward to seeing you there on Monday."

Councilman Smith stated, "There is one thing I wanted to let the residents of Riverlands Subdivision know. Mrs. Millet said she had a couple of calls. I checked with our parish engineer. They are getting ready to go out for bids for those items shortly. We have already approved it to go out for bid for that project. There are three lift stations I think you said Chuck. Those three lift stations should help with that flooding when the rain comes through. So that issue is going out to bid basically as we speak."

There was no executive session.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

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 Agreement

Any and all pending legal matters

**ADJOURNMENT:**

At 7:08 PM, Councilman Julien moved and Councilman Lee seconded the motion to adjourn. The motion passed unanimously.

/s/Ronnie Smith  
COUNCIL CHAIRMAN

/s/Jackie Landeche  
Council Secretary