

**FINANCE COMMITTEE MINUTES**  
**September 27<sup>th</sup>, 2011**  
**Chairman Steve Lee**  
**Vice-Chairman Charles Julien**

Members: Haston Lewis, Danny Millet, Charles Julien, Jaclyn Hotard, Darnel C. Usry, Cheryl Millet, Lucien Gauff, III, Ronnie Smith, Steve Lee

**PRESENT:** Ronnie Smith, Jaclyn Hotard, Lucien Gauff, III, Steve Lee, Cheryl Millet, Haston Lewis, Charles Julien, Danny Millet

**ABSENT:** Darnel C. Usry

**BID OPENING REPORT/AWARDS:**

**Brenda Labat – Bid Award – Authorization to award the low bid for the Utilities Department Office Trailer to Satellite Shelters of LaPlace, LA in the amount of \$40,818.00**

Brenda Labat, Director of Purchasing, stated, "Administration recommends awarding the low bid for the office trailer to Satellite Shelters of LaPlace for \$40,818.00."

Councilwoman Millet stated, "I am really pleased and happy to see that the low bid did actually go to a local company that we can keep the business here in St. John and that really makes me feel well."

**MOTION:** Councilwoman Millet moved and Councilman Smith seconded the motion to grant administration authorization to award the low bid for the Utilities Department Office Trailer to Satellite Shelters of LaPlace, LA in the amount of \$40,818.00. The motion passed with 7 yeas, 1 absent (Usry) and 1 abstaining (Lee).

**Brenda Labat – Bid Award – Authorization to award the low bid for the Control Valves for Ruddock Well System to Louisiana Utilities of New Orleans, LA in the amount of \$126,000.00**

Brenda Labat stated, "Administration recommends awarding the low bid for 6 control valves for the Ruddock Well System to Louisiana Utilities at a cost of \$21,000.00 each for a total of \$126,000."

Councilwoman Usry arrived to the council meeting at 6:06 PM

Councilman Lewis asked, "I would like to know if they are the only ones that sell those type of valves. It looks like with that pricing we don't have much competition in that valve business."

Brenda Labat stated, "Well we put this bid out. It was advertised in the L'Observateur it was put on our parish website and centralbidding.com which is a national service. So obviously if there were other people we might have gotten something else. I don't know for certain but I am happy that we have a Louisiana company that was able to provide it."

Councilman Lewis stated, "I understand what you are saying but sometimes we build those specs around certain valves and that is why no

one else can bid on them because we build them accordingly and then we get left out of the bid load."

Brenda Labat stated, "Mr. Lewis it is against the law to bid something like that. We say or equal and the vendors have the opportunity to tell us they have an equal value and we would have to prove that it is not equal if their price is lower."

Councilman Lewis stated, "I know what you are saying but you know I might ask for a bid for a F-150 Ford truck or equal but I have built all of my bids around that particular truck. I know how you can do it. I have seen it happen."

Brenda Labat stated, "Well we only received the one bid. I can do nothing else."

Councilman Lee stated, "The only answer I can assume is clearly that is not the case here."

Councilman Lewis stated, "I don't think that is the case. A lot of time it is why we don't get other bids. It depends on how you put your specs out."

Councilman Lee stated, "I understand the point you are making Mr. Lewis. I believe the administration was perhaps caught off guard a little bit but clearly the answer is that is not the case. It was bid properly and I am glad to hear that the administration goes to that extent actually in the bid process. So your point was well taken Mr. Lewis."

Councilman Gauff stated, "A lot of time material of construction has a lot to do with the cost and maybe in this instance material of construction has something to do with it also. So it does depend on what we are asking for."

**MOTION:** Councilman Smith moved and Councilwoman Millet seconded the motion to grant administration authorization to award the low bid for the Control Valves for Ruddock Well System to Louisiana Utilities of New Orleans, LA in the amount of \$126,000.00. The motion passed with 8 yeas and 1 abstaining (Lee).

**Theresa Rodgers/Angelic Sutherland – (Tabled 9-13-11) Authorization to renew the contract with the Broussard Baloney Law Firm, APC for services associated with the adjudicated properties program**

**MOTION:** Councilman Smith moved and Councilwoman Hotard seconded the motion to remove the item from the table. The motion passed unanimously.

Angelic Sutherland, Assistant to the Parish President, stated, "Administration requests authorization to renew the contract with the Broussard Baloney Law Firm, APC for services associated with the adjudicated properties program. This contract was initiated in 2009 to develop policies and procedures to return adjudicated properties back into the stream of commerce. It has not been finalized and will not be finalized until approved by the council. This is a fee for service contract with the scope of work identified in Exhibit A. As some of the

*work has been completed and the rest is ongoing, it would not be in the parish's best interest to change contractors at this point in the process."*

Councilwoman Usry asked, "How long is the anticipation before we complete the project?"

Angelic Sutherland stated, "I don't see it as being long. The policy and procedures were submitted by Broussard/Baloney and again our legal counsel had some concerns about possible edits that maybe needed. So I see in the next couple of weeks us finalizing and if it is determined that those edits need to be made we will make the edits to present to the council and introduce that ordinance for approval."

Councilwoman Usry asked, "Do you think it will happen before this council leaves office?"

Angelic Sutherland stated, "Yes. I see it being this council."

Councilman Smith stated, "I know at the last meeting I had some concerns. I was concerned about how much money had been paid out to the Broussard Firm to do the work that had been done. I in the meantime had a meeting with Mrs. Broussard-Baloney and I was very satisfied with the information that I was given by her. I think this is going to be positive for the parish. I have been for moving this project forward since day one. I didn't want anybody to think I was trying to stop the progress of the project or not allow that firm to get it. I just wanted a couple of questions answered and some stuff cleared up. That was cleared up and I am in full support of this extension and her firm."

Councilman Lewis stated, "I had a chance myself to talk to our legal advisor and what he told me I think I can live with that."

Councilman Julien stated, "I would only ask that Mrs. Baloney can come for a moment and give a brief explanation as to back to the stream of commerce for the constituents who may not understand so they will know what that means."

Geri Broussard-Baloney stated, "When referencing the stream of commerce, the nutshell version is it is an opportunity to first and foremost get it back into the hands of the land owners. We incorporated in the ordinance what we call the lot next door program which basically allows the property owners that live adjacent to the property that has already been adjudicated to the state the first opportunity to get the property back. Most of the properties are in the more rural areas of the parish, so most of the property owners that live adjacent to it are relatives or part owners in the property that was never really legally placed in the hands of heirs due to failure to open succession. It gives those family members the first opportunity to legally get title to that property. So in a nutshell when we say put it back in the stream of commerce it means put it back in the hands legitimately of individuals so that it can be developed or maintained. It is basically a win/win for the parish and the community because again most of the properties that have been identified are in the more rural areas. There is a lot of blighted property. I know in Garyville we have some of the blighted abandoned properties that are actually being used for drugs and other illicit purposes so you know it would give them an

opportunity to get those properties cleaned up and then they will start paying taxes on them again. So it is really a win/win situation for the parish."

Councilman Gauff stated, "I would just like to thank most of you that have spoken out about this. I am definitely in support of this as I was in the last meeting and hopefully we can move forward with this. Thank you."

Councilman Lee stated, "This is a program that this councilman and Mr. Lewis have dealt with for probably twenty years. It is something that we attempted to get started and sometimes things fall through the cracks and sometimes politics get in the way and sometimes the priorities from one council to the next changes but I think it is something that is absolutely necessary for a parish our size and as sophisticated as we are becoming to do this. So I am in total support of it and I am glad that we had quite extensive dialogue on it in the last two meetings. So with that in mind I am going to ask the council to use their lights to vote."

**MOTION:** Councilman Smith moved and Councilwoman Hotard seconded the motion to grant administration authorization to renew the contract with the Broussard Baloney Law Firm, APC for services associated with the adjudicated properties program. The motion passed unanimously.

**Theresa Rodgers – Authorization to execute Change order No. 1, a net decrease of \$3,571.20, with J.A. "Jack" Julius, Jr. Inc. of Marrero, LA for reimbursement of building permit fees for the Main Library Addition in LaPlace**

Theresa Rodgers, CAO, stated, "Administration requests authorization to execute Change Order No. 1, a net decrease of \$3,571.20 with J.A. "Jack" Julius, Jr., Inc. of Marrero, LA. This change order provides reimbursement to the St. John Library for building permit fees."

**MOTION:** Councilman Smith moved and Councilman Millet seconded the motion to grant administration authorization to execute Change order No. 1, a net decrease of \$3,571.20, with J.A. "Jack" Julius, Jr. Inc. of Marrero, LA for reimbursement of building permit fees for the Main Library Addition in LaPlace. The motion passed unanimously.

**Theresa Rodgers – Authorization to execute Change order No. 2 in the amount of \$5,755.00 with J.A. "Jack" Julius, Jr. Inc. of Marrero, LA for revisions to manholes and sub-surface drainage around the Main Library Addition in LaPlace**

Theresa Rodgers stated, "Administration requests authorization to execute Change Order No. 2 in the amount of \$5,755.00 with J.A. "Jack" Julius, Jr., Inc. of Marrero, LA for revisions to manholes and sub-surface drainage for the Central Library renovation project. These change orders result in a net increase of \$2,183.80 and a total project cost of \$1,129,183.80."

**MOTION:** Councilman Smith moved and Councilman Julien seconded the motion to grant administration authorization to execute Change order No. 2 in the amount of \$5,755.00 with J.A. "Jack" Julius, Jr. Inc. of

Marrero, LA for revisions to manholes and sub-surface drainage around the Main Library Addition in LaPlace. The motion passed unanimously.

**Any and all other financial concerns**

There were no other financial concerns at this time.

**Adjournment**

**MOTION:** Councilwoman Millet moved and Councilwoman Usry seconded the motion to adjourn. The motion passed unanimously.