

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR PUBLIC MEETING OF THE
MAYOR AND BOARD OF ALDERMEN
OF THE TOWN OF VIDALIA, LOUISIANA,
HELD ON TUESDAY, AUGUST 8, 2023 AT 6:00 P.M.
IN THE TOWN HALL MEETING ROOM, 200 VERNON STEVENS BLVD., VIDALIA,
LOUISIANA**

The Mayor and Board of Aldermen of the Town of Vidalia, Louisiana, met, in regular session, in the Town Hall Meeting Room on Tuesday, August 8, 2023, at 6:00 p.m.

There were present: Mayor Buz Craft, Aldermen Jon Betts, Brent Smith, Robert Gardner, Tommy Probst, and Alderwoman Rosa I. Demby.

There were also present: Piara Wilson, Municipal Clerk; Debra Moak, Municipal Accountant; George C. Murray, Jr., Municipal Attorney; Jay LaSyone, Municipal Manager; and members of the press.

The meeting was opened by the Mayor and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited by those present, followed by the invocation given by Alderwoman Demby.

A quorum being present, the Mayor declared the Board of Aldermen of the Town of Vidalia, Louisiana, to be duly convened, in regular session, as the governing authority of said municipality, and opened the meeting for the conduct of business.

After being reviewed, the typed minutes of the regular town meeting of July 11, 2023, were approved with no changes. The motion for the approval of the minutes was made by Alderwoman Demby, seconded by Alderman Gardner, and unanimously carried.

The Mayor then asked if anyone had comments on current agenda items. Noting that no one had any questions or comments, he advised that he would continue with the formal agenda.

Before addressing the formal agenda, the Mayor announced that he wanted to thank the Concordia Parish Police Jury for the work they are doing on the Vidalia Canal. He also noted that the street overlay projects have begun.

Agenda Item No. 1 was the presentation of the financial statement for June, 2023. The Mayor then called on the Municipal Accountant, Debra Moak, CPA, who presented the financial statement. As customary, she began by explaining the various fund balances, which summaries included a comparison of actual expenses to budget expenses. Then, the summary sheets, previously given to the Aldermen, were reviewed in detail, including a report on the positive and negative fund balances and indicated the net changes in the various funds. After reporting on which revenues are under budget and which are over budget at this time, she brought the Aldermen up to date on several items of interest. Those items included: cash in the bank; investments; total assets and liabilities; combined revenues and expenses, showing a change in net position of a positive 2.0 million excess; and she concluded by noting that it will take approximately 2 months to finalize the 2022-2023 fiscal year entries and work papers, which when done, will be given to the Auditors for their audit. The Mayor then asked if anyone had any questions for Mrs. Moak. There were no questions and he thanked Mrs. Moak for her presentation.

Agenda Item No. 2 was Board discussion and vote on approval of occupational license applications. The only application was by Josetina Sotelo for Pepe Betos, LLC, d/b/a "Pepe Betos

Mexican Kitchen and Cantina” at 1102 Carter Street. There being no questions or comments, a motion to grant the application was made by Alderman Probst, seconded by Alderman Smith, and unanimously carried.

Agenda Item No. 3 was Board discussion and vote on acceptance of engagement letter for Silas Simmons, LLP, to provide audit services for the Town of Vidalia for fiscal year ending June 30, 2023. The Mayor explained that this is the same engagement letter that we have accepted for several years. A motion to accept the engagement letter was made by Alderman Gardner seconded by Alderman Betts, and unanimously carried.

Agenda Item No. 4 was Board discussion and approval to set dates and times for Hydro Projects meetings on August 22 and August 24, 2023, at 5:00 P.M. After announcing the agenda item, the Mayor explained that there had been some confusion about which the actual dates and times were and that this agenda item was to clarify and set those meetings. There being no questions or comments, a motion was made by Alderman Gardner, seconded by Alderman Smith, that the dates, times and place of those meetings would be Tuesday, August 22, 2023, and Thursday, August 24, 2023, at 5:00 P.M. at Vidalia City Hall Meeting Room.

Agenda Item No. 5 was presentation on current programs for Concordia Council on Aging (Delores Thomas, Vidalia site director). Ms. Thomas addressed those present and the Board from the podium and gave an overview of the various current programs in which the Concordia Council on Aging is participating. The first was the annual Beat the Heat Fan Drive, which aims to provide 20” box fans for senior citizens from July 25 through September 2. She then explained many of the services presently being provided by the Concordia Council on Aging. In connection therewith, she introduced a new executive site director, Ms. Patsy Small.

Agenda Item No. 6 was Board discussion and vote on approval for Vidalia Police Department.

John Hawkins, Full-time school resource officer (SRO);
Jose’ Vazquex, Full-time patrol officer;
John Ford, Reserve officer.

After a short discussion, a motion was made to approve the foregoing hires, in globo. That motion was made by Alderman Betts, seconded by Alderman Smith, and unanimously carried.

Agenda Item No. 7 was Board discussion and approval to appoint Cornell Lewis as Superintendent for the Utility Department. The Mayor began by explaining the need to have someone new to head the Utility Department and he recommends Cornell Lewis to be the Town’s Superintendent. The Mayor then listed the many jobs that Mr. Lewis has been doing in the past, including his experience with the Utility Department and the Water Works Department. The Mayor concluded by stating that Mr. Lewis is very qualified to be Superintendent. Following the Mayor’s presentation, a motion to approve Cornell Lewis as Superintendent of the Utility Department was made by Alderman Gardner, seconded by Alderwoman Demby, and unanimously carried.

Agenda Item No. 8 was update on recent maintenance work on Town’s Gas System (Eddie Beach, Gas Department Supervisor). The Mayor called on Mr. Eddie Beach who addressed the Mayor and Board on recent maintenance by the Town on its gas lines, as required by recent Federal guide lines. He noted that Vidalia is the first municipality in this area to get the Federal inspections done on our gas lines. Following the presentation, the Mayor thanked Mr. Beach and his staff for the excellent job which they have done.

Agenda Item No. 9 was Board vote to award bid for new knuckleboom truck for the Town's Street Department. After announcing the agenda item, the Mayor proceeded to open bids for the new knuckleboom truck. After opening and reading the bids from Vacuum Sales & Service of Gonzales and Scott Tractor, LLC, and a short discussion, a motion for a resolution to accept the Scott Tractor, LLC, bid of \$204,500.00 as the low bid, subject to meeting the advertised specifications, was made by Alderman Gardner, seconded by Alderman Probst, and unanimously carried.

(A COPY OF THE RESOLUTION IS ATTACHED HERETO AND MADE A PART HEREOF).

Agenda Item No. 10 was Board discussion and approval of bids on surplus vehicles for the Town of Vidalia. The Mayor explained the procedure to be followed in opening and approving bids on the many vehicles. He advised the Board that, on examination of the unopened bids, it was found that some bidders did not pay attention to the instructions for making bids, and that those bids would have to be discussed individually. The Mayor then began to open the bids, dealing first with bids which did not indicate, on the envelope, the item for which the bid was submitted. Once those items had been opened and read and the item identified, they would be held so that they could be put with the bids for each individual vehicle. This procedure continued for some time with the envelopes being opened, the name of the person bidding, the vehicle number of the item, and the bid amounts were made known and noted in due course. After all bids had been opened and announced, a motion to accept the highest bid, which met the bid's specifications, be accepted, and if the high bidder does not come and pay for the vehicle in the time allowed by State Statute, then the next high bidder would be notified and he would have 2 weeks to come and pay for the vehicle. The motion was made by Alderman Gardner, seconded by Alderwoman Demby, and unanimously carried.

Agenda Item No. 11 was adjournment. The Mayor noting that there was no further agenda items, asked for a motion to adjourn. The motion to adjourn was made by Alderman Probst, seconded by Alderman Betts, and unanimously carried.

/s/ Piara Wilson
PIARA WILSON, MUNICIPAL CLERK

/s/ Buz Craft
BUZ CRAFT, MAYOR

The following resolution was offered by Alderman Gardner, seconded by Alderman Probst:

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the following bids were opened and read aloud on August 8, 2023, for the new knuckleboom truck:

VACUUM TRUCK SALES & SERVICE OF GONZALES -- \$210,500.00;
VACUUM TRUCK SALES & SERVICE OF GONZALES -- \$209,000.00;
SCOTT TRACTOR, LLC. in the amount of \$204,500.00.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town of Vidalia award the bid to SCOTT TRACTOR, LLC, in the amount of \$204,500.00.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Mayor is authorized to execute any and all documents including contracts, estimates and change orders between the Town of Vidalia and SCOTT TRACTOR, LLC.

THIS RESOLUTION adopted this 8th day of August, 2023, with the vote recorded as follows:

YEAS: Aldermen Betts, Probst, Gardner, Smith and Alderwoman Demby.

NAYS: NONE.

ABSENT: NONE.

AND THE RESOLUTION was adopted this 8th day of August, 2023.

/s/ Piara Wilson
PIARA WILSON, MUNICIPAL CLERK

/s/ Buz Craft
BUZ CRAFT, MAYOR