

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR PUBLIC MEETING OF THE
MAYOR AND BOARD OF ALDERMEN
OF THE TOWN OF VIDALIA, LOUISIANA,
HELD ON TUESDAY, OCTOBER 13, 2020 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, October 13, 2020, at 6:00 p.m.

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

There were absent: NONE.

There were also present: Jay LaSyone, Town Clerk; Debra Moak, Town Accountant; George C. Murray, Jr., Town Attorney and Pam Middleton, Executive Secretary to the Mayor, 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 Alderman Betts.

A quorum being present, the Mayor declared the Mayor and 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 from the special meeting of August 25, 2020, and the regular meeting of September 8, 2020, were approved. The motion for approval of the August meeting was made by Alderman Betts, seconded by Alderman Smith, and unanimously carried. The motion for approval of the September 8 minutes was made by Alderman Betts, seconded by Alderwoman Demby, and unanimously carried. The Mayor then opened the floor for public comments on current agenda items. Mr. Ray Ainsworth was recognized and concerning Item 9, the update on Streets & Sewer Projects, he raised issues about the Town paving private properties. The Mayor addressed his concerns. With respect to Item No. 10, the presentation by the Mayor on planned changes to Town code enforcement, it was suggested that hiring a Code person who would report only to the Mayor was possibly not legal. The Mayor addressed those concerns. There being no other public comments, the Mayor closed the floor for comments.

Addressing Agenda Item No. 1, the Mayor called on the Town Accountant, Debra Moak, who presented the financial statement for the month ending August 31, 2020. As customary, she explained the various fund balances, which summaries included a comparison of actual expenses to budget expenses. She then reviewed the summary sheets, previously given to the Aldermen, and reported on the various positive and negative fund balances and indicated the net changes in the various funds through August 31, 2020. After specifically reporting on the amounts in the various fund balances, she reminded the Aldermen that those statements were provided to them in their meeting packet. Alderman Gardner had a question in connection with the CARES Act, which she explained to him. He then thanked her for clarifying his concerns. Thereupon, the Mayor thanked Mrs. Moak for her usual thorough presentation.

Agenda Item No. 2 was the consideration of occupational license applications. The first application was by Pamela J. Bell for a Peddler license for "Novelty Sales" at Family Dollar. There being no comments or questions, on motion by Alderman Gardner, seconded by Alderman Betts, and unanimously carried, the application was granted. The second application was by "Simply Unique Flowers & Gifts, LLC" (Jill Brown, Owner) for "Simply Unique", at 1109 Carter Street. There being no comments or questions, on motion by Alderman Betts, seconded by Alderman Smith, and unanimously carried, the application was granted.

Agenda Item No. 3 was the consideration of outdoor sign applications. The only application was by Simply Unique Flowers & Gifts for window signs and a hanging sign at the place of business at 1109 Carter Street, in accordance with the application. There being no comments or questions, it

was moved by Alderman Betts, seconded by Alderwoman Demby, and unanimously carried, that the application be granted.

Agenda Item No. 4 was Board discussion and vote to approve a resolution accepting all bids for transformer/breaker additions (Substation Project) and awarding project to Ernest P. Breaux Electrical, LLC, in the amount of \$726,905.00. The Mayor then explained the need for the approval of the Resolution accepting the bids and awarding the project to those present and the Board. Following his presentation, there being no discussion, a motion to approve the proposed Resolution, as submitted at the meeting, was made by Alderman Betts, seconded by Alderman Smith, and unanimously carried.

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

Agenda Item No. 5 was Board discussion and vote to approve a Resolution accepting all bids for site work & transmission pad at Vidalia Industrial Park and awarding project to Camo Construction Company, Inc., in the amount of \$149,393.00. The Mayor again explained the need for the approval of the Resolution accepting all bids and awarding the project to the Board and those present. There being no discussion, a motion to approve the Resolution, as presented at the meeting, was made by Alderwoman Demby, seconded by Alderman Betts, and unanimously carried.

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

Agenda Item No. 6 was Board discussion and vote to approve a Resolution to appoint Mayor Buz Craft as Director and Utility Department Head Ricky Roth as Alternate Director to represent the Town of Vidalia on the Louisiana Municipal Gas Association Board of Directors. The Mayor explained the reasons for the Resolution and asked for a motion to appoint. A motion to appoint Mayor Buz Craft as Director and Utility Department Head Ricky Roth as alternate Director on the LMGA Board was made by Alderman Betts, seconded by Alderman Smith, and the roll call vote was as follows: YEAS: Alderman Betts, Smith Probst and Alderwoman Demby. NAYS: Alderman Gardner. Mr. LaSyone announced that the motion passed by a vote of 4 YEAS to 1 NAY.

Agenda Item No. 7 was Board discussion and vote on approval of replacement hires for Vidalia Police Department, Joshua Cole Hornsby – Full-time patrol officer; and Mary E. Wiley, Full-Time Dispatcher. The Mayor turned the floor over to Chief Merrill who presented his reasons for needing the hires. He stated that even after these hires, he would still be 3 officers short. There being no discussion or questions, it was moved by Alderman Betts, seconded by Alderman Smith, that the two hires be made. The roll call vote thereon was as follows: YEAS: Aldermen Betts, Smith, Alderwoman Demby. NAYS: Aldermen Gardner and Probst. The Clerk announced that by a vote of 3 YEAS and 2 NAYS, the motion to hire both Joshua Cole Hornsby and Mary E. Wiley passed. Mr. Probst then had a question of the Chief as to why a person who was certified had never been hired. The Mayor noted that that would be a matter for Executive Session.

Agenda Item No. 8 was Board discussion on adding employee cost for AirEvac Membership to Town benefit package. The Mayor discussed the matter briefly and then turned the floor over to Ms. Sherri Eidt, with AirEvac, who explained the matter of adding employee cost for membership to the Town benefit package. Following a short discussion between the Board members, it was moved by Alderman Probst, seconded by Alderman Gardner, to table the matter and the roll call vote thereon was as follows: YEAS: Alderman Gardner, Probst and Alderwoman Demby. NAYS: Aldermen Betts and Smith. The Clerk then announced that the motion carried by a vote of 3 YEAS to 2 NAYS.

Agenda Item No.9 was an update on Street & Sewer Projects. The Mayor in general discussed improvements and different projects which have been completed and called on Mr. Ricky Roth to further explain the status of the projects. At the conclusion of Mr. Roth's presentation, Mr. Ray Ainsworth had several questions of the Mayor, who answered his questions, item by item. Alderman Probst and Alderman Gardner also had comments. When there were no further comments or comments, the Mayor concluded his presentation.

Agenda Item No. 10 was a presentation by Mayor Craft on plan changes to Town Code Enforcement. The Mayor began by explaining why changes were needed on having a named Code Enforcement Officer as the Town is having problems with animals, also with residences not having

911 numbers in view as well as other issues. Following the Mayor's presentation, Alderman Probst had comments to make about his views on what needs to be done and made a motion to table the matter, which motion died for a lack of a second. The Mayor advised the Board that he would not implement changes to the Town's Code Enforcement without bringing the matter back for discussion to the Board.

Agenda Item No. 11 was Board vote to enter Executive Session to discuss investigative matters. The Mayor asked for the motion and a motion to enter into Executive Session was made by Alderwoman Demby, seconded by Alderman Betts, and the roll call vote thereon was as follows: YEAS: Aldermen Betts, Smith, Gardner, Probst and Alderwoman Demby. NAYS: NONE. The Clerk announced that by a vote of 5 YEAS and no NAYS, the Board went into Executive Session.

Agenda Item No. 12 was Board vote to exit Executive Session.

On returning from the Executive Session, a motion was made by Alderman Betts, seconded by Alderman Probst, and unanimously carried, to exit Executive Session.

Thereupon, a motion to adjourn was made by Alderman Probst, seconded by Alderman Smith, and unanimously carried, and the meeting was declared adjourned.

/s/ Jay LaSyone
JAY LASYONE, TOWN CLERK

/s/ Buz Craft
BUZ CRAFT, MAYOR

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The following resolution was offered by Alderman Betts, duly seconded by Alderman Smith:

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the following Bids were opened and read aloud on Thursday, September 24, 2020, for Electrical Upgrades – Vidalia Substation Transformer/Breaker Addition. Bids were received as follows:

Ernest P. Breaux Electrical, LLC	\$ 726,905.00
Chancellor, Inc.	1,235,994.00

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town of Vidalia accept all bids received and award the project as follows:

Ernest P. Breaux Electrical, LLC.	\$ 726,905.00
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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 the Equipment suppliers for the above equipment purchases.

This Resolution adopted this 13th day of October, 2020, with the vote recorded as follows:

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

NAYS: NONE.

ABSENT: NONE.

And the Resolution was declared adopted on this 13th day of October, 2020.

/s/ Jay LaSyone
JAY LASYONE, TOWN CLERK

/s/ Buz Craft
BUZ CRAFT, MAYOR

The following resolution was offered by Alderwoman Demby, seconded by Alderman Betts:

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, bids were received and read aloud on September 17, 202, for Vidalia Industrial Park – Site Work and Transmission Pad. Bids received were as follows:

Camo Construction Company, Inc.	\$149,393.00
E. P. Breaux Electrical, LLC	221,365.00

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town of Vidalia accepts all bids received and awards the project to Camo Construction Company, Inc. in the amount of \$149,393.00.

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 Camo Construction Company, Inc.

This Resolution adopted this 13th day of October, 2020, with the vote recorded as follows:

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

NAYS: NONE.

ABSENT: NONE.

And the Resolution was declared adopted on this 13th day of October, 2020.

/s/ Jay LaSyone
JAY LASYONE, TOWN CLERK

/s/ Buz Craft
BUZ CRAFT, MAYOR