

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR PUBLIC MEETING OF THE
MAYOR AND BOARD OF ALDERMEN
OF THE TOWN OF VIDALIA, LOUISIANA,
HELD ON TUESDAY, MARCH 9, 2021 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, March 9, 2021, at 6:00 p.m.

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

There was 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 of the emergency meeting of February 18, 2021, were approved. The motion for approval of those minutes was made by Alderwoman Demby, seconded by Alderman Smith, and unanimously carried. After being reviewed, the typed minutes of the regular meeting of February 9, 2021, were approved. The motion for approval of those minutes was made by Alderman Probst, seconded by Alderwoman Demby, and unanimously carried.

The Mayor then opened the floor for public comments on current agenda items. No one made any public comments. There being no comments, the Mayor closed the floor for comments.

Agenda Item No. 1 was a report on damages and clean-up efforts related to winter storm. Mayor Craft began his comments by thanking all of the Town employees for their professionalism and hard work in taking care of the clean-up of the damages. He specifically mentioned Jeremy McElwee, Cornel Lewis, Lee Staggs and Ricky Roth for their dedication and leadership during the clean-up. He then turned to some of the specifics of the clean-up and the problems involved and concluded by stating that the clean-up has cost approximately \$370,000.00 to date, most of which will be refunded by grants.

Agenda Item No. 2 was the presentation of the Town's financial audit performed by Silas Simmons, LLC, for the fiscal year 2019-2020. The Mayor turned the floor over to Mr. Scott Adams, CPA, who gave the report on the audit. Mr. Adams began by explaining the nature of the audit report and the process in general. He went through the various sections making comments on each section. In conclusion, he reported that the Town is receiving a clean audit opinion. There being no questions, the Mayor thanked Mr. Adams for his presentation and for the work done on the report.

Addressing Agenda Item No. 3, the Mayor called on the Municipal Accountant, Debra Moak, CPA, who presented the financial statement for the month ending January 31, 2021. She began by explaining the various fund balances, which summaries included a comparison of actual expenses to budget expenses. The summary sheets, previously given to the Aldermen, were reviewed and she reported on the various positive and negative fund balances and indicated the net changes in the various funds through January 31, 2021. Then, as usual, she reminded the Aldermen that those statements were provided to them in their meeting packet. There being no questions, the Mayor thanked Mrs. Moak for her usual thorough presentation.

Agenda Item No. 4 was a discussion on upcoming Budget meetings for the fiscal year 2021-2022. The Mayor began by explaining the need for the discussion and asked the Board how they

wanted to proceed. After some discussion, the consensus of the Board was to proceed as with last year's budget meetings.

Agenda Item No. 5 was the consideration of outdoor sign applications. The only application was by Anchor Sign, Inc./Alexis Wise for "World Finance", at 1655 Carter Street. A motion was made by Alderman Probst, seconded by Alderman Gardner, and unanimously carried, to approve the application for the two signs in accordance with the exhibits to the application.

Agenda Item No. 6 was presentation and Board approval of proposed contract between Town of Vidalia and Air-Med Care Network (Air-Evac) for 2021. The Mayor recognized Ms. Sherry Eidt, membership sales manager, who spoke concerning the contract provisions. She indicated that she did not have actual numbers as yet as they are doing a system-wide upgrade of their computer system. She indicated that the plan would be for all citizens of Vidalia and she went over the various options for upgrades. She indicated last year the cost was \$19,394.00 for the contract. After answering some questions from those present and Board members, she advised that she would get the actual figures and get them back to the Town for consideration at their next meeting.

Agenda Item No. 7 was Board discussion and vote on approval to advertise for bids on new garbage truck. Mr. Lee Staggs, Street/Sanitation Department Head, spoke to the Board on the need for the new garbage truck. After his presentation, Alderman Probst had questions on what landfill we are presently using and stated that he felt that something should be done for the Town to get the service we deserve. Following that discussion, a motion was made by Alderman Betts, seconded by Alderman Probst, and unanimously carried, to approve the advertising for bids on the new garbage truck in accordance with Mr. Staggs' presentation.

Agenda Item No. 8 was Board discussion to vote to name Frank Duson as new full-time Code Enforcement Officer. The Mayor spoke to the Board to tell them his reasons for wanting to have Mr. Duson named as the full-time Code Enforcement Officer. The Mayor then gave an overview of the situation explaining the differences between enforcing the criminal provisions of the Municipal Code and enforcing the civil penalties provided by other portions of the Municipal Code. There followed a discussion of those differences. There were comments concerning the length of time that it takes to get the civil penalties enforced and Alderman Probst stated that he believes there needs to be a monetary fine for all violations of the Code, Criminal or Civil. Following the discussion, a motion to approve naming Mr. Frank Duson as the new full-time Code Enforcement Officer was made by Alderman Gardner, seconded by Alderman Betts, and the vote thereon was as follows: YEAS: Alderman Betts, Gardner, Probst, Smith and Alderwoman Demby. NAYS: NONE. The Clerk announced that the motion passes by a vote of 5 YEAS to 0 NAYS.

There being no additional agenda items, motion to adjourn was made by Alderman Smith, seconded by Alderwoman Demby, and unanimously carried, and the meeting was declared adjourned.

JAY LASYONE, TOWN CLERK

BUZ CRAFT, MAYOR