

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR PUBLIC MEETING OF THE
MAYOR AND BOARD OF ALDERMEN
OF THE TOWN OF VIDALIA, LOUISIANA,
HELD ON TUESDAY, MAY 14, 2019 AT 6:00 P.M.
IN THE TOWN HALL MEETING ROOM**

The Mayor and Board of Aldermen of the Town of Vidalia, Louisiana, met, in regular session, in the Town Hall Meeting Room in Vidalia, Louisiana, on Tuesday, May 14, 2019, at 6:00 p.m.

There were present: Mayor Buz Craft, Aldermen Jon Betts, Tommy Probst, Tron McCoy, Robert Gardner, and Alderwoman Sabrina Dore’.

There were absent: NONE.

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

The meeting was opened with the reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance and the invocation was given by Alderman Gardner.

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 regular meeting of April 9, 2019, were approved, without changes. The motion for approval was made by Alderman McCoy, seconded by Alderman Gardner, and unanimously carried.

Addressing Agenda Item No. 1, the Mayor called on the Town Accountant, Debra Moak, who presented the financial statement for the month of March, 2019. She explained the fund balances for each of the funds, which summaries included a comparison of actual expenses to budget expenses. She also reviewed the several 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 April 30, 2019. Following her presentation, there being no questions, the Mayor thanked Mrs. Moak for her usual thorough presentation.

Agenda Item No. 2 was the application by Darlene Buckner for an occupational license for LUX Events by DDB at 1642 Carter Street, Suite 5, Vidalia, Louisiana. Ms. Buckner spoke on behalf of her application and explained that the business will pertain to providing decorating services for various events and the sale of items necessary for such decorating. Following her presentation, it was moved by Alderman Gardner, seconded by Alderwoman Dore’, and unanimously carried to grant the application.

Agenda Item No. 3 was the application for an outdoor sign by MUNN Enterprises, Inc. of Hattiesburg, Mississippi, to re-image the lighted sign on the canopy of the Sprint Mart #67 at 1123 Carter Street, Vidalia, LA. Following a review of that application, it was moved by Alderwoman Dore’, seconded by Alderman Gardner, and unanimously carried to grant the application.

Addressing Agenda Item No. 4, the Mayor advised the Board that he is introducing, at this meeting, the proposed Ordinance adopting the Operating Budget for the fiscal year 2019-2020. The Mayor noted that a copy of the Ordinance had been in their packet which they were previously provided. The Mayor further advised that the Ordinance and the budget would be available for inspection beginning Wednesday, May 15, 2019, at City Hall. He further reported that the Notice of Intent and the Notice of Public Hearing will be advertised as soon as the dates are decided.

Agenda Item No. 5 was the request for Board adoption of a Resolution to award the bid for Highway 131 Gas Line Extension. The Mayor explained the need for the extension and, there being no questions, on a motion by Alderwoman Dore', seconded by Alderman Probst, and unanimously carried, the Resolution awarded the project to the low bidder, Womack & Sons Construction, Inc., as presented at the meeting, was adopted.

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

Agenda Item No. 6 was the request for Board adoption of a Resolution setting the millage rate for 2019. The Mayor then introduced Mr. Jerry Clark, Parish Tax Assessor, who explained to the Board the mechanics of setting the millage levied on the 2019 tax roll on all properties subject to taxation by the Town. He explained that the current millage is 3.39 mills and that it will remain the same for the next year and that the millage would change the next time there is a re-assessment. After his presentation, there being no questions, on motion by Alderwoman Dore', seconded by Alderman McCoy, and unanimously carried, the Resolution fixing the millage at 3.39 mills, as presented at the meeting, was duly adopted.

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

Agenda Item No. 7 was a request for Board adoption of the Resolution fixing the amount to be maintained in the Hydro Reserve Fund in accordance with Vidalia Ordinance No. 588. The Mayor explained the need to pass such Resolution at this time and that the Ordinance provides a minimum amount to be maintained at the sum of \$1.98 Million as per the Ordinance. He went on to remind the Board that they, in the past, had maintained, in the Hydro Reserve Fund, the sum of \$2.3 Million Dollars and recommended that they keep the millage at that amount. Following the Mayor's presentation, there being no questions, on motion by Alderman Betts to adopt the Resolution to maintain the sum in the Hydro Reserve Fund at \$2.3 Million Dollars, which motion was seconded by Alderman McCoy, and the vote thereon was unanimous.

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

Agenda Item No. 8 was a request for Board approval of acceptance of the Engagement Letter from Silas Simmons, LLP, for the audit of the Town's finances for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2019. The Mayor reminded the Board that the letter and materials from Silas Simmons, LLP, was in the packet previously provided to them and asked for questions. There being no questions, Alderman Gardner moved to accept the Engagement Letter, as presented to the Board for the audit of the Town's finances for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2019. The motion was seconded by Alderwoman Dore', and unanimously carried.

Agenda Item No. 9 was a request for Board approval of funding for the Summer Youth Program, an evening recreational program provided through the organization of sisterhood and brotherhood of the Greater Mt. Carmel Missionary Baptist Church. The Mayor reminded the Board that the program has been ongoing for many years and directed their attention to the letter by Mr. Riley outlining the program. Following the Mayor's comments, it was moved by Alderman McCoy, seconded by Alderman Gardner, and unanimously carried, to continue funding the program as requested by Mr. Riley in his letter to the Board.

Agenda Item No. 10 was a request for Board approval of a new hire for the Vidalia Police Department, being Hayley Vanier as a part-time dispatcher. The Mayor called on Police Chief Joey Merrill to make the request. Chief Merrill advised the Board that he presently has four (4) full-time

dispatchers and needs one part-time dispatcher to cover the situation when one of the full-time dispatchers would be unavailable. Following Chief Merrill's presentation, on motion of Alderman Gardner, seconded by Alderman Betts, and unanimously carried, the Board approved the new hire for the Vidalia Police Department, as requested.

Agenda Item No. 11 was a discussion of updating the current Town Sign Ordinance as it relates to political signage. The Mayor spoke to the Board on this matter and reminded them that a discussion of this matter was had at the Regular April Board Meeting and that at that time it was decided to not make any changes to the current town Ordinance. The current Ordinance prohibits political signs on Town property and has limits on the size of signs in private yards. The Mayor further said that he has been advised that there is a possibility of making restrictions on signs in private yards may not be legal or may be unconstitutional and that he is looking into that matter at this time.

Following the discussion, the Mayor called on Alderman Gardner to give an update on the plans for the Memorial Day march from Vidalia to the National Cemetery in Natchez, MS, the morning of Memorial Day, May 27, at 8:00 A.M. Alderman Gardner gave some of the details of the march and reminded the Board that this is a tradition of 153 years. At this point, Alderman McCoy interjected that it is 3.8 miles from the start of the march in Vidalia to its termination in Natchez and challenged Mayor Craft to make the march with the other participants and asked that the challenge be mentioned in the minutes.

The Mayor then indicated that there are no further agenda items, and asked for a motion to adjourn, which motion was made by Alderman McCoy, seconded by Alderman Betts, and unanimously carried, and the meeting was adjourned.

/s/ Jay LaSyone
JAY LASYONE, TOWN CLERK

/s/ Buz Craft
BUZ CRAFT, MAYOR

The following Resolution was offered by Alderwoman Dore', seconded by Alderman Probst:

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, bids were received and read aloud on March 12, 2019, for the Gas Line Extension along Hwy. 131 Project:

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that upon the office of Facility Planning & Control's concurrence, the Town of Vidalia awards the project to the low bidder, Womack & Sons Construction Group, Inc., in the amount of \$467,995.30.

Base Bid	\$399,366.80
Alt. No. 1	68,628.50

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 contractor.

This Resolution adopted this 14th day of May, 2019, with the vote recorded as follows:

YEAS: Aldermen Betts, McCoy, Gardner and Probst and Alderwoman Dore'.

NAYS: NONE.

ABSENT: NONE.

/s/ Jay LaSyone
JAY LASYONE, TOWN CLERK

/s/ Buz Craft
BUZ CRAFT, MAYOR

The following resolution was offered by Alderwoman Dore', seconded by Alderman McCoy:

RESOLUTION

A RESOLUTION REGARDING MILLAGE BEING LEVIED ON THE 2019 TAX ROLL ON ALL PROPERTIES SUBJECT TO TAXATION BY THE TOWN OF VIDALIA, LOUISIANA.

MILLAGE

General Alimony	3.39 mills
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BE IT RESOLVED that the property administrative officials of the Parish of Concordia, State of Louisiana, be and they are hereby empowered, authorized, and directed to spread said taxes, as hereinabove set forth, upon the assessment roll of said Parish for the year 2019 and that the tax herein levied shall become a permanent lien and privilege on all property subject to taxation as herein set forth, and the collection thereof shall be enforceable in the manner provided by law.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the foregoing Resolution was called for a vote on the adoption thereof, and the vote was recorded as follows:

YEAS: Aldermen Betts, McCoy, Probst and Gardner and Alderwoman Dore'.

NAYS: NONE.

ABSTAINING: NONE.

ABSENT: NONE.

And the resolution was declared adopted on this the 14th day of May, 2019.

/s/ Jay LaSyone
JAY LASYONE, TOWN CLERK

/s/ Buz Craft
BUZ CRAFT, MAYOR

The following resolution was offered by Alderman Betts and seconded by Alderman McCoy:

RESOLUTION

A RESOLUTION FIXING THE AMOUNT TO BE MAINTAINED IN THE HYDRO RESERVE FUND IN ACCORDANCE WITH ORDINANCE NO. 588

WHEREAS, the Town of Vidalia, in accordance with Ordinance No. 588, desires to fix the amount to be maintained in the Hydro Reserve Fund; and

WHEREAS, the Hydro Reserve Fund is presently being maintained at \$2,300,000.00; and

WHEREAS, after due consideration and deliberation, the Board has decided to maintain the fund at \$2,300,000.00 but to allow the difference between the current minimum balance of \$1,980,000.00 and the amount to be maintained, aforesaid, be utilized to pay expenses of the Town, subject to Board approval; therefore:

BE IT RESOLVED that the Hydro Reserve Fund for the current fiscal year be maintained at its current level of \$2,300,000.00 and that the excess between the minimum required balance of \$1,980,000.00 and the amount to be maintained of \$2,300,000.00 may be used to pay Town expenses, as may be approved by the Board of Aldermen.

The above RESOLUTION was called to a vote and the vote thereon was as follows:

YEAS: Aldermen Betts, McCoy, Gardner, Probst and Alderwoman Dore'.

NAYS: NONE.

ABSENT: NONE.

ABSTAINING: NONE.

AND THE RESOLUTION was declared adopted on this the 14th day of May, 2019.

/s/ Jay LaSyone
JAY LASYONE, TOWN CLERK

/s/ Buz Craft
BUZ CRAFT, MAYOR