

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE  
MAYOR AND BOARD OF ALDERMEN  
OF THE TOWN OF VIDALIA, LOUISIANA,  
HELD ON TUESDAY, AUGUST 8, 2017 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, August 8, 2017, at 6:00 p.m.

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

There were absent: NONE.

There were also present: Vicki Byrnes, City Clerk; Jay LaSyone, Assistant City Clerk; Debra Moak, City Accountant; City Attorney George C. Murray, Jr.; Executive Secretary to the Mayor, Pam Middleton; Bill Murray, City Manager; Police Chief, Joey Merrill; Johnny Evans, Fire Chief; and representatives of the press.

The meeting was opened by the reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance, and an 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 from the meetings of June 29, 2017, and July 11, 2017, were approved, without changes. The motion for approval of both of those minutes was made by Alderman McCoy, seconded by Alderman Gardner, and unanimously carried.

Addressing Agenda Item No. 1, the Mayor called on City Accountant, Debra Moak, who presented the financial statement, being a summary of the actual revenues over expenditures as of July 31, 2017. She reviewed the summary sheets previously given to the Aldermen and advised that they were available for distribution at the meeting. After answering several questions concerning variances between fund balances, she reported that there continues to be a surplus of revenues over expenditures.

Agenda Item No. 2 was the consideration of request for the following:

- (1) The Scirocco Agency, LLC (Allstate Insurance) at 1700 Carter Street, for an occupational license. Mrs. Summer Scirocco spoke on behalf of the application. Alderman Betts then pointed out that an occupational license is not needed in the case of insurance agencies as they pay fees to the State directly. Mrs. Scirocco then advised the Mayor and Board that she has made application for a sign permit and handed it to the Mayor for consideration. The Mayor asked if the Board would like to take up this matter at this time and, a motion was made by Alderman Probst to add the application for sign permit to the agenda, which motion was seconded by Alderman Gardner, and unanimously carried. After considering the request for the sign permit, on motion of Alderman Gardner, seconded by Alderwoman Dore', the application for sign permit was granted.

- (2) ALL ABOUT U BEHAVIORIAL HEALTH SERVICES, INC., for an occupational license at 1810 Carter Street, Vidalia, LA. Tabanika L. Chatman, CEO, spoke on behalf of the application. After discussion, a motion was made by Alderman McCoy, seconded by Alderman Gardner, and unanimously carried, to approve the issuance of the occupational license.
- (3) Intensive Home Healthcare at 1633 Carter Street, Vidalia, LA, for a change of ownership. Director of Nursing and Co-owner, Emily Merrill, spoke on behalf of the application. After a short discussion, on motion by Alderman Gardner, seconded by Alderwoman Dore', the change of ownership was approved.

Agenda Item No. 3 was the consideration of a request by River City Cabins, Camps & Carports, LLC, for an outdoor sign permit at 1204 ½ Carter Street. Ms. Theresa Johnson spoke on behalf of the application. After discussion, on motion of Alderwoman Dore', seconded by Alderman Probst, and unanimously carried, the application was approved.

Agenda Item No. 4 was consideration of a Resolution to allow the sale of alcoholic beverages at a benefit concert on the Vidalia Riverfront by Mr. Ronnie Calhoun. Mr. Calhoun was present and made a presentation to the Board on his request to sell beer only at a concert to be given by his band, "VIDALIA", at the amphitheater on the Riverfront on August 25, 2017. He stated that the proceeds from the concert will go one-third (1/3) to the ELLIS MALONE FOUNDATION; one-third (1/3) to the MICHAEL MOSTER DEFEAT DIPG ORGANIZATION in Aiden Taunton's name; and one-third (1/3) to Lilly-Anne Bryan's family as she has to spend considerable time at St. Jude's. He explained to the Board that he is making application for a ONE EVENT ONLY beer license from the State and that he has a \$1,000,000.00 insurance policy to cover the event, including the sale of beer. Alderman Gardner asked about security and Mr. Calhoun stated that Chief Merrill has agreed to provide security. Following the presentation, on motion by Alderman Gardner, seconded by Alderman Probst, and unanimously carried, the request to allow the sale of beer was approved.

Addressing Agenda Item No. 5, Mayor Craft reminded the Board that the auction for the sale of the Eleanor Street and the John Dale Drive properties had been scheduled for noon on Monday, June 19, 2017. That at that time, only two persons were present to bid on the property and neither were willing to bid the appraised value for either and that therefore the properties did not sell. The Mayor then advised the Board that it is apparent that the properties will not sell for a sum equal to or more than the appraised values and that if the Board wishes to re-advertise the properties for sale without the requirement that the bids start at the appraised value, then an Ordinance will need to be passed to amend Ordinances 666 and 667 to delete the requirement contained in both of those Ordinances that the consideration for the sale would be the appraised value or higher. After discussion, on motion by Alderman Betts, seconded by Alderman Probst, and unanimously carried, the Ordinance to amend Ordinance Nos. 666 and 667 regarding the sale of City owned properties on Eleanor Street and John Dale Drive to delete the requirement that the proposed consideration for the sale is the appraised value or higher, was ordered pre-filed.

Addressing Agenda Item No. 6, the Mayor advised the Board that the Ordinance adopting and enacting a new code for the Town of Vidalia, Louisiana, sometimes referred to as the Ordinance for MUNI-CODE implementation, was pre-filed at the July 11, 2017, regular board meeting and that it is now appropriate to hold a public hearing on that Ordinance and consider it for approval. A motion

was made by Alderman Betts, seconded by Alderman Gardner, and unanimously carried, to open the public hearing. After the Mayor and City Manager, Bill Murray, answered several questions from those in attendance, on motion by Alderman McCoy, seconded by Alderman Gardner, and unanimously carried, the public hearing was closed. There being no further questions or comments from the Board, a motion was made by Alderwoman Dore', seconded by Alderman Probst, and unanimously carried, to adopt the ordinance as pre-filed, to be effective as of the date of publication of the Ordinance in the Official Journal.

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

Agenda Item No. 7, is a discussion of pre-filing an ordinance for the adoption of the City Employee Handbook. Mayor Craft explained to the Board and those in attendance that the Administration has been working diligently to revise the City Employee Handbook and that, after several discussions with Department Heads and the members of the Board of Aldermen and various employees, the handbook is almost ready for adoption. He also said that there are some topics that need discussion and those were 17 different topics which had been added as an Addendum to the handbook as provided to the Board previously. The Mayor then started going through the handbook and discussing with the Board the decisions to be made to add or subtract or to change language in the manual. When it came to a discussion of the Drug and Alcohol Policy, which pertained to procedures for positive drug/alcohol tests and the adding and subtracting language from that policy, there was an extended discussion over the language of the policy and the penalties for violation of the policy. When it became apparent that an impasse had been reached concerning consensus on what the drug policy should be, Alderwoman Dore' moved to table the matter for further discussion and her motion was seconded by Alderman Gardner, and the motion passed unanimously.

Agenda Item No. 8 is a discussion of commercial electric rates as applied to home-based businesses. The Mayor reminded the Board that Mr. Jeremy Ewing had spoken to the Board at the July 11, 2017, meeting to voice his concerns over the occupational license fee for his business, Ewing Electric, LLC, which operates out of his residence. One of the concerns was that he pays commercial fees for city services and that he has no customers who come into his house and that he believes the Town's Ordinance concerning such fees should be changed to make exception for home businesses such as his. There followed a discussion by the Mayor and Board of Aldermen, as well as comments from several in the audience concerning what should be done about changing the Town's policy. The Town told the Board that he visited with several towns who have policies that make exceptions for home businesses and had one or two ordinances that he could share with them concerning the matter. Following further discussion, it was moved by Alderman Probst, seconded by Alderman Gardner, and unanimously carried, to table this matter for further discussion.

Addressing Agenda Item No. 9, the Mayor advised the Board that it is necessary to have an ordinance in place which sets the salaries for the Mayor, Board of Aldermen, City Clerk and Chief of Police. He stated that he would like to have an ordinance pre-filed at this meeting to set those salaries so that the Ordinance could be passed at the September meeting, which action would bring them into compliance with State law. There then followed a discussion during which the Mayor was asked about the current salaries and whether or not they could be increased or decreased. The Mayor told the Board, in general terms, what the current salaries are and that his salary and the Police Chief's salary could be increased, but not decreased, and that the salaries of the Aldermen and City

Clerk could be decreased or increased. More discussion followed in which the Mayor was asked to provide the Board with a salary history with the number of years varying by Aldermen. Alderman Betts then moved to pre-file the Ordinance setting the salaries for the Mayor, Board of Aldermen, City Clerk and Chief of Police at the sum that they were when the present administration took office. The Mayor asked if there was a second and being none, the Mayor declared the motion died for a lack of a second.

Agenda Item No. 10 was a discussion of the public meetings regarding hydro royalties as required under the Hydro Ordinance. The Mayor addressed the Board and those in attendance to tell them that the meetings as required by the Hydro Ordinance to discuss the use of the royalties are being scheduled for August 17, 2017, at 6:00 P.M. and August 22, 2017, at 6:00 P.M., both to be held at the Town Hall.

The Mayor then reported that a replacement for the trash truck, known as the “hook” truck, has been found and that it should be available within the next two weeks or so.

The Mayor then read from a letter by the Reynolds and Parker Families commending the Town employees especially from the Fire Department and Police Department who responded to their recent tragedy. Following his reading of the letter, various persons in attendance voiced their thanks to the families for their expression of support for the Town’s actions.

There being no further business, on motion of Alderman Gardner, seconded by Alderwoman Dore’, and unanimously carried, the meeting was adjourned.

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CITY CLERK

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MAYOR