

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR PUBLIC MEETING OF THE
MAYOR AND BOARD OF ALDERMEN
OF THE TOWN OF VIDALIA, LOUISIANA,
HELD ON TUESDAY, MAY 11, 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, May 11, 2021, at 6:00 p.m.

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

There was absent: Alderman Robert Gardner.

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.

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 regular meeting of April 13, 2021, were approved. The motion for approval of those minutes was made by Alderwoman Demby, seconded by Alderman Smith, and unanimously carried by those present.

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

Agenda Item No. 1 was the presentation of the financial statement for March, 2021. The Mayor 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. 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 March 31, 2021. 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 thorough presentation.

Agenda Item No. 2 was Board discussion and vote on approval of occupational license applications. The first application was by Susan Chapman & Deborah Johnese for "Life Help Caregiving, LLC" at 411 Ash Street. Both applicants spoke on behalf of the application. There being no questions or comments, on motion by Alderman Probst, seconded by Alderman Smith, and unanimously carried by those present, the application was approved. The second application was by Loren D. Vines & Heather Powers for "Lush Salon & Spa, Inc.", at 4012 Carter Street, with accompanying outdoor sign application. Ms. Heather Powers spoke on behalf of the application. There being no further questions or comments, a motion to approve the application with the accompanying sign application was made by Alderman Probst, seconded by Alderman Betts, and unanimously carried by those present. The third application was by Kimethea Ann Hill for "Steamy

Magnolias”, at 4004 Carter Street. Ms. Hill spoke in favor of the application. There being no questions or comments, a motion to approve the application was made by Alderman Smith, seconded by Alderwoman Demby, and unanimously carried by all present.

Agenda Item No. 3 was Board discussion and vote on adopting a resolution setting millage being levied on the 2021 Tax Roll on all properties being subject to taxation by the Town of Vidalia, Louisiana. The Mayor announced this item agenda and turned the floor over to Mrs. Jeannie Archer who spoke to the Board on the need to adopt millage for the 2021 Tax Roll. Following her presentation, it was the consensus of the Board to keep the millage at 3.37 mills and a motion to adopt their requested Resolution, as presented, was made by Alderman Betts, seconded by Alderwoman Demby, and unanimously carried by those present.

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

Agenda Item No. 4 was Board discussion and vote on accepting and awarding of bid to Keystone Electrical Manufacturing Company in the amount of \$40,028.43 for three (3) protective relay panels (Substation Project). The Mayor gave the Board an overview of the project, to date, and advised the Board that there had been two bids submitted which were received and read aloud on the April 6, 2021, meeting for the purpose of reviewing the bids. The Keystone bid was the lowest bid. The Town’s Engineers have given the Mayor a letter indicating that the Keystone bid was the lowest bid received and it satisfies the equipment specifications and requested delivery. Following a short discussion, it was moved by Alderman Betts to pass a Resolution accepting the bid and awarding the contract, as presented at the meeting. Alderman Smith seconded that motion and the motion was unanimously carried by those present.

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

Agenda Item No. 5 was Board discussion and vote on approval of Memorandum of Understanding & Cooperative Endeavor Agreement between Red River Delta Law Enforcement Planning Council, Inc., & Town of Vidalia (Vidalia Police Department). The Mayor briefly explained the request for the Memorandum of Understanding and turned the floor over to Ms. Sheila McFarland who spoke to the Board on the need for and nature of the Agreement. Following her presentation, there being no questions or comments, Alderman Probst made a motion to approve the Memorandum of Understanding & Cooperative Endeavor Agreement between the Red River Delta Law Enforcement Planning Council, Inc. and the Town of Vidalia as presented at the meeting. Alderwoman Demby seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously by those present.

(A COPY OF THE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING & COOPERATIVE ENDEAVOR AGREEMENT IS ON FILE AT TOWN HALL)

Agenda Item No. 6 was Board discussion and vote on approval of change in employment status for employee of Vidalia Police Department: Angelina Johnson Part-time Dispatcher to Full-time Dispatcher. The Mayor advised the Board of the request to change status of Angelina Johnson from Part-time Dispatcher to Full-time Dispatcher with the Vidalia Police Department. There being no questions or comments, a motion to approve the change in employment status, as requested, was made by Alderman Betts, seconded by Alderwoman Demby, and unanimously carried by those present.

Agenda Item No. 7 was Board discussion and vote on approval for Town of Vidalia to sell re-claimed asphalt material to Vidalia Cemetery Association. The Mayor introduced the issues involved and there following an extended discussion between the Board and members of the Cemetery Association. The Mayor at one point indicated that it might be possible to sell the re-

claimed asphalt for \$30.00 per cubic yard and Mr. William Saul spoke in favor of doing that. It was also brought up that it might be possible to do a Cooperative Endeavor Agreement and Sale and, in connection with that, and the Cemetery Association asked the Mayor to look into doing such a Cooperative Endeavor Agreement. Members of the Cemetery Association and Alderman Probst brought up the issue of getting an Attorney General's Opinion and whether or not it should have been done. At one point, Alderman Probst indicated that he wanted to make a motion to get an Attorney General's Opinion on: (1) Can the Town donate the asphalt or, if they cannot donate, how much could the fair market value be discounted because the Cemetery is a public cemetery and may just leave it at that. It was brought up that the Cemetery Association once had a Cooperative Endeavor Agreement with the Parish on the upkeep of the streets. Toward the end of the discussion, Alderman Probst again reiterated his motion to get the Attorney General's Opinion on whether the Town can donate the asphalt or, if they cannot donate, how much could the fair market value be discounted because the cemetery is a public cemetery. The motion was seconded by Alderwoman Demby, and carried unanimously by all those present. Alderman Probst also made a motion to seek the possibility of a Cooperative Endeavor Agreement between the Town and the Cemetery Association for assistance in maintaining the cemetery. The motion was seconded by Alderwoman Demby, and carried unanimously by all those present.

Agenda Item No. 8 was Board discussion and vote on acceptance of engagement letter for Silas Simmons, LLC, to provide audit services for fiscal year ending June 30, 2021. The Mayor advised the Board that it is time to retain Certified Public Accountants to provide the annual audit services for the Town for this fiscal year. He then introduced Mr. Scott Adams who spoke to the Board and gave an overview of the audit procedures. Following his presentation, there being no further questions or comments, it was moved by Alderman Betts, seconded by Alderman Probst, and unanimously carried by all present to accept the engagement letter as presented by Silas Simmons, LLC.

Agenda Item No. 9 was the introduction of an Ordinance adopting the operating budget of revenues and expenses for the Town of Vidalia, Louisiana, for the fiscal year 2021-2022. The Mayor advised the Board that he is introducing the Ordinance adopting the operating budget of revenues and expenses for the Town of Vidalia, Louisiana, for the fiscal year 2021-2022; that Notice of the introduction of the proposed Ordinance will be advertised in the official journal; and that a public hearing will be held on May 27, 2021, concerning the budget. After that public hearing, to be held at a Special Meeting of the Mayor and Board of Aldermen on May 27, 2021, that the passage of that Ordinance will be the sole item on the agenda.

Agenda Item No. 10 was the introduction of an Ordinance approving the Mayor's appointment of Piara Wilson as Municipal Clerk, effective July 1, 2021, and the fixing of her salary. The Mayor announced to the Board that he is hereby introducing an Ordinance approving his appointment of Piara Wilson as Municipal Clerk, effective July 1, 2021, and fixing her salary at the sum of \$49,000.00 per year. He indicated that Notice of this proposed Ordinance will be advertised in the official journal and a public hearing will be held at the Board's regular meeting on June 8, 2021, to consider its adoption.

Agenda Item No. 11 was Board discussion and vote on approval for funding of 2021 Summer Youth Program (Greater Mt. Carmel Missionary Baptist Church, Pastor Raymond Riley). The Mayor spoke to the Board and explained that this program has been ongoing for many years and is of a great benefit to the Town's youth during the summer. The cost of the program is \$4,000.00. Pastor Riley then spoke to the Board in favor of obtaining funding for this year's program and, after a series of questions, a motion to approve the funding was made by Alderman Probst, seconded by Alderwoman Demby, and unanimously carried by those present.

Agenda Item No. 12 was opening and awarding bids on Town surplus vehicles and equipment. The Mayor explained to the Board that they had indicated at a prior meeting that the

Town's surplus vehicles and equipment should be advertised for bid and sold to the highest bidder. That any items not bid upon would be salvaged. The Mayor then opened bids on thirteen (13) pieces of equipment and the lowest bids for the equipment was accepted.

(A COPY OF THE TABULATION OF THOSE BIDS AND THEIR ACCEPTANCE IS ATTACHED HERETO AND MADE A PART HEREOF)

Agenda Item No. 13 was Board discussion on Town policy of charging commercial utility rates to home-based businesses (Alderman Betts). The Mayor advised the Board that Alderman Betts had asked to put this on the agenda and turned the floor over to him for discussion. Alderman Betts advised the Board that, as they know, the policy heretofore has been to charge home based businesses as if they were normal commercial businesses for utilities and other items and that he believes that the Town should change their policy. After some discussion, it was the consensus that the Board will look into changing the policy and that it would need an Ordinance amending the current Code to change the policy.

Agenda Item No. 14 was a discussion on the possibility of leasing property currently being used as the Town's Debris Yard. The Mayor advised the Board at this time that Mr. Mike Grantham has approached the Board on leasing the property currently being used as the Town's Debris Yard, which is behind the Sewer Lagoon. There followed a discussion in which the Mayor explained portions of the Cooperative Endeavor Agreement which would be needed with Mr. Grantham which included insurance and other items. It was moved by Alderman Smith, seconded by Alderman Probst, and unanimously carried by those present, that the Mayor continue to negotiate the CEA with Mr. Grantham and once they had concluded the terms, he would bring it back to the Board for approval.

Agenda Item No. 15 was a presentation of a dividend check from the Louisiana Worker's Compensation Commission to the Town, in the nature of a rebate check. Mr. Beau Pilgrim and Mr. Bryan Chandler with Reed Insurance Company, were present and were recognized by the Board. They spoke to the Board and thanked them for being given the opportunity to provide insurance coverage for recent years. They then told the Board that they are very happy to present a check to the Mayor for \$114,000.00 as a refund from the Worker's Compensation Commission. They also spoke of the various ways in which they have saved the Town money on the premiums and have been able to extend the coverage. The Mayor thanked them for the check and for their excellent work in handling the Town's insurance matters.

Agenda Item No. 16 was an announcement concerning economic development. At this time the Mayor announced to the Board that Mrs. Heather Malone, who was present in the audience, will be leaving the Town's employ as the Economic Development Director in mid-June. He then recognized Mrs. Malone and asked her to say a few words. Mrs. Malone then took the floor and thanked the Mayor and Board for all they have done in assisting her in carrying out her duties as Economic Director. She went on to cite many accomplishments that have been made since she has been the Director and expressed her feelings of regret for leaving. However, she gave them an overview of what she will be doing with the Longview Economic Development Department and the Board agreed, as did the Mayor, that while they will surely miss her, that they understand that this is a career opportunity and wished her the best of luck.

Agenda Item No. 17 was adjournment. The Mayor announced that there is no further business, and asked for a motion to adjourn. A motion to adjourn was made by Alderman Probst, seconded by Alderwoman Demby, and unanimously carried by all present.

/s/ Jay LaSyone
JAY LASYONE, TOWN CLERK

/s/ Buz Craft
BUZ CRAFT, MAYOR

On a motion by Alderman Betts, duly seconded by Alderwoman Demby, the following resolution was offered to-wit:

RESOLUTION

A RESOLUTION SETTING MILLAGE BEING LEVIED ON THE 2021 TAX ROLL ON ALL PROPERTIES SUBJECT TO TAXATION BY THE TOWN OF VIDALIA, LOUISIANA.

MILLAGE

General Alimony 3.37 mills

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 2021 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, Probst, Smith and Alderwoman Demby.

NAYS: NONE.

ABSTAINING: NONE.

ABSENT: Alderman Gardner.

And the resolution was declared adopted on this the 11th day of May, 2021.

/s/ Jay LaSyone
JAY LASYONE, TOWN CLERK

/s/ Buz Craft
BUZ CRAFT, MAYOR

On a motion by Alderman Betts, duly seconded by Alderman Smith, the following resolution was offered to-wit:

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, bids were received and read aloud on Tuesday, April 6, 2021, for the Town of Vidalia – Electrical Upgrades, Procurement of Relay Panels for Vidalia Industrial Park Substation. Bids received were as follows:

<u>BIDDER</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>
Keystone Electrical Manufacturing Co.	\$ 40,028.43
Premier Control Systems, LLC	46,925.00

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town of Vidalia award the project to Keystone Electrical Manufacturing Company, in the amount of \$40,028.43.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Mayor is authorized to execute any and all documents including contracts, purchase orders, estimates and change orders between the Town of Vidalia and Keystone Electrical Manufacturing Co.

This Resolution adopted this 11th day of May, 2021, with the vote recorded as follows:

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

NAYS: NONE.

ABSENT: Alderman Gardner.

And the Resolution was declared adopted on this 11th day of May, 2021.

/s/ Jay LaSyone
JAY LASYONE, TOWN CLERK

/s/ Buz Craft
BUZ CRAFT, MAYOR

**TOWN OF VIDALIA
SUBMITTED BIDS
REGULAR MEETING OF THE MAYOR AND BOARD OF ALDERMEN
MAY 11, 2021**

BIDDER	ITEM	BID RECEIVED
J.J. MERCHANT	"PACKAGE DEAL"	\$179.79
BID AWARDED TO ONLY BIDDER ON MOTION BY BETTS, SECOND BY PROBST AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED		
J.J. MERCHANT	1997 FORD TRUCK(0653)	\$127.27
BID AWARDED TO ONLY BIDDER ON MOTION BY BETTS, SECOND BY SMITH AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED		
J.J. MERCHANT	1994 CHEVY TRUCK(7723)	\$127.27
BID AWARDED TO ONLY BIDDER ON MOTION BY BETTS, SECOND BY PROBST AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED		
J.J. MERCHANT	2000 DODGE TRUCK(5937)	\$117.17
BID AWARDED TO ONLY BIDDER ON MOTION BY BETTS, SECOND BY PROBST AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED		
J.J. MERCHANT	2004 FORD TRUCK(1669)	\$179.79
BID AWARDED TO ONLY BIDDER ON MOTION BY DEMBY, SECOND BY PROBST AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED		
J.J. MERCHANT	2006 FORD VAN(2391)	\$157.57
BID AWARDED TO ONLY BIDDER ON MOTION BY PROBST, SECOND BY SMITH AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED		
J.J. MERCHANT	2006 DUTCHMAN CAMPER(0940)	\$797.97
BID AWARDED TO ONLY BIDDER ON MOTION BY BETTS, SECOND BY DEMBY AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED		
J.J. MERCHANT	1993 GMC TRUCK(5436)	\$137.37
KEVIN DAVIS	1993 GMC TRUCK(5436)	\$355.00
RON RENFROW	1993 GMC TRUCK(5436)	\$157.00
BID AWARDED TO HIGH BIDDER ON MOTION BY PROBST, SECOND BY SMITH AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED		
J.J. MERCHANT	1998 INTL DUMP TRUCK(6206)	\$579.79
REX ARCHER	1998 INTL DUMP TRUCK(6206)	\$410.00
BID AWARDED TO HIGH BIDDER ON MOTION BY DEMBY, SECOND BY BETTS AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED		
J.J. MERCHANT	ZERO TURN MOWER	\$1079.00
REX ARCHER	ZERO TURN MOWER	220.00
BID AWARDED TO HIGH BIDDER ON MOTION BY PROBST, SECOND BY BETTS AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED		
J.J. MERCHANT	2005 FORD CROWN VIC(3097)	\$300.00
X-PRESS RECYCLING	2005 FORD CROWN VIC(3097)	\$139.39
BID AWARDED TO HIGH BIDDER ON MOTION BY PROBST, SECOND BY SMITH AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED		

**TOWN OF VIDALIA
SUBMITTED BIDS
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MAY 11, 2021**

BIDDER	ITEM	BID RECEIVED
J.J. MERCHANT	2005 FORD CROWN VIC(3097)	\$300.00
X-PRESS RECYCLING	2005 FORD CROWN VIC(3097)	\$127.27
KEVIN DAVIS	2005 FORD CROWN VIC(3097)	\$175.00
BID AWARDED TO HIGH BIDDER ON MOTION BY SMITH, SECOND BY DEMBY AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED		
J.J. MERCHANT	CUSHMAN GOLF CART(6980)	\$227.27
REX ARCHER	CUSHMAN GOLF CART(6980)	\$ 50.00
RON RENFROW	CUSHMAN GOLF CART(6980)	\$ 57.00
BID AWARDED TO HIGH BIDDER ON MOTION BY PROBST, SECOND BY DEMBY AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED		