

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR PUBLIC MEETING OF THE
MAYOR AND BOARD OF ALDERMEN
OF THE TOWN OF VIDALIA, LOUISIANA,
HELD ON TUESDAY, JUNE 8, 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, June 8, 2021, at 6:00 p.m.

There were present: Mayor Buz Craft, Aldermen Jon Betts, Brent Smith, Robert Gardner, Tommy Probst, 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.

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 May 11, 2021, were approved. The motion for approval of those minutes was made by Alderman Probst, seconded by Alderman Gardner, and unanimously carried.

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 April, 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 April 30, 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 usual thorough presentation.

Agenda Item No. 2 was introduction of an Ordinance amending the Operating Budget of Revenues and Expenses for the Town of Vidalia, Louisiana, for the fiscal year 2020-2021. The Mayor announced that no action is needed by the Board on this item and formally introduced the Ordinance amending the Operating Budget of Revenues and Expenses for the fiscal year 2020-2021. The Board then set Friday, June 11, 2021, at 8:00 A.M., at the Town Hall Meeting Room, as a special meeting to consider the adoption of that Ordinance.

Agenda Item No. 3 was Board discussion and vote on approval of occupational license applications. The first application was by Robert L. Gardner, Jr., with accompanying outdoor sign application, for "Shirley Mae's of Vidalia", at 20 Alabama Street, Vidalia. Mr. Gardner spoke on

behalf of the application and sign approval. There being no questions or comments, on motion by Alderman Probst, seconded by Alderwoman Demby, and unanimously carried (Alderman Gardner abstained), the application with the accompanying sign application was approved. The second application was by Mr. Robert Calhoun for “Big Rob’s Smoke Pit” at 405 Martin Luther King. Mr. Calhoun spoke on behalf of the application. There being no questions or comments, a motion to approve the application was made by Alderman Gardner, seconded by Alderman Probst, and unanimously carried. The third application was by Alison Burkley representing Cocktail Expert, LLC, for “Cocktail Expert” at 2048 Charles Street. There being no questions or comments, a motion to approve the application was made by Alderman Smith, seconded by Alderman Betts, and carried unanimously.

Agenda Item No. 4 was presentation on community development block grant application. The Mayor recognized Hanna Junkin, Town of Vidalia Marketing Director & Grant Coordinator, who spoke to the Board and explained the terms and procedures for the application for the grant. She further explained for the need for a Resolution; Citizen Participation Plan; and Procurement Policy which will be further discussed in Agenda Item No. 5. Following several comments and questions from Alderman Probst, to which the Mayor and Ms. Junkin replied, the matter was closed for discussion.

Agenda Item No. 5 was Board discussion and vote on Resolution authorizing submittal of FY2022-2023 Louisiana Community Development Block Grant Application, and entering into agreements associated with administration and engineering services, and approving Resolutions adopting Citizen Participation Plan and Procurement Policy associated with this grant application. Following a short discussion, and noting that this matter had been discussed previously at some length in Agenda Item No. 4, the Mayor asked for a motion to approve the Citizen Participation Plan and the procurement policy, and the Resolution adopting the Citizen Participation Plan and the Resolution authorizing submittal of FY2022-2023 Louisiana Community Development Block Grant Application and entering into agreements associated with administration and engineering services and the Resolution adopting the procurement procedures relative to the LCDBG Program. Thereupon, a motion to approve the Citizen Participation Plan; the Procurement Policy; and Resolutions be passed adopting the Citizen Participation Plan; authorizing submittal of FY2022-2023 Louisiana Community Development Block Grant application, and entering into agreements associated with administration and engineering services; and adopting the Procurement Procedures relative to the LCDBG Program, all as presented at the meeting, be adopted. The motion was seconded by Alderman Gardner, and unanimously carried.

(COPIES OF THE RESOLUTIONS ARE ATTACHED HERETO AND MADE A PART HEREOF).

Agenda Item No. 6 was Engineer’s status report on current projects under way for the Town of Vidalia. The Mayor then introduced Mr. Bryant Hammett of Bryant Hammett & Associates, who spoke first and gave a general overview of the various projects which are currently under way or just completed for the Town. Following his presentation, he introduced Mr. Keith Capdepon who spoke on the various projects recently completed and projects under way. The projects completed, including the Port road; a waterline to the Port; the overhead and underground electric lines for the Port. Projects under way are a gas line extension to Syrah; a street overlay project which has funds from FEMA included; and various repairs due to the recent high water. Also in progress are an Industrial Park certification process; Waste Water improvement; electrical upgrades; and drainage improvements. A power point presentation was included in the explanations of these matters. Mr Hammett then finished up the presentation with a discussion with the Board over the need to repair, or replace several sewer pumping stations. Following that presentation, it was the consensus of the Board that those facilities should be replaced.

Agenda Item No. 7 was Board discussion and vote on fixing the amount to be maintained in the Hydro Reserve Fund, in accordance with Ordinance No. 588. The Mayor announced to the Board that it is now time to fix the amount to be maintained in the Hydro Reserve Fund and stated that the amount is currently \$2.3 million and the Ordinance requires a minimum of \$1.98 million to be kept in the reserve. After a short discussion, it was moved by Alderman Probst, seconded by Alderman Smith, and unanimously carried, that the Town should keep \$2.3 million in reserve.

Agenda Item No. 8 was Board discussion on setting dates for two (2) public hearings to receive public input on proposed projects and possible alternative uses of surplus Hydro revenues. The Mayor explained to the Board the need at this time to set two (2) meetings in accordance with the Hydro Ordinance. The Mayor told the Board that he has spoken with several groups and has been given many proposed projects. He asked the Board to set a date to have the first of the required hearings. Alderman Probst stated that it needs to be made plain that people that have given suggestions for projects will have those suggestions considered without having to re-submit. It was the consensus of the Board, that the required meetings should be held on a Tuesday or Thursday at 6:00 P.M.

Agenda Item No. 9 was Board discussion and vote on approval of replacement hire for the Vidalia Police Department – Danielle Jefferson as Part-time dispatcher. After a short discussion, a motion was made by Alderman Betts, seconded by Alderman Gardner, and unanimously carried, to approve the replacement hire of Danielle Jefferson as part-time dispatcher.

Agenda Item No. 10 was public hearing on an Ordinance approving the Mayor's appointment of a Clerk and to fix the compensation of the Clerk of the Town of Vidalia, Louisiana. The Mayor told the Board of a need to have a public hearing on the Ordinance approving his appointment of a Clerk and fixing the Clerk's salary. A motion was made by Alderman Gardner, seconded by Alderman Betts, and unanimously carried, to enter into the public hearing. There was no discussion or comments or questions from the audience and, on motion by Alderman Probst, seconded by Alderwoman Demby, and unanimously carried, the Board exited the public hearing.

Agenda Item No. 11 was Board discussion and vote on an Ordinance approving the Mayor's appointment of a Clerk and to fix the compensation of the Clerk of the Town of Vidalia, Louisiana. The Mayor announced that the proposed Ordinance had been pre-filed and it was time to vote on the adoption of the Ordinance. A motion was made by Alderman Betts, seconded by Alderwoman Demby, to approve the Ordinance as presented and pre-filed. Alderman Gardner spoke first to advise that he is going to vote against the fee as set forth in the Ordinance. He indicated that the Clerk's fee should be set at \$55,000.00. There followed a short discussion and the Mayor called for a roll call vote. The vote was as follows: FOR ADOPTION AS PRESENTED: Aldermen Betts, Probst and Smith; AGAINST: Alderman Gardner and Alderwoman Demby. The Clerk announced that the vote was 3 votes FOR and 2 votes AGAINST and therefore the Ordinance approving the Mayor's appointment of a Clerk and to fix the compensation of the Clerk as presented, was approved.

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

Agenda Item No. 12 was Board discussion and a vote on the appointment of Mayor Pro Tempore of the Town of Vidalia, Louisiana. The Mayor advised the Board of Agenda Item No. 12 and, there being no discussion, a motion was made by Alderman Smith, seconded by Alderman Betts, to appoint Alderman Betts, as Mayor Pro Tempore. A roll call vote was called and the vote thereon was as follows: FOR: Alderman Betts and Alderman Smith. AGAINST: Aldermen Gardner, Probst and Alderwoman Demby. The Clerk announced that the vote was 3 AGAINST and 2 FOR and that the motion failed. Thereafter, a motion was made by Alderman Probst, seconded by Alderman Gardner, to appoint Alderman Gardner as the Mayor Pro Tempore. A roll call vote was called and the vote thereon was as follows: FOR: Aldermen Gardner, Probst and Alderwoman Demby. AGAINST: Aldermen Betts and Smith. The Clerk announced that the vote was 3 votes for, 2 votes AGAINST, and that the motion carried.

Agenda Item No. 13 was report on request for proposal for Advanced Metering Infrastructure System for water, gas & electric utilities. The Mayor advised the Board of the current proposal for the Advanced Metering Infrastructure System and advised that he will keep them apprised of the progress of the proposal.

Agenda Item No. 14 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 Alderman Gardner, and unanimously carried.

/s/ Jay LaSyone
JAY LASYONE, TOWN CLERK

/s/ Buz Craft
BUZ CRAFT, MAYOR

ORDINANCE NO. _____

AN ORDINANCE APPROVING THE MAYOR'S APPOINTMENT OF A CLERK AND TO FIX THE COMPENSATION OF THE CLERK OF THE TOWN OF VIDALIA, LOUISIANA

BE IT ORDAINED, BY THE MAYOR AND BOARD OF ALDERMEN OF THE TOWN OF VIDALIA, LOUISIANA, in regular session, duly convened as the governing authority of said municipality, that:

Section 1. This proposed Ordinance was previously introduced at the regular meeting of May 11, 2021; and

Section 2. After due notice of advertising of this proposed ordinance in the official journal on the 19th day of May, 2021, and public hearing held at the Mayor and Board's regular meeting on the 8th day of June, 2021, it is hereby ordained and adopted as an Ordinance of the Town of Vidalia, Louisiana, that:

WHEREAS, LSA-R.S. 33:404.1 provides that the Board of Aldermen shall, by Ordinance, fix the compensation of the Mayor, Aldermen, Clerk and Chief of Police; and

WHEREAS, the current Clerk, Jay LaSyone, will be assuming another position with the Town of Vidalia effective July 1, 2021, and the Mayor has appointed PIARA WILSON as the incoming Clerk; and

WHEREAS, the Board shall approve the Mayor's appointment of the incoming Clerk and further the compensation needs to be fixed for the incoming Clerk, effective July 1, 2021;

THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED, by the Mayor and Board of Aldermen of the Town of Vidalia, Louisiana, that the Mayor's appointment of PIARA WILSON as the incoming Clerk is hereby approved and the compensation for the incoming Clerk is hereby fixed at \$49,000.00 per year, to be effective July 1, 2021.

The foregoing Ordinance was read and considered, section by section, and as a whole, and the vote thereon was as follows:

YEAS: Aldermen Betts, Probst and Smith.

NAYS: Alderman Gardner and Alderwoman Demby.

ABSTAINING: NONE.

ABSENT: NONE.

WHEREUPON, the foregoing ordinance was declared to be duly adopted this 8th day of June, 2021, to be effective immediately.

/s/ Jay LaSyone
JAY LASYONE, TOWN CLERK

/s/ Buz Craft
BUZ CRAFT, MAYOR