

BUDGET COMMITTEE
Wednesday, September 4, 2013 @ 4:00 P.M.

PRESENT: Julius Alsandor, Chairman, Blair Briggs, Reginald Tatum, and Jacqueline Martin
ABSENT: None

1. *Discuss lawsuit settlement for Paula Dubuc vs. City of Opelousas.* On a motion by Alderman Reginald Tatum, seconded by Alderwoman Jacqueline Martin and unanimously carried, it was resolved to send this matter to the full council for discussion at the Regular Council Meeting on September 10, 2013.
2. *Discussion regarding the fiscal year 2013-2014 budget.* City Clerk Karen Frank gave an overview of the changes made to the proposed Fiscal Year 2013-2014 budget. She stated that the City was originally facing a budget with a deficit of \$573,766. She explained that they have gone to several different departments and made cuts and eliminated some positions.

Executive Department will have a \$26,000 deduction due to the elimination of one full-time position.

Street Department will have a \$110,000 deduction due to not filling two vacant positions, reductions in overtime, and not undertaking the Karma Schad repair project at this time.

Police Department will have a \$125,000 deduction due to not filling some vacant positions.

Fire Department will have a \$116,000 deduction due to eliminating overtime and not filling two positions.

Code Enforcement Department will have a \$20,000 deduction due to not filling one vacant position.

Tourism Department will have a \$39,850 deduction due to not filling one full-time vacant position and reducing funds for some building repairs.

Museum will have a \$16,000 deduction due to not filling one full-time position.

Parks & Recreation Department will have a \$35,000 deduction due to a reduction in overtime and eliminating one position.

Community Development Department will have a \$40,000 deduction due to eliminating one position.

Ms. Frank pointed out that after these cuts which were recommended by Mayor Cravins the budget will be \$16,971 into the black. Alderman Blair Briggs stated that more cuts still need to be made and that it is not fair that only a few departments are making additional cuts. Ms. Frank stated that some of the departments only have two employees and cannot make any more cuts. Chief Perry Gallow and Ms. LaVonya Malveaux stated that they can work with the budgets they have been given as long as there are no additional cuts. Alderman Julius Alsandor pointed out that most other municipalities are cutting back because of hard economic times. Ms. LaVonya Malveaux stated that the City of Opelousas has seen an increasing fund balance over the years and this shows that they are doing what

they should be doing. Alderwoman Jacqueline Martin thanked everyone for working with them during the budget preparation. Alderman Reginald Tatum asked about the outcome of the judge's decision regarding the non-classified employees who were illegally hired. Ms. Laura Balthazar stated that once those employees leave then the positions will still have to be filled so it will not change the bottom line. Alderman Alsandor asked Chief Lee Cahanin if he could work with the budget he has been given. Chief Cahanin stated that he will work with whatever he is given although he needs more funds. He stated that he does not need the full amount that is listed in personnel services. Ms. Frank stated that he can move the funds around any way he likes as long he stays within his budget's bottom line number. Alderman Alsandor stated that they cannot continue to amend the budget and take money from the City's fund balance even though it has shown a positive for the past three years. They have to hold the department heads and themselves accountable. Chief Gallow wanted clarification that if they can choose to give a cost of living increase to their employees as long as it is in their budget. Ms. Frank stated that he would have to guarantee that he will not go over his budget.

On a motion by Alderman Julius Alsandor and seconded by Alderwoman Jacqueline Martin, it was recommended to send the Fiscal Year 2013-2014 proposed budget to the full council for approval on September 10, 2013. A roll call vote was taken with the following results:

YEAS: Julius Alsandor and Jacqueline Martin.

NAYS: Blair Briggs and Reginald Tatum.

No action taken due to TIE vote. This item will be revisited at the Regular Council Meeting on September 10, 2013.

On a motion by Alderman Reginald Tatum, seconded by Alderman Blair Briggs and unanimously carried, it was resolved to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 5:20 p.m.