

CITY OF OPELOUSAS  
OPELOUSAS, LOUISIANA  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
JANUARY 12, 2021

The Council of the City of Opelousas, Parish of St. Landry, State of Louisiana, convened in a regular session on this 12<sup>th</sup> day of January 2021 at 5:00 p.m. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic mandates for social distancing and limited occupancy requirements, the meeting was open to limited general public and was **LIVE-STREAMED ON THE WWW.CITYOFOPELOUSAS.COM website.**

With Mayor Julius Alsandor presiding, the meeting was called to order.

Mayor Alsandor requested the Clerk to call the roll and the following Council members were PRESENT: Marvin Richard, Milton Batiste III, Floyd Ford, Charles Cummings, Sherell Roberts, and Chasity Davis. ABSENT: None.

A moment of silent meditation was observed. Pastor Paul Gatlin, Emmanuel Church of God in Christ, Opelousas, Louisiana, led the prayer.

Mrs. Charlette Milburn McLendon, U.S. Army Veteran, led the Pledge of Allegiance.

On a motion by Alderman Floyd Ford and seconded by Alderman Marvin Richard, it was resolved to APPROVE the Minutes of the Regular Meeting held 12/08//2020. A roll call vote was taken with the following results:

YEAS: Marvin Richard, Milton Batiste III, Floyd Ford, Charles Cummings, Sherell Roberts, and Chasity Davis.

NAYS: None.

ABSENT: None.

On a motion by Aldermen Floyd Ford and Marvin Richard and seconded by Alderman Charles Cummings, it was resolved to delete the following item: *under the PERSONNEL ITEMS Section, Item No. 18, "Designate 2021 Holiday Pay dates for Police Officers"*. A roll call vote was taken with the following results:

YEAS: Milton Batiste III, Floyd Ford, Charles Cummings, Sherell Roberts, Chasity Davis, and Marvin Richard.

NAYS: None.

ABSENT: None.

On a motion by Alderman Marvin Richard and seconded by Alderman Floyd Ford, it was resolved to add the following item: *under the PERSONNEL ITEMS Section, "Approve the Termination of Police Officer Recruit Kem L. Dwyer"*. A roll call vote was taken with the following results:

YEAS: Floyd Ford, Charles Cummings, Sherell Roberts, Chasity Davis, Marvin Richard, and Milton Batiste III.

NAYS: None.

ABSENT: None.

On a motion by Alderman Milton Batiste III and seconded by Alderman Charles Cummings, it was resolved to ADOPT the revised agenda as presented with the approved changes. A roll call vote was taken with the following results:

YEAS: Charles Cummings, Sherell Roberts, Chasity Davis, Marvin Richard, Milton Batiste III, and Floyd Ford.

NAYS: None.

ABSENT: None.

- **Three-minute recess for submission of public comments/questions.**

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Reading of Public Comments/Questions, if any. No public comments or questions were submitted.

- COVID-19 Update from Dr. Ken Cochran, Opelousas General Health Systems (OGHS) representative. Mr. Cochran stated that he is recovering from COVID-19. Currently there is an 11% positivity rate in St. Landry Parish and the large majority do not require hospitalization and are recovering at home. There have been about 32 deaths this month and they have treated over 460 positive in-patients and tested over 9,000 outpatients. They are at 90% of their ICU capacity. Blood supply is low and they are requesting blood donations. Almost 2,000 COVID-19 vaccines have been administered to healthcare workers and their families. Mr. Cochran emphasized wearing masks, social distancing, good hand hygiene, staying at home if you do not feel well and getting the vaccine as soon as it is available.

- Legislative Update from Representative Dustin Miller and Senator Gerald Boudreaux. Rep. Miller gave a status update on the following State projects funded: the Water System Metering Project for \$1.8 million; the Street Improvements Project for \$1.5 million capital outlay plus a \$500,000 line of credit; \$500,000 for the water meter planning and construction; \$500,000 for Opelousas City jail sewer and drainage issues and sewer plant repairs; \$1 million for Judson Walsh Bridge; Red light at corner of Hwy 182 and Harry Guilbeau Road through DOTD; contract for OPD to utilize the Wildlife and Fisheries building; Opelousas Heights project postponed; \$250,000 for planning for Vine Street Project right-of-ways and a request for an additional \$19 million to purchase right of ways and repairs; \$500,000 for Parks and Recreation center at South City Park and a request for an additional \$600,000. Senator Boudreaux thanked the Mayor and Council as well as the Governor and his team and Secretary Wilson and his team. He stated that Parish President Jessie Bellard is also working with the City. Sen. Boudreaux stated that they all need to put personal agenda aside and work together to get things done.

- Update/Presentations from Mayor Julius Alsandor. Mayor Alsandor gave a video presentation of several of the accomplishments of the City of Opelousas in 2020.

### REPORTS

Review Monthly Finances. Mr. Stephen Woods gave the financial report for the month ending 12/31/2020 which ended the first quarter of the 2020 fiscal year. On a motion by Alderman Milton Batiste III and seconded by Alderman Marvin Richard, it was resolved to accept the Monthly Finance Report as presented. A roll call vote was taken with the following results:

YEAS: Sherell Roberts, Chasity Davis, Marvin Richard, Milton Batiste III, Floyd Ford, and Charles Cummings.

NAYS: None.

ABSENT: None.

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Engineer's Monthly Report. A copy of the Engineer's Monthly Report was provided to the Council members. Mr. Jarrell gave the following updates: the Metering Project that will be funded with State funds has been approved; the EPA project plan for the cleaning and TV'ing of the sewer lines has been completed for this year and the report is to be submitted to EPA; and repairs to various water lines and rehabilitation of a ground storage tank at the Med-South Well Site are currently in the design phase. On a motion by Alderman Charles Cummings and seconded by Alderman Milton Batiste III, it was resolved to accept the Engineer's Monthly Report as presented in writing. A roll call vote was taken with the following results:

YEAS: Chasity Davis, Marvin Richard, Milton Batiste III, Floyd Ford, Charles Cummings, and Sherell Roberts.

NAYS: None.

ABSENT: None.

City Attorney's Report. Attorney Broussard stated that he had no report.

### OLD BUSINESS

Introduction of an Ordinance to Amend Ordinance No. 12 of 2020 to reflect updated financial terms in contract for Lease-Purchase of two fire trucks.

#### INTRODUCTION OF AN ORDINANCE

#### AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE CITY OF OPELOUSAS TO ENTER A TAX-EXEMPT LEASE PURCHASE AGREEMENT FOR THE ACQUISITION OF TWO FIRE TRUCKS

WHEREAS, on November 10, 2020, the City of Opelousas ("City") adopted Ordinance No. 12 of 2020 authorizing the City of Opelousas to Enter a Tax-Exempt Lease Purchase Agreement for the acquisition of two fire trucks;

WHEREAS, there was a clerical error in the text of Ordinance No. 12 of 2020;

WHEREAS, Ordinance No. 12 of 2020 provided for a rate of interest of 2.72%, and a principal amount not to exceed \$1,900,000.00;

WHEREAS, the rate of interest should have been expressed as 2.98%;

WHEREAS, the principal amount of indebtedness authorized by the governing authority should have been no more than \$1,905,233.00;

WHEREAS, the governing authority desires by this Ordinance to amend Ordinance No. 12 of 2020 to reflect the appropriate terms shown above;

WHEREAS, the governing authority desires that all other provisions of Ordinance No. 12 of 2020 maintain the force and effect of law; and

WHEREAS, this Ordinance having been introduced on the \_\_\_\_ day of January 2021 by councilmember \_\_\_\_\_, a public hearing having been held on February 9, 2021, on motion by councilmember \_\_\_\_\_ and seconded by councilmember \_\_\_\_\_, the following vote was held on February 9, 2021, for final adoption:

YEA:

NAY:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the City Council of the City of Opelousas, in legal session convened, that Ordinance No. 12 of 2020 is hereby amended to reflect a rate of interest of 2.98%, and authorization of a principal indebtedness of no more than \$1,905,233.00. All other provisions of Ordinance No. 12 of 2020 shall remain unchanged and shall maintain the force and effect of law. Said Ordinance was introduced by Alderman Milton Batiste III

### NEW BUSINESS

Designate Official Journal for calendar year 2021. On a motion by Alderman Charles Cummings and seconded by Alderman Floyd Ford, it was resolved to designate the *Daily World* as the Official Journal (newspaper) for calendar year 2021. A roll call vote was taken with the following results:

YEAS: Marvin Richard, Milton Batiste III, Floyd Ford, Charles Cummings, Sherell Roberts, and Chasity Davis.

NAYS: None.

ABSENT: None.

Nominate and Appoint Mayor Pro-Tempore for calendar year 2021. Alderwoman Sherell Roberts nominated Alderwoman Chasity Davis for Mayor Pro-Tempore. No other nominations were made. On a motion by Alderwoman Sherell Roberts and seconded by Aldermen Marvin Richard and Charles Cummings, it was resolved to appoint Alderwoman Chasity Davis as Mayor Pro-Tempore for calendar year 2021. A roll call vote was taken with the following results:

YEAS: Milton Batiste III, Floyd Ford, Charles Cummings, Sherell Roberts, Chasity Davis, and Marvin Richard.

NAYS: None.

ABSENT: None.

Appointment of Committees for calendar year 2021:

***Budget Committee:***

*Milton Batiste III, Chairman  
Charles Cummings, Vice Chairman  
Sherell Roberts  
Floyd Ford*

***Personnel Committee:***

*Charles Cummings, Chairman  
Sherell Roberts, Vice Chairwoman  
Milton Batiste III  
Chasity Davis*

***General Services Committee:***

*Chasity Davis, Chairwoman  
Charles Cummings, Vice Chairman  
Floyd Ford  
Marvin Richard*

On a motion by Alderman Charles Cummings and seconded by Alderman Marvin Richard, it was resolved to retain the committee members from calendar year 2020 into calendar year 2021 as listed. A roll call vote was taken with the following results:

YEAS: Floyd Ford, Charles Cummings, Sherell Roberts, Chasity Davis, Marvin Richard, and Milton Batiste III.

NAYS: None.

ABSENT: None.

Review nominations and appoint a new member to the Municipal Civil Service Board. Mrs. Linda Walker stated that there were two vacancies on the Municipal Civil Service Board at this time but only one had been placed on the agenda for consideration. One vacancy was created by the death of Mr. Robert Morrison and the other was created by the resignation of Mr. Pride Doran. City Clerk Leisa Anderson pointed out that she had only received McNeese State University's set of nominations prior to the agenda going out and that is why only one vacancy was noted on the agenda. Mrs. Walker stated that she received an email from Grambling University with their nominations and assumed that the clerk had received it as

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well. The clerk had notified Mrs. Walker that she had not received it and Mrs. Walker gave it to her on the day of the Council meeting. The City attorney stated that this would be a discrepancy since neither of the universities had submitted their nominations in a timely manner based on the vacancy dates. Mrs. Walker stated that she had been trying to reach the second university but they had been closed due to COVID. Attorney Broussard pointed out that it was now the Governing Authority's responsibility for selecting the two nominees since the deadline had passed for submissions from the two universities. After a lengthy discussion and review of State Civil Service rules regarding appointments of vacancies, it was suggested that this matter be tabled for further review. On a motion by Alderman Floyd Ford and seconded by Alderman Charles Cummings, it was resolved to table this matter until more information is received. A roll call vote was taken with the following results:

YEAS: Charles Cummings, Sherell Roberts, Chasity Davis, Marvin Richard, Milton Batiste III, and Floyd Ford.

NAYS: None.

ABSENT: None.

Approve the appointment of Mr. Robert Wolfe to the Planning Commission for a three-year term, effective 02/08/2021. Attorney Broussard pointed out that the appointment of Mr. Robert Wolfe would be a conflict of interest since he is employed by Morgan Goudeau & Associates, an entity that is currently functioning as the City's engineering firm. Attorney Broussard suggested that either Mr. Wolfe or the City of Opelousas request an opinion on this matter from the Ethics Board prior to moving forward. He recommends tabling this matter until either party receives this information. On a motion by Aldermen Charles Cummings and Milton Batiste III and seconded by Alderman Floyd Ford, it was resolved to table this matter until an opinion from the Ethic Board is received. A roll call vote was taken with the following results:

YEAS: Sherell Roberts, Chasity Davis, Marvin Richard, Milton Batiste III, Floyd Ford, and Charles Cummings.

NAYS: None.

ABSENT: None.

Approve the settlement agreement in Department of Environmental Quality Proceeding No. AE-CN-15-01084. On a motion by Alderman Floyd Ford and seconded by Alderman Milton Batiste III, it was resolved to grant authority to consent to the settlement agreement in the Department of Environmental Quality Proceeding No. AE-CN-15-01084. A roll call vote was taken with the following results:

YEAS: Chasity Davis, Marvin Richard, Milton Batiste III, Floyd Ford, Charles Cummings, and Sherell Roberts.

NAYS: None.

ABSENT: None.

Approve agreement with Trek, Inc. for repairs to the headworks at the Candy Street Wastewater Treatment Plant. On a motion by Alderman Charles Cummings and seconded by Alderman Floyd Ford, it was resolved to table this matter. A roll call vote was taken with the following results:

YEAS: Marvin Richard, Floyd Ford, Charles Cummings, Sherell Roberts, and Chasity Davis.

NAYS: None.

ABSENT: Milton Batiste III (*stepped out*).

#### PERSONNEL ITEMS

On a motion by Alderman Charles Cummings and seconded by Alderman Marvin Richard and Alderwoman Chasity Davis, it was resolved to approve the Termination of Police Officer Recruit Kem L. Dwyer, effective 12/28/2020. A roll call vote was taken with the following results:

YEAS: Floyd Ford, Charles Cummings, Sherell Roberts, Chasity Davis, and Marvin Richard.

NAYS: None.

ABSENT: Milton Batiste III (*stepped out*).

#### EXECUTIVE SESSION

On a motion by Aldermen Milton Batiste III and Marvin Richard, seconded by Alderwomen Chasity Davis and Sherell Roberts and unanimously carries, it was resolved to go into Executive Session at 7:08 to discuss the following matter:

- *Discuss Keionna Roberts v. ABC Insurance Co., et. al, civil action no. 21-C-0024-D, 27<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Court, Parish of St. Landry, Louisiana, filed 01/04/2021.*

- ❖ Plaintiffs: Keionna Roberts & Trikelsa Patterson, obo minor children

- ❖ Defendants: ABC Insurance Company, City of Opelousas, St. Landry Parish Government, Nathan Williams, Jr., Lil Nathan & the Zydeco Big Timers, LLC, Chris Ardoin, J. Paul Grant

On a motion by Alderman Charles Cummings, seconded by Alderman Milton Batiste III and Alderwoman Chasity Davis, it was resolved to return to Regular Session at 7:21 p.m.

On a motion by Alderman Charles Cummings and seconded by Alderwoman Sherell Roberts, it was resolved to authorize City Attorney Travis Broussard to tender the claim to Risk Management for further action. A roll call vote was taken with the following results:

YEAS: Charles Cummings, Sherell Roberts, Chasity Davis, Marvin Richard, Milton Batiste III, and Floyd Ford.

NAYS: None.

ABSENT: None.

There being nothing further to come before the Council, on a motion by Alderman Milton Batiste III, seconded by Alderwoman Chasity Davis and unanimously carried, it was resolved that the meeting be adjourned. The meeting was adjourned at 7:26 p.m.

ATTEST:

  
CITY CLERK

  
MAYOR