

CITY OF OPELOUSAS
OPELOUSAS, LOUISIANA
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
APRIL 13, 2021

The Council of the City of Opelousas, Parish of St. Landry, State of Louisiana, convened in a regular session on this 13th day of April 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. Mayor Alsandor asked that they keep the Gauthier Family in their prayers. Reverend Brian P. Alfred, Mount Olive Missionary Baptist Church, Opelousas, Louisiana, led the prayer.

Captain Craig Thomas, U. S. Army retired Sergeant, was not present so Mr. Victor Lewis, administrator of J. S. Clark Leadership Academy, Opelousas, Louisiana, led the Pledge of Allegiance.

On a motion by Alderman Charles Cummings and seconded by Alderwoman Chasity Davis, it was resolved to APPROVE the Minutes of the Regular Meeting held 03/09/2021. 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.

On a motion by Alderman Floyd Ford and seconded by Alderman Charles Cummings, it was resolved to ADOPT the agenda as documented with no changes. 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.

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Reading of Public Comments/Questions, if any. No comments were submitted online or by email.

- COVID-19 Update from Opelousas General Health Systems (OGHS) representative. Representative could not be present today so Mayor Alsandor read notes submitted by OGHS: Currently St. Landry Parish is at a 1.9% positivity rate; vaccines are now open to everyone 16 and above (Moderna) and 18 and above (Pfizer); State vaccination rate is at 19.3% and St. Landry Parish vaccination rate is at 16.34%; J & J vaccines are on pause for now so vaccines are available through Moderna and Pfizer, OGH is still offering community vaccine events but an appointment is needed—visit their website or Facebook page to register or call the hotline at 337-447-2262 if you need assistance in scheduling the vaccine. Stay on course; mask up; practice hand hygiene; adhere to the crowd limitations; stay away from others if you are sick, ill, or have any of the signs indicative of the virus itself. “Our efforts got us this far, let’s keep the momentum going and it will take all of us to that point of where the vaccine is behind us and not in front of us.”

- Updates/Presentations by Mayor Julius Alsandor. Ms. Lena Charles, chairperson of Opelousas Downtown Development District (ODDD), addressed the Council and the audience regarding the Opelousas Master Plan. She stated she is proud to say that our district’s main focus is the revitalization of Opelousas and the things they have undertaken through the Master Plan which will be finished next month. ODDD is excited that they can also lend their support to the City of Opelousas and the Donald Gardiner Stadium project. They are proud because they are looking for this revitalization for our future and our future is our children and our children can benefit from us working together and making sure that we present something that will be a catalyst for change. When you take those risks, you are looking for change and you are looking for going up and not backwards. Ms. Charles thanked the Mayor and Council for allowing ODDD to be a part of this project

At this time, Mayor Alsandor stated that he was waiting on someone to arrive for his presentation and he allowed the Council members the opportunity to add any remarks they may want to add at this particular time. All other Council members except Alderman Batiste stated that they had no remarks. Alderman Batiste stated that he just wanted to echo the sentiments that the Mayor had expressed earlier to the family of Kori Gauthier. He asked that we keep the family in mind and in prayer as they go through this difficult time.

REPORTS

Review Monthly Finances. Mr. Stephen Woods gave the financial report for the month ending 03/31/2021. On a motion by Alderman Marvin Richard and seconded by Alderman Floyd Ford, it was resolved to accept the Monthly Finance Report as presented. 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.

Engineer’s Monthly Report. A copy of the Engineer’s Monthly Report was provided to the Council members. Mr. William Jarrell gave the following updates:

- Replacement of Water Meters – beginning to start the planning for that project—obtaining information regarding the City’s existing system—contacted ACLARA, the Automated Meter Reading (AMR) System provider to see if they can eliminate some of the Data Collection Units (DCU’s) which would save the City a little bit of money—he will have a lot more information to share by next month.
- Street Improvement Project – in the design phase right now—he will be about another 2 – 3 weeks in the office and then he should be contacting each of the Council members to ride their districts and make any adjustments to get their input—next they will submit the plans to FP&C for approval and then advertise for bids—possible completion by end of the year.
- Water System Improvement Project – anticipating completing plans by end of next week and then submitting to FP&C for approval.
- Bridges on Augustus and Ducharme are closed. Bridges on Heather and Frilot have issues but are still open. Bridge Reports are submitted to the Parish by DOTD.

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On a motion by Alderman Charles Cummings and seconded by Alderman Marvin Richard and Alderwoman Chasity Davis, it was resolved to accept the Engineer's Monthly Report as presented. 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.

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

At this time, Mayor Alsandor made his presentation to Mr. Joseph LaDay. Mr. LaDay was not present due to illness so his granddaughters accepted a plaque on his behalf. Mayor Alsandor stated that Mr. LaDay was being recognized for 29 years of service to the City of Opelousas Fire and Police Civil Service Board from 1991-2020. The plaque was presented by Mrs. Sarah Branton, Fire & Police Civil Service Board Chairperson and Mrs. Catherine Thomas, Fire & Police Civil Service Board Secretary.

OLD BUSINESS

NONE.

NEW BUSINESS

Adopt the Millage Rate for Tax Year 2021. After the Resolution was read, Mayor Alsandor asked if there were any questions from the Council or the audience regarding the adoption of the millage. There were no questions or comments made.

CITY OF OPELOUSAS
STATE OF LOUISIANA

RESOLUTION TO ADOPT THE GENERAL ALIMONY MILLAGE RATE FOR ALL PROPERTY SUBJECT TO TAXATION BY THE CITY OF OPELOUSAS IN THE PARISH OF ST. LANDRY FOR TAX YEAR 2021.

RESOLUTION 2021- 02

MOTION-Marvin Richard and Floyd Ford
SECONDED-Charles Cummings

SECTION: BE IT RESOLVED, by the Mayor and Board of Aldermen of the City of Opelousas, Louisiana, in a regular and legal session convened, that the City of Opelousas of the Parish of St. Landry, Louisiana, in a public meeting held on April 13, 2021, which meeting was conducted in accordance with the Open Meetings Law and the additional requirements of Article XII, Section 3 of the Louisiana Constitution and R.S. 42:11 – 28 [R.S. 42:11, et seq.] that the following millage rate(s) be and they are hereby levied upon the dollar of each assessed valuation of all property which is subject to ad valorem taxation within said City for the year 2021 for the purpose of raising revenue:

Tax Description:

Millage Rate:

General Alimony (5134 001):


7.130 mills

SECTION 2. BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the proper administrative officials of the Parish of St. Landry, 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 to make the collection of the taxes imposed for and on behalf of the taxing authority, according to law, and that the taxes herein levied shall become a permanent lien and privilege on all property subject to taxation as herein set forth, and collection thereof shall be enforceable in the manner provided by law.

The foregoing resolution was read in full; the roll was called on the adoption thereof, and the resolution was adopted by the following votes:


YEAS: Sherell Roberts, Chasity Davis, Marvin Richard, Milton Batiste III, Floyd Ford, and Charles Cummings.
NAYS: None.
ABSTAINED: None.
ABSENT: None.

ATTEST:


Leisa S. Anderson, City Clerk
City of Opelousas

CERTIFICATE

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and exact copy of the resolution adopted at the City Council Meeting held on April 13, 2021, at which meeting a quorum was present and voting. City of Opelousas, Louisiana, this 13th day of April 2021.


Julius Alsandor, Mayor
City of Opelousas

Grant authority to accept the St. Landry Parish Sheriff's ACT OF DONATION of one (1) 2011 Chevrolet Silverado 2500 Pickup, VIN #1GC1KXCG7BF228108, to the City of Opelousas. On a motion by Alderman Marvin Richard and seconded by Aldermen Milton Batiste III and Charles Cummings, it was resolved to accept the St. Landry Parish Sheriff's ACT OF DONATION of one (1) 2011 Chevrolet Silverado 2500 Pickup, VIN #1GC1KXCG7BF228108. 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.

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Approve the re-appointment of the following Opelousas Municipal Fire and Police Civil Service Board members for another three-year term, effective 04/25/2021 to 04/25/2024: (A) SARAH BRANTON; AND (B) HARRY JERRY. On a motion by Alderman Marvin Richard and seconded by Alderwoman Chasity Davis, it was resolved to approve the re-appointment of SARAH BRANTON and HARRY JERRY to the Opelousas Municipal Fire and Police Civil Service Board for another three-year term, effective 04/25/2021 to 04/25/2024. 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.

Approve the appointment of Dr. Joseph Guillory to the Opelousas Planning Commission for a three-year term, effective 05/01/2021 to 05/01/2024. On a motion by Alderman Milton Batiste III and seconded by Alderman Charles Cummings, it was resolved to approve the appointment of Dr. Joseph Guillory to the Opelousas Planning Commission for a three-year term, effective 05/01/2021 to 05/01/2024. 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.

Discuss request for ZONING CHANGE to a C1 (COMMERCIAL 1) ZONE for property located in an NMU (NEIGHBORHOOD MIXED USE) ZONE on Wallior Street between E. Grolee and the Railroad Tracks to develop retail/light office space (FaKouri Enterprise). The Planning Commission held a Public Hearing on 04/12/2021 but there was no party present representing this property. The matter will be forwarded to next month's meeting. On a motion by Alderman Milton Batiste III, seconded by Alderman Marvin Richard and unanimously carried, it was resolved to TABLE the request for ZONING CHANGE to a C1 (COMMERCIAL 1) ZONE for property located in an NMU (NEIGHBORHOOD MIXED USE) ZONE on Wallior Street between E. Grolee and the Railroad Tracks to develop retail/light office space (FaKouri Enterprise).

Discuss request for VARIANCE approval (3 ½' set back and 1 ft. height variance) for property located in an R1 (RESIDENTIAL 1) ZONE at 209 W. Smiley Street to continue the construction of a brick fence approximately 6" from curbing and 7.5 ft. in height (DaJavu Enterprise – Rene' Dejean). The Planning Commission held a Public Hearing on 04/12/2021 and recommended approval of this item and there was no opposition from residents in the area. It was recommended that the City Engineer review this matter. Attorney Broussard stated that a hold harmless agreement should be entered into at the owner's expense. On a motion by Alderwoman Sherell Roberts and seconded by Alderman Floyd Ford, it was resolved to TABLE the request for VARIANCE approval (3 ½' set back and 1 ft. height variance) for property located in an R1 (RESIDENTIAL 1) ZONE at 209 W. Smiley Street to continue the construction of a brick fence approximately 6" from curbing and 7.5 ft. in height (DaJavu Enterprise – Rene' Dejean) until the City Engineer can review it. 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.

Discuss request for VARIANCE approval for property located in a P (PARKS) DISTRICT at 300 Block W. Martin Luther King Drive to move a mobile home on site to open an ambulance station (St. Landry Parish School Board – Med Express). The Planning Commission held a Public Hearing on 04/12/2021 and recommended approval of this item. The Planning Commission held a Public Hearing on 04/12/2021 and recommended approval of this item. On a motion by Alderwoman Sherell Roberts and seconded by Alderman Floyd Ford, it was resolved to approve the request for VARIANCE approval for property located in a P (PARKS) DISTRICT at 300 Block W. Martin Luther King Drive to move a mobile home on site to open an ambulance station (St. Landry Parish School Board – Med Express). A roll call vote was taken with the following results:

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

NAYS: None.

ABSTAINED: Marvin Richard and Milton Batiste III.

ABSENT: None.

THE MOTION PASSES.

Discuss request for VARIANCE approval for property located in an NMU (NEIGHBORHOOD MIXED USE) ZONE at 717 N. Court Street to build two (2) Duplexes at the above-referenced location (Alice Mwakitawa). The Planning Commission held a Public Hearing on 04/12/2021 and recommended approval of this item. On a motion by Alderman Charles Cummings and seconded by Alderman Floyd Ford, it was resolved to approve the request for VARIANCE approval for property located in an NMU (NEIGHBORHOOD MIXED USE) ZONE at 717 N. Court Street to build two (2) Duplexes at the above-referenced location (Alice Mwakitawa). 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.

Discuss request for VARIANCE approval for property located in an R1 (RESIDENTIAL 1) ZONE at Pulford Street, Lot #35 to move a Mobile Home on the property (Granger Property Ventures LLC). The Planning Commission held a Public Hearing on 04/12/2021 and recommended approval of this item. On a motion by Alderman Floyd Ford and seconded by Alderwoman Chasity Davis, it was resolved to approve the request for VARIANCE approval for property located in an R1 (RESIDENTIAL 1) ZONE at Pulford Street, Lot #35 to move a Mobile Home on the property (Granger Property Ventures LLC) with the contingency that the mobile home is approved by Code Enforcement. A roll call vote was taken with the

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

NAYS: None.

ABSENT: None.

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Discuss request by Louisiana Drug Co., Inc./Tony Chachere's Creole Foods for approval of encroachment of 7 ft. into the 15 ft. utility easement located on the south side of property off Oakleaf Boulevard for expansion of warehouse at property described as follows:

That certain tract or parcel of ground, together with all buildings and improvements thereon, together with all servitudes, rights of way, appurtenances, thereunto belonging, situated in Sections 85, 105, and 106, Township 6 South, Range 4 East, St. Landry Parish, Louisiana, containing 11.113 acres, more or less, and being more particularly described as TRACT 2 as shown on that plat of survey prepared by Robert L. Wolfe, Jr., Registered Professional Land Surveyor dated October 13, 2003, revised February 21, 2005, which plat of survey recorded under Act. No. 941476 in Conveyance Book C-41, page 137. Said tract contains such dimensions, boundaries and configuration as set forth on the referred plat of survey.

On a motion by Alderman Milton Batiste and seconded by Alderman Marvin Richard, it was resolved to approve the request by Louisiana Drug Co., Inc./Tony Chachere's Creole Foods for approval of encroachment of 7 ft. into the 15 ft. utility easement located on the south side of property off Oakleaf Boulevard for expansion of warehouse at property described as follows:

That certain tract or parcel of ground, together with all buildings and improvements thereon, together with all servitudes, rights of way, appurtenances, thereunto belonging, situated in Sections 85, 105, and 106, Township 6 South, Range 4 East, St. Landry Parish, Louisiana, containing 11.113 acres, more or less, and being more particularly described as TRACT 2 as shown on that plat of survey prepared by Robert L. Wolfe, Jr., Registered Professional Land Surveyor dated October 13, 2003, revised February 21, 2005, which plat of survey recorded under Act. No. 941476 in Conveyance Book C-41, page 137. Said tract contains such dimensions, boundaries and configuration as set forth on the referred plat of survey.

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.

PERSONNEL ITEMS

On a motion by Alderman Marvin Richard and seconded by Alderwoman Chasity Davis and Alderman Floyd Ford, it was resolved to approve the Extended Annual Leave for Permanent Police Lieutenant Rodney May, effective 02/08/2021 until further notice.

On a motion by Alderman Marvin Richard and seconded by Alderwoman Chasity Davis and Alderman Floyd Ford, it was resolved to approve the Extended Sick Leave for Permanent Police Lieutenant Frank J. Boudreaux, effective 02/12/2021.

On a motion by Alderman Marvin Richard and seconded by Alderwoman Chasity Davis and Alderman Floyd Ford, it was resolved to accept the Resignation of Permanent Police Officer Evan M. Sumrall, effective 03/05/2021.

On a motion by Alderman Marvin Richard and seconded by Alderwoman Chasity Davis and Alderman Floyd Ford, it was resolved to approve the Termination of Sick Leave for Permanent Police Lieutenant Michael L. Lacombe, effective 03/08/2021.

On a motion by Alderman Marvin Richard and seconded by Alderwoman Chasity Davis and Alderman Floyd Ford, it was resolved to approve the Termination of Sick Leave for Permanent Police Sergeant Ebony D. Martin, effective 04/05/2021.

On a motion by Alderman Marvin Richard and seconded by Alderwoman Chasity Davis and Alderman Floyd Ford, it was resolved to approve the Police Chief's recommendation of hire for Ralph Sheumaker as a maintenance worker for the Opelousas Police Department, effective 04/14/2021.

On a motion by Alderman Marvin Richard and seconded by Alderwoman Chasity Davis and Alderman Floyd Ford, it was resolved to approve the Police Chief's recommendation of hire for Jennah Alyse Martin as a Police Officer Recruit, effective 04/19/2021 with working test period to begin immediately upon completion of the six month formal training or completion of P.O.S.T. certification, whichever occurs first.

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.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

On a motion by Alderman Marvin Richard, seconded by Alderman Charles Cummings and unanimously carried, it was resolved to go into Executive Session at 6:50 p.m. to discuss the following matter:

- *Dupre Carrier Godchaux demand letter dated 4.8.21 regarding sums due on insurance audit.*

On a motion by Alderman Charles Cummings, seconded by Alderman Marvin Richard and unanimously carried, it was resolved to return to Regular Session. No action needed.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

There being nothing further to come before the Council, on a motion by Alderwoman Sherell Roberts, seconded by Alderwoman Chasity Davis and unanimously carried, it was resolved that the meeting be adjourned. The meeting was adjourned at 7:03 p.m.

ATTEST:


CITY CLERK


MAYOR