

City Hall
Westwego, Louisiana
Regular Session

Monday, December, 10, 2018

The Mayor and City Council of the City of Westwego met in Regular Session at 6:00 P.M., Monday, December 10, 2018. In the Council Room at City Hall, 1100 Fourth Street, Westwego, Louisiana.

There were present:

Mayor Joe Peoples
District 1 Council Member Glenn Green, Sr.
District 2 Council Member Johnny S. Nobles, Jr.
District 3 Council Member Lisa H. Valence
District 4 Council Member Matthew J. Rivere
District 5 Council Member Johnnie Lynn Thibodeaux
Police Chief Dwayne J. Munch, Sr.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Peoples called the meeting to order and asked everyone to stand for the invocation.

INVOCATION AND MOMENT OF SILENCE

Mayor Peoples led the assembly in prayer, followed by a moment of silence in honor of the deceased members of our community and the former President of the United States George H. W. Bush

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mr. Leo Terrebonne led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance.

PRESENTATIONS / ANNOUNCEMENTS / ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

(LHV) Proclamation honoring Mr. Leo Terrebonne

The Mayor and City Council presented a proclamation to Mr. Leo Terrebonne celebrating his 95th Birthday.

Mayor Peoples and the City Council thanked all the citizens that went vote on Saturday, December 8, 2018 and stated that eighty five percent voted yes for the renewal of the EMS Millage. The Mayor acknowledged and thanked the EMS for the great service they are providing to the citizens of Westwego.

AMEND THE AGENDA

MOVED by Council Member Green, and seconded by Council Member Nobles, to amend the agenda to discuss the Old City Hall Property on Avenue A.

APPROVED: Yeas: Green, Nobles, Valence, Rivere, Thibodeaux

ADDRESS THE CITY COUNCIL

JOHNNY SHADDINGER, JR. – 312 AVENUE B

Mr. Shaddinger addressed the City Council concerning the proposed water rates. A discussion followed.

Council Member Nobles spoke on behalf of the City Council regarding the numerous meeting that were conducted with the citizens of Westwego to discuss the proposed water rate increase.

SCOTT BURKE – LOOP LINEN

Mr. Burke addressed the City Council to discuss commercial water rates and read a letter stating Loop Linen's concern of the proposed commercial water rates. A discussion followed.

Council Member Green stated in 1984 he proposed a water rate increase however, it was voted down. Council Member Green discussed the problems with the City of Westwego's infrastructure in District One and throughout the city. The water rate increase is needed to assist with the infrastructure as well as the deficiencies in the water plant budget.

KELLY DUAL – DUAL INSURANCE

Kelly Dual, of Dual Insurance, addressed the City Council to discuss the Blue Cross insurance renewal rate which has increased by sixteen percent (16%). Mr. Daul is negotiating prices at this time and will return to address the council once the negotiations are complete. The renewal date on the policy is March 1, 2019.

HEAR ALL REPORTS

Chief of Police – Dwayne J. Munch, Sr. submitted his original report.

Fire Chief – Ryan P. Guidroz was not present however, Corey Cannata submitted the original report.

Chief Building Inspector – Leslie “Skip” Lombas, Jr. was not present but had submitted his original report.

Mechanical Inspector – Tommy Baxter submitted his original report.

Plumbing Inspector – Walter “Bubba” Choquette, Jr. submitted his original report.

Electrical Inspector – Doyle Guidroz, was not present but had submitted his original report.

EMS Director – Joseph J. Aldor, Jr. submitted his original report.

Senior Center Coordinator – Brant Fonseca was not present, but had submitted his original report.

Farmers Market Coordinator – Keith Bouvier submitted his original report.

Code Enforcement – Perry Talamo submitted his original report.

Mayor Peoples/James Butler CPA – Financial Report – Budget vs. Actual. This will be addressed later in the meeting.

APPROVE THE MINUTES

Regular Session of Monday, November 12, 2018

MOVED by Council Member Valence, and seconded by Council Member Green, to approve the minutes of the Regular Session of Monday, November 12, 2018.

APPROVED: Yeas: Green, Nobles, Valence, Rivere, Thibodeaux

Special Session of Thursday, November 15, 2018

MOVED by Council Member Valence, and seconded by Council Member Green, to approve the minutes of the Special Session of Thursday, November 15, 2018.

APPROVED: Yeas: Green, Nobles, Valence, Rivere, Thibodeaux

RESOLUTIONS FOR ADOPTION

The City Clerk read aloud the following resolutions for adoption:

Offered by Council Member Green:

RESOLUTION 2018-12(A)

A resolution declaring December 2018 to be Influenza Vaccination Month in the City of Westwego.

MOVED by Council Member Green, and seconded by Council Member Valence, to adopt Resolution 2018-12(A).

APPROVED: Yeas: Green, Nobles, Valence, Rivere, Thibodeaux

Offered by Council Member Green:

RESOLUTION 2018-12(B)

A resolution approving the 2018 Environmental Audit in connection with the Louisiana Municipal Water Pollution Prevention Program prepared for the Westwego Wastewater Plant for submission to the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality.

MOVED by Council Member Green, and seconded by Council Member Rivere, to adopt Resolution 2018-12(B).

APPROVED: Yeas: Green, Nobles, Valence, Rivere, Thibodeaux

NOTICE OF INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the following entitled ordinances were introduced at a regular meeting of the Mayor and Council of the City of Westwego, State of Louisiana held on Monday, December 10, 2018, and laid over for publication of notice:

Offered by Council Member Nobles:

An ordinance adopting the 2019 Legislative Calendar for the City of Westwego

NOTICE IS HEREBY FURTHER GIVEN that the Mayor and Council will hold a regular meeting on Monday, January 14, 2019, at the Westwego City Hall, 1100 Fourth Street, Westwego, Louisiana, at six o'clock (6:00) p.m., at which time there will be a public hearing prior to consideration of the adoption of the aforesaid ordinances.

ORDINANCES FOR ADOPTION

The City Clerk read aloud the following ordinances for adoption.

Offered by Council Member Green:

ORDINANCE 1562

An ordinance amending and readopting the 2018 Budget for the City of Westwego.

MOVED by and seconded by All Council Members, to open the public hearing.

APPROVED: Yeas: Green, Nobles, Valence, Rivere, Thibodeaux

City CPA Jim Butler spoke in regards to the 2018 and 2019 Budget. A discussion followed.

Mayor Peoples invited public comment. No one spoke in favor of, or opposition of this ordinance.

MOVED by and seconded by All Council Members, to close the public hearing.

APPROVED: Yeas: Green, Nobles, Valence, Rivere, Thibodeaux

MOVED by Council Member Green, and seconded by Council Member Nobles, to adopt Ordinance 1562.

APPROVED: Yeas: Green, Nobles, Valence, Rivere, Thibodeaux

Offered by Council Member Green:

ORDINANCE 1563

An ordinance approving the 2019 Budget for the City of Westwego.

MOVED by and seconded by All Council Members, to open the public hearing.

APPROVED: Yeas: Green, Nobles, Valence, Rivere, Thibodeaux

Council Member Rivere spoke concerning the recreation budget and the need for replacement of some sports equipment. Council Member Rivere would like the 2019 recreation budget be increased from \$10,322.00 to \$14,322.00. CPA Jim Butler explained this will change the unreserved surplus to \$530,000.00. A discussion followed.

Council Member Nobles would like the \$50,314.00 budgeted in 2018 for playgrounds to remain the same for the 2019 budget for playgrounds.

Council Member Valence spoke in regards to the \$2,000.00 funding that is available for the beautification budget. City CPA Butler stated the most secure way is to inform the Beautification Committee they have these funds available and receipts must be turned to receive these funds. Mayor Peoples stated a purchase order must be obtained for any items purchased from this fund. This is the same requirement as all other departments within the city.

Mayor Peoples invited public comment. No one spoke in favor of, or opposition of this ordinance.

MOVED by and seconded by All Council Members, to close the public hearing.

APPROVED: Yeas: Green, Nobles, Valence, Rivere, Thibodeaux

Council Member Nobles asked that a roll call be taken.

MOVED by Council Member Nobles, and seconded by Council Member Green, to adopt Ordinance 1563 with said changes made to playground budget and the recreation budget.

APPROVED: Yeas: Green, Nobles, Valence, Rivere, Thibodeaux

ADDRESS THE CITY COUNCIL

CHARLOTTE FALGOUT – 1055 CEDRE DRIVE

The Cancer Fundraiser will be Saturday, April 27, 2019 from 12:00 noon to six o'clock (6:00 p.m.) at the Westwego Farmers Market. Council Member Nobles would like to pay for the rental of the Farmers Market and Chief Munch will provide the Police Officers. Ms. Falgout would like the City Council to consider naming a street for the late Police Officer Michael Louviere. A discussion followed.

ORDINANCE FOR ADOPTION

The City Clerk read aloud the following ordinances for adoption.

Offered by All Council Members:

ORDINANCE 1564

An ordinance amending Section 44-19 of the Westwego Code of Ordinances to provide for an increase in the rates charged for Water furnished by the Westwego Waterworks System.

Mayor Peoples requested the entire ordinance be read aloud. The City Clerk read the entire ordinance aloud.

Mayor Peoples discussed the ordinance, a discussion followed

MOVED by and seconded by All Council Members, to open the public hearing.

APPROVED: Yeas: Green, Nobles, Valence, Rivere, Thibodeaux

Mayor Peoples invited public comment.

Ms. Betty Landry of 421 Sala Avenue spoke in favor of this ordinance. Ms. Landry has been attending the City Meeting for more than 20 years during this time the need for a water increase has been discussed but never applied. She feels it is very important for the finances of the city that this ordinance be passed and that everyone should pay their fair share.

Mr. Leonard Waguespack of 800 Seventh Street spoke against this ordinance. Mr. Waguespack's concern is the two percent (2%) cost of living increased. Mayor Peoples explained the two percent (2%) cost of living increase will not be included in the minimum billing which includes many of the elderly and the fixed income residents of our city. A discussion followed.

Mr. Scott Burke of Loop Linen spoke against this ordinance. Mr. Burke asked if the 2% cost of living will have a sunset. He feels the businesses in Westwego do pay their fair share and feels a millage is necessary and would be fair to all. Mr. Burke stated we need to clean up the water loss to increase our revenue. A discussion followed.

Mr. Johnny Shaddinger of 312 Avenue B stated he supported the water rate increase but does not support the two percent (2%) cost of living increase.

MOVED by and seconded by All Council Members, to close the public hearing.

APPROVED: Yeas: Green, Nobles, Valence, Rivere, Thibodeaux

Council Member Rivere and Council Member Green asked that a roll call be taken.

MOVED by Council Member Green, and seconded by Council Member Nobles, to adopt Ordinance 1564

APPROVED: Yeas: Green, Nobles, Valence, Rivere, Thibodeaux

Offered by All Council Members:

ORDINANCE 1565

An ordinance enacting Section 44-182 of the Westwego Code of Ordinances to provide for an annual 2% increase in the User Charges and Surcharges for Wastewater Disposal.

The City Clerk read aloud the entire ordinance.

MOVED by and seconded by All Council Members, to open the public hearing.

APPROVED: Yeas: Green, Nobles, Valence, Rivere, Thibodeaux

Mayor Peoples invited public comment. No one spoke in favor of, or opposition of this ordinance

MOVED by and seconded by All Council Members, to close the public hearing.

APPROVED: Yeas: Green, Nobles, Valence, Rivere, Thibodeaux

Council Member Rivere asked that a roll call be taken.

MOVED by Council Member Rivere, and seconded by Council Member Nobles, to adopt Ordinance 1565.

APPROVED: Yeas: Green, Nobles, Valence, Rivere, Thibodeaux

Council Member Rivere explained how important a rate increase was necessary at this time. The City Council worked hard to get the best numbers for the citizens of Westwego.

Council Member Nobles stated how important it was for the millage that passed concerning the City of Westwego EMS. If this millage would have failed we would no longer have the Westwego EMS. Council Member Nobles expressed how important this water rate increase is to the City of Westwego.

Mayor Peoples thanked his staff and Maurice Bourgeois, the Deputy Clerk for working so diligently to obtain the real numbers, not estimated numbers to assist with the decisions of the water rate increase.

Offered by Council Member Rivere:

ORDINANCE 1566

An ordinance amending and reenacting Section 40-1 of the Westwego Code of Ordinances to prohibit the obstruction of streets, sidewalks, public servitudes, neutral grounds, and other public ways.

MOVED by and seconded by All Council Members, to open the public hearing.

APPROVED: Yeas: Green, Nobles, Valence, Rivere, Thibodeaux

Mayor Peoples invited public comment. No one spoke in favor of, or opposition of this ordinance.

MOVED by and seconded by All Council Members, to close the public hearing.

APPROVED: Yeas: Green, Nobles, Valence, Rivere, Thibodeaux

Council Member Rivere discussed the problem with tree planting on the servitudes.

MOVED by Council Member Rivere, and seconded by Council Member Green, to adopt Ordinance 1566.

APPROVED: Yeas: Green, Nobles, Valence, Rivere, Thibodeaux

OLD BUSINESS

1. (GG) Farmers Market / Sala Avenue

Council Member Green inquired why there are no Christmas Decorations at the Farmers Market and Sala Avenue. Mayor Peoples explained the Christmas Decorations in the Old City Hall were in very bad condition and new decorations would need to be purchased. Keith Bouvier of the Westwego Farmers Market put decorations up however, the wind destroyed them. Mayor Peoples explained the problems with the lighting on Sala Avenue. He is currently negotiating with Entergy concerning the replacement of the lights on Sala Avenue. The Mayor hopes by next Christmas this will be fixed and we can purchase decorations for Sala Avenue. Council Member Green committed five thousand dollars (\$5,000.00) from his Discretionary Funds for the Christmas decorations for Sala Avenue and the Westwego Farmers Market. Mayor Peoples discussed the fence around the Farmers Market. The bid for the fence came in at \$49,672.00. The money is available from the Hotel/Motel Sales Tax Fund.

MOVED by Council Member Green, and seconded by Council Member Valence, to open discussion.

APPROVED: Yeas: Green, Nobles, Valence, Rivere, Thibodeaux

Council Member Nobles and Council Member Valence asked questions concerning the fence. A discussion followed. Mayor Peoples and the Farmers Market Coordinator, Keith Bouvier worked on the designing of the fence. A discussion followed.

MOVED by Council Member Green, and seconded by Council Member Valence, to purchase the fence for the Westwego Farmers Market.

APPROVED: Yeas: Green, Nobles, Valence, Thibodeaux ABSTAINED: Rivere

2. (JSN) Water Test Readings

Council Member Nobles questions concerning water testing were answered earlier in the meeting.

3. (LHV) SCADA System Update

Mo Saleh, of PEEC, Inc. stated the SCADA System has been installed and is working properly. The operation can now run with the operators during the day (a twelve hour shift) and at night with the monitoring of the SCADA System. After hours the system will be linked to the operator's cell phones, computers at City Hall, and Mayor Peoples cell phone. This system will send a notice to the above people if there is a problem. Mayor Peoples hired Louis Duhe part time. Mr. Duhe will be doing water testing and will be linked to the SCADA System since he lives in the city. Mr. Saleh gave an update on the sewer plant, the static screen has been ordered and we should receive it in 45 days. The contract on belt press and the sludge pump has been submitted to the DEQ for final signatures. The installation of the equipment will be going out for bid after the holidays. The price of the equipment came in a while back however, the prices are being kept at the same rate as of now.

4. (JP) Utility Adjustment

MOVED by Council Member Rivere, and seconded by Council Member Valence, to approve the Utility Bill Adjustments as recommended.

APPROVED: Yeas: Green, Nobles, Valence, Rivere, Thibodeaux

5. (JP) Update on Louis Marrero, Catfish Bourgeois & Christian Jones Parks

Mayor Peoples gave an update on the Louis Marrero Park. At this time the asbestos flooring has been removed, the roof is on and the concrete work is incomplete. Meyers Engineering is requesting an 89 day extension on this contract, Change Order # 4.

MOVED by Council Member Rivere, and seconded by Council Member Thibodeaux, to approve Change Order # 4.

APPROVED: Yeas: Green, Nobles, Valence, Rivere, Thibodeaux

Catfish Bourgeois Park is complete. Council Member Thibodeaux would like to consider locking the gates at a certain time. A discussion followed. Mayor Peoples feels we need more police patrolling and more lighting. Chief Munch explained they cannot ask anyone to leave without closing signs posted with the times. Council Member Rivere asked that we put up signs but take closing time under advertisement. Chief Munch will check into putting up crime cameras in this area.

Mayor Peoples stated an approval is needed for Christian Jones Park for a Substantially Complete Certificate and Change Order #2 extending the contract 15 calendar days. Mayor Peoples discussed the sign for the park was not in the original plans therefore, a decision must be made on the sign. Council Member Green would like the park to be named the Christian Jones Memorial Park and would like to have parking from the fence to the sidewalk to the street. Mayor Peoples will review this to make sure there is enough room for off street parking. Council Member Green is willing to use his Discretionary Funds for the parking.

Mayor Peoples would like the City Council to decide a date for the ribbon cutting for Catfish Bourgeois Park and Christian Jones Park. Council Member Green would like the gate on Christian Jones Park be locked at 9:00 p.m.

MOVED by Council Member Valence, and seconded by Council Member Green, to approve Change Order # 2 and submit to Facility Planning the Substantially Complete Certificate.

APPROVED: Yeas: Green, Nobles, Valence, Rivere, Thibodeaux

6. (JP) Update on Sewer Lift Station @ Louisiana Street & WB Expressway.

The new sewer lift station will be shipped on December 13, 2018.

7. (JP) Update on Avenue A

The pre-bid was December 4, 2018 for the black topping from Avenue A to the Westbank Expressway with possible water line replacement. The bid opening will be on December 18, 2018 at 2:00 p.m. at Westwego City Hall, 1100 Fourth Street.

8. (JP) Martin House Roof Bid

Mayor Peoples informed the City Council the concurrence letter has been received from Facility Planning.

9. (JP) Westwego Arts Center

The bids came in for the Westwego Arts Center there was \$207,000.00 for this project. The lowest bid was at \$339,000.00 plus \$15,000.00 for the alternate equaling a total of \$354,000.00. The biggest expense was the elevator. Some money is available through the Act II, the Hotel/ Motel Sales Tax Fund. Mayor Peoples stated we have \$50,000.00 that can be spent on this building which is separate from Facility Planning. A discussion followed. Council Member Green feels we should try to obtain additional money for this project. Council Member Thibodeaux requested a copy of the bid.

NEW BUSINESS

1. (JSN) Health Insurance Renewal

Addressed earlier in the meeting.

2. (MJR) Trash

Council Member Rivere discussed the ongoing problem with the trash pickup. Two residence on 11th Street cut branches on November 9th and was not picked up until December 8th. Council Member Rivere asked that the Mayor get with the City Attorney to dissolve our contract. Council Member Green stated the trash is never pick up on Norton Street.

AMENDED AGENDA

Council Member Green stated there are residents inquiring about the purchasing of the Old City Hall property on Avenue A. Mayor Peoples explained the numerous utilities that are running under this property.

MOVED by Council Member Green, and seconded by Council Member Rivere, to start the process of the possibly selling parts of this property.

APPROVED: Yeas: Green, Nobles, Valence, Rivere, Thibodeaux

ADJOURN

MOVED by All, and seconded by All, to adjourn meeting at 8:35 p.m. Monday, December 10, 2018.

APPROVED: Yeas: Green, Nobles, Valence, Rivere, Thibodeaux

Mayor Peoples on behalf of himself and the City Council wished everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Joe Peoples, Mayor

Lisa Tapia, City Clerk

The Mayor and City Council of the City of Westwego will meet in Regular Session at 6:00 p.m., Monday, January 14, 2019, in the Council Room at City Hall, 1100 Fourth Street, Westwego, Louisiana
