

City Hall
Westwego, Louisiana
Regular Session

Monday,
April 8, 2019

The Mayor and City Council of the City of Westwego met in Regular Session at 6:00 P.M., Monday, April 8, 2019, in the Council Room at City Hall, 1100 Fourth Street, Westwego, Louisiana.

There were present:

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

District 1 Council Member Glenn Green, Sr. arrived late.

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.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Council Member Valence led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance.

AMEND THE AGENDA

MOVED by Council Member Valence, and seconded by Council Member Nobles, to amend the agenda to discuss the following items.

1. (JP) IGA Street Signs Purchase and Replacement
2. (JP) 0.75 % Sales Tax for Police Salaries
3. (JP) Utility Bill Adjustments
4. (JP) Compliance Environment Services

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

PRESENTATIONS / ANNOUNCEMENTS / ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Mo Saleh with PEEC, Inc. gave an update on the sewer plant. Final changes have been approved by the DEQ and the scheduled bid date will be on Thursday, May 16, 2019 at 2:00 p.m. A mandatory pre bid conference will be held on Wednesday, May 1st at 10:00 a.m. A discussion followed.

Council Member Rivere acknowledged Mr. Ken Bouvier for 44 years of service with New Orleans EMS.

ADDRESS THE CITY COUNCIL

MERVIN GRAVES – 472 DOGWOOD DRIVE

Mr. Graves addressed the City Council to discuss the new ordinance regarding the parking/storage of recreational vehicles. Mr. Graves asked that the council consider the lot layout before voting on this ordinance. Mayor Peoples announced this ordinance will be continued until next month.

ADAM DUFRENE, JR. – 722 AVENUE E

Declined to address the City Council.

Council Member Green arrived at 6:10 p.m.

BETTY G. LANDRY – 421 SALA AVENUE

Ms. Landry addressed the City Council regarding the WHDC Quarterly Report. Ms. Landry asked the Mayor if he talked to the State Fire Marshall regarding the fire codes on Sala Avenue. Mayor Peoples will check with the State Fire Marshall concerning this. Mayor Peoples informed Ms. Landry the signs at the monument have been installed and hopefully will assist with the parking problems. Mayor Peoples and Ms. Landry discussed the problems with the lighting on Sala Avenue.

CANDICE HOLLAND – 1009 WILLOW DRIVE APT. B

Ms. Holland addressed the City Council requesting a Home Occupational License, telephone and mail only, for her on-line jewelry business.

MOVED by Council Member Rivere, and seconded by Council Member Valence, to grant a Home Occupational License to Candice Holland for her on- line jewelry business.

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

SHEENA CAMPBELL – 904 AVENUE B

Ms. Campbell addressed the City Council concerning the ordinance regarding the parking/storage of recreational vehicles. Mayor Peoples stated the he and the City Council are working tirelessly on this ordinance. Council Member Nobles stated his main concern is safety and making sure the vehicle is not obstructing anyone's view.

Council Member Rivere spoke in regards to the City Ordinance that was adopted 20 to 30 years ago regarding the parking/storage of recreational vehicles. Council Member Rivere stated the Mayor has given this council the opportunity to modify this ordinance that it may benefit all the citizens of Westwego. Council Member Rivere stated this council is working very hard to make this ordinance fit for everyone.

Police Chief Munch stated the way this City Ordinance was written in 1993 all the residences would be in violation of this ordinance however, the Mayor and City Council are trying to modify this ordinance to be fair to all the residents.

RODNEY BREAUX, JR. – 1219 AVENUE H

Mr. Breaux addressed the City Council regarding an Occupational License for PPS Financial Solutions, LLC.

MOVED by Council Member Rivere, and seconded by Council Member Thibodeaux, to grant an Occupational License to Rodney Breaux with PPS Financial Solutions.

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

HEAR ALL REPORTS

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

AMENDED AGENDA

Amend the Agenda to discuss Item Number 2, (JP) 0.75% sales tax for Police Salaries.

Chief Munch discussed a 0.75% sales tax dedicated to Police salaries. Chief Munch stated we are the lowest paid department in the area and are losing officers to other agencies.

Council Member Green is in favor and will sponsor this resolution and Council Member Nobles will second this resolution. A discussion followed. A formal resolution is required for this 0.75% sales tax. Council Member Green withdrew his motion. Mayor Peoples asked that this resolution be prepared for the next meeting in hopes that it can be put on the November Ballot.

HEAR ALL REPORTS (CON'T)

Fire Chief – Ryan P. Guidroz was absent.

Chief Building Inspector – Leslie “Skip” Lombas, Jr. 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 absent but submitted his original report.

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

Senior Center Coordinator – Brant Fonseca submitted his original report. Mr. Fonseca thanked Chief Munch for the Senior Center Easter Party and thanked Mayor Peoples for the fence repairs at the Senior Center. Mayor Peoples addressed Mr. Fonseca concerning his request of the Westwego Civic Association Building for the Senior Center Mardi Gras Ball. Mayor Peoples asked Council Member Valence to speak to the Civic Association concerning the Senior Center Mardi Gras Ball.

Council Member Green asked that the agenda be amended to discuss Hurricane Preparedness. Mayor Peoples stated if there are no objections this will be added to the Amended Agenda that was voted on earlier in the meeting. There were no objections.

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. City CPA Jim Butler was not present. Mayor Peoples informed the City Council Mr. Butler will be available at a later date if there are any questions concerning this report.

Council Member Rivere announced the Annual Crawfish Cookoff will be held Saturday, May 4th at the Westwego Farmers Market.

APPROVE THE MINUTES

Regular Session of Monday, March 11, 2019

MOVED by Council Member Valence, and seconded by Council Member Green, to approve the Minutes of the Regular Session on Monday, March 11, 2019.

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

RESOLUTIONS FOR ADOPTION

The City Clerk read aloud the following resolutions for adoption.

RESOLUTION 2019 – 04(A)

Offered by Council Member Rivere:

A resolution recognizing April 2019 as Autism Awareness Month in the City of Westwego.

MOVED by Council Member Rivere, seconded by Council Member Green, to adopt Resolution 2019-04(A)

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

RESOLUTION 2019 – 04(B)

Offered by Council Member Rivere:

A resolution designating April 2019 to be Fair Housing Month in the City of Westwego.

MOVED by Council Member Rivere, seconded by Council Member Green, to adopt Resolution 2019-04(B)

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

RESOLUTION 2019 – 04(C)

Offered by Council Member Rivere:

A resolution accepting the Louisiana Compliance Questionnaire for Louisiana Municipalities, as completed for the City of Westwego by the Mayor and his staff, as a required part of the audit for which the City has recently engaged a Certified Public Accountant.

MOVED by Council Member Rivere, seconded by Council Member Valence, to adopt Resolution 2019-04(C)

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

RESOLUTION 2019 – 04(D)

Offered by Council Member Valence:

A resolution authorizing Mayor Joe Peoples, on behalf of the City of Westwego, to submit an application to the Jefferson Parish Department of Community Development for the purpose of placing the Westwego Wastewater Collection System Improvements on the Project Priority List for funding through the Community Development program, further authorizing Mayor Peoples to furnish such additional information as may reasonably be requested in connection with the application, and designating Mayor Peoples as the Official Project Representative for the City of Westwego for any project that may result from the submission of the application.

MOVED by Council Member Valence, seconded by Council Member Nobles, to adopt Resolution 2019-04(D)

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

RESOLUTION 2019 – 04(E)

Offered later in meeting.

AMENDED AGENDA

Amend the Agenda to discuss Item Number 1, (JP) IGA Street Signs Purchase and Replacement

RESOLUTION 2019 – 04(F)

Offered by Council Member Valence:

A resolution ratifying an Intergovernmental Agreement between the City of Westwego and the Parish of Jefferson for the installation of French Quarter style street name signs at forty-one (41) intersections in the City of Westwego at a cost of \$6,650.00.

MOVED by Council Member Valence, seconded by Council Member Nobles, to adopt Resolution 2019-04(F)

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, April 8, 2019, and laid over for publication of notice:

The City Clerk read aloud the following ordinances for introduction.

Offered by Council Member Green:

An ordinance amending and reenacting Section 44-26 of the Westwego Code of Ordinances to provide for Water Service Security Deposits.

NOTICE IS HEREBY FURTHER GIVEN that the Mayor and Council will hold a regular meeting on Monday, May 13, 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 1572

An ordinance amending and re-enacting Section 44-30 of the Westwego Code of Ordinances to provide for the discontinuation of water service for delinquency and related matters.

MOVED by Council Member Green, and seconded by Council Member Rivere, to open the public hearing.

APPROVED: Yeas: Green, Nobles, Valence, Thibodeaux

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

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

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

Mayor Peoples gave an explanation of this ordinance. A discussion followed.

MOVED by Council Member Green, and seconded by Council Member Nobles, to adopt Ordinance 1572.

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

Offered by Council Member Rivere:

An ordinance amending and re-enacting Section 34-60 of the Westwego Code of Ordinances concerning the parking/storage of recreational boats, campers, trailers etc.

This ordinance will be continued until next month. Council Member Rivere asked that once the ordinance is complete it be posted prior to the May 13, 2019 meeting for the residents' review.

OLD BUSINESS

1. (GG) 109 Norton Street – Update

Mayor Peoples gave an update on 109 Norton Street and explained this property had an issue with a fraudulent contractor and the contractors are currently working on removing this structure.

2. (GG) 301-305 Fourth Street – Update

Council Member Green ask that the owners of 301–305 Fourth Street secure and clean up this structure. Perry Talamo with Code Enforcement is communicating with the owner of the property to assure the cleanup is being done.

3. (GG) River Road – Update

Council Member Green spoke of the poor condition of the River Road and asked the Mayor to impress upon the DOTD the importance of this matter. Mayor Peoples stated the DOTD is almost finished their evaluation and will start repairs sometime thereafter.

4. (GG) Avenue A and Fourth Street – Update

Council Member Green spoke concerning the church property at Avenue A and Fourth Street. Mayor Peoples signed the purchase agreement for \$10,000.00 for this property.

5. (GG) Dedication of Christian Jones Playground

A date is set for Saturday, May 18, 2019 at 10:00 a.m. for the Christian Jones Playground Dedication and the Dedication Ceremony for the Catfish Bourgeois Park which will also be held on Saturday, May 18, 2019 at 11:00 a.m. Council Member Rivere asked that we confirm the date with Senator John Alario, Jr. and State Representative Robert Billiot concerning the Dedication Ceremony since they were a great help in acquiring the funds for these projects.

MOVED by Council Member Green, and seconded by Council Member Thibodeaux, that the Dedication Ceremony for the Christian Jones Playground and the Catfish Bourgeois Park will be held on Saturday, May 18, 2019.

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

6. (GG) Railroad at Fourth Street and Sala Avenue

Council Member Green expressed his concern with the condition of the railroad tracks at Fourth Street and Sala Avenue and Louisiana Street. Mayor Peoples has contacted the Property Management and is awaiting their response.

7. (JSN) Update – Appearance in front of City Hall

Council Member Nobles asked for an update on the pressure washing, columns and flower gardens in front of City Hall. Mayor Peoples has contracted Evergreen Lawn Care to plant and maintain the gardens in front of City Hall. Mayor Peoples has contacted another company to pressure wash the front of the building. Council Member Valence asked if Evergreen Lawn Care would fertilize the grass in front of City Hall. Evergreen Lawn Care agreed to fertilize the grass in front of City Hall.

Council Member Rivere inquired about the new sign for City Hall. Mayor Peoples spoke of the new sign and will have pictures for the City Council to view at the Regular Meeting in May.

8. (JSN) Update – District 2 Street Repairs

Council Member Nobles asked for an update on the street repairs in District 2. Mayor Peoples put rocks in the holes and would like to do the small repairs in house and have the Jefferson Parish Contractor do the bigger repairs. Mayor Peoples also discussed District 3 and District 4 street repairs.

9. (MJR) Cooperative Endeavor Agreement with YMBC

Council Member Rivere discussed a cooperative endeavor with the YMBC. He stated in the past the City of Westwego cut the grass for the YMBC. The YMBC has asked that the City of Westwego resume cutting their grass in exchange for six (6) events in the YMBC Hall. Mayor Peoples will look into this cooperative endeavor with the YMBC.

10. (JP) DMV Fees

Mayor Peoples stated the agreement with the City of Westwego and the DMV is now in place. Beginning April 1, 2019 the City of Westwego will receive \$6.00 for each transaction instead of \$4.50 per transaction. This increase will help offset the deficiency in the budget regarding the DMV.

Council Member Nobles spoke concerning the DMV number system. Mayor Peoples is getting a price for the number system and stated a door will be installed soon to separate the front City Hall window from the lobby.

11. (JP) Farmers Market

Mayor Peoples and Keith Bouvier discussed ideas to compensate the money that is being lost on events at the Farmers Market. A discussion followed. The Crawfish Boil was also discussed.

12. (JP) Victory Drive @ Westbank Expressway Lights

Mayor Peoples contacted the DOTD once again concerning the Westwego sign on Victory Drive and Westbank Expressway that is not working properly. The DOTD explained there was a box that controlled the lighting of the Westwego sign that was damaged from an accident and they are presently working to repair this problem.

13. (JP) OLPS Property

Discussed earlier in this meeting.

14. (JP) Auction

The Auction will take place on Saturday, May 11th at the Westwego Police Department. Mayor Peoples gave the City Council a list of the items that will be available at this auction.

15. (JP) Avenue A Resurface Project Update

Mayor Peoples gave an update on Avenue A. At this time the city employees are replacing and locating water taps. The contractor is waiting on approval from the DOTD concerning the traffic plan because traffic will be blocked at different locations while this work is being performed. Once the contractor receives approval from the DOTD work will begin on this project.

AMENDED AGENDA

1. (JP) Utility Adjustment

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

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

2. (JP) Compliance Environment Services

The Atmos Gas Company is going to hire a company that will vacuum and inspect the sewer lines from Louisiana Street to Avenue D on the Northside of the railroad tracks. This is a \$100,000.00 service that will be done at the gas company's expense to insure they did not bore through any sewer lines when they were doing their work in this area.

3. (GG) Hurricane Preparedness

Council Member Green spoke on behalf of the Hurricane Preparedness in his district concerning seniors who may need help in the event of an emergency. Mayor Peoples stated the cleanup contract is in place in the event of a hurricane and Brant Fonseca has a system and plan for the seniors in the City of Westwego. A discussion followed. In the past Council Member Valence and Allison Romero would do a meal preparation in the event of a hurricane. Mayor Peoples asked that they check into this and inform him of the cost.

NEW BUSINESS

1. (GG) Council Members Locked Mailboxes

Council Member Green asked the reason the locked mailboxes were removed from the Council's Office. Council Member Rivere explained this was voted on months ago when Council Member Green was ill and unable to attend the meetings. The City Council asked the Mayor for locking file cabinets in the Council's Office instead of the locked mailboxes. A discussion followed.

2. (JSN) Janitorial for City Hall

Council Member Nobles discussed the cleanup for City Hall. He appreciated the Mayor hiring someone to fill this position and he understands the budget must be adjusted to compensate this.

3. (JLT) Catfish Bourgeois Playground

Council Member Thibodeaux asked the amount of money that is available from the playground improvement fund. She expressed the need for a bathroom closer to the walking track and the children's playground. Mayor Peoples is waiting on completion of the Louis Marrero Park to have an exact figure of the available funds from the initial funds that were allotted. Mayor Peoples will inform the council concerning the funds and the progress of the Louis Marrero Park. A discussion followed.

4. (JP) Railroad Quiet Zone

Mayor Peoples discussed the need for a Railroad Quiet Zone from Klein Street to Louisiana Street. After much research a resolution is required to make this a Railroad Quiet Zone.

RESOLUTION 2019 – 04(E)

Offered by Council Member Nobles:

A resolution asking that the City of Westwego be made a Railroad Quiet Zone from Klein Street to Louisiana Street.

MOVED by Council Member Nobles, seconded by Council Member Green, to adopt Resolution 2019-04(E)

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

5. (JP) 617 Vic Street

Mayor Peoples would like to begin condemnation proceedings on 617 Vic Street.

MOVED by Council Member Rivere, and seconded by Council Member Green, to begin condemnation proceedings on 617 Vic Street.

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

6. (JP) 600 West Drive House & Shed

Mayor Peoples would like to begin condemnation proceedings on 600 West Drive.

MOVED by Council Member Nobles, and seconded by Council Member Green, to begin condemnation proceedings on 600 West Drive.

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

7. (JP) Water Meters – Southside of Expressway

Mayor Peoples applied to Facility Planning to repurpose the funds that were earmarked for the water tower to now be earmarked for the replacement of water meters on the Southside of the Westbank Expressway

from Victory Drive to Louisiana Street. Mayor Peoples did speak to Senator John Alario concerning this. A discussion followed.

8. (JP) Cement Repairs

Mayor Peoples is waiting on the Jefferson Parish Contractor concerning the black topping. The City of Westwego will be doing the smaller street repairs with concrete.

ADJOURN

MOVED by All, and seconded by All, to adjourn meeting at 7:35 p.m. Monday, April 8, 2019.

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

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, May 13, 2019, in the Council Room at City Hall, 1100 Fourth Street, Westwego, Louisiana.
