

City Hall  
Westwego, Louisiana  
Regular Session  
Monday, June 10, 2019

The Mayor and City Council of the City of Westwego met in Regular Session at 6:00 p.m., Monday, June 10, 2019, 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.  
City Clerk Lisa Tapia

#### 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 memory of the members of our community who died since our last meeting.

#### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

#### PRESENTATIONS / ANNOUNCEMENTS / ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Mayor Peoples read aloud the following notice of public meeting:

#### NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the City Council of the City of Westwego, State of Louisiana, plans to consider a resolution calling a special election to be held on Saturday, November 16, 2019, seeking approval for the City of Westwego, State of Louisiana, to authorize the levy of a 6.50-mill special tax for the purpose of paying salaries and benefits, including pension benefits, for Police Department personnel. The resolution will be considered at a City Council meeting to be held on July 8, 2019, at six o'clock (6:00) p.m., at City Hall, Westwego, Louisiana.

#### KEN CANTRELLE – HISTORIAN FOR OUR LADY OF PROMPT SUCCOR CHURCH

Ken Cantrelle, Historian for Our Lady of Prompt Succor Church addressed the City Council to announce the church's 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary on February 8, 2020, and to request the City's help in preparing for it.

A discussion followed.

The City Attorney stated that he will look into whether or not the City can assist OLPS in this matter.

#### MO SALEH – SEWER PLANT UPDATE

Project Engineer Mo Saleh addressed the City Council to discuss the status of the Sodium Hypochlorite System and Waste Water Treatment Plant Improvement Projects. He reported that the City received four bids today for the Sodium Hypochlorite System Project and recommended that the City Council take the bids under advisement and submit the low bid to Jefferson Parish Community Development for approval.

A discussion followed.

MOVED by Council Member Rivere, and seconded by Council Member Green, to take the bids for the Sodium Hypochlorite System Project under advisement, to submit the low bid to Jefferson Parish Community Development for approval, and to authorize Mayor Peoples to proceed with the low bid if it is approved.

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

Mr. Saleh reported that the bid opening for the Waste Water Treatment Plant Improvement Project has been extended an additional eight days until next 2:00 p.m. Tuesday, June 18, 2019, and that an addendum will be issued this Wednesday, June 11, 2019, to answer technical questions posed by the bidders.

#### AMEND THE AGENDA

MOVED by Council Member Rivere, and seconded by Council Member Valence, to amend the agenda to discuss the following matters at the end of business before retiring to Executive Session.

- (JP) 2% Fire Insurance Rebate
- (JP) Auction Proceeds
- (JP) Cats
- (JP) Avenue C Fire Station

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

#### ADDRESS THE CITY COUNCIL

##### PHI LINH ELLIS – SMOOTHIE KING

Phi Linh Ellis addressed the City Council on behalf of CME, LLC to request an Occupational License for the new Smoothie King at 1030 Avenue D.

MOVED by Council Member Rivere, and seconded by Council Member Thibodeaux, to grant an Occupational License to CME, LLC to operate the new Smoothie King at 1030 Avenue D, subject to all requirements for such.

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

##### CHELSEA FLANAGAN

Chelsea Flanagan addressed the City Council to request an Occupational License to sell cold cups and candy from her home.

The City Attorney asked for a few minutes to look this up in the Code of Ordinances.

##### KAREN FRANKS

Karen Franks addressed the City Council to request an Occupational License to operate a full-service beauty salon at 202 Sala Avenue.

MOVED by Council Member Green, and seconded by Council Member Nobles, to approve an Occupational License for Karen Franks to operate a full-service beauty salon at 202 Sala Avenue, subject to all requirements for such.

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

##### LISA VALENCE

Council Member Lisa Valence addressed the City Council to request two Occupational Licenses, one under the name 1125 Valence, LLC for her property at 1125 Avenue H and one under the name Valence Enterprises, LLC for her property on Louisiana Street.

MOVED by Council Member Thibodeaux, and seconded by Council Member Nobles, to approve two Occupational Licenses for Lisa Valence, under the names 1125 Valence, LLC and Valence Enterprises, LLC, subject to all requirements for such.

APPROVED. Yeas: Green, Nobles, Rivere, Thibodeaux; Abstained: Valence

#### CHELSEA FLANAGAN

Mayor Peoples recognized the City Attorney who reported that the type of business that Chelsea Flanagan asked about earlier is prohibited in a residential neighborhood.

#### SHEENA CAMPBELL

Sheena Campbell was present regarding the ordinance amending and re-enacting Section 34-60 of the Westwego Code of Ordinances.

Mayor Peoples asked her to wait until the matter comes up later in the meeting.

#### RUBY MC CULLOCH

Ruby McCulloch addressed the City Council to request an Occupational License to operate a dog grooming business from her home.

Mayor Peoples explained that the Code of Ordinances does not allow this in a residential neighborhood, and asked Ms. McCulloch to meet with Code Enforcement for further information regarding her location.

#### MERVIN GRAVES

Mervin Graves was present regarding the ordinance amending and re-enacting Section 34-60 of the Westwego Code of Ordinances.

Mayor Peoples asked him to wait until the matter comes up later in the meeting.

#### WESLEY HAWLEY

Wesley Hawley was present regarding the ordinance amending and re-enacting Section 34-60 of the Westwego Code of Ordinances.

Mayor Peoples asked him to wait until the matter comes up later in the meeting.

#### HEAR ALL REPORTS

Chief of Police Dwayne J. Munch, Sr., Fire Chief Ryan P. Guidroz, Chief Building Inspector Leslie "Skip" Lombas, Jr., Mechanical Inspector Tommy Baxter, Senior Center Coordinator Brant Fonseca, Farmers Market Coordinator Keith Bouvier, and Code Enforcement Officer Perry Talamo submitted their written reports.

Plumbing Inspector Walter "Bubba" Choquette, Jr., Electrical Inspector Doyle Guidroz were not present. Their reports were submitted prior to the meeting.

EMS Director Joseph J. Aldor, Jr., was not present. His report was submitted by Paramedic Nicole Volpi, who also announced that the Westwego Emergency Medical Service will be holding a book reading at 10:00 a.m. June 20, 2019 at the Westwego Library and invited all children and parents to attend.

Mayor Peoples asked if the City Council had any questions on the monthly budget report, which they did not. He stated that City CPA James Butler will be present next month to review the budget.

#### APPROVE THE MINUTES

MOVED, and seconded, by All Council Members, to approve the minutes of the Regular Session of Monday, May 13, 2019.

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

## RESOLUTIONS FOR ADOPTION

Offered by Council Member Rivere:

### RESOLUTION 2019-06(A)

A resolution appointing The Advocate as the Official Journal of the City of Westwego.

MOVED by Council Member Rivere, and seconded by Council Member Green, to adopt Resolution 2019-06(A).

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

Offered by Council Member Nobles:

### RESOLUTION 2019-06(B)

A resolution in support of the City of Gretna in its opposition to plans of the New Orleans and Gulf Coast Railway Company to acquire property and build additional rail in residential and commercial areas of downtown Gretna, and in opposition to the transportation of Canadian crude oil through the City of Westwego and through the City of Gretna as it would pose a major disruption to the citizens and business owners of Westwego and Gretna and would pose an unacceptable health hazard and safety risk to people of the area.

MOVED by Council Member Nobles, and seconded by Council Member Green, to adopt Resolution 2019-06(B).

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

Council Member Thibodeaux stated that she must abstain in this matter because her employer does business with the railroad.

## ORDINANCES FOR INTRODUCTION

The City Clerk read aloud the following ordinance for consideration:

Offered by Council Member Nobles:

An ordinance amending and reenacting in its entirety Section 8-114 of the Westwego Code of Ordinances to provide for the definition of cruelty to animal.

## ORDINANCES FOR ADOPTION

The City Clerk read aloud the following ordinance for adoption:

Offered by Council Member Rivere:

### ORDINANCE 1574

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.

Mayor Peoples read aloud the changes being made to the ordinance and discussed their affect.

MOVED, and seconded, by All Council Members, to open a public hearing for this ordinance.

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

Mayor Peoples entertained public comment.

Johnny Shaddinger spoke in favor of the ordinance.

Sheena Campbell addressed the City Council to discuss the affect the ordinance would have on her situation.

A discussion followed.

Wesley Hawley thanked the Mayor and City Council for rewriting the ordinance and then addressed the City Council to discuss the affect the ordinance would have on his situation.

A discussion followed.

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

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

Council Member Rivere offered a motion to adopt the ordinance, seconded by Council Member Nobles for discussion.

A discussion followed.

Council Member Valence stated that police officers should also have discretion regarding whether a vehicle poses a safety hazard.

Mayor Peoples stated that the words "by Code Enforcement" will be removed from paragraph (e).

MOVED by Council Member Rivere, and seconded by Council Member Nobles, to adopt Ordinance 1574 with the words "by Code Enforcement" will be removed from paragraph (e).

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

#### OLD BUSINESS

1. (JSN) 501 Fourth Street – Quiet Title

Council Member Nobles stated that he would like to meet with the two adjacent business owners and the Mayor regarding this situation.

2. (JP) Utility Billing Adjustment

MOVED, and seconded, by All Council Members, to approve the Utility Billing Adjustments.

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

3. (JP) Update Martin House

Mayor Peoples reported that the roof on the Martin House is almost finished and the fascias and gutters are on. He stated that Council Members Nobles and Valence have toured the house and asked the other three Council Members to tour the house with him to get a feel for his proposed use of the structure as a reception hall.

4. (JP) Update WAC

Mayor Peoples reported that the roof on the Westwego Art Center building is finished, the windows should be installed and complete by June 21, the termite remediation is underway, and the bricks still need to be sealed. He also discussed possible uses for the building.

5. (JP) Update Farmer's Market

Mayor Peoples reported that the roofs over the bathrooms is complete, the concrete walkways have been extended and widened, the walk-in refrigerator and freezer have been delivered, the garage door opening is complete at the back of the stage and the roll-up door should be installed this week, the sound system is currently being installed, the plumber is preparing to run the water lines down the Fourth Street side, and rotten wood throughout the Market is being repaired.

Council Member Nobles asked about the new property that was purchased next to the Market parking lot.

Mayor Peoples stated that he is in the planning stages of the Honor Square and parking lot area. He has taken Facility Planning to the site and would like to take the City Council there two at a time to discuss plans.

6. (JP) Update Museum

Mayor Peoples reported that the roof and gutters are complete at the Museum, but there is another issue with water intrusion through the back wall into the bathroom that will be addressed soon.

7. (JP) Update WHARF

Mayor Peoples reported that the electric lines have been installed underground and run to the classroom, the LED security lighting has been installed on the poles, and security cameras will be installed soon. He stated that he and Council Member Valence had a telephone conference with the Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority about the funds from Wildlife and Fisheries, which will become available as soon as the contract is executed. This will provide \$995,000 for Phase 1, with funding provided through Facility Planning for further phases.

8. (JP) Update Street Repairs

Mayor Peoples reported that the price for the street repairs came in at \$389,920.00 just to fix the potholes, so he is getting prices for the rest of the equipment needed to be able to do the work in-house.

A discussion followed.

Mayor Peoples stated that he would come back to the Council once he has the prices.

9. (JP) Update 617 Vic Street

Mayor Peoples reported that the owner is getting estimates to tear down 617 Vic Street and plans to have the work complete by June 30, so he has placed the condemnation process on hold until then.

10. (JP) Update Honor Square

Mayor Peoples reported that Councilmen Paul Johnston and Rickie Templet have committed \$40,000 each toward Honor Square and that Aptim Engineering is working on preliminary plans. He stated that there is also Facility Planning money that can be used for this project.

11. (JP) Update River Road

Mayor Peoples stated that the River Road improvements have been delayed due to the high river level and may get started as early as August. They are planning to widen and deepen the ditch from the warehouses to Klein Street and resurface the road from Louisiana Street all the way through Westwego to the Harvey Canal.

12. (JP) Update Avenue A

Mayor Peoples reported that the blacktop on Avenue A is complete from Fourth Street to the Westbank Expressway and they are working on making the walkways handicap accessible. He stated that City crews are installing individual taps for each house, which is greatly improving water pressure, that the drains will be vacuumed to remove any debris from the construction, and that after construction is complete, a walkthrough will be conducted to make sure that everything has been done right.

13. (JP) Update Sewer Plant

This item was addressed earlier in the meeting.

14. (JP) Update Police Department Millage

This item was addressed earlier in the meeting.

15. (JP) Update Fire Hydrants

Mayor Peoples reported that the 176 fire hydrants that were broken at the start of this term have all been repaired and that phase two will begin soon to raise and straighten the low and leaning hydrants.

Chief Guidroz stated that every fire hydrant in the City now works, and that the Fire Department will flow test them all over the next year and install color-coded rings to indicate their flow capacity.

Council Members Green and Valence commended Mayor Peoples for all the work he has gotten done since taking office.

Council Members Rivere and Valence spoke on behalf of Ronell Laporte to request an Occupational License for her to operate a Dog Grooming Business at 128 Sala Avenue.

MOVED by Council Member Green, and seconded by Council Member Rivere, to grant an Occupational License to Ronell Laporte to operate a Dog Grooming Business at 128 Sala Avenue, subject to all requirements for such.

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

#### NEW BUSINESS

1. (MJR) Mayor Pro-Tempore

Council Member Rivere nominated Council Member Nobles for Mayor Pro Tempore.

MOVED by Council Member Rivere, and seconded by Council Member Valence, to appoint Council Member Nobles as Mayor Pro Tempore.

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

Council Member Nobles nominated Council Member Rivere for Mayor Pro Tempore Pro Tempore.

MOVED by Council Member Nobles, and seconded by Council Member Green, to appoint Council Member Rivere as Mayor Pro Tempore Pro Tempore.

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

2. (MJR) District 4 – Update

Council Member Rivere stated that this was covered earlier in the meeting.

3. (JLT) 431 Fourth Street

Council Member Thibodeaux discussed issues at 431 Fourth Street.

A discussion followed.

4. (JP) City Limits/Zip Code

Mayor Peoples discussed the ongoing confusion in the news media with events from outside of city limits being identified as having occurred in Westwego. He entertained a verbal resolution asking the U. S. Postal Service to assign a separate zip code to addresses outside of city limits, keeping 70094 for addresses within the City.

A discussion followed.

#### VERBAL RESOLUTION 2019-06(C)

A resolution requesting that the United States Postal Service create a separate Zip Code for locations outside of the City of Westwego's city limits, leaving the City of Westwego's Zip Code at 70094.

MOVED, and seconded, by All Council Members, to adopt Verbal Resolution 2019-06(C).

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

Council Member Rivere offered a verbal resolution to send to the news media, together with a map of Westwego, asking them not to report anything outside of Westwego city limits as Westwego.

#### VERBAL RESOLUTION 2019-06(D)

A resolution asking the News Media not to report events that occur outside of City of Westwego city limits as having occurred in Westwego.

MOVED, and seconded, by All Council Members, to adopt Verbal Resolution 2019-06(D).

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

5. (JP) Catfish Bourgeois Park Restrooms

Mayor Peoples reported that he and Council Members Nobles and Rivere met with the Engineer regarding restrooms at Catfish Bourgeois Park. He stated that funding is available for this through Facility Planning, and that the Engineer is working on plans for restrooms near the old location with appropriate construction to allow hosing down the interiors.

6. (JP) Louis Marrero Park Playground Equipment

Mayor Peoples reported that he and Council Member Rivere met with the Engineer at Louis Marrero Park regarding a playground area that would mirror the one at Catfish Bourgeois Park (minus the whirlybird). The funding for this is also available through Facility Planning and the Engineer is working on the plans.

Council Member Valence asked the Mayor to look into including some sort of shade or shelter for the playground at Louis Marrero Park.

7. (JP) Stop Sign Avenue A at Sixth Street

Mayor Peoples asked the City Council to authorize the placement of Stop Signs on Avenue A at Sixth Street due to the level of traffic through the intersection.

MOVED by Council Member Thibodeaux, and seconded by Council Member Rivere, to authorize the placement of Stop Signs on Avenue A at Sixth Street.

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

8. (JP) Farmer's Market Rentals

Farmers and Fisheries Market Director Keith Bouvier discussed the need to update rental policies, prices, fees, and scheduling for the Market.

A discussion followed.

Council Member Rivere suggested that the City Council take this matter under advisement and schedule a separate meeting for further discussion.

Mayor Peoples stated that he would meet with the City Council two at a time with Keith to discuss the issues and come up with a plan.

9. (JP) Ditches on Seven Oaks Boulevard

Mayor Peoples discussed recent flooding on Seven Oaks Boulevard. He stated that he contacted Jefferson Parish and DOTD, and that the ditches have been swept and the water is now flowing well.

10. (JP) Avenue D at Eleventh Street

Mayor Peoples reported that the sewer manhole on Eleventh Street near Avenue D is collapsing, and that he is going to have a reinforced concrete slab installed to take the weight of traffic off of the pit.

Council Member Valence asked about the Louisiana Street lift station.

Mayor Peoples stated that he was supposed to have the cost today, but the engineer did not send it.

A discussion followed.

11. (JP) Hurricane Season

Mayor Peoples discussed Hurricane Season preparations.

12. (JP) State Funding

Mayor Peoples handed out a packet to the City Council regarding State Capital Outlay Funds available for ongoing project through Facility Planning & Control and then discussed the information contained therein.

A discussion followed.



13. (JP) New Computers City Hall

Mayor Peoples thanked Chief Munch for purchasing thirteen new computers for City Hall.

Chief Munch stated that it's all about working together and doing what's best for the City as a whole. He commended the Mayor and City Council for everything they have accomplished by working together.

14. (JP) 610 & 614 Fourth Street

Mayor Peoples asked the City Council to initiate condemnation proceedings for 610 and 614 Fourth Street.

MOVED by Council Member Thibodeaux, and seconded by Council Member Green, to initiate condemnation proceedings for 610 Fourth Street and 614 Fourth Street.

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

15. (JP) Senate President John Alario, Jr. & State Representative Robert Billiot

Mayor Peoples reported that Senate President John Alario, Jr. and State Representative Robert Billiot are approaching the end of their terms in office and are term-limited out. He stated that he is planning a celebration for them later in the year, and asked everyone, if they see either of them, to show their appreciation for everything they have done for the City of Westwego during their careers.

A discussion followed.

ITEMS ADDED BY AMENDMENT

1. (JP) 2% Fire Insurance Rebate

Mayor Peoples reported that the annual 2% Fire Insurance Rebate has been received in the amount of \$50,911.15 and asked the City Council to authorize him to transfer the funds to the Westwego Volunteer Fire Company.

MOVED, and seconded, by All Council Members, to authorize Mayor Peoples to transfer the 2% Fire Insurance Rebate, in the amount of \$50,911.15, to the Westwego Volunteer Fire Company.

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

2. (JP) Auction Proceeds

Mayor Peoples discussed the proceeds from the recent auction, which brought in \$13,846.44 for the Police Department, \$4,489.70 for the Fire Department, and \$22,464.00 for City Hall, of which approximately \$5,000.00 is actually for EMS. He stated that he intends to purchase two new pumps and fittings to outfit a truck for the Streets Department using the remainder of the City Hall proceeds.

3. (JP) Cats

Mayor Peoples discussed ongoing issues with cats throughout the City.

A discussion followed.

Mayor Peoples stated that he will meet with the City Attorney, and with the City Council two at a time, to put together an ordinance to address cats.

4. (JP) Avenue C Fire Station

Mayor Peoples reported that one of the adjacent property owners would like to purchase a portion of the property at the Avenue C Fire Station.

MOVED by Council Member Rivere, and seconded by Council Member Thibodeaux, to authorize Mayor Peoples to have the Avenue C Fire Station property surveyed and appraised.

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

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mayor Peoples entertained a motion to retire to Executive Session.

MOVED, and seconded, by All Council Members, to retire to Executive Session at 8:35 p.m. to discuss the following matter:

Abedaziz Ahmed Litigation

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

The Mayor and City Council returned from Executive Session at 9:10 p.m.

ADJOURN

Mayor Peoples entertained a motion to adjourn.

MOVED, and seconded, by All Council Members, to adjourn at 9:10 p.m.

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

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Joe Peoples, Mayor

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Lisa Tapia, City Clerk

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The Mayor and City Council of the City of Westwego will meet in Regular Session at 6:00 p.m., Monday, July 8, 2019, in the Council Room at City Hall, 1100 Fourth Street, Westwego, Louisiana.

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