

City Hall
Westwego, Louisiana
Regular Session
Monday, May 13, 2019

The Mayor and City Council of the City of Westwego met in Regular Session at 6:00 p.m., Monday, May 13, 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

Deputy City Clerk Maurice T. Bourgeois, Jr. led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance.

PRESENTATIONS / ANNOUNCEMENTS / ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

FRED SCHASSAR – AMERICAN LEGION SECOND DISTRICT COMMANDER

American Legion Second District Commander Fred Schasser presented the 2018-2019 American Legion Second District Citizen of the Year Award to City of Westwego Employee Ross “Frog” Babin.

NATIONAL POLICE WEEK AND NATIONAL EMS WEEK

Council Member Valence announced that May 12, 2019 through May 18, 2019 is National Police Week and that May 19, 2019 through May 25, 2019 is National EMS Week.

PARK DEDICATIONS

Mayor Peoples announced the Christian-Jones Memorial Playground Dedication at 10:00 a.m., Saturday, May 18, 2019, followed by the A. J. “Caffish” Bourgeois Playground Upgrade Dedication at 11:00 a.m. the same day.

MEMORIAL DAY CEREMONY

Mayor Peoples announced the Memorial Day Service at 5:00 p.m., Monday, May 27, 2019, at the Monument in front of the Water Tower at 677 Avenue H.

RYAN DAUL – DAUL INSURANCE AGENCY

Ryan Daul, of Daul Insurance Agency, addressed the City Council to discuss the Property Insurance Renewal and the LWCC Dividend.

A discussion followed.

MO SALEH – SEWER PROJECT UPDATE

Project Engineer Mo Saleh addressed the City Council to discuss the status of the Sewer Projects.

A discussion followed.

ADOPT THE 2019 MILLAGE RATES

Mayor Peoples entertained a motion to open a public hearing for the adoption of the 2019 Millage Rates.

MOVED, and seconded, by All Council Members, to open a public hearing for the adoption of the 2019 Millage Rates.

APPROVED. Yeas: Green, Nobles, Valence, Rivere, Thibodeaux; Nays: None; Abstained: None; Absent: None

The City Clerk read aloud the following resolution for adoption:

RESOLUTION 2019-05(A)

BE IT RESOLVED, by the City of Westwego, or the Parish of Jefferson, Louisiana, in a public meeting held on Monday, May 13, 2019, which meeting was conducted in accordance with the Open Meetings Law and the additional requirements of Article VII, Section 23(C) of the Louisiana Constitution and R.S. 47:1705(B), that the following millage rates be and are hereby levied upon the dollar of the assessed valuation of all property subject to ad valorem taxation within said City for the year 2018, for the purpose of raising revenue:

<u>MILLAGE</u>	
<u>Tax</u>	<u>Mills</u>
General City Tax	3.37
Street Lighting & Street Maintenance	2.50
Park Maintenance & Lighting	2.50
Fire Protection Maintenance & Operation	4.19
Fire Department Maint. & Op. & Equipment	5.87
Police Maintenance & Operation	4.19
<u>Ambulance Service Maintenance</u>	<u>7.00</u>
Total	29.62

IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED that the Assessor of the Parish of Jefferson shall extend upon the assessment roll for the year 2019 the taxes herein levied, and the tax collector of said City shall collect and remit the same to said taxing authority in accordance with law.

Mayor Peoples entertained Public Comment; there was none.

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

APPROVED. Yeas: Green, Nobles, Valence, Rivere, Thibodeaux; Nays: None; Abstained: None; Absent: None

MOVED, and seconded, by All Council Members, to adopt Resolution 2019-05(A).

APPROVED. Yeas: Green, Nobles, Valence, Rivere, Thibodeaux; Nays: None; Abstained: None; Absent: None

AMEND THE AGENDA

MOVED by Council Member Valence, and seconded by Council Member Nobles, to amend the agenda to discuss the following matters at the end of business:

- (LHV) Cooperative Endeavor Agreement with the Westwego Civic Association
- (JSN) City Hall
- (JSN) Playground Equipment
- (MJR) A Resolution in Support of House Bill 335
- (JP) Drainage Pump Station #1
- (JP) Fire Department Parking Lot
- (JP) The Auction

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

ADDRESS THE CITY COUNCIL

MICHAEL GIETL

Michael Gietl addressed the City Council to request an Occupational License to operate a Wholesale Fashion Accessories Business at 1498 Fourth Street.

MOVED by Council Member Nobles, and seconded by Council Member Valence, to grant an Occupational License to Michael Gietl to operate a Wholesale Fashion Accessories Business at 1498 Fourth Street subject to all legal requirements for such.

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

RACHAEL CULMONE

Rachael Culmone addressed the City Council to request a Home Occupational License for Mail and Telephone Service Only to operate a Welding, Fabrication, and Welding Inspection Service from her home at 647 Avenue D.

MOVED by Council Member Thibodeaux, and seconded by Council Member Rivere, to grant a Home Occupational License for Mail and Telephone Service Only to Rachael Culmone to operate a Welding, Fabrication, and Welding Inspection service from her home at 647 Avenue D, subject to all legal requirements for such.

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

RODNEY DELAGARDELLE

Rodney De La Gardelle was present to discuss Item 3 under New Business.

Mayor Peoples entertained a motion to take Item 3 under New Business out of order.

MOVED by Council Member Nobles, and seconded by Council Member Rivere, to take Item 3 under New Business out of order.

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

(JSN) 836 CHIPLEY STREET – CONDEMNATION

A discussion of 836 Chipley Street followed.

MOVED by Council Member Nobles, and seconded by Council Member Thibodeaux, to start condemnation proceedings for 836 Chipley Street.

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

DOUG CHERAMIE II – LOCAL LIASON FOR THE OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

Doug Cheramie II, local liaison for the Office of the Attorney General, addressed the City Council to introduce himself and offer his assistance as liaison.

CHARLES HUDSON

Charles Hudson addressed the City Council to discuss the garbage service.

A discussion followed.

JOHNNY SHADDINGER

Johnny Shaddinger addressed the City Council to discuss recycling.

DR. CHARLOTTE MILAZZO

Dr. Charlotte Milazzo addressed the City Council to discuss her plans for 431 Fourth Street, which she recently leased.

A discussion followed.

Dr. Milazzo stated that she would return next month with a formal plan for the location.

HEAR ALL REPORTS

Chief of Police Dwayne J. Munch, Sr. submitted his written report and then discussed the possibility of a property tax millage to fund a salary increase for his department.

A discussion followed.

Mayor Peoples stated that he would start preparations for a millage election.

Fire Chief Ryan P. Guidroz submitted his written report.

Chief Building Inspector Leslie "Skip" Lombas, Jr. submitted his written report.

Mechanical Inspector Tommy Baxter was not present.

Plumbing Inspector Walter "Bubba" Choquette, Jr. submitted his written report.

Electrical Inspector Doyle Guidroz was not present, but his written report was submitted earlier.

EMS Director Joseph J. Aldor, Jr. submitted his written report.

Senior Center Coordinator Brant Fonseca submitted his written report.

Farmers Market Coordinator Keith Bouvier submitted his written report.

Code Enforcement Perry Talamo submitted his written report.

Mayor Peoples/James Butler CPA – Financial Report – Budget vs. Actual

Mayor Peoples asked City CPA Jim Butler to address the City Council.

City CPA Jim Butler addressed the City Council to discuss City Hall Project funds. He stated that FEMA is reviewing available funds with the possibility of reducing them.

A discussion followed.

Mr. Butler briefly discussed the budget. He stated that he would be present at the July meeting with updated figures through June and that he would ask the City Council at that time to consider amending the budget.

APPROVE THE MINUTES

MOVED by Council Member Rivere, and seconded by Council Member Green, to approve the minutes of the Regular Session of Monday, April 8, 2019.

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

RESOLUTIONS FOR ADOPTION

The City Clerk read aloud the following resolution for adoption:

Offered by Council Member Rivere:

RESOLUTION 2015-05(B)

A resolution in support of House Bill 335 to enact R.S. 40:5.5.4 to require food service establishments serving imported crawfish or shrimp to inform patrons that the seafood is of foreign origin.

MOVED by Council Member Rivere, and seconded by Council Member Thibodeaux, to adopt Resolution 2015-05(B).

Yeas: Green, Nobles, Valence, Rivere, Thibodeaux

ORDINANCES FOR INTRODUCTION

There were no ordinances for introduction.

ORDINANCES FOR ADOPTION

Offered by Council Member Green:

ORDINANCE 1573

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

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; there was none.

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

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

MOVED by Council Member Nobles, and seconded by Council Member Rivere to discuss the ordinance.

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

A discussion followed.

MOVED by Council Member Green, and seconded by Council Member Thibodeaux to adopt Ordinance 1573.

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

Mayor Peoples stated that the ordinance on trailers and boats should be ready for next month.

OLD BUSINESS

1. (JSN) Asphalt Street Repairs – Update

Council Member Nobles asked for an update on the asphalt street repairs.

Mayor Peoples discussed the status of the Asphalt Street Repairs Project. He stated that the City is piggy-backing on the Jefferson Parish contract with Barriere Construction and that he would provide the City Council with a list of the work to be done with an estimate of the costs.

2. (LHV) Sewer Plant – Update

This matter was addressed earlier in the meeting.

3. (JLT) Avenue A – Update

Council Member Thibodeaux asked for an update on Avenue A.

Mayor Peoples discussed the status of water line improvements and the coming street overlay. He noted that recent drainage issues were due to heavy rains and had nothing to do with the construction.

A discussion followed.

4. (JP) Utility Bill Adjustment

Mayor Peoples entertained a motion to approve the Utility Bill Adjustments.

MOVED by Council Member Rivere, and seconded by Council Member Valence, to approve the Utility Billing Adjustments.

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

5. (JP) Recycling Program

Mayor Peoples announced that the Recycling Program has been suspended because the recycling facility that Waste Connections uses is unable to accept recyclables at this time.

A discussion followed.

6. (JP) Museum – Update

Mayor Peoples reported that the roof has been completed at the Museum and the contractor is scheduled to finish the gutters this week.

7. (JP) Martin House – Update

Mayor Peoples reported that the roof at the Martini House is proceeding slowly due to the type of material. He stated that he has some thoughts for the future use of the building and invited the City Council to tour the structure with him to see how its laid out and discuss his ideas.

8. (JP) Farmers Market – Update

Mayor Peoples reported that the fence at the Farmers Market is finished; the roofing contractor and concrete contractor are scheduled to start repairs this week; the walk-in refrigerator and walk-in freezer have been ordered; rotten wood on the Church front will be repaired and a garage door installed; pressure washing is complete; the sound system is being priced; and a walk-behind yard vacuum has been ordered. He stated that these improvements are being funded by the hotel/motel tax.

9. (JP) WAC – Update

Mayor Peoples reported that the contractor should finish the roof at the Westwego Art Center this week, but that the building has been found to be infested with termites. He stated that a City crew has ripped out damaged cabinets and that a termite company is treating the building. He then discussed replacing the windows and sealing the outside walls, and asked the City Council to authorize him to purchase the the windows at a cost of \$50,948.00.

MOVED, and seconded, by All Council Members, to authorize Mayor Peoples to purchase the windows for the Westwego Art Center at a cost of \$50,948.00.

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

10. (JP) Riverboat Landing – Update

Mayor Peoples reported that he will be meeting with a contractor tomorrow to look at designing a hydraulic ram for the walkway out onto the barge so that people can go out and sit on the barge. He stated that they will also be looking at a design for a walkway over the River Road, funding for which has been available for years (the pedestrian bridge is the Third Phase of the Lazy River Landing Project).

11. (JP) Street Lights on Sala Avenue – Update

Mayor Peoples reported that he has contacted two companies recommended by Entergy regarding LED conversions for the street lights on Sala Avenue.

12. (JP) Church Property – Update

Mayor Peoples discussed plans for the property on Fourth Street next to the Farmers Market parking lot, which the City now owns.

A discussion followed.

13. (JP) WHARF – Update

Mayor Peoples reported that he is working with APTIM on a water line across the levy for the WHARF Project, and that he is getting prices on portable restrooms. He stated that the restrooms will complete the requirements for the DEQ mitigations, and that he is looking at using some of the hotel/motel tax to purchase equipment for maintenance of the property.

14. (JP) LGAP – Update

Mayor Peoples stated the 2018-2019 Louisiana Government Assistance Grant has been spent on pipe, fittings, casings, and supplies for the water line improvements.

15. (JP) Park – Updates

Mayor Peoples asked the City Council for their input on the sign for Christian-Jones Park.

A discussion followed.

Mayor Peoples discussed issues with the contractor at Louis Marrero Park. He stated that he will be meeting with the contractor's bonding company to discuss liquidated damages.

NEW BUSINESS

1. (GG) Dugues Canal Pump Station

Council Member Green stated that the Dugues Canal Pump Station is in very poor condition and asked the Mayor to investigate the matter.

A discussion followed.

Mayor Peoples stated that he would contact the Parish President.

Council Member Nobles asked Mayor Peoples to also investigate problems with the Keyhole Canal caving in at the railroad tracks.

2. (GG) Storm Drains

Council Member Green asked if the storm drains would be cleaned in preparation for Hurricane Season.

Mayor Peoples stated that the drains will be cleaned, but that the Vac-Con Truck operator is out sick. He stated that he is looking for a qualified operator, and that he will even look into borrowing an operator from Jefferson Parish if necessary.

3. (JSN) 836 Chipley Street – Condemnation

This matter was discussed earlier in the meeting.

4. (JSN) 501 Fourth Street – Quiet Title

Council Member Nobles asked that the City quiet title on 501 Fourth Street so that it can be returned to commerce.

Mayor Peoples asked the City Attorney to look into the matter.

5. (LHV) Hazard Mitigation Plan Annual Progress Report 2018 Discussion

Council Member Valence discussed the 2018 Hazard Mitigation Plan Annual Progress Report.

MOVED by Council Member Valence, and seconded by Council Member Rivere, to approve the 2018 Hazard Mitigation Plan Annual Progress Report.

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

6. (JP) Community Water Enrichment Fund

Mayor Peoples reported that the City has been approved for a Community Water Enrichment Fund grant in an amount up to \$23,760.00.

7. (JP) Feeding Wild Animals

Mayor Peoples discussed the feeding of wild animals in Council Member Valence's district. He stated that he has hired a professional service to trap raccoons and rats, and that on May 10 the City started enforcing the ordinances that address the situation.

A discussion followed.

Mayor Peoples stated that he would be working on an improved ordinance to address this situation.

8. (JP) LWCC Dividend

This matter was addressed earlier in the meeting.

9. (JP) Garbage Service

Mayor Peoples discussed the garbage service. He stated that he was advised to hire a contract attorney.

Council Member Nobles offered motion to look into hiring a contract attorney, seconded by Council Member Green for discussion.

Council Member Valence stated that there are provisions in the garbage contract to penalize the contractor for violating.

A discussion followed.

Chief Munch stated that garbage truck drivers can be cited for spillage under the City Code of Ordinances.

MOVED by Council Member Nobles, and seconded by Council Member Green, to look into hiring a contract attorney.

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

Mayor Peoples stated that he would look into hiring a contract attorney, and that he would also look into citations and fines.

10. (JP) Old City Hall Property

Mayor Peoples stated that Dufrene Surveying will be surveying the Old City Hall Property in preparation for having it appraised and offering it for sale.

11. (JP) Water Plant

Mayor Peoples stated that he will be boarding up the Water Plant, and that he will be looking into a fence around the pumps and the tank to restrict entry to the facility.

A discussion followed.

12. (JP) Honor Square

Mayor Peoples discussed constructing an Honor Square to honor our veterans and first responders.

AMENDED AGENDA ITEMS

(LHV) Cooperative Endeavor Agreement with the Westwego Civic Association

Council Member Valence discussed amending the Cooperative Endeavor Agreement between the City of Westwego and the Westwego Civic Association.

A discussion followed.

(JP) Drainage Pump Station #1

Mayor Peoples announced that the Parish of Jefferson will be opening bids on June 6, 2019 for Improvements to the Westwego Drainage Pump Station #1, including removing two of the three bridges that cross the canal.

(JP) Fire Department Parking Lot

Mayor Peoples stated that there is enough money left in the Fire Station Project to finish the parking lot and fence and asked the City Council to authorize him to send plans for the work to Facility Planning.

MOVED by Council Member Rivere, and seconded by Council Member Valence, to authorize Mayor Peoples to send plans for the work to be done at the Fire Station to Facility Planning for approval.

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

(JP) The Auction

Mayor Peoples reported that the auction held this Saturday brought in \$41,683.62, and that the trailer behind the old fire station on Avenue H may bring in an additional \$10,000.00 if the prospective bidder decides to bid on it. He stated that the monies will go back into the budgets of the departments from which the surplus items came.

A discussion followed.

(JSN) City Hall

Council Member Nobles thanked Mayor Peoples for cleaning up City Hall. He stated that it looks beautiful.

Mayor Peoples stated that City Hall and the Farmers Market were pressure washed, and that the Senior Center will be pressure washed soon, roof and all. He also thanked Margaret Harrison for doing a really nice job on the flower beds out front. He then discussed the new City Hall sign, which may need an alternate source of funding in light of FEMA's reconsideration of the City Hall Project funding.

A discussion followed.

(JSN) Playground Equipment

Council Member Nobles discussed the broken merry-go-round in the new play area at A. J. "Catfish" Bourgeois Park. Older children are using the equipment despite the area being clearly posted as exclusively for the use of children under the age of 12, and equipment is being damaged as a result.

A discussion followed.

Council Member Green stated that he would sponsor an ordinance to address this problem and asked the City Attorney to prepare one.

Council Member Green asked if the City will submit an application for the LMA Community Achievement Award.

A discussion followed.

Mayor Peoples stated that work on the application was delayed somewhat but that he will have someone work on it.

ADJOURN

MOVED, and seconded, by All Council Members, to adjourn at 8:35 p.m.

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, February 11, 2019, in the Council Room at City Hall, 1100 Fourth Street, Westwego, Louisiana.
