

City Hall
Westwego, Louisiana
Regular Session
Monday, August 10, 2020

The Mayor and City Council of the City of Westwego met in Regular Session on 6:00 p.m., Monday, August 10, 2020 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

The meeting was streamed live on Facebook Live.

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 for the members of our community who have died since our last meeting.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

PRESENTATIONS / ANNOUNCEMENTS / ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

KEEP JEFFERSON PARISH BEAUTIFUL ADVISORY BOARD

Mayor Peoples announced that he has appointed Amanda Walker to represent the City on the Keep Jefferson Parish Beautiful Advisory Board.

ADDRESS THE CITY COUNCIL

LEONARD WAGUESPACK

Leonard Waguespack addressed the City Council to discuss citizens putting stones, rods, etc. on city servitude.

A discussion followed.

SANDRA COLEMAN

Sandra Coleman addressed the City Council to request a Home Occupational License for Mail and Telephone Service Only to operate her Party Rental Business, Party Rental Plug, LLC, from her home at 722 Texas Street.

A discussion followed.

Council Member Green asked Ms. Coleman to obtain the approval of the Housing Authority before returning for further discussion of her request.

HOWENDY CUEVAS-GOMEZ

Howendy Cuevas-Gomez addressed the City Council to request an Occupational License to operate his business, Lider Body Shop, at 912 Fourth Street.

MOVED by Council Member Thibodeaux, and seconded by Council Member Valence, to grant an Occupational License to Howendy Cuevas-Gomez to operate a Body Shop at 912 Fourth Street.

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

BETTY LANDRY

Betty Landry addressed the City Council to thank two City employees, Russel Utley and Bobby Utley, for helping her recently with a situation on Sala Avenue.

JOSHUA WINGERTER

Joshua Wingerter addressed the City Council to request an Alcohol Beverage Permit to serve alcohol beverages for events at his Art Gallery located at 401 Sala Avenue.

A discussion followed.

MOVED by Council Member Green, and seconded by Council Member Nobles, to grant an Alcohol Beverage Permit to serve alcohol beverages for events at his Art Gallery located at 401 Sala Avenue.

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

HEAR ALL REPORTS

Chief of Police Dwayne J. Munch, Sr., Chief Building Inspector Leslie "Skip" Lombas, Jr., EMS Director Joseph J. Aldor, Jr., Senior Center Coordinator Brant Fonseca, Farmers Market Coordinator Keith Bouvier, and Code Enforcement Officer Perry Talamo submitted their reports.

Fire Chief Ryan P. Guidroz, Plumbing Inspector Chuck Pooré, Electrical Inspector Doyle Guidroz, and Mechanical Inspector Jeremy Floyd were not present but had submitted their reports prior to the meeting.

Mayor Peoples entertained questions about the Financial Report/Budget vs. Actual. There were none.

AMEND THE AGENDA

MOVED by Council Member Nobles, and seconded by Council Member Rivere, to amend the agenda to discuss the following items at the end of business.

- (JP) Water Meter Project
- (JP) Plans for Traffic Control for Schools
- (JP) Items on City Servitude
- (JP) Calvin Galiano Park
- (MJR) District 4 Update

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

APPROVE THE MINUTES

MOVED by Council Member Rivere, and seconded by Council Member Thibodeaux, to approve the minutes of the Regular Session of Monday, July 13, 2020.

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

RESOLUTIONS FOR ADOPTION

Mayor Peoples read aloud the following resolutions for adoption.

Offered by Council Member Nobles:

RESOLUTION 2020-08(A)

A resolution authorizing Mayor Joe Peoples on behalf of the City of Westwego, to enter into a Cooperative Endeavor Agreement with the Parish of Jefferson for the HUD Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Entitlement Program, the Home Investment Partnerships (HOME) Program, and the Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG) Program.

MOVED by Council Member Nobles, and seconded by Council Member Valence, to adopt Resolution 2020-08(A).

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

Offered by Council Member Nobles:

RESOLUTION 2020-08(B)

A resolution authorizing Mayor Joe Peoples, on behalf of the City of Westwego, to submit Capital Outlay Requests to the State of Louisiana Division of Administration Office of Facility Planning and Control for Fiscal Year 2021-2022.

MOVED by Council Member Nobles, and seconded by Council Member Rivere, to adopt Resolution 2020-08(B).

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

Offered by Council Member Nobles:

RESOLUTION 2020-08(C)

A resolution naming The New Orleans Advocate as Publisher of the Official Journal of the City of Westwego for the contract year beginning July 1, 2020 and ending June 30, 2021.

MOVED by Council Member Nobles, and seconded by Council Member Green, to adopt Resolution 2020-08(C).

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

ORDINANCES FOR INTRODUCTION

There were no ordinances for introduction.

ORDINANCES FOR ADOPTION

Mayor Peoples read aloud the following ordinances for adoption.

Offered by Council Member Green:

ORDINANCE 1586

An ordinance authorizing Mayor Joe Peoples to take all actions and sign all documents necessary to advertise for sale and sell the surplus immovable property known as Lot 20-B, Square 3, Whitehouse Subdivision and providing for related matters.

MOVED by Council Member Green, and seconded by Council Member Valence, to open a public hearing for the ordinance.

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

Mayor Peoples entertained public comment. There was none.

MOVED by Council Member Green, and seconded by Council Member Valence, 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 1586.

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

Offered by Council Member Valence:

An ordinance setting rules and regulations for Airbnb and Short-Term Rentals.

Council Member summarized the ordinance.

MOVED by Council Member Valence, and seconded by Council Member Green, to open a public hearing for the ordinance.

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

Mayor Peoples entertained public comment.

No one spoke in favor of the ordinance; no one spoke in opposition.

MOVED by Council Member Valence, and seconded by Council Member Rivere, to close the public hearing.

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

Council Member Valence offered a joint motion by All Council Members to adopt the ordinance.

Council Member Rivere offered to second for discussion.

MOVED by Council Member Valence, and seconded by Council Member Rivere, for discussion.

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

A discussion followed.

Council Member Valence amended her motion to continue the ordinance until next month.

MOVED by Council Member Valence, and seconded by Council Member Rivere, to continue the ordinance until next month.

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

OLD BUSINESS

1. (LHV) Tree Trimming on Sala Avenue

Council Member Valence discussed trimming the trees on Sala Avenue.

Mayor Peoples stated that he has hired a contractor to trim the trees, but that the contractor is experiencing Covid-19-related staffing issues but will be trimming soon.

2. (JP) Update on Street Resurfacing Project

Mayor Peoples discussed the status of the Street Resurfacing Project. He also discussed the additional street repairs, which are being done while the contractor is in Westwego in order to eliminate additional mobilization costs.

3. (JP) Update WHARF Project

Mayor Peoples discussed the status of the Wetlands Harbor Activities Recreational Facility Project. He also discussed additional resources that may be available through organizations that serve the handicapped.

4. (JP) Update Gazebo

Mayor Peoples discussed the Gazebo Project at the Farmers and Fisheries Market. He stated that bids for the project will be opened at 2:00 p.m. August 20, 2020.

5. (JP) Update 175 Avenue A

Mayor Peoples discussed 175 Avenue A, which the City recently acquired at a cost of \$700,000.00 using DOTD funds that were originally allocated in the late 1990's for the construction of a walkway over River Road for the Lazy River Landing.

A discussion followed.

6. (JP) Update Sewer Plant

Mayor Peoples discussed the Wastewater Treatment Plant Improvement Project. He stated that there have been delays due to rain and Covid-19, but that the project is moving along.

7. (JP) Update Pump to the River

Mayor Peoples discussed the project to pump stormwater to the Mississippi River by reversing the water plant intake system.

8. (JP) Update Catch Basin Repairs

Mayor Peoples discussed the catch basin repairs that are taking place throughout the City to maintain the aging infrastructure.

A discussion followed.

9. (JP) Update 168 Louisiana Street

Mayor Peoples discussed 168 Louisiana Street. He stated that the owner has removed the structures and cleared the lot.

A discussion followed.

MOVED by Council Member Nobles, and seconded by Council Member Thibodeaux, to board up the structure at 481 Celomar Park as a matter of public safety.

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

10. (JP) Update Honor Square

Mayor Peoples discussed Honor Square, which is under construction on the Avenue A side of the Farmers and Fisheries Market parking lot on Fourth Street.

11. (JP) Update Westwego Art Center

Mayor Peoples discussed the status of work at the Westwego Art Center.

12. (JP) Update ARC Building

Mayor Peoples discussed the ARC Building. He stated that Blackwater has contributed \$7,500.00 to the ARC for repairs, and that once the repairs are complete the City Council can approve the new lease.

13. (JP) Update Louis Marrero Gym

Mayor Peoples discussed the status of the Louis Marrero Gym. He stated that mediation has led to an agreement with the contractor's surety company and with the State for the flooring.

A discussion followed.

14. (JP) Update Entergy Project

Mayor Peoples discussed the status of the Entergy transmission line project. He stated that Entergy has agreed to repair the damage caused during the construction on Magnolia Drive.

15. (JP) Update EOC

Mayor Peoples discussed the status of the EOC Building. He stated that the project is moving along, and that the contractor is doing a good job.

16. (JP) Update Catfish Bourgeois Restrooms

Mayor Peoples discussed the status of the Restroom Project at Catfish Bourgeois Park. He stated that the torn-up concrete there is due to sewerage and drainage problems that had to be fixed in order to provide proper utility connections to the restrooms and to fix the issue with standing water.

17. (JP) Update Sala Avenue

Mayor Peoples discussed the status of work on Sala Avenue. He reported that he has found the matching bricks for the sidewalks and that the contractor who is doing the catch basin work has someone who will be laying them in. He also stated that the streetlights have all but one been repaired with an Entergy grant, and the cables have been put up across the street for decorative lights to be strung across.

18. (JP) Update Klein Street Water Line

Mayor Peoples discussed the Klein Street Water Line project. He stated that the estimated cost is \$79,000.00 and that he has applied to the Railroad for the permit to go under the tracks.

A discussion followed.

19. (JP) Utility Billing Adjustments

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

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

Mayor Peoples discussed the procedures for utility billing adjustments.

NEW BUSINESS

1. (GG) Mississippi River Levee

Council Member Green discussed water standing along the river levee. He asked Mayor Peoples to have someone from the Southeast Louisiana Flood Protection Authority – West come and explain to the City Council why there is always water at the bottom of the levee.

Mayor Peoples stated that he has spoken to SLFPAW Regional Director John R. Monzon about the water, which Mr. Monzon feels is rainwater, and that Mr. Monzon is going to have the area inspected to be sure.

2. (JSN) 817 West Drive

Council Member Nobles offered a motion to begin condemnation proceedings on 817 West Drive.

MOVED by Council Member Nobles, and seconded by Council Member Rivere, to begin condemnation proceedings on 817 West Drive.

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

3. (JP) Segnette Estates

Mayor Peoples discussed street and drainage repairs in the Segnette Estates subdivision.

4. (JP) Municipal Street Addresses

Mayor Peoples stated that he is having a letter sent to residents who do not have their address posted properly to let them know that they must have their address visible for their own safety.

5. (JP) Louis Marrero Park Fence

Mayor Peoples stated that the contractor has the necessary materials now and will be replacing the net on the Avenue B side of Louis Marrero Park with chain link fencing soon.

6. (JP) 720 Avenue A

Mayor Peoples stated that last month he had asked the City Council to start condemnation proceedings for 710 Avenue A and 712 Avenue A, but that he has since determined that the addresses are actually 712 Avenue A and 720 Avenue A. This occurred because the addresses are not posted on the houses. He entertained a motion to start condemnation proceedings on 712 Avenue A and 720 Avenue A.

MOVED by Council Member Thibodeaux, and seconded by Council Member Rivere, to begin condemnation proceedings on 712 Avenue A and 720 Avenue A, and not 710 Avenue A.

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

7. (JP) 646 Avenue A

Mayor Peoples stated that the owners of 646 Avenue A have agreed to forgo a hearing and allow the City to demolish the structure at their expense in order to avoid the extra costs of condemnation.

8. (JP) Lost Revenue due to COVID-19

Mayor Peoples discussed the lost revenues due to the Covid-19 pandemic. He stated that the City has lost more than \$745,000 in revenues so far, which does not include the additional costs to the City due to the pandemic.

A discussion followed.

AMENDED ITEMS

1. (JP) Water Meter Project

Mayor Peoples announced that the Water Meter Project will be advertised for bids on August 13, 20, and 27, 2020, with a pre-bid meeting at 10:00 a.m., September 3, 2020 and the bid opening at 2:00 p.m., September 10, 2020. He stated that the \$450,000.00 project will replace all of the water meters on the south side of the Westbank Expressway with new electronic remote read meters using state Capital Outlay funds that were originally allocated to a water tower project that is no longer needed.

2. (JP) Plans for Traffic Control for Schools

Mayor Peoples discussed traffic control for Isaac Joseph Elementary School (formerly Vic A. Pitre Elementary School), Ray St. Pierre Academy (formerly Myrtle C. Thibodeaux Elementary School) and Joshua Butler Elementary School.

A discussion followed.

3. (JP) Items on City Servitude

Mayor Peoples stated that he will be sending letters to residents who are in violation of Section 40-1, Obstruction of Public Ways Prohibited, to let them know that they cannot block City servitude.

4. (JP) Calvin Galiano Park

Mayor Peoples discussed the Calvin Galiano Park Improvements Project on Victory Drive. He stated that the project is in the design phase and will include a walking track with off-street parking and a couple of small gazebos for sitting.

5. (MJR) District 4 Update

Council Member Rivere discussed recent and ongoing projects and improvements in District 4.

ADJOURN

MOVED, and seconded, by All Council Members, to adjourn at 8:13 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, September 14, 2020, in the Council Room at City Hall, 1100 Fourth Street, Westwego, Louisiana.
