

City Hall
Westwego, Louisiana
Regular Session
Monday, April 10, 2023

The Mayor and City Council of the City of Westwego met in Regular Session at 6:00 p.m., Monday, April 10, 2023, in the Council Room at City Hall, 1100 Fourth Street, Westwego, Louisiana.

There were present:

Mayor Robert E. Billiot Sr.
District 1 Council Member Maggie Campbell
District 2 Council Member Johnny S. Nobles Jr.
District 3 Council Member Lisa H. Valence
District 4 Council Member Robert J. Utley
District 5 Council Member Robert J. Bonvillian
Police Captain Edward Beyerback, for Chief Munch
City Clerk Lisa Tapia

Police Chief Dwayne J. Munch Sr. was unable to attend.

The meeting was streamed live on Facebook Live.

CALL TO ORDER

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

INVOCATION AND MOMENT OF SILENCE

Pastor Sam Croghan, of CrossLife Fellowship Church, led the assembly in prayer, followed by a moment of silence for the deceased members of our community.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

PRESENTATIONS / ANNOUNCEMENTS / ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

LOVE THE BOOT – WESTWEGO BEAUTIFICATION COMMITTEE

Council Member Valence announced that the Westwego Beautification Commission, together with student volunteers from Patrick F. Taylor Science & Technology Academy, will be participating in the Keep Louisiana Beautiful Love the Boot Program at 9:00 a.m. Saturday, April 22, 2023, and invited everyone to participate.

AMEND THE AGENDA

MOVED by Council Member Nobles, and seconded by Council Member Utley, to amend the agenda to introduce an ordinance repealing Sec. 34-73 later under Ordinances for Introduction.

APPROVED. Yeas: Campbell, Nobles, Valence, Utley, Bonvillian

LORI S. GUIN – 20 YEAR APPRECIATION PLAQUE

Mayor Billiot announced that Lori S. Guin has retired and presented her with a plaque in appreciation of her 20 years of service to the City of Westwego.

MOMENT OF SILENCE

Mayor Billiot asked everyone to stand for a moment of silence in honor of former Mayor Daniel P. Alario, Sr., who passed away this afternoon.

D.O.T.D. – 2023 SCHOLARSHIP APPROVAL TO ATTEND THE 2023 CTAA EXPO

Mayor Billiot announced that the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development awarded a scholarship to Senior Transportation Coordinator Allison Romero to attend the 2023 The Community Transportation Association of America Expo, May 21-23, 2023, in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

Ms. Romero addressed the City Council to discuss her award. She stated that she is one of only four people in Louisiana to receive this scholarship.

CONDEMNATION HEARING

32 NORTON STREET

MOVED, and seconded, by All Council Members, to open a Condemnation Hearing for 32 Norton Street.

APPROVED. Yeas: Campbell, Nobles, Valence, Utley, Bonvillian

The hearing was recorded by Michelle Vidrine-Corona, CCR.

The City Attorney presented his exhibits and then called City Engineer Hamid Alizadeh, of Aptim Engineering, to testify.

Mr. Alizadeh was sworn in and testified. He presented a written report of his inspection of 32 Norton Street and testified as to its condition. He stated that the structure is in very dangerous condition and recommended that it be demolished and removed.

The City Attorney called Chief Building Official Leslie P. Lombas, Jr. to testify.

Mr. Lombas was sworn in and testified. He stated that no one has requested a building permit since May 2007 to perform repairs to the structure.

The City Attorney called Code Enforcement Officer Chad Usea to testify.

Mr. Usea was sworn in and testified. He stated that he posted a notice of these proceedings on the property and that no one has contacted him since.

Attorney Tom Wilkinson, the appointed Curator for the owners, presented his exhibits and discussed his thorough but unsuccessful efforts to contact the owners and any interested parties.

At the request of Mayor Billiot, Mr. Wilkinson explained the procedures for notifications.

The City Attorney recommended that the City Council order that the structure be demolished and removed within thirty (30) days, and if this is not done that the City then demolish and remove the structure and file a lien against the property for the cost of condemnation proceedings including the demolition and removal.

A discussion followed.

MOVED by Council Member Campbell, and seconded by Council Member Nobles, to accept the recommendation of the City Attorney.

APPROVED. Yeas: Campbell, Nobles, Valence, Utley, Bonvillian

MOVED, and seconded, by All Council Members, to close the Condemnation Hearing for 32 Norton Street.

APPROVED. Yeas: Campbell, Nobles, Valence, Utley, Bonvillian

ADDRESS THE CITY COUNCIL

KELLI KAPESIS

Kelli Kapesis addressed the City Council to request permission to move her Beauty Salon Business from 1090 Fourth Street to 937 Avenue F.

Council Member Bonvillian stated that Ms. Kapesis is renting a booth from Ricki Romano.

MOVED by Council Member Bonvillian, and seconded by Council Member Utley, to grant permission for Kelli Kapesis to move her Beauty Salon Business from 1090 Fourth Street to 937 Avenue F.

APPROVED. Yeas: Campbell, Nobles, Valence, Utley, Bonvillian

JOE SPINATO

Joe Spinato addressed the City Council to request an Occupational License to operate a Short-Term Rental at 389 Louisiana Street.

A discussion followed.

MOVED by Council Member Utley, and seconded by Council Member Nobles, to grant tentative approval for an Occupational License for Mr. Spinato to operate a Short-Term Rental at 389 Louisiana Street, predicated upon satisfaction of all requirements therefor.

APPROVED. Yeas: Campbell, Nobles, Utley, Bonvillian; Abstained: Valence

Mayor Billiot announced that Ultimate Swamp Adventures and Segnette Landing, which are owned and operated by Mr. Spinato and his brother Michael, were selected as 2023 WBIA Invest West Champions by the Westbank Business & Industry Association.

BETTY G. LANDRY

Betty G. Landry addressed the City Council to discuss traffic on Sala Avenue during events at the Farmers and Fisheries Market.

A discussion followed.

Mayor Billiot stated that the issue will be addressed.

JASON BERGERON, JR.

Jason Bergeron, Jr. addressed the City Council to request an Occupational License to operate an Automobile Mechanic Shop at 1002 Fourth Street.

A discussion followed.

MOVED by Council Member Bonvillian, and seconded by Council Member Valence, to grant an Occupational License to Jason Bergeron, Jr. to operate an Automobile Mechanic Shop at 1002 Fourth Street predicated upon the satisfaction of all requirements therefor.

APPROVED. Yeas: Campbell, Nobles, Valence, Utley, Bonvillian

NORA RODRIGUEZ

Nora Rodriguez addressed the City Council to request a Home Occupational License for Mail and Telephone Service Only to operate her business, Physician Business Solutions, LLC, from her home at 601 Vic A. Pitre Drive.

MOVED by Council Member Utley, and seconded by Council Member Valence, to grant a Home Occupational License for Mail and Telephone Service Only to Nora Rodriguez to operate her business, Physician Business Solutions, LLC, from her home at 601 Vic A. Pitre Drive.

APPROVED. Yeas: Campbell, Nobles, Valence, Utley, Bonvillian

CHARLES NEUMAN

Charles Neuman addressed the City Council to request an Occupational License to operate a Food Truck at 1424 Fourth Street.

A discussion followed.

MOVED by Council Member Nobles, and seconded by Council Member Utley, to grant an Occupational License to Charles Neuman to operate a Food Truck at 1424 Fourth Street predicated upon the satisfaction of all requirements therefor. The Food Truck must be behind the fence.

APPROVED. Yeas: Campbell, Nobles, Valence, Utley, Bonvillian

KENI UMANA

Keni Umana addressed the City Council to request an Occupational License to operate a Mechanic Shop at 1090 Fourth Street.

MOVED by Council Member Nobles, and seconded by Council Member Utley, to grant an Occupational License to Keni Umana to operate a Mechanic Shop at 1090 Fourth Street predicated upon the satisfaction of all requirements therefor.

APPROVED. Yeas: Campbell, Nobles, Valence, Utley, Bonvillian

AMANDA BENNETT & FRANK FRANKLIN

Amanda Bennett and Frank Franklin addressed the City Council to discuss their property at 706 Victory Drive.

A discussion followed.

MOVED by Council Member Valence, and seconded by Council Member Nobles, that the property may not be occupied and must be sealed from unauthorized entry until it is inspected by the Chief Building Official; Ms. Bennett and Mr. Franklin must appear before the City Council at the Regular Session on June 12, 2023, to report on their progress.

APPROVED. Yeas: Campbell, Nobles, Valence, Utley, Bonvillian

SABRINA BOURGEOIS

Sabrina Bourgeois addressed the City Council to request an Occupational License to operate a Computer Gaming Cafe for Teenagers at 724 Fourth Street.

A discussion followed.

Council Member Bonvillian stated that Ms. Bourgeois has a really great idea, but that he does not believe the location is right for what she wants to do. He asked Ms. Bourgeois to contact him for further discussion.

JANET STEWART

Janet Stewart addressed the City Council to discuss her property at 614 Fourth Street.

A discussion followed.

Mayor Billiot asked Ms. Stewart to meet with him and Council Member Bonvillian at City Hall on Monday, April 17, 2023, at 10:00 a.m.

Ms. Stewart agreed to meet with the Mayor and Council Member Bonvillian at that time.

TREVOR MITCHELL

Trevor Mitchell addressed the City Council to request an Occupational License to operate a warehouse for Adept Health, at 1490 Fourth Street.

A discussion followed.

MOVED by Council Member Nobles, and seconded by Council Member Utley, to grant an Occupational License to Trevor Mitchell to operate a warehouse for Adept Health, at 1490 Fourth Street predicated upon the satisfaction of all requirements therefor.

APPROVED. Yeas: Campbell, Nobles, Valence, Utley, Bonvillian

ORDINANCES FOR ADOPTION

ORDINANCE 1619

An ordinance approving the plan of survey and resubdivision of a certain piece or portion of ground situated in the City of Westwego, Parish of Jefferson, State of Louisiana, in that part thereof known as Lots 2, 3, and 4 of Original Lots 91 & 93, Salaville Subdivision, and is more fully shown on a plan by Dufrene Surveying & Engineering, Inc., dated January 31, 2023. (Approved by the Zoning Planning Advisory Board on April 5, 2023 – to resubdivide 517 and 529 Laroussini Street / Arthur Plaisance)

MOVED by Council Member Utley, and seconded by Council Member Bonvillian, to open a public hearing for this ordinance.

APPROVED. Yeas: Campbell, Nobles, Valence, Utley, Bonvillian

Mayor Billiot entertained public comment; there was none.

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

APPROVED. Yeas: Campbell, Nobles, Valence, Utley, Bonvillian

MOVED by Council Member Utley, and seconded by Council Member Bonvillian, to adopt Ordinance 1619 approving the plan of survey and resubdivision of a certain piece or portion of ground situated in the City of Westwego, Parish of Jefferson, State of Louisiana, in that part thereof known as Lots 2, 3, and 4 of Original Lots 91 & 93, Salaville Subdivision, and is more fully shown on a plan by Dufrene Surveying & Engineering, Inc., dated January 31, 2023.

APPROVED. Yeas: Campbell, Nobles, Valence, Utley, Bonvillian

BIDS

There were no bids for consideration.

HEAR ALL REPORTS

- Chief of Police Dwayne J. Munch, Sr.
- Fire Chief Charles M. Hudson
- Chief Building Inspector Leslie P. Lombas, Jr.
- Plumbing Inspector Chuck Poore
- Electrical Inspector Roger Myers
- Mechanical Inspector Jeremy Floyd
- EMS Director Thomas J. Calamari, Jr.
- Senior Center Coordinator Brant Fonseca
- Code Enforcement Officer Chad M. Usea
- Financial Report/Budget vs. Actual

The Fire Chief reported that Blackwater has completed the installation and initial testing of its pump from the River and will be working with the Fire Department to provide training and additional testing.

MOVED, and seconded, by All Council Members, to accept all reports.

APPROVED. Yeas: Campbell, Nobles, Valence, Utley, Bonvillian

APPROVE THE MINUTES

MOVED, and seconded, by All Council Members, to approve the minutes of the Regular Session of Monday, March 13, 2023, and the Special Session of Monday March 15, 2023.

APPROVED. Yeas: Campbell, Nobles, Valence, Utley, Bonvillian

RESOLUTIONS FOR ADOPTION

RESOLUTION 2023-04(A)

A resolution adopting the 2023 Millage Rates:

BE IT RESOLVED that the following millage(s) are hereby levied on the 2023 tax roll on all property subject to taxation by the City of Westwego:

<u>MILLAGES</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
Police Salaries & Benefits	6.50
<u>Ambulance Service Maintenance</u>	<u>7.00</u>
Total	36.12

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the proper administrative officials of the Parish of Jefferson, State of Louisiana, be and they are hereby empowered, authorized, and directed to spread said taxes, as hereinabove set forth, upon the assessment roll of said Parish for the year 2023, and to make the collection of the taxes imposed for and on behalf of the taxing authority, according to law, and that the taxes herein levied shall become a permanent lien and privilege on all property subject to taxation as herein set forth, and collection thereof shall be enforceable in the manner provided by law.

MOVED, and seconded, by All Council Members, to adopt Resolution 2023-04(A) adopting the 2023 Millage Rates.

APPROVED. Yeas: Campbell, Nobles, Valence, Utley, Bonvillian

Offered by all Council Members:

RESOLUTION 2023-04(B)

A resolution declaring April 2023 to be Fair Housing Month in the City of Westwego.

MOVED, and seconded, by All Council Members, to adopt Resolution 2023-04(B) declaring April 2023 to be Fair Housing Month in the City of Westwego.

APPROVED. Yeas: Campbell, Nobles, Valence, Utley, Bonvillian

Offered by all Council Members:

RESOLUTION 2023-04(C)

A resolution recognizing the week of April 10 through April 14, 2023, as National Community Development Week in the City of Westwego.

MOVED, and seconded, by All Council Members, to adopt Resolution 2023-04(C) recognizing the week of April 10 through April 14, 2023, as National Community Development Week in the City of Westwego.

APPROVED. Yeas: Campbell, Nobles, Valence, Utley, Bonvillian

Offered by all Council Members:

RESOLUTION 2023-04(D)

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, and seconded, by All Council Members, to adopt Resolution 2023-04(D) 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.

APPROVED. Yeas: Campbell, Nobles, Valence, Utley, Bonvillian

ADDED BY EARLIER AMENDMENT TO THE AGENDA

AN ORDINANCE FOR CONSIDERATION

Offered by Council Member Nobles:

An Ordinance repealing Sec. 34-73. – Zoning provisions regarding the opening or reopening of package liquor stores.

Council Member Nobles discussed the reason for this ordinance.

ORDINANCES FOR INTRODUCTION

Offered by Council Member Nobles:

An Ordinance amending Chapter 26 – Article VI – Electronic Enforcement – Division 3. Vehicle Speed – Subsection B adding Sec. 26-228 Expenditure of Discretionary Funds.

Offered by Council Member Nobles:

An ordinance authorizing the City of Westwego to dispose of, in accordance with Louisiana law, certain property that is no longer needed for public use.

ADDRESS THE CITY COUNCIL

JOSHUA WINGERTER

Joshua Wingerter addressed the City Council to announce a coming event at his Art Gallery, which is located at 401 Sala Avenue, on April 21, 2023. He stated that he is hosting five local artists and that there will be live music, food, and an open bar. He invited everyone to attend and stated that he has a table reserved for the Mayor and City Council in front of the stage.

OLD BUSINESS

1. (REB) Utility Bill Adjustments

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

APPROVED. Yeas: Campbell, Nobles, Valence, Utley, Bonvillian

2. (REB) WHARF – Phase 3

Project Engineers Hamid Alizadeh and Gerard J. Gillen, III, of Aptim, addressed the City Council to discuss the status of the WHARF Project Phase 3.

A discussion followed.

NEW BUSINESS

There were no items under New Business.

CULTURAL DISTRICTS

Mayor Billiot stated that the City is looking into participating in the Louisiana Cultural Districts Program.

Council Member Valence discussed the Louisiana Cultural Districts Program and the positive effect it would have on the City of Westwego.

Mayor Billiot discussed other programs that the City is looking into.

Economic Development Consultant Louis Thomas, of L. H. T. Services, Inc., addressed the City Council to discuss programs available to help residents repair their homes and to promote Economic Development within the City.

A discussion followed.

Mayor Billiot entertained a motion to amend the agenda.

AMEND THE AGENDA

MOVED by Council Member Valence, and seconded by Council Member Nobles, to amend the agenda to introduce a resolution regarding the Cultural Districts.

APPROVED. Yeas: Campbell, Nobles, Valence, Utley, Bonvillian

A RESOLUTION FOR ADOPTION

RESOLUTION 2023-04(E)

A resolution in support of the exploration into the Louisiana Cultural District projects, in support of the Letter of Intent to apply for Cultural District designation, and authorizing the Mayor to hire James Rolf, a historic preservation consultant, with Rolf Restoration Works, to assist the City in this endeavor.

Mayor Billiot stated that Mr. Rolf's services will cost \$4,000.00.

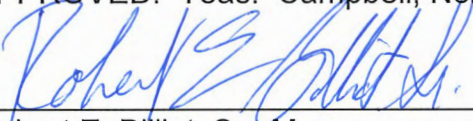
MOVED by Council Member Valence, and seconded by Council Member Utley, to adopt Resolution 2023-04(E) in support of the exploration into the Louisiana Cultural District projects, in support of the Letter of Intent to apply for Cultural District designation, and authorizing the Mayor to hire James Rolf, a historic preservation consultant, with Rolf Restoration Works, to assist the City in this endeavor.

APPROVED. Yeas: Campbell, Nobles, Valence, Utley, Bonvillian

ADJOURN

MOVED, and seconded, by All Council Members, to adjourn at 7:49 p.m., Monday, April 10, 2023.

APPROVED. Yeas: Campbell, Nobles, Valence, Utley, Bonvillian



Robert E. Billiot, Sr., 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 8, 2023, in the Council Room at City Hall, 1100 Fourth Street, Westwego, Louisiana.