Minutes -July 2, 2024

Council Meeting

City of Patterson, Louisiana

The Mayor and Council of the City of Patterson, Louisiana meeting was held on Tuesday,

July 2, 2024. The meeting was held at 6:00 p.m. in the council meeting room at 1314 Main Street.

Mayor Rodney Grogan presided over the meeting.

Mayor Grogan announced we would now go into a Public Hearing to discuss Ordinance #2024-06 amending rates for water service and Ordinance #2024-06A amending rates for sewer service; there were no public comments. Mayor Grogan asked if anyone in the audience would like to comment on Ordinance # 2024A amending rates for water service, but there was no comment from the audience. With no public comments, Mayor Grogan requested a motion to close the public hearing. Councilmember Mamie Perry motioned to close the Public Hearing, seconded by Councilmember Miranda Weinbach. Councilmembers DeMale Bowden, Jr., Ray Dewey, Mamie Perry, Miranda Weinbach, and Mayor Pro Tem Lee Condolle voted yes.

Rev. Marty Harden, with Bethel Pentecostal, led the invocation.

Councilmember Miranda Weinbach led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Midge Bourgeois, City Clerk, called the Roll. Councilmembers DeMale Bowden, Ray Dewey, Mamie Perry, Miranda Weinbach, and Mayor Pro Tem Lee Condolle were present.

Murtada Mousa from Providence Engineering, Holden Murray, Chief Garrett Grogan, and City Attorney Russel Cremaldi were in attendance.

A motion was made by Councilmember Ray Dewey and seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Lee Condolle to dispense with the reading and approve the June 4, 2024, minutes. Councilmembers DeMale Bowden, Ray Dewey, Mamie Perry, Miranda Weinbach, and Mayor Pro Tem Lee Condolle voted yes.

There were no public comments.

Sean Marshall with St. Mary Heat FC Soccer Association spoke on the club, which provides soccer for players of all ages to play at various levels; he stated that the fall registration for their recreational children's soccer league is now open until July 15, 2024. Mr. Marshall stated they currently have adult soccer with eight teams of 10 people per team. They play on the field at the Berwick Civic Complex. Mr. Marshall also said they are trying to get together a girl’s travel soccer team. This league is parish-wide, not just for this local area. St. Mary Heat FC Soccer Association has a Facebook page they post on for various events and registration. If anyone has any questions, as per Mr. Marshall, they can call (985) 992-6005 or email: stmarysoccerassociation@gmail.com.

Allise Jennings Salazar is requesting approval for a Back to School Funday to be held on Saturday, August 3, 2024, between 3:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. at Park Street Park. There will be free food, fun jumps, and water slides. Mayor Grogan asked Chief Grogan if the times were good for his department, and Chief Grogan approved of the time. Councilmember Ray Dewey motioned to approve this event and was seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Lee Condolle. Councilmembers DeMale Bowden, Ray Dewey, Mamie Perry, Miranda Weinbach, and Mayor Pro Tem Lee Condolle voted yes.

Patrick Jones with Patterson Housing Authority did not show up.

Mayor Duval Arthur with the Town of Berwick advise that the Town of Berwick in the past has helped the City of Patterson by selling the city water. The Town of Berwick would like to become a gas customer. Now the Town of Berwick has ran into a situation where at the end of their gas line they are running out of gas. The pressure at the end of the line is very low when everyone’s generators kick on. The low pressure is at the end of the line on Old Spanish Trail Road. Mayor Grogan stated that if a catastrophic situation were to occur, the City of Patterson would shut off gas to the Town of Berwick, and all the customers would be affected; Mayor Duval understood what Mayor Grogan stated. Steve Bierhorst was concerned since the City of Patterson operates the system at 27 lbs, and the Town of Berwick operates at 12 lbs. Rafael Lopez, Public Works Director with the Town of Berwick, stated they only needed 3 lbs. Mayor Duval reiterated what Mr. Lopez stated earlier to the council: they do not want to get up to 27 lbs, only just 3 lbs. Ronald Davis said it was okay since the Town of Berwick only.

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needs 3 lbs. As per Mayor Grogan, there will be no decision tonight. We will hold a special call meeting to discuss this endeavor more closely with the City of Patterson and the Town of Berwick. Midge Bourgeois, City Clerk, will notify Mayor Duval, his council, and the City of Patterson’s council when the special call meeting will be held.

Alyssa Cart and Jeremy Meaux, with Darnell, Sikes, & Frederick, were at the meeting to discuss their roles as auditors. Jeremy Meaux explained what the Engagement letter is for. Mr. Meaux stated that the auditor's scope is to prepare the audits for the City of Patterson each fiscal year, which each fiscal year ends on June 30th. They will audit each major fund's financial statements, reporting on internal control over financial reporting and compliance with laws, regulations, agreements, and noncompliance provisions. They will perform and assist in other areas. Mayor Grogan advised Alyssa Cart and Jeremy Meaux that he gave Pam Washington the right to speak with them and John Armato. He suggested that Alan Taylor has posted everything through May 31, 2024. Once the June 2024 statements are balanced, Alan Taylor can close out the fiscal year, and we move forward.

Pam Washington introduced herself to the council and audience, stating she is a retiree of the City of Patterson after 46 years. Mrs. Washington said she has worked under three sets of auditors, three attorneys, five mayors, 30 plus council members, and bonding attorneys. She advised everyone she is at the City of Patterson as a part-time employee; she went on to state she does not own a company or LLC; she is a part-time employee for the City of Patterson. Ms. Washington stated as a part-time employee, she is allowed to work 10 – 15 hours per week. Ms. Washington went on to say when she was employed with the City of Patterson full-time, she didn’t play games; she gave straight-up answers, gave correct answers, and if she didn’t know the answer, she knew someone who would know the answer. As stated, the auditors are our friends. It was stated by Ms. Washington she didn’t write one law for the State of Louisiana or the City of Patterson. Therefore, she will be teaching the new accounting clerk the correct way. She knows that a council member made a public request, but the council will not get the information, so if you need to call LLA or whomever, call Ms. Washington, who stated she is not afraid to speak with them. She can pull a report like when she was here ten years ago and changed the dates, but it will still be wrong; she stated she wants to give out the correct information. No report will be given out today or tomorrow; this city was left in a position that was nobody’s fault that we were left in that position. Ms. Washington announced the new accounting clerk, Monica Mabile. The council was then asked to accept the engagement letter for Darnell, Sikes & Frederick. Councilmember DeMale Bowden stated he had made the public request due to ever since January 1st, when he took office. himself He knows nothing about finance. Councilmember Bowden said that in the public records request, if Mr. Russel Cremaldi or himself is correct, once a public request is made, you have ten days to provide that information. Mr. Cremaldi advised that they have to reply within a reasonable time, and if there are going to be any rejections, then they have three days to advise of the case. Councilmember Bowden requested a list of accounts with balances; Midge Bourgeois, City Clerk, stepped out of the meeting to print a list of accounts with balances and give it to the council.

Councilmember DeMale Bowden made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Ray Dewey, to adopt Ordinance 2024-06, which provides a rate increase for water services. Mayor Grogan did a roll call. Councilmembers DeMale Bowden, Ray Dewey, Mamie Perry, Miranda Weinbach, and Mayor Pro Tem Lee Condolle voted yes.

Councilmember Mamie Perry made a motion, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Lee Condolle, to adopt Ordinance 2024-06A, an increase for sewer services. Councilmembers DeMale Bowden, Ray Dewey, Mamie Perry, Miranda Weinbach, and Mayor Pro Tem Lee Condolle voted yes.

A motion was made by Councilmember Mamie Perry and seconded by Councilmember Miranda Weinbach to amend the Utilities and Public Works Service Fees.

Councilmember Ray Dewey moved to accept the Engagement Letter from Darnall, Sikes, and Frederick, which Mayor Pro Tem Lee Condolle seconded. Councilmembers DeMale Bowden, Ray Dewey, Mamie Perry, Miranda Weinbach, and Mayor Pro Tem Lee Condolle voted yes.

William Gil, with Planning & Zoning, spoke about Spitale Farms developing a crawfish pond. Mr. Gil advised the Spitales came to him in June 2021 about this crawfish pond. A non-conforming variance

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was discussed, and the Planning & Zoning Board approved the non-conforming variance for this crawfish pond. Mayor Grogan stated there was a concern by Councilmember Ray Dewey that there was a misprint of the date on the signs for the Public Hearing. Councilmember Dewey noted that he invited the citizens who inquired about the wrong dates to the council meeting, but they are not here tonight. Mr. Gil advised the sign company they had put the wrong dates and were going to put the correct dates on the signs. Councilmember Dewey inquired about the variance on the property; it states at the end of Tiffany St., and he wanted to know where the end of Tiffany’s is. It was noted the end of Tiffany Street runs into Causey St. Mayor Grogan asked if all state requirements were met; if not, he recommended that all clearance from the state be done first, then for the Spitales to get with William Gil with Planning & Zoning pending outcome of the state.

Chief Grogan spoke on a Cooperative Endeavor Agreement between the St. Mary Parish Sheriff's Department and the Patterson Police Department. The Patterson Police Department was approached about adding a K-9 dog to the department. They accepted the dog; in fact, he is in training at this time. The Sheriff’s Dept was getting new vehicles and will give us one of their surplus vehicles for a K-9 unit. If the Police Department no longer uses it for the dog, the vehicle will be returned to the St. Mary Sheriff’s Department. Councilmember DeMale Bowden motioned to go into a Cooperative Endeavor Agreement with the St. Mary Parish Sheriff’s Department, seconded by Councilmember Miranda Weinbach. Councilmembers DeMale Bowden, Ray Dewey, Mamie Perry, Miranda Weinbach, and Mayor Pro Tem Lee Condolle voted yes.

Councilmember DeMale Bowden wanted the mayor, the council, and everyone that he, Councilmembers Ray Dewey and Miranda Weinbach, to go around meeting the department heads, where they have been having great meetings. They will be visiting other departments to work well and be in sync with Mrs. Pam Washington regarding the budget preparation.

Mayor Grogan stated that we are trying to pull down our monies; we have 1.5 million dollars from the Federal Government acquired through Congressional member Clay Higgins. They have started the project, and the equipment is coming in, but we have to get our money funneled through the parish since they were the ones that sponsored. The contractors have started Phase 1 and are getting ready to go into Phase 2. We have to get our money, plus we are working with USDA.

Murtado Mousa with Providence Engineering spoke about the gas line between the City of Patterson and the Town of Berwick, and a thorough evaluation will be done. When speaking on the crawfish pond, the state doesn’t handle this; Fema handles it, but you must ensure it is not in a flood zone. All proposals received by USDA, Jenny with USDA has been sent all paperwork.

Russel Cremaldi, City Attorney had no comments

Chief Grogan had no comments.

Fire Chief Scott Hutton asked if reports were sufficient that the council asked for? All is good.

Steve Bierhorst had no comments.

Ronald Davis had no comments.

Sharon Gillum, Water Plant Supervisor, had no comment.

Terry Space had no comments.

Councilmember Ray Dewey thanked the city workers for all they do.

Holden Murray thanked everyone for their support of all the events. Mr. Murray thanked New York University for being the only city in Louisiana selected to be put on their City Heath dashboard map. Also, the National League of Cities granted the city an additional $15,000. Next Friday, G-Rentals will be in the parking lot at City Hall, giving out free snowballs. Also, two businesses, Southern Chaos and Glow Body, will both be given $10.00 discounts if you spend $20.00. Holden advised he will give out the dates.

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Beverly Domengeaux announced that the St. Mary Council of Aging announced that 85 box fans were delivered from our city to the St. Mary Council of Aging.

Councilmember Miranda Weinbach thanked Steve Bierhorst for the Public Works drive around the city to show her everything ran between water lines and drainage lines. Councilmember Weinbach also thanked Pam Washington for all she has done helping with the finances.

There being no further business to come before the Mayor and Council, Mayor Pro Tem Lee Condolle made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Councilmember Mamie Perry. The Council unanimously agreed. Councilmembers DeMale Bowden, Jr., Mamie Perry, Miranda Weinbach, and Mayor Pro Tem Lee Condolle voted yes. Councilmember Ray Dewey was absent.

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Rodney A. Grogan, Mayor

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Midge Bourgeois, City Clerk