

**Town of Lockport  
Lockport, Louisiana**

**Minutes of Regular Meeting February 24, 2015**

The Mayor and Town Council met in regular session on Tuesday, February 24, 2015 at 7:00PM, at the Lockport Town Hall Complex.

**A. Call to Order, B. Opening Prayer, C. Pledge of Allegiance**

Mayor Paul Champagne called the meeting to order. The opening prayer was offered by Town Clerk, Mandy Himel. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mayor Champagne.

**D. Roll Call**

The roll was called with the following present: Mayor Paul Champagne, Councilmembers: Sharon Guidry, Rodney Hartman, Craig Rogers and Weldon Triche. Councilman Donovan Barker was absent. Also present were Town Clerk Mandy Himel, Town Attorney Chris Huddleston, and Chief of Police Warren Vedros.

**E. Approval of Minutes for January 20, 2015 Regular Meeting**

Mayor Champagne asked if there were any corrections or comments concerning the minutes of the January 20, 2015 meeting. Councilman Rogers made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Councilman Triche seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

**F. Approval of Financial Statements for the month ending January 31, 2015**

Mayor Champagne asked if there were any questions or comments concerning the financial statements for the month ending January 31, 2015. Councilman Hartman moved and Councilwoman Guidry seconded a motion to approve the financial statements as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

**G. Police Report**

Mayor Champagne called on Police Chief Warren Vedros to report on his department's activities. Chief Vedros distributed copies of the monthly activity report. Chief Vedros said that the body cameras are installed, and the in car camera will be in on Monday. Mayor Champagne thanked the police department and all other seventy-nine police officers from surrounding areas that helped with the parade. A motion was made by Councilman Rogers and seconded by Councilman Triche to accept the Police Report as presented. The motion carried unanimously. Councilman Rogers recommended for everyone to look over the annual report for them to discuss at the next meeting.

**H. GSE Report**

Mayor Champagne called on Clay Breaud of GSE, who gave the monthly engineering status report as follows:

**1. Sewer Rehabilitation (Northeastern Quadrants):**

Suncoast started work on December 8, 2014 and should be substantially completed before May 15, 2015. The cleaning of the lines have been completed. Suncoast will re-TV that area where the AT&T line penetrated the sewer line to make sure the repair is sufficient prior to lining it. Suncoast will be responsible for replacing the pavement, but the Town will have to maintain the traffic aggregate until the pavement is replaced. Suncoast began cleaning the manholes on February 11<sup>th</sup> and will start lining the mains the week of Mardi Gras.

**2. CDBG Request for Sewer Rehabilitation (Western Quadrants):**

This project was not funded through CDBG but will be funded by DEQ. Submitted automatically because of 2-year cycle.

**3. Capital Outlay Request for Sewer Rehabilitation (Western Quadrants):**

A capital outlay request for the sewer rehabilitation project was submitted the last two years and the Town was granted \$110,000 (Priority 5). This money has to be elevated to Priority 1 before it becomes available for use. A capital outlay request was submitted prior to the November 1<sup>st</sup> deadline to move the previously awarded up the priority list and request additional funds.

**4. Sewer Rehabilitation (Northwestern Quadrant):**

The engineering agreement has been signed by Lockport and is with DEQ awaiting their approval. DEQ has reviewed the agreement but has stated that the right-of-way acquisition task (\$15,000.00 upset limit) is not eligible for funding. This project is estimated to cost approximately \$685,000.

**5. Street Repairs:**

A capital outlay application was submitted for funds to pay for street repairs throughout the Town of Lockport. Capital Outlay appropriations will be determined in June 2015.

**I. Announce date, time, and place of meeting at which the town intends to continue ad valorem tax**

Mayor Champagne announced that the town will hold the above described meeting at the regularly scheduled Council meeting on Tuesday, April 21, 2015 at 7:00pm at the Lockport Town Hall.

**J. Surplus Property**

Mayor Champagne stated that we declare the 2008 F150XL white pick up truck as surplus. We were able to purchase a new truck with Grant funds. Councilwoman Guidry made the motion. Councilman Triche seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously.

**K. Joe Paul Mayet**

Mayor Champagne called on Mr. Mayet to address the Council about his blighted properties. He said that it has been really difficult trying to get people to invest money into his properties due to location. He has tried anything from restaurants and even the Culinary Institute at Nicholls State University. Most investors said that it is a dead area, and if it was on the highway then they might possibly be interested. If this doesn't go anywhere, then he is willing to redirect his idea and proceed with any type of businesses other than restaurant. He stated it would not be cost effective to remodel the "old clothing store", and they would possibly tear it down. He stated that the "Jeandron building" might have some investors that are actually considering joining him in a project valued at over a million dollars. He said that he will give them until June 2015 to do the market research and to give him a decision. Mayor Champagne asked Mr. Mayet what happens after June. Mr. Mayet said he would probably put "Jeandron building" up for sale, tear down the clothing store, and allow any type of business in the other building. Councilman Triche expressed his concern about parking issues in that area and that needs to be taken into consideration. Mayor Champagne asked Mr. Mayet to come back in July for the meeting to give the Council an update on this progress.

**L. Reports**

Mayor Champagne stated Paddle on the Bayou will be Sunday, April 12, 2015. He said we usually pay for the food and the refreshments. Mr. Richard Hebert has agreed to do the cooking again for this event. He asked the Council to give the Town permission to provide the food and refreshments. Councilman Rogers made a motion to allow the Town to purchase the food and refreshments. Councilman Triche seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously. Mayor Champagne stated Mary Collins will be out six to eight weeks, and we are trying to find someone to replace her for that time. He asked if the Council remembers anything about a Crisis Leave Program/Policy that was adopted in 2010. Mayor Champagne stated he wanted the Council to know about this situation. The Council was very supportive of this program, and the Mayor has the authority to make the decision. Mayor Champagne said Municode will have something to give to us to proofread in 50-60 days, and then, we would adopt the code. He stated Clean up the Bayou will be held in March 14, 2015 at the Belle Vue Fire Station. Mayor Champagne stated that the town will be getting the garbage cans soon. He stated that Jerome Danos asked if we would have a problem changing the pick up days to Tuesday and Friday. If we allow this, then, they can get the smaller trucks to go throughout the Town. He said that we needed to tell everyone in advance to make them aware of the pick up day changes. There are two projects going on the North Lafourche levee District is doing the second lift on Canal Street, and they are also working the Church Street Drainage project. Mayor Champagne stated that the Traditional Boat Building would like permission from the Council to allow them to rent the building for a wedding reception. He stated that he, the Town Attorney, and the Town Clerk met with Mr. Tom Butler and the Mother of the Bride. He explained to them what they need as far as the insurance requirements. He said that Mr. Butler was not aware of the process that should have been followed. Since it does state in the lease he cannot sublease without Council approval, he asked the Council for their permission for them to host this event. Councilman Rogers stated that if they plan to use this building as an income source, then we would possibly have to renegotiate their contract. He said he will agree to this one time event since everything is already planned. Councilman Triche said that we have to consider other events as well to make it fair for all. Mayor Champagne stated that if this happens again, then they understood that they would need to get Council approval before anything is planned. Councilman Hartman said that we need to make it mandatory for them to hire a police officer for this event. Mayor Champagne said they have already agreed to hire a police officer. Councilwoman Guidry made a motion to allow the Traditional Boat Building to host this wedding reception. Councilman Hartman seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously.

**1. Council**

- a. Councilman Triche suggested that we apply for a grant to help with improvements of the streets. Mayor Champagne said we will look into this. Mayor Champagne also stated that the new street signs have been delivered for the one way streets.
- b. Councilman Rogers stated that we talked about signage on the highway. He asked if anyone went in the Town Hall to see what we actually have to use that is still good. He suggests that we get grass cut in the ditches and culverts cleaned. He stated about the reviewing the emails on School Street concerning the drainage issue. The resident will have to dig a trench to the culvert to drain the water.
- c. Councilman Hartman asked if the Town can get proactive to send a letter out to residents on what actually requires a permit. He stated that there are people who bring in old trailers. Then, they abandon them, and they do not get a permit. He said there are also people who buy these prefabricated buildings, and they do not get a permit either. He suggests that an employee from the Town needs to investigate or police this matter. Mayor Champagne said this will be

addressed, and we will contact South Central Planning. Mayor Champagne also suggested we revisit the zoning restrictions and ordinances. Councilman Hartman stated we have a beautiful park, and possibly we would should look into putting a memorial such as a granite monument for veterans, police officers, firemen, first responders, etc. Mayor Champagne suggested that someone who is interested in this should come present a proposal to the Council, but he sees no objection to this project.

Chief Vedros asked the Council for permission to host the 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Easter egg hunt on March 29, 2015 at the Bayouside Park. He said last year they had 3000 eggs and this year they have 9000 eggs. Councilwoman Guidry made a motion to host the 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Easter egg hunt. Councilman Hartman seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously.

**L. Public Wishing to address the Council**

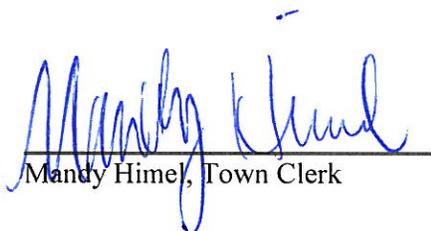
Mr. Mayet commented on the Veteran's Memorial idea. He said there is a very nice memorial at the Tourist center. We can get an indication from them since it is a local reference. He suggested we could have a brick sale to raise money to create this memorial.

Mr. Kenny Matherne stated that with the new budget for 2015, they added \$336,000 more to the Church Street Drainage project. Councilman Hartman asked about Morganza. Mr. Matherne stated that the Morganza will definitely help the Lockport area because the levee will be about 17-20 feet high.

**M.** The next scheduled regular Town meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 17, 2015. There being no further business to come before the Council, a motion by Councilman Triche to adjourn the meeting was seconded by Councilman Rogers and carried unanimously at 8:50 PM.

Town of Lockport

  
Paul Champagne, Mayor

  
Mandy Himel, Town Clerk