

CITY OF HARAHAH
6437 JEFFERSON HIGHWAY, HARAHAH, LOUISIANA
MAYOR AND HARAHAH CITY COUNCIL
February 19, 2015

The Mayor and the Council met on the above date for the regular meeting at 7:30 pm.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Following the Pledge of Allegiance, the Mayor called the Meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Present: Mayor Miceli, Councilman Baudier, Councilman Benton, Councilman Huete, Councilman Johnston, Councilman Wheeler, Municipal Clerk Nicole Lee, Police Chief Tim Walker, Fire Chief Todd St. Cyr, City Attorney London.

Mayor Miceli announced that Charlene Maddie had a new granddaughter born today and also two employees – Stu Foley, Playground Director and Police Chief Walker have birthdays today.

SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

2015 J.P.R.D. 10 & under & 12 & Under Girls Bidy Basketball Eastbank Champions Dena Gunckel introduced the coaches and the coaches introduced the girls. The girls were awarded certificates.

ADDRESS THE COUNCIL

Steve Mistretta said he worked for Alexis' owner of the Red Wagon. He had the farmer's market. He said the city does not have a vendor's license to sell produce and he would like them to adopt one.

Mayor Miceli said she appreciated his hard work and talked to code enforcement and is looking into the problem.

Chief Tim Walker – gave a recap of 2014's police statistics. He said that with their active reserve section the department is very active in community affairs – he listed a number of functions in which the dept. was involved.

Mayor Miceli said she had received phone calls praising the police department and acknowledged that their employees go above and beyond what is required.

Fire Chief Todd St. Cyr reminded the people of the March 28th election to renew a millage for the fire department and announced the open house on March 14th from 2 – 4 pm.

Mayor Miceli thanked the members of the fire department for their dedication. She asked everyone to support the millage for the fire department.

Councilman Huete asked how much the millage will bring in and if there was anything else on the ballot.

Chief St. Cyr said it will bring in \$385,000, which is a third of the budget for the department.

Councilman Benton said a community in Colorado had lost their fire department because there were not enough funds.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by **Councilman Johnston** and seconded by **Councilman Huete** to dispense with the reading of the minutes of the January 15, 2015 Council Meeting.

The Mayor called for the vote, it was as follows:

YEAS: Benton, Baudier, Huete, Johnston, Wheeler

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

MOTION APPROVED

A motion was made by **Councilman Wheeler** and seconded by **Councilman Johnston** to approve the minutes of the January 15, 2015 Council Meeting.

The Mayor called for the vote, it was as follows:

YEAS: Benton, Baudier, Huete, Johnston, Wheeler

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

MOTION APPROVED

COMMUNICATIONS

BOARD OF ADJUSTMENTS AND APPEALS

The Board of Adjustments and Appeals did not meet in January.

PLANNING & ZONING BOARD

The Planning & Zoning Board did not meet in February.

RESOLUTIONS

None

ORDINANCES FOR APPROVAL (PUBLIC HEARING)

The following Ordinance was introduced by Councilman Johnston and seconded by Councilman Huete.

The City Clerk read the Ordinance in its entirety.

1. An Ordinance to enact budget procedures.

The Mayor opened the Public Hearing – Johnston/Huete

No one spoke

The Mayor closed the Public Hearing – Johnston/Baudier

Council Discussion:

Councilman Baudier asked if there wasn't an ordinance already.

Mayor Miceli said there is state statute that dictates much of this and it is similar.

Councilman Benton said this is a redundant ordinance and the only difference was a line item form which the Finance Director should have input on.

Councilman Huete asked if it would be amended, but she didn't have any amendments.

Councilman Johnston said that the statues give minimal requirements that allows the city to go 6 months before adopting an ordinance and this would make it mandatory to adopt before the end of the year. He would like to have a line item adopted so that money can be spent properly.

Councilman Benton stated that this feels hollow because the previous administration kept amending the budget even into the new year. She feels it does not accomplish anything.

Councilman Huete said the previous administration was ridiculed for their actions and that Councilman Johnston is trying to put additional checks and balances in place.

The Mayor called for the vote, it was as follows:

YEAS: Huete, Johnston

NAYS: Benton, Baudier, Wheeler

ABSENT: None

ORDINANCE FAILED

The following Ordinance was introduced by Councilman Johnston and seconded by Councilman Huete.

The City Clerk read the Ordinance in its entirety.

2. An Ordinance to require online posting of City budgets.

The Mayor opened the Public Hearing. Johnston/Benton

No one spoke.

The Mayor closed the Public Hearing. Johnston/Wheeler

Council Discussion:

Councilman Huete said that everyone ran on transparency and all of us should support this ordinance.

Councilman Benton said that she ran on transparency and it's a good thing, but there are no funds or manpower to implement this at this time. She asked that a couple of months is needed to be ready. They are just getting into the budget and trying to cut expenses. It is just not the right time.

Councilman Baudier would like the 15 days changed to 30 days and the technology is not available at this time. It is too quick to do this but in future he would support it.

Councilman Wheeler asked if there is an IT person on staff that would do this.

Mayor Miceli said we want transparency but they are starting from scratch – there are still handwritten receipts. There is no archiving of emails. There is no IT person on staff and there is no digital imaging. The website needs to be assessed.

Councilman Baudier asked about the time frame.

Mayor Miceli said she would like to go through the budget hearings first and then implement transparency actions. She said there are staffing issues also

Councilman Johnston said for him transparency starts now. The ordinance gives the administration 6 months to do this. He has no problem changing 15 to 30 days. There is plenty of time to implement.

Councilman Huete said that the meetings and schedules are on line now. It is important that the budget are on the website.

Mayor Miceli said that the website needs to be updated with a codified municipal code. There are a lot of things that need to be done – but tools have to be provided before implementation. IT has been contacted to achieve this.

The Mayor called for the vote, it was as follows:

YEAS: Huete, Johnston

NAYS: Benton, Baudier, Wheeler

ABSENT: None

ORDINANCE FAILS

The following Ordinance was introduced by Councilman Johnston and seconded by Councilman Huete.

The City Clerk read the Ordinance in its entirety.

3. An Ordinance to require online posting of contracts.

The Mayor opened the public hearing: Johnston/Baudier

No one spoke.

The Mayor closed the public hearing: Johnston/Benton

Discussion:

None

The Mayor called for the vote, it was as follows:

YEAS: Huete, Johnston

NAYS: Benton, Baudier, Wheeler

ABSENT: None

ORDINANCE FAILED

Councilman Johnston asked for the floor for personal privilege to make a statement. He said that he read a NOLA.com article that said she had worked on the first two ordinances. He asked if that was correct?

Mayor Miceli said she had not made that statement.

ORDINANCE FOR INTRODUCTION (First Reading)

None

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

1. Budget Hearings

2. Planning & Zoning Board Nominee and Appointment

Mayor Miceli said that both matters will be taken up at the March meeting.

Councilman Baudier nominated Dale Valez, seconded by Councilman Huete.

ADDRESS COUNCIL

Barbara Butera said that the new sound system is not being used properly and no one can hear the proceedings.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Secretary's report for January, 2015 total receipts is \$1,227,998.34

REPORTS

Chief Walker gave his report for January, 2015.

Councilman Benton read a letter concerning a speeding ticket issued in Harahan but sent to First Parish Court. She asked Chief Walker to explain.

Chief Walker said that 1847 citations were issued in 2014, but only 11 went to First Parish Court. He said that certain citations have to go to First Parish Court.

Councilman Baudier sent get well wishes to Margaret Broussard.

Councilman Benton thanked everyone for voting for her. She is honored to be serving.

Councilman Johnston said that everyone talked about wanting transparency but in 2 months they are not ready to do it. He asked that the failed ordinances be put on the agenda along with another ordinance he wants to introduce.

Councilman Wheeler congratulated her daughter and her school's cheering team which won 10th place in a recent national competition.

Mayor Miceli asked the Finance Director Mr. Hienz for a report.

Mr. Hienz said he has provided a summary sheet to the council and said he will be providing the same each month.

PAY BILLS

Bill's paid for January, 2015 in the amount of \$194,053.74.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

None

ADJOURN

A motion was offered by Councilman Baudier and seconded by Councilman Huete to adjourn at 8:23 pm.

The Mayor called for a vote. The vote was:

YEAS: Benton, Baudier, Huete, Johnston, Wheeler

NAYS: None.

ABSENT: None

MOTION APPROVED

Tina Miceli, Mayor

Nicole Lee, Municipal Clerk

A. The following matter involving pending litigation may be considered:

1. Phillip Canella vs. Arch Ins. Co., City of Harahan, Todd A. St. Cyr and Allstate Ins. Co.; 24th JDC, Case 744-961, Div. "I".
2. Susanne K. Scalise vs. City of Harahan, LA, Anne Gordon, Louise Slayden, Ronald Gordon, Gail Gordon; 24th JDC, Case 744-986, Div. "O".

B. The following matter involving prospective litigation for which formal written demand has been made may be considered.

C. The following matters involving discussion of the character, professional competence, or physical or mental health of:

Name