

OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS OF THE MAYOR AND BOARD OF ALDERMEN TAKEN AT A REGULAR TOWN MEETING HELD ON MAY 16, 2017 AT 6:00 P.M. AT THE ARNAUVILLE MEETING ROOM LOCATED AT 107 RUE DE JAUSIERS, ARNAUVILLE, LA

Present: Mayor, Kathy M. Richard

Aldermen: Annette Bramlett, Jamie Huval, Todd Meche, Louis Stelly, Jr., Suzanne Stelly

Town Clerk: Dolores R. Quebedeaux

Town Attorney: Katie Ryan

Town Engineer: Kenny Boagni

Utility Superintendent: Todd Abshire (Absent)

Police Chief: Eddy LeCompte

Parks and Recreation Director: Zelma Jackson (Absent)

Called to Order: Mayor Richard

Prayer: Suzanne Stelly

Pledge: All

Accept April 18, 2017 Regular Town Meeting Minutes—Mayor

Jamie Huval moved to accept the Regular Town Meeting Minutes seconded by Louis Stelly Jr., unanimously carried.

Approve Special Meeting Minutes Water Tower (Executive Session) –Mayor

Louis Stelly Jr., moved to accept the Special Meeting Minutes seconded by Annette Bramlett, unanimously carried.

Approve Special Meeting Minutes Floating Dock—Mayor

Todd Meche moved to accept the Special Meeting Minutes (Floating Dock) seconded by Jamie Huval, unanimously carried.

Utility Report—Todd Abshire (Absent)

Police Report—Chief Eddy LeCompte

Dispatcher Grant Durio is currently in the St. Martin Parish Police Academy for his POST certification. He has completed two weeks thus far. His projected date of graduation is July 18, 2017. The Drug Take Back program sponsored by the DEA took place on Saturday, April 22, 2017, from 8:00 AM until 11:00 A.M. at the Thrifty Way Pharmacy. They collected 2 boxes of prescription and non-prescription drugs, approximately 21 pounds. A Representative of DEA picked up the boxes on May 4, 2017. The program was a success.

The Etouffee Festival was completed on April 30, 2017. Overwhelmingly the change they implemented concerning the traffic flow was well received. There were a couple of minor infractions resulting in a couple of arrest on misdemeanor offenses. The only mishap was the cancellation of the Car Show due to heavy rains on Saturday, May 21, 2017.

All employees have been given their yearly evaluations as of May 12, 2017.

Chief has completed the 2016-2017 Budget for the Arnaudville Police Department to be submitted to Mayor Richard at her convenience. Should any member of the Council wish to review the Budget with the chief can do so.

Trent Mouton was offered a position as a Dispatcher with a starting salary of \$8.56 per hour. The hire was approved by the Mayor and Council. Mr. Mouton will be replacing Dispatcher Jaleesa Barnaba who quit without notice on April 28, 2017.

Statistics from the Arnaudville Police Department for the month of April were: 22 citations, 11 FIC's, 63 MIC's, 3 arrests and 124 calls for service, Employee of the Month was Anna White

Introduce Ordinances to amend June 3, 2017 Budget and to adopt June 30, 2018 Budget—Mayor

(Public Hearing on June 20, 2017 at 4:30 P.M.)

Mayor Richard introduced the two Ordinances; it was moved by Annette Bramlett to accept the Introduction of the Ordinances seconded by Jamie Huval, Roll Call: Annette Bramlett, yea, Todd Meche, yea, Jamie Huval, yea, Louis Stelly, Jr., yea, Suzanne Stelly, yea.

Todd Meche moved to schedule a Public Hearing Meeting on June 20, 2017 at 4:30 P.M. seconded by Jamie Huval and Louis Stelly, Jr., unanimously carried.

Bring Back Arnaudville Community School—Ory Hebert

Ory explained that Arnaudville used to have a fantastic public school. The public school was so good that the excellent Little Flower private school had to close. It was a magnet that attracted people to move and start their families here in town. Young couples moved to Arnaudville for the sole purpose of living in the school zone. The magnet of the public school was an excellent thing for the town. More people in town means more businesses being created, more homes being bought, and more money for the town. Since the community school was taken away, school performance has dropped—as well as enrollment numbers, 4.0 averages, parental involvement, the school building has been largely abandoned, and the community spirit is all but dead. People from far and near used to move to Arnaudville to fall into the school zone. Young couples from town either have to send their kids to private schools or choosing to start their families in places like Cecilia or Carencro—and with them goes money, businesses, and some generations-old good Arnaudville families. Community spirit is the soul of a good public school. Reviving the old AES will bring back a sense of pride in the public school that can only be maintained by young kids going to school in their own hometown where they have the support of and will be held accountable to a loving and watchful community. A letter of support was signed by Mayor Richard.

Jamie Huval commended Ory Hebert for what he is doing about the school. Jamie proposed that a letter be drafted on behalf of the Town Council endorsing this project. Todd Meche moved to send a letter on behalf of the project seconded by Annette Guidry, unanimously carried.

St. Landry Parish School Board—School Board Representatives –Huey Wyble

Huey Wyble thanked the Mayor and the Board for allowing him to speak. Huey stated that he is in support of what Ory Hebert spoke of. Huey introduced the St. Landry Parish School Board attorney Mr. Bob Hammonds.

Mr. Hammonds explained that he was a school teacher before becoming an attorney. Mr. Hammonds explained the avenues that should be taken in what needs to take place for the school. In 2008 the federal judge ordered the school board to submit a plan for the reassignment of elementary school students. The School Board was ordered to submit the plan to the federal judge as part of a desecration case. The board could not agree on what plan to submit, so three plans were submitted which were referred to in the record as Elementary plan 1, Plan Preferred, Elementary Plan 2, Next Preferred, Elementary Plan 3, 3rd preferred and this is how it was referred to in the court pleadings. Elementary Plan 1 which was the preferred a Plan called for no consolidation of Arnaudville and Grand Coteau. There are 3 pairings that took place Arnaudville and Grand Coteau, Canton and Sunset, Grand Prairie and Plaisance. The board did not want to pair the schools. When a plan is submitted the process is to first submit to the other side, Department of Justice was the other side in Arnaudville's case. The Department of Justice chose number 2; they would not accept number 1 or 3. Number 2 included with the pairing of Arnaudville and Grand Coteau. The federal judge accepted what the Department of Justice submitted. The theory of the plan was that Arnaudville was over 80% white and the schools in Grand Coteau were more than 80% black. The theory of the plan was that you mix the children and have racial balancing of the school; there is desecration that was the subject of the litigation. The board agreed on maintaining the schools for 5 years then ask the court to dismiss the case at the end of 5 years. Mr. Hammonds suggested to the Superintendent to hire a demographer. Todd Meche said that he felt that this plan really messed up the high performance school in Arnaudville.

Jamie Huval moved to open the Regular Town Meeting to the Public seconded by Suzanne Stelly and Todd Meche, unanimously carried.

Ory Hebert stated that if the school is currently in unitary status is the school not in violation of the bussing situation. Mr. Hammonds stated that this school year everything stays the same because the school year had already started. Mr. Hammonds stated that it is up to the board to decide if students can attend another school and if transportation will be provided, he said that these are board decisions. The board should consider the entire parish not just Arnaudville.

Jamie Huval stated that he was going to contact the mayors from the different schools and ask that they hold a meeting like Arnaudville did. The Board Members will be the ones to answer the questions and making the right decisions.

Todd Meche moved to close the meeting to the public seconded by Annette Bramlett, unanimously carried.

Huey Wyble and Kyle Boss did express their opinions about this matter and stated that they will take the attorney's advice when it comes to making decisions.

Announcements

Sympathies to all who have lost loved ones.

Adjourn

Todd Meche moved to adjourn the May 16, 2017 Regular Town Meeting seconded by Annette Bramlett, unanimously carried.

Attest

Town Clerk, Dolores R. Quebedeaux

Mayor, Kathy M. Richard

Sent for publication