

OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS OF THE MAYOR AND BOARD OF ALDERMEN TAKEN AT A REGULAR MEETING HELD ON SEPTEMBER 13, 2022, AT 6:00 P.M. AT THE ARNAUDVILLE MEETING ROOM, 107 RUE DE JAUSIERS, ARNAUDVILLE, LA 70512

Present—Mayor, Todd Meche

Aldermen—Jamie Huval, Debbie Kidder, Kevin Robin, Suzanne Stelly

Absent—Cynthia Stelly

Town Attorney—Kay Theunissen (Absent)

Town Engineer—Kenny Boagni (Absent)

Utility Superintendent—Todd Abshire (Absent)

Police Chief—Eddy LeCompte (Absent)

Parks and Recreation—Zelma Jackson (Absent)

Called to Order—Mayor, Todd Meche

Prayer—Suzanne Stelly

Pledge--All

Accept August Regular Town Meeting Minutes—Mayor Meche

Jamie Huval moved to accept the August regular town meeting minutes seconded by Debbie Kidder, motion passed.

Accept August 2022, Expenses—Mayor

No report due to audit.

Utility Report—Todd Abshire (Absent)

Mayor stated that gas pressure testing has taken place in one section of town to meet the gas requirements. The bar chain is installed at the sewer plant but is not completely operable due to waiting on parts that are needed for the basket.

Police Report—Chief Eddy LeCompte (Absent)

Jamie Huval read the police chief's report:

We are happy to inform you that presently we are still at capacity with police officers. We are still accepting applications with the hope of getting qualified candidates and having them on file. In case we lose officers in the future.

We currently have 5 Patrol Officers on the roster. There are now 2 officers, 1 officer (Officer Blanchard) working the night shift with Sergeant Legrand working night Wednesdays and Thursdays to give Officer Blanchard time off. We now have 1 Officer (Officer Deville working day shifts and Sergeant Legrand working Monday and Tuesday to give Officer Deville time off.

The two officers, Officer Blake Aleman and Officer Jacoby Briscoe attending the police academy are doing a great job. They have approximately a little over a month and a half left to complete the police academy. We want to let the council know that the police department is having and arranging for Computer One to come to update the office and laptop computers to make things more compatible.

Statistics for the Arnaudville Police Department for August 2022 were: 3 Arrests, 3 Citations, 3 FIC's, 11 MIC's, 4 Accidents, 1 Assist call, 54 calls of service.

Kevin Robin complemented the police officers for doing a great job.

Parks and Recreation—Zelma Jackson (Absent)

All is well at the park, Beaux Chene is having a softball tournament on October 24 and 25, 2022.

Accept Ordinance No. 07-2022 Adjust Utility Rates—Mayor Meche

Jamie Huval moved to accept Ordinance No. 07-2022 Adjust Utility Rates seconded by Suzanne Stelly, roll call: Kevin Robin, yea, Jamie Huval, yea, Debbie Kidder, yea, Suzanne Stelly, yea, motion passed.

Cynthia Stelly (Absent)

Resolution 6-22- A Resolution Requesting Financial Assistance from the State of Louisiana under the Fiscal Year 2022-2023 Local Government Assistance

Program (LGAP) and Community Water Enrichment Fund Program (CWEF) -

Mayor Meche

Mayor stated that this grant is applied for every year, different amounts have been granted to the town, at this time the town is not sure what it will be granted, Kevin Robin moved to accept Resolution 6-22 seconded by Suzanne Stelly and Debbie Kidder, motion passed.

Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness

(Temporary Housing)—Mayor

A copy was given to the board members, you can use your own Ordinances for this program, Mayor suggested opting out, Jamie Huval moved to opt out seconded by Kevin Robin, motion passed.

Change Trick or Treat from the Monday (October 31, 2022) to the Saturday, (October 29, 2022) 6:00 P.M. to 8:00 P.M.—Debbie Kidder

Jamie Huval moved to the change the trick or treat date (October 29, 2022) seconded by Suzanne Stelly; motion passed.

Candidate for Police Chief—Josh Ross

Not present

Up-Dates—Mayor Meche

Mayor stated effective in October garbage collection will change, pick-up will be once a week. The information is posted on the Arnaudville website.

Mayor Meche read a statement about mis-leading information that has been spread out on the streets.

Town of Arnaudville

Report of Missing Cash Funds

The following is a summary of events leading the discovery of missing cash funds by the Town of Arnaudville

1. In approximately early June 2021, the Town's xxx noticed some red flags when cleaning up old accounts in the utility system and reported this to xxx.
2. The Town Clerk reported the issue to Mayor Meche, explaining that there were several cash utility payments noted on the Town's computer system and applied to the customer's account, but there were no corresponding utility stubs, and no corresponding cash deposits. The transactions at issue occurred during the timeframe from August 2019-September 2020. All the transactions were entered xxx who has been employed by the Town. During this time, one of xxx primary job duties is to accept utility payments made by citizens at Town Hall. The citizens would present their utility bill, a perforated post card. The payments would be entered on the computer system, and intake person would tear off and keep the stub with the payment. At the end of the day, the intake person would run an adding machine tape and prepare a deposit slip, reflecting checks and cash

received that day. The utility bill stubs and adding machine tape were rubber banded together and kept on file.

3. Mayor Meche asked the Town's accountant, Penny Scruggins, Champagne & Co., LLC, 133 East Bridge St., Breaux Bridge (337) 332-4020 to conduct a Confidential investigation regarding the matter. Mayor Meche also contacted Town Attorney, Kay A. Theunissen, Mahtook & Lafleur, 600 Jefferson St., Suite 1000, Lafayette, LA 70502, 337-266-2189, and reported the situation and pending investigation.
4. Ms. Scruggins completed her investigation and reported back to Mayor Meche on or about June 10, 2021. She advised that her investigation, there were approximately seventeen cash receipts made during the period of August 2019 – September 2020, which were unaccounted for in any bank deposits. All the identified transactions were entered by xxx. In addition, there was one check written by xxx for xxx-person utility account, which was entered on the computer system, but that check was never deposited to the Town's bank account. Ms. Scruggins prepared a summary of the transactions at issues. The total funds missing is approximately \$2400.00.
5. Mayor Meche contacted the Town Attorney on June 10, 2021 and advised of the findings by Ms. Scruggins. The Town Attorney conferred with Ms. Scruggins on Friday afternoon June 11, 2021. The Town Attorney then sought input from the LMA general counsel, Karen White. The Town Attorney and I conferred again on late Monday, June 14 and Tuesday June 15. We decided to meet with xxx on Friday June 18, 2021.
6. An in-person meeting was held with the employee xxx. Mayor Meche and the Town Attorney were present. The mayor advised xxx of the missing funds and terminated xxx her employment. He advised xxx that the matter would be turned over to the appropriate authorities for further handling. xxx submitted xxx keys, and timecard and was escorted from the premises immediately after the meeting. I directed the Town Clerk to remove any computer access by xxx.
7. After xxx was escorted from the premises, Mayor Meche and the Town Attorney called the Town's auditor. C. Burton Kolder, Kolder, Slaven & Co., 183, S. Beadle Rd. Lafayette, La., 337-232-4141 and reported the issue

to him. Mr. Kolder recommended we contact the Legislative Auditor, Mike Waguespack and the St. Landry Parish DA, Chad Pete. Both were out of the office and phone messages were left.

8. Mayor Meche spoke with DA Chad Pete on June 21, 2021, who advised him to report the issue to law enforcement. Mayor Meche contacted the St. Landry Parish Sheriff's Office and plans to meet with one of their investigators on the afternoon of June 22, 2021. The Legislative Auditor suggested that I prepare this summary and timeline of events to assist the investigation.

Mayor Todd Meche

June 22, 2021

After the auditor's looked at everything, a claim was filed with the insurance company. Jamie asked that Todd says what was taken and what the insurance paid so this is not brought up again. Mayor Meche stated that both auditing firms came out with \$2400.00 was taken and the insurance paid \$10,000.

Kevin stated that steps must be taken when an individual is being accused of something, all steps were followed in the way it was supposed to be, including the Louisiana Auditors, the District Attorney, the Council was notified as well. Kevin said if he would have seen any discrepancies, he would have been the first to speak up.

The audit report is posted on the website for anyone to look at it.

Citizens' Concerns

Kevin Robin mentioned that there are workshops held before the budget is adopted and the public is invited to attend.

Anthony Ordoyne inquired about the ditches being dug. Mayor stated that not all

the ditches have been dug just yet, but they plan to complete the ditches.

Jamie Huval said he is working diligently on the Nativity and the unveiling will be November 19, 2022, at 7:00 P.M.

Ginger LeCompte works with the United Way served Arnaudville Customers who are customers of Entergy. Feed our Neighbor \$50.00 gift cards. The program will go on if the funds are available.

Lorrie Forras asked what must be done to get a website? She would want to see the recorded meetings on the site. Mayor explained that the minutes are posted on the Arnaudville website.

She said that there would be complete transparency. Kevin stated that she was accusing them of not being transparent. Kevin said that because it is not being filmed does not mean that it is not transparent. He said he takes this very seriously.

Jeremy DiCarlo asked why the chief of police was not at the meeting, Kathy Richard stated that the chief was very ill. Jeremy asked what Fic's was. Parker Blanchard stated it was a Field Interview.

Adjourn

Jamie Huval moved to adjourn the meeting seconded by Suzanne Stelly, motion carried.

Attest:

Town Clerk, Dolores R. Quebedeaux

Todd Meche, Mayor

