

OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS OF THE MAYOR AND ALDERMAN TAKEN AT A REGULAR TOWN MEETING HELD ON JANUARY 24, 2023, AT 6:00 P.M. AT THE ARNAUDVILLE MEETING ROOM, 107 RUE DE JAUSIERS, ARNAUDVILLE, LA 70512

Mayor—Todd Meche

Aldermen—Jamie Huval, Debbie Kidder, Kevin Robin, Suzanne Stelly, John R. Taylor

Town Clerk—Dolores R. Quebedeaux

Attorney—Kay Theunissen

Town Engineer—Kenny Boagni (Absent)

Police Chief—Josh Ross

Utility Superintendent—Todd Abshire (Absent)

Parks and Recreation—Zelma Jackson

Called to Order—Mayor Meche

Prayer—Zelma Jackson

Pledge—All

Old Business:

Accept December 20, 2022, Regular Town Meeting Minutes—Mayor Meche

Jamie Huval moved to accept the December 20, 2022, Regular Town Meeting minutes seconded by Suzanne Stelly, motion passed.

Accept January 10, 2023, Special Meeting Minutes—Mayor Meche

John Taylor motioned to accept the January 10, 2023, Special Meeting Minutes seconded by Jamie Huval, motion passed.

Accept Budget to Actual/Budget Comparison for December 2022—Mayor Meche

Jamie Huval moved to accept the Actual/Budget Comparison for December 2022 seconded by Suzanne Stelly, motion passed.

Utility Report—Todd Abshire (Absent)

A report was handed to the Mayor and Board Members prepared by Todd Abshire.

WATER The entire water system was flushed during the month of December. During the sub-freezing temperature in December, the town did not lose water pressure or service. This is a direct reflection of the diligence, hard work, and preparation of the utility department personnel. While many water systems around us were under a boil advisory, or had no water service, the Town of Arnaudville's water customers were enjoying uninterrupted water service throughout the entire freeze. Kudos to all who did their job. The monthly Safe Drinking Water Act daily chlorine residual logs were verified by Todd Abshire and are on file in the utility office filing cabinet as required by law.

WASTEWATER The bar screen rake at the sewer plant has been repaired by Griner Drilling. The monthly flow records were faxed to HoPak Laboratories to verify flow in accordance with our discharge permit, as well as all analytical results being examined, reported, and filed in the appropriate filing cabinet in the utility department files.

GAS The town's gas system did not experience any issues related to customer gas demand in relation to last month's freezing temperatures. The gas system is operating near 40 pounds of inlet pressure at the Cypress Station and 40 psi at the Koch Station.

Mayor complimented the workers for a job well done during the freeze. A preliminary grade from DHH was given to the town, that grade is an A for the water system. A motion was made by Jamie Huval seconded by Suzanne Stelly to accept the utility report, motion passed.

Police Report—Chief Joss Ross

This month the Arnaudville Police Department has been focusing on rebranding itself as we transition from one administration to another. While some may view these changes as somewhat of a shock, change is something the town needs to address some of the issues the public often complain about, including vagrancy, substance abuse, thefts, and the unlit bicycles riding on the street at night. My directive to all your Police Officers has been very simple, they have been instructed to do their job, without restriction, as long as they remain professional. I have to say, we have come a long way since January 1, 2023, and will continue to move in the right direction, so we can maintain a safe environment for everyone who lives in and visits Arnaudville. While I do not have the stats for the month of December, I can report on what has happened since New Year's Day.

Since the beginning of this year, your Police Department has made 2 arrests for Domestic Abuse Battery, 1 arrest for Burglary and narcotic related charges, 1 arrest for Simple Arson and Battery of a Police Officer, and 1 arrest for Failure to Appear (St. Landry Parish). The aforementioned arrests are classified as Domestic or Felony level charges, has resulted in 5 people being transported to the St. Landry Parish Sheriff's Office Jail. By now, many should have seen an increase in patrol units on the streets. To date, the officers have recovered methamphetamine, marijuana, and several instruments of paraphernalia from various individuals, all of which have been removed from the streets of Arnaudville. So far this month, the police department has issued twenty-five (29) traffic citations for various offenses such as speeding, no insurance, no license plates, window tint, no driver's license, and parking in a fire lane. Several bicycles have been stopped in the late hours of the night, resulting in eight (8) citations being issued for improper lighting equipment on the bicycles and misdemeanor possession of narcotics and paraphernalia. Seven (7) additional citations have been issued to individuals for criminal offenses including littering into the bayou, criminal damage to property, trespassing, possession of narcotics, and paraphernalia. This past weekend and all future weekends, you should see no less than at least three (3) police officers, including myself during the late hours of the night, going into early morning.

The current state of the department is as follows:

Currently we are on track for the first time in a while to having no member of the police department hitting overtime. This will not impact the level of Police protection afforded to every citizen in the town.

Staffing: Currently we have three (3) full-time Police Officers, one (1) part-time Police Officer, and myself are working. With Officer Parker Blanchard at the academy 5 days a week, I am currently covering day shifts 7 day a week. We recently hired Lt. Kane Marceaux, as a full-time employee. Mr. Marceaux is tentatively scheduled to start working on January 30, 2023, as he is currently working out his 2 weeks' notice with the St. Landry Parish Sheriff's Office.

Academy Update: Officer Blanchard is currently starting his 3rd week in the St. Martin Parish Sheriff's Office Academy this week. Officer Blanchard has thus far taken two (2) tests since starting the academy and has scored at 90+ percent each time. He is currently scheduled to graduate sometime near the end of April. I will update everyone with this information, as it becomes available.

Issues: Currently the only issue the department is facing, involves the aging fleet. This is something I have spoken with the mayor about, and we will work on addressing. As of January 10th, I have cancelled the contact for the town to receive one (1) brand new vehicle and will instead be receiving two. One of the vehicles comes from the New Iberia Police Department and is already outfitted and ready to go. This vehicle is a 2018 Dodge Charger with under 30,000 miles. The other

vehicle we are currently looking into purchasing is a 2019 Dodge Charger with approximately 14,000 miles on it. The vehicle from New Iberia should be ready to go in the coming weeks, as they have already committed the vehicle to us. Also on January 22, 2023, vehicle A-1 started making a sound with the motor because some wires were touching. David was able to correct the wires, however that evening, the motor started making a loud noise again. The vehicle has been inspected by Affordable Towing, who is an ASE certified shop. Steve with Affordable stated the engine for this vehicle needs to be replaced, due to a piston snapping, causing metal shavings to get caught dropped into the engine. With an estimated expense of over \$5,000.00, I would request to just decommission the vehicle and place it up for public bid.

General Information: The Arnaudville Police Department is also going to be looking at starting a community watch program, which will be completely virtual. This will be an app that members of the community can download on their phones and can report to police officers 24-7 in real time, while also alerting others on the platform. An example would be if a suspicious person is seen wearing all black and a ski-mask walking down Wilkins Street, once someone posts that, the officer on duty will get a notification. While there is no crime in walking down the street, it will alert the officer to just patrol the area heavily, until they deem the person is not a threat. Another use would be for the Police Department to get information out to the public quickly, in the event of road closures, emergencies, etc.... More on this will follow in the coming month.

Requests: At this time, I would like to ask the council to consider 2 requests. The first request would be to raise the pay of Officer Jacoby Briscoe from \$14.01 to the rate of \$15.07. Officer Briscoe graduated the Police Academy in November and has been employed by the Arnaudville Police Department since January 10, 2022. The second request would be to move Ida Lalonde from a part-time employee to full-time. As a member of staff addresses some personal health problems, Ida will be working dispatch to cover the shifts, so the other employee can focus on her appointments and well-being.

Suzanne Stelly made a motion to raise Jacoby Briscoe's salary from \$14.01 to \$15.07 seconded by Debbie Kidder, motion passed.

Jamie Huval made a motion to move Ida Lalonde from part-time to full-time dispatcher seconded by John Taylor, motion passed.

The board member thanked the police department for a job well done.

Parks and Recreation—Zelma Jackson (Absent)

Mayor Meche explained that there is not much going on at the park.

Appointments:

Town Clerk

Mayor Meche recommended re-appointing Dolores Quebedeaux as Town Clerk. Jamie Huval motioned to re-appoint Dolores Quebedeaux as Town Clerk seconded by Debbie Kidder; motion passed.

Utility Superintendent

Mayor recommended re-appointing Todd Abshire as Utility Superintendent. Jamie Huval moved to re-appoint Todd Abshire as Utility Superintendent seconded by Debbie Kidder, motion passed.

Parks and Recreation Director

Mayor recommended re-appointing Zelma Jackson as Parks and Recreation Director.

Jamie Huval motioned to re-appoint Zelma Jackson as Parks and Recreation Director seconded by John Taylor, Motion Passed.

Engineering Firm

Mayor recommended re-appointing Morgan Goudeau and Associates.

Jamie Huval motioned to re-appoint Morgan Goudeau and Associates seconded by Debbie Kidder and Suzanne Stelly, motion carried.

Attorney Firm

Mayor recommended re-appointing Mahtook and Lafleur, LLC.

Jamie Huval and John Taylor motioned to re-appoint Mahtook and Lafleur, LLC., seconded by Suzanne Stelly, motion passed.

CPA Firms

Mayor recommended re-appointing Kolder Slaven & Company for audit.

Debbie Kidder motioned to re-appoint Kolder Slaven & Company for the audit seconded by Jamie Huval and Suzanne Stelly, motion passed.

Mayor recommended re-appointing Champagne and Company for the budget.

Debbie Kidder motioned to re-appoint Champagne and Company for the budget seconded by Jamie Huval and Suzanne Stelly, motion passed.

Mayor recommended re-appointing John S. Dowling for the payroll.

Debbie Kidder motioned to re-appoint John S. Dowling for the payroll seconded by Jamie Huval and Suzanne Stelly, motion passed.

Magistrate

Mayor recommended the re-appointment of Ben Trant as Magistrate (Granger and Trant, Attorneys at Law)

Jamie Huval moved to re-appoint Ben Trant as the Magistrate seconded by Suzanne Stelly, motion passed.

Mayor Pro-Tempore

Debbie Kidder motioned to have Suzanne Stelly serve as Mayor Pro-Tempore seconded by John Taylor, motion passed.

Allow Brenda Richard or Emily Kennison to take minutes when the clerk is out.

Debbie Kidder motioned to allow Brenda Richard or Emily Kennison to take minutes when the clerk is out seconded by Suzanne Stelly, motion passed.

Re-Schedule the February 21, 2023, meeting to February 28, 2023—Mayor Debbie Kidder moved to change the February 21, 2023, meeting to February 28, 2023, seconded by Suzanne Stelly, motion passed.

Introduce Ordinance 01-2023 An Ordinance setting the Elected Officials' Salaries and Amending the Budget ending June 30, 2023, to reflect the change—Mayor Meche

Debbie Kidder introduced Ordinance 01-2023 by title seconded by Jamie Huval, motion passed.

Schedule a Public Hearing for 5:30 P.M. on February 28, 2023, for Ordinance 01-2023—Mayor Meche

Debbie Kidder motioned to schedule a public hearing for Ordinance 01-2023 at 5:30 P.M. February 28, 2023, seconded by Suzanne Stelly, motion passed.

Introduce Ordinance 2-2023 Amending Section 2-27 of the town Ordinance setting the board meeting for the fourth Tuesday of each month at 6:00 P.M.—Mayor Meche

John Taylor introduced Ordinance 2-2023 by title seconded by Debbie Kidder and Jamie Huval, motion passed.

Schedule a Public Hearing for 5:45 P.M. for Ordinance 2-2023—Mayor Meche
John Taylor motioned to schedule a Public Hearing on February 28, 2023 at 5:45 P.M. for Ordinance 2-2023 seconded by Jamie Huval, motion passed.

Introduce Ordinance 3-2023 to Sell Old Library Building—Mayor Meche
Suzanne Stelly introduced Ordinance 3-2023 by title seconded by John Taylor and Jamie Huval, motion passed.

Schedule a Public Hearing at 5:15 on February 28, 2023, for Ordinance 3-2023—Mayor Meche

Suzanne Stelly motioned to schedule a Public Hearing for Ordinance 3-2023 on February 28, 2023, at 5:15 P.M. seconded by Jamie Huval, motion passed.

Adopt Resolution 01-2023 A Resolution Approving Of a Director and An Alternate Director to Represent the Town of Arnaudville, State of Louisiana, On the Board of Directors Of the Louisiana Municipal Natural Gas Purchasing and Distribution Authority As Provided By Chapter 10-B of Title 33 Of the Louisiana Revised Statutes of 1950—Mayor Meche

Debbie Kidder moved to approve Mayor Todd Meche as the Director and Dolores Quebedeaux as the alternate to represent the Town of Arnaudville on the Board of Directors of the Louisiana Municipal Natural Gas Authority seconded by Suzanne Stelly seconded and John Taylor, motion passed.

Up-Dates—Mayor Meche

Mayor asked for a Resolution to go ahead and advertise for bids for the old police cars, a couple have already been stripped of the police equipment, also a cargo trailer. Bids would be opened at the February meeting. Motion was made by Jamie Huval to advertise seconded by Debbie Kidder; motion passed.

Mayor asked the council to make a motion to give the employees off in observance of June 17, 2023 (Juneteenth) which is a Federal Holiday, motion was made by Debbie Kidder seconded by Jamie Huval, motion passed.

Mayor Meche asked the council to approve moving forward on a grant that George Marks is helping him with, this is a grant to re-do the sidewalks and add new sidewalks. This is due in February, this is with DOTD. Technical Support is being provided by the Atchafalaya National Heritage Agency it requires a 5% match. DOTD pays engineering and design cost. This will be done in three phases depending on how much sidewalk will be done. Mayor asked for a motion to move forward with this. Debbie Kidder motioned to move forward with the project seconded by Jamie Huval, motion passed.

Citizens' Concerns

Jamie Huval complimented the police department on a job well done, he also stated that action needs to take place on the old Schexnayder property and asked that the town attorney get involved with this property, perhaps sending them letters.

Adjourn

Kevin Robin and Jamie Huval moved to adjourn the regular meeting seconded by Suzanne Stelly and John Taylor, motion passed.

Attest

Dolores R. Quebedeaux, Town Clerk

Todd Meche, Mayor