

OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS TAKEN OF THE MAYOR AND BOARD OF ALDERMEN AT A REGULAR TOWN MEETING HELD ON OCTOBER 20, 2020 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, Cynthia Stelly, Suzanne Stelly

Town Clerk—Dolores R. Quebedeaux

Town Attorney—Kay Theunissen

Town Engineer—Kenny Boagni

Utility Superintendent—Todd Abshire (Absent)

Police Chief—Eddy LeCompte

Parks and Recreation—Zelma Jackson (Absent)

Called to Order—Mayor, Todd Meche

Prayer—Debbie Kidder

Pledge—All

Approve September 15, 2020 Regular Town Meeting Minute—Mayor, Todd Meche

Jamie Huval moved to accept the September 15, 2020 Regular Town Minutes second by Kevin Robin, motion carried.

Approve September 2020 Expenses—Mayor Meche

Debbie Kidder moved to accept the September 2020 Expenses second by Suzanne Stelly, motion carried.

Utility Report—Todd Abshire (Absent)

A report was given to the Mayor and Board Members per Todd Abshire.

Water—Maguire Iron is in the process of rehabilitating the Town of Arnaudville water tower. The water tower will be off-line until the project is complete. They are operating on pressure generated by running the wells and have two pressure relief valves on opposite sides of Bayou Teche that will allow them to maintain system pressure. The project is expected to be complete within a month, barring any unexpected delays. 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 decanter valve actuator for SBR #1 has changed and is fully operational. The monthly flow records were faxed to HoPak Laboratories to verify flow in accordance with the 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 gas system is operating near 40 pounds of inlet pressure at the Cypress Station and 40 psi at the Koch Station.

The bids on the water well were received; Mayor stated that he would be sending copies of the bids to the Council Members. He explained that he is waiting on prices for the controls for the new water well. Kenny Boagni explained that he is waiting on the contracts for the street project and is waiting on bonds. The street project is expected to move forward within a month.

Mayor explained that he is working with Kenny Boagni on applying for a grant. The grant would be for up-grading the water meters to automated meters, this will be submitted to Mike Huval's office. If awarded the grant the town will be responsible for putting up 25% of the grant. Mayor asked the council for a motion to proceed in applying for the grant. Jamie Huval motioned to allow the Mayor to apply for the grant second by Suzanne Stelly, motion carried.

Jamie Huval asked the Mayor and Board to consider cleaning the canal on Stelly Drive.

Mayor stated that they would look at the canal and perhaps the utility department could do some of the work.

Police Report—Eddy LeCompte

Chief has been conducting searches for Patrol Officers diligently over the past couple of months. Unfortunately, pickings are slim. Although he applauds the Council on the increase in starting hourly pay, he is still having major problems attracting individuals. Should the candidate be POST certified he or she commands a starting pay of \$16.00 to \$18.00 per hour from other agencies. Even so, there is a critical shortage nationwide for candidates applying for Law Enforcement positions. One agency has gone so far as to offer a \$2,000 signing bonus in order to attract Officers, while some have offered more. One POST certified applicant was interested in joining the ranks; however, he backed out when he found out the fully paid medical coverage was not offered.

Chief requested that the Council approve the hiring of two candidates. Ms. Angelique Stelly and Bryan Vidrine, to the position of provisional Patrol Officer at a starting pay of \$10.58 per hour (Grade 2 Step 7). Both candidates have had some training in law enforcement. Both shall be graded on an on-going basis during their six months of probation.

Chief is currently unsure if the Council will allow children to “Trick or Treat” on Halloween night, Saturday, October 31, 2020. Even if approved to do so, he doubts that many children or homeowners will take part in the festivities. Because of this, the Department does not plan on making any changes in the traffic flow to any streets in town. There has been discussion with St. Francis Regis Church about the possibility of having a “Trunk or Treat”, where residents, wearing proper safeguards, can distribute candy to the children from the rear of their vehicles while parked in the Church parking lots.

Chief stated that Mayor and Board Members should have received a copy of a proposed “COOPERATIVE ENDEAVOR AGREEMENT FOR POLICE SERVICES” in the packets they were given. This “Agreement” will have to be approved by the Council in order for it to be implemented. Chief stated that he reviews the office expenses on a monthly basis and he seems to be doing well. There have been some unexpected expenses that were unforeseen, namely two hurricanes within a month. As per the policy, and because of the uncertainty of possible disaster, he had the employees who were not working spending the storm time on “standby status” and available at the department. Total expenditures for this, which was paid on a straight time basis, were roughly \$2,750. Further, due to Patrol Officers departing and one in the St. Martin POST Academy, the Department was shorthanded. Due to this, he was forced to make arrangements with the St. Landry Sheriff’s Office to cover some of the shifts. Although he budgeted \$7,500 for Contract Labor it appears the he will be spending more than that. He estimates that the Department will need coverage of at least another weekend or two in order to have coverage for the town 24/7. Due to this shortage, and until he gets new people to cover patrol activities, he request and additional \$2,000 added to the Police Department budget for Contract Labor.

Chief spoke to Sheriff Becket Breaux with the St. Martin Sheriff’s Office in order to confirm that they are eligible to receive any donation of vehicles. He stated that he would not be able to give the department any of his used excess vehicles until after the first of next year (2021). He requested that he consider donating two vehicles to APD to which he replied that it may be possible. He further asked if there was a possibility that the St. Martin Maintenance Department could resume maintenance on his vehicles, which will save the Department money in labor cost. He stated that he could see no problem with that but he would have to look to see how the COVID pandemic has effected that particular Department.

Finally, he inquired if his Reserve Officers could patrol Arnaudville for the next weekends until they could get their own Patrol Officers to take over. He asked that Chief send him a written request and that he would look into doing so. His concern was juridical responsibility; however, Chief explained that the patrolling would be strictly within the Town limits and they would be given an oath of office only for the dates and times they would be on duty. Every year the St. Landry Crime Stoppers request Chief’s from the different communities in the Parish to nominate someone from their jurisdiction for outstanding Patrol Officer, Correctional Officer or Dispatcher. Chief said it is honor to say that Dispatcher Dianna Richard was chosen as “Dispatcher of the Year” for St. Landry Crime Stoppers. Ms.

Richard will receive a plaque, a certificate and a \$50 gift card for any restaurant in St. Landry Parish. She will be presented with the award tomorrow afternoon at 3:00 P.M. by St. Landry Crime Stoppers. Chief congratulated Ms. Richard.

Statistics for the Arnaudville Police Department for the month of September were: 3 Citations, 11 FIC's, 27 MIC's, 2 Arrests, 74 calls for service.

Jamie Huval moved to hire Angelique Stelly at \$10.58 Grade 2 Step 7 second by Debbie Kidder, motion carried.

Kevin Robin moved to hire Bryan Vidrine at \$10.58 Grade 2 Step 7 second by Jamie Huval, motion carried.

Jamie Huval moved to amend the budget to add \$2,000 contract labor to the police department budget second by Kevin Robin, motion carried.

Halloween Saturday, October 31, 2020 6P.M. to 8:00 P.M. (Trick or Treat)—Mayor

Debbie Kidder moved to have trick or treat on October 31, 2020 from 6 P.M. to 8 P.M. second by Kevin Robin and Jamie Huval, motion carried.

Adopt Ordinance 04-2020 An Ordinance Adopting And Enacting A New Code For the Town of Arnaudville, Louisiana; Providing for the Repeal of Certain Ordinances No Included Therein; Providing Penalty For the Violation Thereof; Providing For The Manner of Amending such Code; And Providing When Such Code and This Ordinance Shall Become Effective—Mayor

Jamie Huval moved to accept Ordinance 04-2020 second by Debbie Kidder, motion carried.

Police Employee Contract—Cynthia Stelly

Cynthia Stelly commented that a few month back Chief was trying to recoup monies from previous hires that have left the department. The contract would have to be adopted and signed by a new hire (police officer). The contract included dispatchers; chief said that there is no need to have the dispatchers on the contract. Kay Theunissen stated that she will revise the contract if voted on. Cynthia Stelly moved to accept the contract with a re-vision second by Debbie Kidder and Suzanne Stelly, motion carried.

District Judge Candidate—Keith Thibodeaux

Mr. Thibodeaux introduced himself and explained what he plans to do if he is elected as District Judge.

District Attorney Candidate—Chad Pitre

Mr. Pitre introduced himself to the Mayor and Board members he explained what his plans are is he is elected as District Attorney.

Up-Date—Mayor Meche

Mayor explained that work is in progress at the water tower all is going well.

Citizens Concerns'

Adjourn

Jamie Huval moved to adjourn the October 20, 2020 Regular Town Meeting second by Debbie Kidder, motion carried.

Attest:

Dolores R. Quebedeaux, Town Clerk

Todd Meche, Mayor