

OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS OF THE MAYOR AND BOARD OF ALDERMEN TAKEN AT A REGULAR TOWN MEETING HELD ON NOVEMBER 20, 2018 AT 6:00 P.M. HELD AT THE ARNAUDVILLE COMMUNITY CENTER, 291 GUIDROZ STREET, ARNAUDVILLE, LA 70512

Present—Mayor, Kathy M. Richard

Aldermen— Jamie Huval, Todd Meche, Louis Stelly, Jr., Suzanne Stelly

Absent—Annette Bramlett

Town Clerk—Dolores R. Quebedeaux

Attorney—Will Ryan

Engineer—Kenny Boagni

Utility Superintendent—Todd Abshire (Absent)

Police Chief—Eddy LeCompte

Parks and Recreation—Zelma Jackson (Absent)

Called to Order—Mayor, Richard

Prayer—Suzanne Stelly

Pledge—All

Accept October 16, 2018 Regular Town Meeting Minutes—Mayor Richard

Jamie Huval moved to accept the October 16, 2018 Regular Town Meeting Minutes seconded by Louis Stelly, Jr., unanimously carried.

Accept October 2018 Expenses—Mayor Richard

Louis Stelly, Jr., moved to accept the October 2018 Expenses seconded by Todd Meche, unanimously carried.

Utility Report—Todd Abshire (Absent)

Police Report—Eddy LeCompte

On Wednesday, October 31, 2018, the streets of Quebedeaux, Swamp and Washington were designated as “One Way” for approximately two and one half hours during the “Trick or Treat” time period of Halloween. The feedback received was favorable and we did not experience any traffic congestion. Since this approach to reducing congestion and increasing child safety was such a success they plan on doing the same next year.

On Friday, November 16, 2018 Patrol Officer Kirsten McBay graduated from the POST Academy at the St. Martin Police Academy. Chief petitioned the Town Council to approve the promotion of Patrol Officer Kirsten McBay from Provisional to the position of POST Certified Patrol Officer at the pay rate of Grade 2 Step 13 (\$11.37 per hour) effective Saturday, November 17, 2018. Chief petitioned the Town Council to approve the hiring of Mr. Cody LeBlanc and Mr. Kevin Guillotte for the positions of Provisional Patrol Officers at the pay rate of Grade 2 Step 2 (\$9.93 per hour). During the past two or three weeks that these individuals have been training, Mr. Guillotte concluded that he could not perform the job of a Patrol Officer efficiently and decided to resign; therefore, he petitioned the Town Council to accept the resignation of Provisional Patrol Officer Kevin Guillotte.

He continues the conducting of interviews to fill positions vacated for Patrol Officers. As he mentioned at the prior Council Meeting, finding qualified candidates has been difficult due to low pay and a lack of benefits. One thing going for the Department is the proficiency in training and new recruits he gets which; unfortunately has also served to attract other law enforcement agencies who pay more or have better benefits to pursue the trained officers, and woo away from the department. As the Council is already aware, the Department suffered the loss of three officers within the span of approximately thirty days. This placed the Police Department in a precarious situation, since they only had three officers available to work and one was in POST Academy they were left with two officers to handle the

jobs that had to be done. He was fortunate to get some help from the St. Martin and St. Landry Sheriff Offices to fill in for coverage during the past month. Thankfully neither Office submitted charges for compensation for the service they provided to the Department. Chief requested the Council's approval in the setting up and having a Reserve Officer Unit. The hours that each reserve officer would have to complete per month would be roughly twenty-four. These hours would be voluntary and could be worked in any increments of time as long as the total reached the minimum required. If the reserve officer wishes they could work for more hours than required. The insurance cost for Reserve Officers are approximately \$1,000 per officer per year. The Reserve Officer would have to take a physiological exam to determine not only if they are fit but also for insurance purposes. They would also have to pass the POST Firearm Course in order for them to be armed. These Officers would be used to fill in when needed for vacations, emergencies and backup. Chief already has one officer serving in a Reserve capacity, Patrol Officer Barry Ard.

During the last budget meeting Chief presented the Council with the possibility of obtaining a new Ford SUV Police Cruiser, through a government grant, to be added to the fleet of vehicles. The intent is to weed out all the vehicles that are not Patrol Vehicles equipped with those that are. Although he requested two vehicles, budget constraints were such that he could only apply for one. Basically, the Department would receive a fully equipped Cruiser, valued at roughly \$45,000, for a cost to the Department of approximately \$8,000. He prepared and presented the grant proposal and it appeared to be on the road to approval. However, an inspection of the facility by representatives from the federal agency making the grant showed that Arnaudville's government building is not in compliance with ADA regulations (Americans Disabilities Act). This prevents him from being eligible to receive many grants. He request that the incoming administration review and address ADA standards, such as wheelchair accessibility throughout the building (s), so as to make Arnaudville eligible for future funding opportunities. As a side note, there may be grants available to address the necessary construction work for the purpose of ADA Compliance.

Statistics for the Department for October 2018: 18 Citations, 31 FIC's, 23 MIC's, 6 arrests and 95 calls for service.

Employee of the month for the Arnaudville Police Department is Patrol Officer Kirsten McBay. Todd Meche moved to accept the promotion of Patrol Officer Kirsten McBay from Provisional to Post Certified Patrol Officer at the pay rate of Grade 2, step 13 \$11.37 per hour effective November 17, 2018 also hire Officer Cody Leblanc \$9.93 per hour, accept the resignation of Kevin Guillotte seconded by Louis Stelly, Jr., unanimously carried. Suzanne Stelly moved to approve the formation of an Arnaudville Police Department Reserve Officer Unit, Jamie moved to table the formation of an Arnaudville Police Department Reserve Officer Unit, Suzanne Stelly withdrew her motion and seconded Jamie Huval's motion to table the formation of the Reserve Officer Unit until the December 2018 meeting. Jamie stated to the chief that several people have talked to him about what he feels may be a loitering problem in the cemetery. Chief stated that they do patrol that area they have found people in the cemetery and removed them from the premises. Chief also stated that there is no lighting the Mausoleum area, but they do patrol.

Parks and Recreation—Zelma Jackson (Absent)

Mayor explained that basketball is going on and Zelma is taking registration until December 24, 2018.

Capitalization of Fixed Assets Resolution 5-2018—Mayor

Mayor read Resolution 5-2018 in its entirety, Todd Meche moved to accept the Resolution 5-2018 Capitalization of Fixed Assets seconded by Suzanne Stelly, unanimously carried.

Sale of Utility Equipment and Auto—Mayor

Mayor Richard stated that some machinery and other items need to be sold and she needs to get the process started. Todd Meche moved to have the mayor start the process by getting a list of what needs

to be sold to produce to the aldermen and have open bids at the next meeting seconded by Louis Stelly, Jr., unanimously carried.

Blighted Property—Mayor Richard and Attorney, Will Ryan

Mayor Richard explained that she had declared the property on Camp Street as an emergency demolition.

Will Ryan explained that there are two options that can be considered. The first (1st) option is the emergency option that requires 24 hour notice to hold a hearing, unfortunately this options requires the town to hire an attorney to represent the party, which can get costly. The second (2nd) option is to issue a 10 day notice which is not bad. This notice is sent 10 days prior to the hearing also a written report will need to be sent prior to the notice going out laying out the reasons for condemning the property this report is to be sent out by a town official. After the first notice is sent a second notice is required to be sent to the owner letting them know when the demolition will take place. Will stated that it is really up to the council to decide what option they choose. Mayor Richard asked if she would write a letter to the owner finding out if there was a lien on this property. Will said probably not, because of what the law requires. Todd Meche moved to proceed with option 2, (second option) seconded by Jamie Huval, unanimously carried.

Kenny Boagni up-dated the Mayor and Board Members on the gas project that is taking place on Quebedeaux Street and Washington Street. He also addressed the sewer project for NuNu's.

Drainage on Quebedeaux and North Mills / Roads—Dakota Arnaud

Dakota explained that it is not on Quebedeaux and North Mills it is more along the oxidation pond is where the problem is. Dakota explained that he had met with Mayor Richard and Kenny Boagni and he explained what the problem was consolidated water coming from the town is now draining on private property and ruining the property where he resides. Dakota stated that something needs to be done because it is not fair that town water is destroying private property. It was stated that nothing can be done to help with this problem. He also said that the levee has shifted along the oxidation pond. He said the levee is about 5 feet over the property line and it is clogging a ditch on private property. Mayor asked Dakota if they have a survey of their land. He said that they do have a survey of their land. Mayor said she has no problem speaking to Dakota but needs to speak to the property owner. Dakota said that the ditch has been dug along the levee only so far than the ditch fades away along the levee. Mayor asked Kenny to speak on this matter, Kenny asked about the ditch and Dakota said that the ditch was put in by his grandfather. Kenny stated that you cannot block a natural flow of water, you cannot block up a ditch. Kenny said that the ditch drains public water anyhow it is on private property. Kenny also explained that the land there is also in a flood zone and is very low. Mr. Louis explained that this is swamp land and the water will go where it wants. Dakota feels this is the oxidation pond without proper drainage. Mr. Louis stated that if a ditch is dug it would help their property. Dakota stated yes and the town should not be allowed to not have a ditch. Mayor suggested taking this under advisement and get together with the Parish, Kenny and the Town and look at the problem. Dakota stated that Mayor was going to meet with Mr. Alvin Stelly due this being Parish property. Mayor stated to Dakota to, "calm down little boy" and he said he was 18 and was considered a young man. Mayor Richard stated that she was a 65 year old lady and very well respected person, and told Dakota to respect his elders. Mayor stated that the sewer pond is for the town.

Dakota stated that the Mayor told him that she needed to meet his grandfather about an issue that needed to be discussed. Kenny stated to Dakota that he is asking the town to give him a definitive answer; Kenny stated that the landowner is stating that the stakes are on the property lines but the engineers will have to go out and define this. Kenny stated that if there is a problem the town needs to hire someone to fix this problem. For Dakota to say that this is his grandfathers' ditch is incorrect, this ditch drains public water, if this ditch is blocked the town has the right to file an injunction to unblock the ditch to let public water flow, a natural drainage cannot be blocked in the State of Louisiana. Dakota

stated that the complaint was made 14 years ago and nothing was done. Mayor stated that it is not because she did not do anything, if that is what he is trying to point out; Mayor stated that she has helped his father, grandparents, and great grandparents. Dakota stated that the engineer stated that a survey needed to be done and he asked why it was not done 14 years ago. Kenny asked Dakota what is the end fix, and he said he just wanted the problem fixed. Dakota stated that the town needs to know how to fix the problem; the engineer stated that the town has no problem. Mayor explained that it was not her fault that a survey did not take place; she said she is not perfect but she will not let herself get tarnished for her 28 years of service to this town. Mayor explained that it is not only the Mayor you also have a council. Mayor said if she was to bring back things of 14 years ago they would be in the meeting until 3 o'clock in the morning. Mr. Louis stated that the ditch needs to be dug, and should be dug in the right place.

Kenny Boagni also explained that the trees are damaging some of the roads and some of the roads are gravel based, and the roads need to be re-constructed.

Dakota stated that Quebedeaux was in the budget; Kenny stated that this was discussed but was not budgeted.

Blighted Property—Jamie Huval

Jamie stated that this was already discussed.

Citizens' Concerns—Mayor

Adjourn

Todd Meche and Jamie Huval moved to adjourn the November 2018 Regular Town Meeting seconded by Suzanne Stelly, unanimously carried.

Attest:

Dolores R. Quebedeaux, Town Clerk

Kathy M. Richard, Mayor