

**CITY OF OPELOUSAS
OPELOUSAS, LOUISIANA
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
JANUARY 8, 2019**

The Council of the City of Opelousas, Parish of St. Landry, State of Louisiana, convened in a regular session on this 8th day of January 2019 at 5:00 p.m.

With Mayor Julius Alsandor presiding, the meeting was called to order.

Mayor Alsandor requested the Clerk to call the roll and the following Council members were PRESENT: Marvin Richard, Milton Batiste III, Floyd Ford, Charles Cummings, Sherell Roberts, and Chasity Davis. ABSENT: None.

A moment of silent meditation was observed. Alderwoman Chasity Davis led the Pledge of Allegiance and Rev. Dale led the Prayer.

Minutes of the Regular Meeting held 10/09/2018 and 12/11/2018 were not available for review.

On a motion by Alderwoman Sherell Roberts and seconded by Alderman Marvin Richard, it was resolved adopt the agenda. A roll call vote was taken with the following results:

YEAS: Marvin Richard, Milton Batiste III, Floyd Ford, Charles Cummings, Sherell Roberts, and Chasity Davis.

NAYS: None.

ABSENT: None.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mayor Alsandor allowed announcements to be made at the beginning of the meeting so that the large majority that were in attendance could hear them before the end of the meeting.

Mrs. Raquel Manuel, Chamber of Commerce President and CEO, announced that the City of Opelousas has been home to the Chamber of Commerce for 100 years as of this year. The Association of Commerce was established 03/21/1919 and there will be a huge celebration on 03/22/2019 to commemorate the 100 years. A kickoff luncheon will be taking place later this month where they will be talking about all of the programs that they will be doing this year. The St. Landry Chamber is one of 13 Chambers that is accredited in the State of Louisiana. She encouraged Chamber members and the public to go online to the Chamber's website to get more information about the event.

Ms. Lena Charles announced that the Downtown Development District is legislatively-appointed commission to work on economic development in the City of Opelousas. This committee meets the third Friday of every month and the next meeting is scheduled for 01/18/2019. As of January 2019, the DDD has been collecting taxes to be able to support the newly commissioned Downtown Development District.

PRESENTATIONS

Presentation by Mayor Julius Alsandor. Mayor Alsandor pointed out that there have been adjustments made to the sound system so that everyone can hear clearly. He stated that they will be more professional and the decorum will be done differently. The Council will respect the citizens and he hopes that respect is reciprocated to the Council members also. Mayor Alsandor asked those present to please not let this be the last Council meeting that they attend. If they want to be a part of the progress, they have to get involved. He pointed out that they do have a timer now and they will not be in meetings all night with individuals coming up and talking thirty minutes. They will start meeting the week before and having pre-agenda meetings so they won't have 30+ items on the agenda. They are going to come there to handle City business.

Appointment of Mayor Pro-Tempore for 2019. A motion was made by Alderman Charles Cummings and seconded by Alderwoman Chasity Davis to nominate Alderman Milton Batiste III as Mayor Pro-Tempore for 2019. A second motion was made by Alderman Marvin Richard to nominate Alderwoman Sherell Roberts. Alderman Batiste deferred the position to Alderwoman Roberts. Alderman Cummings withdrew his motion and the motion to nominate Alderwoman Sherell Roberts was seconded by Alderman Floyd Ford. A roll call vote was taken with the following results:

YEAS: Marvin Richard, Milton Batiste III, Floyd Ford, Charles Cummings, Sherell Roberts, and Chasity Davis.

NAYS: None.

ABSENT: None.

Appointment of Committees for 2019. These committees will meet on the first Wednesday of each month prior to the second Tuesday Council Meeting.

Budget Committee:

*Milton Batiste III, Chairman
Charles Cummings, Vice Chairman
Sherell Roberts
Floyd Ford*

Personnel Committee:

*Charles Cummings, Chairman
Sherell Roberts, Vice Chairwoman
Milton Batiste III
Chasity Davis*

General Services Committee:

*Marvin Richard, Chairman
Chasity Davis, Vice Chairwoman
Floyd Ford
Charles Cummings*

Mayor's Appointments:

City Attorney – Travis Broussard. A roll call vote was taken with the following results:

YEAS: Marvin Richard, Milton Batiste III, Floyd Ford, Charles Cummings, Sherell Roberts, and Chasity Davis.

NAYS: None.

ABSENT: None.

City Auditing Firm – Kolder Champagne Slaven & Company. A roll call vote was taken with the following results:

YEAS: Marvin Richard, Milton Batiste III, Floyd Ford, Charles Cummings, Sherell Roberts, and Chasity Davis.

NAYS: None.

ABSENT: None.

City Engineering Firm – Morgan Goudeau & Associates, Inc. A roll call vote was taken with the following results:

YEAS: Marvin Richard, Milton Batiste III, Floyd Ford, Charles Cummings, Sherell Roberts, and Chasity Davis.

NAYS: None.

ABSENT: None.

Official Journal (Newspaper) – The Daily World. A roll call vote was taken with the following results:

YEAS: Marvin Richard, Milton Batiste III, Floyd Ford, Charles Cummings, Sherell Roberts, and Chasity Davis.

NAYS: None.

ABSENT: None.

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City Clerk & Tax Collector – position not appointed at this time. Pursuant to La R.S. Title 42.2, Ms. Leisa Anderson shall serve and continue to serve as City Clerk until her successor is appointed and confirmed by the Council or unless Ms. Anderson appointed permanently.

Presentation by Mr. Lee Ritter, Board President for Opelousas Main Street, with an introduction of the new Main Street Board. Mr. Ritter, incoming president of the Opelousas Main Street Board for 2019, introduced the some of the other board members present. Kate Hoffman, Vice President; Candace Randle, Secretary; Elizabeth Ritter, Treasurer. He pointed out that the Main Street Board is there to support the businesses in this community especially in the downtown area. The board meets every fourth Wednesday evening at the Opelousas Tourism buildings. He also spotlighted Ms. Melanie Lafleur who is their director. Mr. Ritter presented the Mayor with an Opelousas flag for the Tricentennial celebration to be hung at City Hall. Ms. Lafleur is the designer of the flag.

Presentation by Fire Chief Charles Mason and Mr. Don D’Avy of “Architects Alliance of Acadiana” requesting approval to begin advertising for bids for the “New Metal Roof for the Central Fire Station” project. Fire Chief Charles Mason stated that the new roof will be installed over the existing roof which has caused the station to have existing water damage. The new roof will be a pitch roof with a 20 year warranty on materials and labor and the roof finish is warranted for 30 years. The specification allow for 150 days to complete the project with stipulated damages paid for every day over the 150 days. On a motion by Alderman Charles Cummings and seconded by Alderman Milton Batiste III, it was resolved to grant authority to begin advertisement for bids for the “New Metal Roof for the Central Fire Station” project. A roll call vote was taken with the following results:

YEAS: Marvin Richard, Milton Batiste III, Floyd Ford, Charles Cummings, Sherell Roberts, and Chasity Davis.

NAYS: None.

ABSENT: None.

Discuss request for APPROVAL OF PLAT for RE-SUBDIVISION of property located at 128 N. Lombard Street (Louisiana Memorial United Methodist Church). The Planning Commission held a Public Hearing on 01/07/2019 regarding this matter and recommended approval of request. On a motion by Alderwoman Sherell Roberts and seconded by Alderman Marvin Richard, it was resolved to approve the request for APPROVAL OF PLAT for RE-SUBDIVISION of property located at 128 N. Lombard Street (Louisiana Memorial United Methodist Church). A roll call vote was taken with the following results:

YEAS: Marvin Richard, Milton Batiste III, Floyd Ford, Charles Cummings, Sherell Roberts, and Chasity Davis.

NAYS: None.

ABSENT: None.

Discuss request for VARIANCE of property located in a NMU (NEIGHBORHOOD MIXED USE) Zone at 1239 S. Union Street to open a Drive Thru (SNT LLC – Smoothie-N-Things). The Planning Commission held a Public Hearing on 01/07/2019 regarding this matter and recommended approval of request. On a motion by Alderman Marvin Richard and seconded by Alderman Floyd Ford, it was resolved to approve the request for VARIANCE of property located in a NMU (NEIGHBORHOOD MIXED USE) Zone at 1239 S. Union Street to open a Drive Thru (SNT LLC – Smoothie-N-Things). A roll call vote was taken with the following results:

YEAS: Marvin Richard, Milton Batiste III, Floyd Ford, Charles Cummings, Sherell Roberts, and Chasity Davis.

NAYS: None.

ABSENT: None.

Discuss request for CONDITIONAL USE of property located in a NMU (NEIGHBORHOOD MIXED USE) Zone at 905 S. Walnut Street to reopen a Seafood Market (Shannan Touchet – Eddie’s Seafood Market). The Planning Commission held a Public Hearing on 01/07/2019 regarding this matter and recommended approval of request. On a motion by Alderman Marvin Richard and seconded by Alderman Charles Cummings, it was resolved to approve the request for CONDITIONAL USE of property located in a NMU (NEIGHBORHOOD MIXED USE) Zone at 905 S. Walnut Street to reopen a Seafood Market (Shannan Touchet – Eddie’s Seafood Market). A roll call vote was taken with the following results:

YEAS: Marvin Richard, Milton Batiste III, Floyd Ford, Charles Cummings, Sherell Roberts, and Chasity Davis.

NAYS: None.

ABSENT: None.

Discuss request for VARIANCE of property located in a C1 (COMMERCIAL 1) Zone at 1151 N. Main Street to place larger letters on the building wall sign (Anchor Signs – Dollar Tree). The Planning Commission held a Public Hearing on 01/07/2019 regarding this matter and recommended approval of request. Dollar Tree will be opening another location in the old CVS building. Mr. Brad Frasier, representative from Anchor Signs, stated that the variance is needed for larger lettering for the sign than what was in place before. The request is for a 36” set of letters. On a motion by Alderman Charles Cummings and seconded by Alderman Floyd Ford, it was resolved to approve the request for VARIANCE of property located in a C1 (COMMERCIAL 1) Zone at 1151 N. Main Street to place larger letters (36”) on the building wall sign (Anchor Signs – Dollar Tree). A roll call vote was taken with the following results:

YEAS: Marvin Richard, Milton Batiste III, Floyd Ford, Charles Cummings, Sherell Roberts, and Chasity Davis.

NAYS: None.

ABSENT: None.

Discuss request for CONDITIONAL USE of property located in a NMU (NEIGHBORHOOD MIXED USE) Zone at 606 N. Main Street to move an existing Apparel Shop (Andre Pont LLC – Studio Boutique). The Planning Commission held a Public Hearing on 01/07/2019 regarding this matter and recommended approval of request. On a motion by Alderwoman Sherell Roberts and seconded by Alderman Marvin Richard, it was resolved to approve the request for CONDITIONAL USE of property located in a NMU (NEIGHBORHOOD MIXED USE) Zone at 606 N. Main Street to move an existing Apparel Shop (Andre Pont LLC – Studio Boutique). A roll call vote was taken with the following results:

YEAS: Marvin Richard, Milton Batiste III, Floyd Ford, Charles Cummings, Sherell Roberts, and Chasity Davis.

NAYS: None.

ABSENT: None.

Presentation by City Attorney. Attorney Travis Broussard stated that they have received no new suits since last month’s meeting. He pointed out that suits continue to be dismissed due to litigation. The City has not entered any new major contracts at this time. Attorney Broussard stated that while the AgraTech contract has been approved by the Council, it has not yet been executed by the Mayor to close the deal so that business has not yet located here in Opelousas.

Engineer’s Monthly Status Report. Mr. William Jarrell gave an update on the following projects: (1) Street Project (Wartell Street, Mary Ann Street, and College Avenue) is substantially complete. His office will be recommending to the Council shortly to accept the project as substantially complete once the punch list items are addressed by the Contractor before final acceptance; (2) Chlorination

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Project at Wastewater Treatment Plant will be receiving bids on 01/17/19. Alderwoman Roberts requested an update on the Leo Street Lift Station Project from Chachere Street to Vine Street. Mr. Jarrell stated that another engineer in his office is working on that project. Alderman Richard requested an update on the Judson Walsh Bridge Project. Mr. Jarrell stated that this project is being scheduled to be advertised for bids in June. There will be some utilities that will need to be relocated related to that project. Mr. Jarrell pointed out that this is a State project—not a City project—and will be handled by DOTD.

RESOLUTIONS

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY OF OPELOUSAS TO OBTAIN A VISA BUSINESS CARD THROUGH AMERICAN BANK.

The City Attorney stated that this measure, as he understands it, is to fulfill the need for convenience with respect to transacting business and that this business card will be used for specific line items that have already been appropriated in the previous budget for use for certain things. At this time, that money is already being spent pursuant to using checks exclusively which tends to burden, delay and otherwise hinder the City’s ability to do business. The use of this card will be exclusive to the same reasons we already tender a check for that line item—this will just be a second method of payment for those particular line items with respect to that things that have already been appropriated by the Council for the Fiscal Year 2018-2019. Alderman Batiste asked if there are any policies or procedures in place for credit card use. Attorney Broussard stated that under Title 33:406 of the Lawrason Act, provides that any time you appropriate funds or incur debt, you must do so by an Ordinance and not only by a Resolution. The administration would like this Resolution to be adopted to allow the paperwork to be facilitated for use of the card but there will be no debt incurred on the card until an Ordinance is adopted. The City Clerk stated that in answer legal counsel’s question regarding a credit card policy, the previous administration did not have a credit card so there was no policy was set; but the administration prior to that one did have a policy in place for credit card use. Mayor Alsandor stated that all departments will have access to that card with the authorization of the Mayor. The City Clerk pointed out that the wording of the title should be changed to reflect the fact that the City is just starting the application process. The word “obtain” will be changed to “apply for”. On a motion by Alderwoman Sherell Roberts and seconded by Alderwoman Chasity Davis, the following Resolution was offered for adoption:

RESOLUTION NO. 01 OF 2019

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY OF OPELOUSAS TO APPLY FOR A VISA BUSINESS CARD THROUGH AMERICAN BANK

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Board of Aldermen of the City of Opelousas deem it necessary that the City obtain a Visa business card for the transacting of certain business matters related to City operations; and

WHEREAS, the current fiscal agent for the City of Opelousas is American Bank & Trust Company;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Board of Aldermen of the City of Opelousas, State of Louisiana, do hereby authorize Mayor Julius Alsandor to sign any and all paperwork to apply for a Visa Business Card through American Bank & Trust Company in order to transact business for the City of Opelousas.

The above resolution, having been submitted to a vote, was adopted on this 8th day of January 2019 as follows:

YEAS: Marvin Richard, Milton Batiste III, Floyd Ford, Charles Cummings, Sherell Roberts, and Chasity Davis.

NAYS: None.

ABSENT: None.

ATTEST:

CITY CLERK

MAYOR

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mayor Alsandor asked if there were any additional announcements. Mr. Eric Williams, founder of a program entitled “Guns Down, Power Up”, which is making progress, is a volunteer with the Boys and Girls Club. He is requesting support in obtaining a building to house projects for children on a day-to-day basis. He teaches chess and many other programs he will be implementing. Mayor Alsandor recommended that Mr. Williams talk to Mr. Chris Rideau, Parks Director, as well as Ms. Adrian Giron with the Boys and Girls Club.

Mr. Charles Tyler complimented the Mayor and Council on a job well done.

Mr. Derrick Comeaux congratulated the Mayor and Council. He stated that he is working on a business venture on building a shopping center in Opelousas with 25% of the workers having to be hired locally.

Mr. Samuel P. Rubin and Mr. Paul Givens stated that they have been teaching the kids martial arts for the last six months and need the support of the community.

Mr. Warren Babineaux congratulated the Mayor and Council and the Police Chief.

Police Chief Martin McLendon presented the leaders in his department: Major Mark Guidry—Patrol Division Commander, Fleet Operations, and Technology; Captain Craig Thomas—Investigative Services; Assistant Chief Scott Aymond—in charge of day-to-day operations and budgetary matters.

Mayor Alsandor recognized several Water Plant and Public Works employees who helped with the emergency repair of the 16” water main that burst at the Water Plant on Christmas Eve: Israel Roberts, Joseph Pickney, Kurt Young, Wilfred Malveaux, James Keith Batiste, Matthew Zachery, Derrick Pitre, Mike Landry, Deontre Sam, Brent Aymond, Fred Henderson, and engineer William Jarrell. The leadership, knowledge, and expertise of this group of men helped to alleviate a problem that could have caused problems for all of us over the Christmas holidays.

There being nothing further to come before the Council, on a motion by Alderwoman Sherell Roberts, seconded by Alderman Charles Cummings and unanimously carried, it was resolved that the meeting be adjourned. The meeting was adjourned at 6:17 p.m.

ATTEST:

CITY CLERK

MAYOR