 May 23, 2018

The following minutes were taken at the regular monthly meeting of the Mayor and the Board of Aldermen on April 17, 2018 at the Town Hall in Pearl River.

Mayor McQueen asked that everyone keep the families of Miss Jane Christopher and Mr Frank Guillie in our prayers for their loss. Mayor McQueen called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.

Alderman Bennett gave the invocation; the pledge of allegiance was led by Mayor McQueen.

**ROLL CALL:**

Mayor McQueen called roll and Alderman Walsh, Bennett, Phillips, Cutrer, McGregor, Chief Johnny Jennings, Attorney Tim Mathison, Attorney Matt Daigle, and Town Clerk, Madeline Campbell were all present.

**Acceptance of Minutes:** from Council Meeting March 20th 2018. Alderman Cutrer asks to change page 7, to read “donated gift cards from local restaurants”. Move to accept with one change Alderman Walsh first, Alderman Bennett second, All in Favor Aye, **So Moved**.

Motion to accept Special Meeting March 6th 2018 minutes with changes made by Alderman Walsh, second by Alderman Bennett, All in Favor Aye, **So Moved.**

**RECOGNITION OF SPECIAL GUESTS:**

1. Alderman Bennett – Pearl River Police Officer, Michael Alquist
2. Alderman Cutrer – Polishing The Pearl Poster Contest Winners
3. Notice of Armed Forces Day Celebration May 19th, 2018

Mayor McQueen asks to move a Speaker up in the agenda, Alderman Walsh firsts this motion, Alderman Bennett seconds. All in Favor Aye, **So Moved.**

Pastor Tobey Pitman, representing Pearl River Ministerial Alliance of the 25 churches in Pearl River, Louisiana, comes to the podium to speak about the Mayor’s Prayer Breakfast coming up on May 3, 2018, Speaker will be Michael Sprague.

Mr. Joe Seeley comes to the podium to speak on the Armed Forces Day Celebration from 11:30am to 1:00pm in the Pearl River Park with free food.

**PUBLIC HEARING:**

1. Discussion of Ordinance #16-28-11A Town Clerk Special Pay. Mayor McQueen opens the public hearing. Only change is in the special meeting pay rate from $150 to $100. No Discussion. Mayor McQueen closes the public hearing. Mayor calls for a vote; Alderman Walsh moves to accept Ordinance #16-28-11A; Alderman McGregor seconds. All in favor, Aye. **So Moved.**
2. Discussion of Ordinance #18-03-03 Regulating Special Public Events. Mayor McQueen opens to public hearing. New Ordinance introduced gives guidelines for functions that come in the town, and how to record at Town Hall and process their event with regards to police presence and street closures. Discussion around local non-profit events versus outside entity coming into Pearl River; solution to have a Cooperative Endeavor Agreement with our local organizations. Major events that have come in the past, voluntarily and out of courtesy have let town hall know. We then sent these groups to the Police Department to provide details the police may need regarding those events. So far the town has had no incidents with special events. Miss Hannah Rotar came to the podium. Her comment offered input regarding this discussion considering a number of attendees to reach before requiring the permit. Kick in elements to require a police presence: an outside event (not under a permanent structure roof), open to public, alcohol is being served, and a town street closed or street affected. Two people from the floor come to the podium for discussion. Mayor McQueen moves to close the public hearing, first Alderman Cutrer moves to table the discussion at the request of The Lion’s Club who could not make this particular meeting; Alderman Cutrer has forwarded a copy to them for review. Alderman Bennett seconds the motion. All in favor, 4 Yay, and 1 Nay. **So Moved.**
3. Mayor McQueen opens Discussion of Ordinance #145A Parade for public hearing. Attorney Tim Mathison points out: only changes made are regarding clarity on Commercial Establishments Parade Day Closing Times, and Designated Areas on Parade Route. Section 4, #3 add language “state of Louisiana Commissioned law enforcement officer”. Mayor McQueen asks any more discussion? None, so public hearing closed. Alderman Walsh motions to accept this ordinance. Alderman Bennett seconds. All in favor, Aye. **So Moved.**
4. Mayor McQueen opens Ordinance #91-04A Closing Time of Bars for public hearing. Is there any discussion on this? Ordinance on Parade covers most of the intent of this one on Closing Time of Bars; together these two ordinances were conflicting regarding the closing time on parade day. We have adopted the Louisiana State Laws regarding “unsafe & unruly behavior”. No more discussion. Mayor McQueen closes public hearing. Alderman Bennett makes a motion to accept as amended; Alderman McGregor seconds the motion. Alderman Cutrer motions to substitute “refer to state laws” regarding Chief of Police’s discretion to close; All in favor, no. The substitute motion failed. Original motion to accept as amended motion first by Alderman Bennett and second by Alderman McGregor. All in favor, four Aye (Alderman Walsh, Bennett, Phillips, McGregor); all opposed, one Nay (Alderman Cutrer). **Motion** **Carried.**
5. Mayor McQueen opens discussion on Ordinance #174A S&W Rate Adjustment to public hearing. Suggested rates to be as $12.00 for the first 2,000 gallons, and $3.00 for every additional 1,000 over that ceiling of 2,000. Discussion included dormant houses and continued billing for sewer, which cannot be disconnected by law, and water, which can be disconnected. Unless resident comes into Town Hall and notifies us that electricity turned off, the water bill will continue to be charged. Mayor McQueen closes public hearing. Mayor McQueen requests of the council to put this ordinance discussion in a public hearing at a later date when the public can focus on just this one ordinance. Alderman Walsh moves to table this ordinance for future public hearing; Alderman Cutrer seconds the motion to table. All in favor, Aye. **So Moved.** Mayor calls for a motion to call a special public hearing for just this ordinance; Alderman Walsh so moves; Alderman Cutrer seconds. All in favor, Aye. **So Moved.**
6. Mayor McQueen opens discussion on Ordinance 16-21-12A 2017 Budget. Alderman Walsh states she has not had time to look this one over. Alderman Bennett agrees to same. Motion made by Alderman Walsh to open discussion about 2017 Budget Final to include FEMA and allocation of 2017 leftover billing. Second by Alderman Bennett. All in favor, Aye. **So Moved.** Discussion continued by Attorney Daigle to include highlights of 2017 Budget. Proposing Money Market Account transfers; adjustments from auditors/CPA. Motion made by Alderman Walsh to table the 2017 and 2018 Budget for discussion at a future time. Alderman Walsh motions to receive Billy Burkett off the floor to bring into discussion his unpaid services for 2017. Alderman Phillips seconds the motion. All in favor, Aye. **So Moved.** Mr. Burkett comes to the podium to discuss his services, his contract, to turn in documentation to GOHSEP for reimbursement. This information is relevant to required quarterly reports submitted to GOHSEP for FEMA. Mr Burkett assures that a PW is still open for possible approval and reimbursement. Verify this through LouisianaPA.gov website. Mr. Burkett says he only wants to be allowed to process paperwork for monies the town has already spent; he needs the paperwork then he can file for reimbursement. Alderman Bennett describes why she is not comfortable agreeing to more spending on Mr Burkett’s contract. Mayor McQueen points out that he does not want any more monies spent until he can see all the activity over the past three years for the Town of Pearl River, in a readout that shows what the town has turned in and what the town is eligible to receive. Attorney Mathison asks if Mr Burkett has a listing of the PW’s through which the Town is going to be reimbursed for services (Project Management versus DAC). No PW has been written for reimbursement of Mr Burkett’s services. Three storms, a flood and the plant; town received only $100k on $813k submitted. Alderman Bennett motions to move discussion on 2017 and 2018 Budget to next meeting. Alderman Phillips seconds. All in favor, Aye. **So Moved.**

**AGENDA PLACE REQUEST BY CITIZENS**

1. Drainage issues. Miss Dale Whitfield & Leon Dijon regarding Magnolia Ridge new subdivision and their property on D J Holly Road flooding as a result of the new subdivision being built. Alderman Bennett asks for council to consider hiring a drainage engineer for a comprehensive town plan, not just property by property approach. Mayor assures that the developer cannot obstruct the drainage on any property by law in St Tammany Parish or in the Town of Pearl River. Current problem of the latest rain happened because the ditch was blocked. Other locations in town are flooding because the ditches are covered; culverts do not drain as fast as open ditches.
2. Mr Ken Calandro on Tupelo and Oak. His discussion is about keeping a swell on property and this is the owner’s responsibility. The swell must be kept up, or the owner is fined according to the regulations. Mr Calandro requests that this be enforced for his home on the corner of Tupelo and Oak. Gene Belliario suggests an engineer to review the plans submitted by property owners and developers. Need staff and planning commission for review of these. Suggests putting in place a moratorium to stop building while enacting code to enforce such issues; then putting in place the court proceeding/processes for staff to follow in order to enforce. Louisiana Civil Code exists regarding the maintenance of the ditches. Mr Calandro only wants to have the code enforced. Mayor McQueen points out that funding is not there to have the machine and the crew digging ditches and installing swells for every property that calls for it. Two attorneys under two different regimes have told Mr Calandro this is a civil matter and that his interpretation is not correct according to the town attorneys. Alderman Phillips brings up the subdivision digging ditches creating a dirt wall; Alderman Walsh asks about overall drainage plan. Mayor McQueen points out currently the one we use is represented by a map in Town Hall lobby showing actual water flows, which is the only reliable drainage to use and plan around. Concluding thought is to hire an engineer as Mayor McQueen has brought up.
3. Miss Betty Hodge comes to the podium. Her issue is on Gum Street, where she has lived for 30 years, with her neighbors building on their property. The road along the property has been built up on their side causing her fence to fall over and her property flooded by the water from their property. Mayor McQueen looked at her property; the road is on the property line so no ditch can be dug without digging up the road, or moving the fence further onto her property. Alderman Walsh will research the neighbor property regarding how many lots are legitimately there and status of each.

Alderman Phillips motions to introduce a new ordinance 62-08 Street Regulations. Alderman Walsh seconds his motion to introduce this new ordinance. Motion is to amend ordinance to include language about the speed limit on Oak Street from Richland to Ash at Barrington Court set at 15 miles per hour instead of 20. All in favor of the introduction of Ordinance #62-08 Street Regulations, Yay, all opposed, none. **So Moved.**

**MAYOR’S COMMENTS:**

Reminders: the LMA District Meeting in Madisonville Wednesday evening at 6:00pm, Mayor’s Prayer Breakfast Thursday May 3rd beginning at 8:30am.

Update on WWTP: Construction on the new plant began this week. The plant should be completed by Thanksgiving 2018.

Engineer has been called out for Sullivan Place; checking on possibility of pumps installed and ditches along Craddock Lane and McQueen Road, also retention pond.

**LEGISLATIVE COMMENTS:**

Alderman Walsh wants to propose a resolution that the Town of Pearl River purchase all beautification flowers/plants from the Pearl River High School FFA Department whenever feasible. Mayor McQueen mentions in the past, dealing with the high school their prices were almost double and the supply was not enough for the Town’s needs.

Alderman McGregor mentions that Northshore High School has a Pearl River town resident who sells the flats to us at cost.

Alderman Cutrer mentions Pearl River won the district award for Cleanest City Contest; another cleanup, Trash Bash on April 21st to focus on key areas for the state judges who are coming on April 26th 2018 around noon. Magnolia Forest Garden Club sponsors light lunch for this event.

**CHIEF JENNINGS COMMENTS:**

He has one question about Hickory and Pine digging a ditch and street closure to be sure of when this will happen.

Chief reports on the arrest activity for March. He reminds residents that solicitation door to door is not legal in our town. Let the police know when this happens. Radar sign data was also supplied from placement on Pine Street in February to March. Has a second sign to place soon. Coffee With a Cop report. Lock installed on door and bell for evening shifts at the Police Department. NCIC cards to be installed in vehicles soon.

**PARISH COUNCIL:**

Gene Bellisario offers Hwy 41 Spur update. Land value requests and land acquisitions are being processed. Both sides of the highway are required to have this done.

**RECREATION DISTRICT 5:**

Pete Finger offers update. Flag football season, Little League ball teams and PRHS and Creekside Jr High property CEAs are in place.

**FIRE DISTRICT 11:**

Jack Dockery offers update regarding the activity for March. The vacancy for Fire Chief has been filled by Mr Jack Dockery. He has been received as the official chief. There will be testing in the near future, so water will be brown. Required testing will be satisfied for the district.

Alderman Phillips reports favorably about our district response time.

**PLANNING & ZONING:**

No report. Mayor McQueen mentions a future meeting about Taco Bell subdividing meeting.

**SCHOOL BOARD:**

Principles for Riverside Elementary and Pear River High School are retiring. School grading will be changed by rubic changes from the State of Louisiana BESE Board. Student testing grades are the catalyst for these coming changes. Bullying legislation is under way. Highway 11 lights for safety, as well as Highway 41 lights at Creekside Jr High is requested. April 24th will be PRHS awards ceremony for all interested in attending.

Veterans of Foreign Wars fundraiser on April 24th with the Crowe Brothers Band at The Fish House.

Contractor for PRHS portable moving was an issue, and it is being addressed.

MEETING ADJOURNED

AT 10:30 p.m.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED THIS 23rd DAY OF MAY 2018

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Madeline B Campbell, Town Clerk Clarence D McQueen, Mayor