



**TOWN OF PEARL RIVER
COUNCIL MEETING
OCTOBER 18, 2022 at 7:00 P.M.**

CALL TO ORDER:

The Council Meeting was held at the Pearl River Town Hall and called to order by Mayor Lee at 7:00 p.m.

INVOCATION:

The invocation was given by Alderman Bennett.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mayor Lee.

ROLL CALL:

Present: Alderman Bennett, Hanna, Galloway, Walsh, Moray, along with Mayor Lee, Attorney Mathison, Attorney Daigle and Chief Sessions.

Motion made by Alderman Walsh to Move Special Guest to accommodate A.G. Crowe who has another Obligation; Seconded by Bridgette Bennett; **All in favor. So moved.**

PUBLIC HEARING – Ordinance No. 22-09-20 (B) – An ordinance relative to the annexation of property along Pump Slough, Pearl River, LA 70452, as petitioned by Honey Island Nature Park, LLC

A.G. Crowe – Asking to annex this vacant piece of property

Alderman Bennett; Stated that this property is along the scenic waterway. Are there any plans to develop the vacant land. Mr. Crowe stated that they do not have plans to develop. It is raw land (island) and underwater most of the time. It can only be accessed by boat. If this is approved tonight and you decide to build that would give you the right to proceed. Mr. Crowe stated approval from the council would be required. Alderman Walsh: Zoning is currently R3 which is multifamily, somewhere it was noted that it could be R5 which is recreational.

Tim Mathison stated that the Parish inquired how the property would be zoned. It was decided to be brought in as R3 which is multi-family. Currently the larger piece is zoned Industrial and the smaller piece is Highway commercial.

Alderman Hanna: Asked if there are plans to build a road. There are no plans to construct a road. Why is the zoning being changed from commercial to multi-family zoning? Mr. Mathison: In early discussions with Mr. Crowe one of the potential uses for the property could be campsites. The R3 zoning classification would better suited for that purpose rather than a commercial zone. Alderman Hanna: Would like to see a fishing pier or a park for the public. The property is approximately 15 acres. It was purchased with the possible intent to develop a public amenity. Those plans have changed and the owners of the property no longer have an interest in developing it.

Audience --- Why annex the property if there are no plans to develop vs keeping the property in the parish jurisdiction? Any development would change the landscaping of the river. There are no plans to construct a bridge and it can only be accessed by boat. Could R5 recreational zoning be considered?

Alderman Walsh suggest that this item be tabled to further research R5 zoning. Alderman Hanna would like to see the recommendation from the Parish on the annexation. Capt. Dean; made mentioned that if the property is annexed into the town, they do not have a boat to answer calls.

Alderman Walsh made a motion to table; seconded by Alderman Hanna. All in favor. So moved

SPECIAL GUEST: Alderman Bennett, Alderman Galloway, Chief Sessions and Don Thanars

Alderman Bennett, Award Presentation to Brian Philips for his selfless volunteer services to the Town of Pearl River.

Alderman Galloway, Award presentation for Lola Monroe for being a pioneer to this town and her work with the civics club.

Capt Dean: presented Post Certified Academy Awards to: John Davis, Percy Caye, Vyctoria Samons, Keith Porter and Chief Sessions for completing the 8 month Post Certified Academy training program. These certificates are a small token of the Towns appreciation. Promotions include Officer John Davis to Sgt; and Officer Percy Caye to Corporal in the Reserve Division. Lt Dean presented an award to Capt Dean for his efforts in saving the life of a young lady during a storm.

Don Thanars - Candidate for School Board

PRESENTATION:

Don Thanars – Candidate for St. Tammany Parish School Board – Spoke about his qualifications. He wants to make a positive impact in the lives of our children’s education and future. The Marines have taught me train, equip and prepare. Their education is going to help them be better citizens and workers. I am an independent thinker and a man of god. I can make a difference.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Mayor Lee called for the approval of the minutes for the regular Council Meeting held on September 20, 2022, Accepted with Corrections as requested by Alderman Hanna. Alderman Walsh made the motion to accept, seconded by Alderman Bennett. **All in favor. So moved.**

**Discussion followed Alderman Hanna wants to be transparent. Ordinance 16-11-21 (D) There was no communication with the Town Administration and the Police Department when budget changes were happening. Mayor Lee is trying to accomplish a balanced budget due to cost of advertising in the farmer which is approximately \$1,000.00 each time it is published. The minutes did not reflect what Alderman Hanna wanted to be transparent about; “The communication between the Police Dept and Town Administration. They need to get together before we have budget changes and I don’t feel like they did last time there needs to be a discussion between the two”.

Legislative Comments & Reports:

New Roof Discussion: Alderman Hanna would like the record to reflect the exact number. Not \$32,000.00 or more. The actual cost was \$38,094.62. Mayor Lee stated the exact number was not available at the last meeting. We are reflecting on what was talked about. Alderman Hanna asked "so you didn't pay \$38,094.62. The minutes are what we discussed. Alderman Hanna stated she did give the exact amount. The Mayor does not recall hearing the exact cost.

Alderman Galloway addressed comments that were made in the last meeting in regards to the water meters. She doesn't understand why everyone was so upset. Her point was not to point fingers about the problem. Simply that it has been an ongoing problem.

Alderman Hanna: Also requested a copy of the contract for from Sustainability Partners with all the cost filled in. She has not yet received it.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Mayor Lee called for the approval of the minutes for the Special Council Meeting held on September 29, 2022, Accepted with Corrections as requested by Alderman Hanna. Alderman Walsh made the motion to accept, seconded by Alderman Bennett. **All in favor. So moved.**

Alderman Hanna requested the following Corrections:

Line item need to be added for the \$5,000.00 for Blighted Properties.

Street Signs: Referring to the sign at the end of Willis Alley that hurricane Ida removed. Add museum and community center. It should read Town Hall; Police Department; Museum and Community Center.

The discussion in reference to giving the Police Department \$30,000.00 for repairs. All repairs for the building are paid for from the general fund.

Ordinance No. 22-09-20 (A) An ordinance relative to the annexation of property located at 64621 Highway 41, Pearl River, LA 70452, as petitioned by Bruce and Crystal Bennett.

Alderman Walsh made a motion to accept. Alderman Bennett seconded. **All in favor. So moved**

Ordinance No. 16-11-21 (E) – An ordinance relative to an amendment to the Fiscal Year 2022 Budget.

Special Meeting was held on September 29, 2022; a few changes in the line items were adjusted. We were able to get together with Capt. Dean and Chief Session and finalize the budget. Money was transferred from the money market to purchase a vehicle and the necessary server from telecom to transfer dispatch to the sheriff's office. A raise for the police department was proposed. It is needed to compete with other agencies. We need more manpower to deter crime. Motion to accept made by Alderman Bennett. Seconded by Alderman Hanna. **All in favor. So moved.**

Ordinance No. 22-07-19 – An Ordinance relative to Town sponsored events.

This ordinance has been withdrawn by Alderman Bridgette Bennett. The idea behind this ordinance was to raise money for the museum. The idea was to mimic other municipalities that have events with alcohol. I asked that it be a consideration to have alcohol at special events with the approval of town hall.

FIRE DISTRICT #11

Chief Dockery-

EMS-105

MVA-10

Trash Fire-2

Grass Fire-2

Service/GI-7

Dispatched/Canceled-6

False Alarm-6

Total - 138

Reminder that they will be at the truck or treat and night out against crime with the bounce house and stuff for the children. Check your heaters and carbon monoxide detectors. Keep space heaters at least 3 feet from any items to help prevent fires. Capt. Dean commended the fire department for their efforts on the interstate with vehicle fire that resulted in a fatality.

ADMINISTRATIVE COMMENTS AND REPORTS:

Mayor Lee: Four generators have been ordered and should be in place before next hurricane season. Our Christmas program will be held on December 2, 2022 at 6:30 PM. Our drainage study is still in process. We hope to have the report before the end of the year, so we can start taking corrective action.

LEGISLATIVE COMMENTS AND REPORTS:

Alderman Bennett has requested blood donors. This time of year is a critical time for blood. Also a shout out to the river clean-up crew. The river clean-up was a great success. Reminder that we have a tax renewal as well as the trunk or trick with the night out against crime. We will also be having a benefit for a local resident Pam Delaughter who needs a Liver Transplant at Gators on Nov 5 from 11:00-5:00 PM
Alderman Hanna: Checking the status on the following issues: (A) were any changes made to the re-subdivision application? Per Tim Mathison; application changes are still under review. (B) The status on the water meter readings. Mayor Lee responded that our town employees are currently doing manual reads when necessary and Jen Miller has worked very hard to get the bills out. (C) Blighted Property; another letter was sent to the property owner. If we do don't get a response the Town employees will board up the property to make it safer. Before the next meeting. (D) Tax renewal; please consider this renewal when voting. If it does not pass the Town will lose approximately \$127,000.00 in revenue.

Alderman Galloway: Our 1st Sensory Day sponsored by Connie Cares, will be held on 10/23/2022 at 1:00 PM; Thanked the Mayor for hosting the event. It is geared toward children with autism. All children are welcome.

POLICE CHIEF COMMENTS AND REORTS

Deputy Chief German gave the August Police Report

Calls-773

Open Investigations-10

Tickets-146 (101 were for speeding)

Arrest-43

Felony-17

Misdemeanor-26

DWI Arrest-0

Arrest Warrants-15

Search Warrants-6
Narcotic Arrest- 14
Juvenile-3

Narcotic arrest: 14; Narcotic seized: 35 grams of Methamphetamine, 3 Hydrocodone, 14 Rooted Marijuana Plants, 6 lbs Marijuana and 1 gram of Crack Cocaine; 2 Weapons Seized and Currency in the amount of \$1839.00; After the seizure process is complete the Police Dept will keep 60% of the funds

Notable Incidents:

09/01/2022; a student at Creekside Junior High School was arrested for possession of a knife and it was later learned that his intent was to "poke" the kid that got him in trouble.

09/15/2022; A residence burglary, a known suspect forced himself into the residence of his child's mother. The suspect stole her cell phone, damaged several items and fled the location. Later returned and threatened the mother with a screwdriver. The suspect had violated a protective order and was arrested.

Notable Arrest:

09/08/2022: The PRPD executed a search warrant on McQueen Rd. During the investigation, the following drugs were seized: 1 package of THC Gummies, 34 grams of Methamphetamine, 3 Hydrocodone and drug paraphernalia consistent with distribution. 1 Juvenile was arrested, and others were later located and arrested.

09/24/2022: PRPD responded to a Domestic Violence call. During the investigation, the Officers discovered 14 Marijuana Plants, over 5lbs of loose marijuana and \$1839.00 in currency and paraphernalia. Officers arrested two subjects.

Discussion:

From the Audience: We have someone stealing in broad daylight. Please "If you see something – Say Something"

HONEY ISLAND MUSEUM REPORT

Represented by Virgil Phillips – 3 field trips. We will be open for the Trunk or Trick with the night out against crime. We have something new with the Advanced Placement students from Pearl River High. They are going to write about pick a subject from the museum to write about. It will be a comparison from how things were then and now.

RECREATION DISTRICT #5

Represented by Skip Phillips – our meetings are 3rd Monday of the month at 7:00 PM. We are still in need of a board member. Our project is the boat launch. \$18,000.00 for elevation shots has been allocated to start. We would attendance at our meeting and any guidance offered. Alderman Bennett asked is there anything that could be done about the garbage. The Mayor will have the Town employees empty the trash cans at the boat launch.

PARISH COUNCIL DISTRICT 9

No Representative

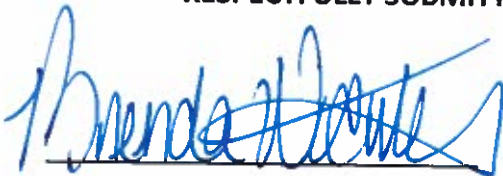
SCHOOL BOARD:
No Representative

PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION:
No Representative

Mayor Lee adjourned the meeting.

CD available in Records room, upon request.

**MEETING ADJOURNED
AT 8:58 P.M.
RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED THIS 30th DAY OF OCTOBER 2022**


Brenda Wichterich, Deputy Clerk


Honorable Joe D. Lee