



**TOWN OF PEARL RIVER  
COUNCIL MEETING  
December 17, 2024 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 Galloway.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:**

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mayor Lee.

**ROLL CALL:**

Present: Alderman Phillips, Franatovich, Moray, Galloway and Schultheis, also present; Mayor Lee, Attorney Tim Mathison and Chief Sessions.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Mayor Lee called for the approval of the minutes for the November 19, 2024, Council Meeting. Alderman Moray made the motion to accept, seconded by Alderman Schultheis. Mayor Lee called for a roll call vote; Alderman Phillips, Yea; Alderman Franatovich, yea; Alderman Moray, Yea; Alderman Galloway, Yea; Alderman Schultheis, Yea. **All in favor, So moved.**

**PUBLIC HEARINGS-  
RESOLUTIONS –**

Resolution No. 24-11-01 - Resolution re-subdividing a parcel of land at 39321 Oak Street, Pearl River, LA as requested by Michael and Kean Koch.

Alderman Schultheis made the motion to accept, seconded by Alderman Moray. Mayor Lee called for a roll call vote; Alderman Phillips, Yea; Alderman Franatovich, Yea; Alderman Moray, Yea; Alderman Galloway, Yea; Alderman Schultheis, Yea. **All in favor, So moved.**

Resolution No. 24-11-02 – A Resolution in opposition to the reduction of members on the St. Tammany Parish Council.

Alderman Schultheis made the motion to accept, seconded by Alderman Galloway. Mayor Lee called for a roll call vote; Alderman Phillips, Yea; Alderman Franatovich, Yea; Alderman Moray, Yea; Alderman Galloway, Yea; Alderman Schultheis, Yea. **All in favor, So moved.**

## ORDINANCES

Ordinance No. 24-11-19 (A) – An Ordinance clarifying the buffer zone requirements in Recreational Resort and Recreational Vehicle Park zones.

Alderman Galloway made a motion to Table this until the March 2025 Regular Council Meeting, seconded by Alderman Schultheis. Mayor Lee called for a roll call vote; Alderman Phillips, Yea; Alderman Franatovich, Yea; Alderman Moray, Yea; Alderman Galloway, Yea; Alderman Schultheis, Yea. **All in favor, So moved.**

Ordinance No. 24-11-19 (B) – An Ordinance adopting the Fiscal Year 2025 budget.

Discussion: Alderman Phillips made a motion to discuss, seconded by Alderman Franatovich.

Mayor Lee: As previously discussed, I planned to enroll in the insurance package. In lieu of taking the benefit I chose to give the staff a raise.

Mayor Lee went over the budget in detail and plans for the current and upcoming projects. Total budget 7.7 million of those funds; 1.9 million from the fund balance for projects to include sewer repairs, water main and the park. 1.1 million for Calhoun St. drainage project will carry over to next year. Budget with projected revenue is appr 5.8 million. Bid opening for Calhoun St came in at \$387,000.00; Mayor Lee would like to give PEC the go ahead to begin the engineering work for Holmes St. This will increase the chances of obtaining capital outlay funds if we are shovel ready.

Police Budget: sales tax revenue projected to be \$1,000,050.00; SRO funds \$323,000.00; Transfer from general fund \$400,000.00 with a total budget of \$1.8 million

Mayor Dean: discussed the necessity for additional funds. We discussed the budget at length with the mayor and it is understood that the budget will be revisited later on in the year.

Line items; had a conversation with the mayor in reference to new vehicles and we were given the green light to place the order. The order has been placed for 3 new Police Tahoe's. The PD is requesting that the council approve the purchase for several reasons: the cost of vehicle maintenance was over \$40,000.00. Mayor Lee stated that he did have the conversation about the new vehicles and is in agreement if the budget allows for the cost. Mayor Lee's concern is the budget doesn't support new vehicles without cutting some line items.

2 years ago the PD had 5.5 million in the fund balance. In 2023 they spent \$350,000.00 and in 2024 they spent the \$200,000.00. The fund balance is depleted.

Major Dean states that the Town has the money to fund the PD. The responsibility of the council and the Mayor is to fund public safety. Without public safety you don't have anything. It is difficult to recruit new officers and the Town wants to cut the budget. "That makes no sense" When something happens in this town and "it will" When the citizens point fingers at us – we are going to point right back at y'all" it is as simple as that.

Mayor Lee's response: We want a strong PD. The Town is not cutting the budget, we can only give what we are bringing in. You are asking for funds from the emergency fund. It will be fiscally irresponsible and is not sustainable. In 2 years the emergency funds would be depleted. We have to live within our means. The PD payroll including benefits is appr 1.6 million. In 2019 the PD budget was 1.1 million and in 2024 it has increased by almost 1 million.

Major Dean: The cost of each vehicle is \$79,000.00. The annual cost to lease each vehicle is \$59,400.00 plus insurance. All we want is a fair budget, something we can function with. The PD needs to be funded, we need the new vehicles, and we need them now.

Alderman Schultheis asked if funds can be used from capital expenditures – Major Dean states that is used for body cams and tazers. Alderman Schultheis asked if it possible to order just 1 vehicle.

Alderman Galloway asked if any personnel were cut when the sheriff's office took over dispatch. Mayor Dean's response: We have spent -0- overtime in administration. Amanda Dean gave a description of each administrative personnel. The council is responsible for the PD and the people. If the town settles the lawsuit with the emergency funds and we have an emergency our emergency fund will be depleted.

Mayor Lee stated: It is simple math. If you deplete your emergency funds to fund day-to-day operations that is a recipe for bankruptcy. We are under orders from the DEQ to do repairs and we have a pending lawsuit from 7 police officers. We may have to use emergency funds for that.

Mayor Dean stated: The PD wrote 5,757 tickets last year. We are doing our job. We need these cars, and they have been ordered. We are asking the council to approve the purchase of the vehicles.

Alderman Phillips: All for a great PD. At the PD's current rate of spending the PD will be \$531,000.00 in debt by August. Where will the money come from? Major Dean states obviously the rate of spending will have to change, that is common sense. As a council member wants to be a good steward of the taxpayer's money. What has the PD to help the budget and not spend so much. The PD brings the money through fines. There won't be a budget next year if spending is not adjusted now.

Alderman Phillips called for question. Mayor Lee called for a roll call vote; Alderman Phillips, Yea; Alderman Franatovich, Yea; Alderman Moray, Yea; Alderman Galloway, Yea; Alderman Schultheis, Yea. **All in favor, So moved.**

**ADMINISTRATIVE COMMENTS & REPORTS –Mayor Lee:** The Calhoun Street drainage project should start within a month as well as the water main project. We have reached out to a couple of companies for the splash pad. We are currently installing electricity in the pavilions. Fans will be installed on a timer. By approving the budget, we can give PEC the go-ahead to begin the engineering work for Holmes Street. This will increase our chances of obtaining Capital Outlay funds. The Christmas program was a huge success. Thanks to the PD and FD as well as all the staff. The lighted arches for the train looked nice. Special thanks to Maria for all the time and hard work that she puts into our program.

Mayor Lee stated that Budget vs Actual Report were placed in the Alderman's boxes — See attached for complete report.

#### **LEGISLATIVE COMMENTS & REPORTS –**

**Alderman Schultheis:** Would like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year,

**Alderman Galloway –** Thanks the Police Department as well as Phillip Truxilla for the donations for the stockings and Ms. Ann for all her help.

**Alderman Moray –** No comments

**Alderman Franatovich-** No comments

**Alderman Phillips-** Great Christmas program. Mr. Huerkamp has supplied information on lighted stop signs. The cost is \$275.00 each.

**POLICE CHIEF COMMENTS & REPORTS – Chief Sessions:**

Jayson Germann gave the November 2024 monthly report: See attached for complete report.

**FIRE DISTRICT 11 – CHIEF DOCKERY** – See attached for complete report.

**RECREATION DISTRICT #5 –Skip Phillips:** 5K Race scheduled on March 15, 2025; flag football will also be starting in March.

**PARISH COUNCIL DISTRICT #9 – David Cogle:** Home Rule Charter will begin meeting next month. The Parish is considering ordinances such as a speech ordinance that would forbid personal attacks or defamatory comments; and a spay and neuter ordinance. The budget has also been passed with funds to implement traffic measures such as the speed tables.

**SCHOOL BOARD – Mike Peterson:** Gave an overview of the structure of how the school board works as well as the 4x4 block schedule that will be offered. All high schools will be on the same time schedule. It will allow more time in the classroom for both academic and vocational classes. Students will have more opportunities with the new programs.

**PLANNING & ZONING – Skip Phillips:** Workshop scheduled on 01/5/2025 to discuss the buffer zone requirements in the Recreational Resort and Recreational Vehicle Park Zones as well as cell towers.

**CD's available to purchase.  
MEETING ADJOURNED  
AT 8:30 P.M.**

**RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED THE 29TH DAY OF JANUARY 2025**

  
Honorable Joe D. Lee

  
Maude Griffis, Town Clerk



# PEARL RIVER POLICE DEPARTMENT

Jack Sessions, Chief of Police

## The Month of December

Total Calls Handled: 1953

Open Investigations: 12

### Notable Arrest

On December 15 at approximately 10:00 p.m. Pearl River Police Departments Proactive Officer conducted a traffic stop at Pump Slough and I-59 south Exit 5A on ramp. The Officer initiated the traffic stop after observing the vehicle turn on to Pump Slough Road without utilizing a turn signal. During the course of the traffic stop, the Officer learned that the passenger identified as Malik Conerly B/M DOB: 8-12-1998 had an outstanding warrant issued from Franklinton Police Department. The warrant was for Illegal Discharge of a weapon and Solicitation for Murder. The Officer verified the warrant and placed Mr. Conerly under arrest. The Officer conducted a search of the vehicle and located a 9 mm Smith and Wesson handgun. Based on the nature of the charges for the warrant, the Officer elected to seize the weapon for safe keeping. The Officer notified Lt. Germann of the arrest and the weapon. Lt. Germann then contacted a Detective (not the Detective handling the case) with the Franklinton Police Department, who informed Lt. Germann that the weapon used in the crime was a 9mm handgun and that they never recovered it. Based on the Officer's due diligence, the Officer may have recovered the weapon used in the crime.

On December 20, Pearl River Police Officers was notified of a stolen vehicle by the Flock Safety camera system (license plate reader). The Officers obtained a description of the vehicle and located it in the parking lot of the Dollar General. Moments later, the Officers observed two people enter the vehicle and drive off. The Officers then conducted a felon stop on the vehicle in the parking lot of Jubilee. Both the driver and the passenger were detained pending the investigation. While waiting for the confirmation on the stolen vehicle, the Officers located a 10 mm FN handgun on the passenger side floorboard. The Officers seized the gun and discovered that it too had been reported stolen. The Officers received confirmation that both the vehicle and the gun were stolen. The Officers also learned that the passenger was a convicted felon. The driver was charged with Illegal Possession of Stolen Firearm, Illegal Possession of Stolen Property and Unauthorized Use of a Movable. The passenger was charged with Illegal Possession of Stolen Property, Illegal Possession of Stolen Firearm, Possession of a Firearm by a Convicted Felon and Possession of Marijuana.

On December 21, Pearl River Police Officers were dispatch to a reckless driver on the I-59 interstate. The Officers located the vehicle and observed it driving 30 MPH in a 70 MPH zone and swerving in out of the lanes. Based on that, the Officers elected to conduct a traffic stop. During the course of the traffic stop investigation, the Officers located a small amount of Marijuana in the vehicle. The Officers searched the passenger and discovered the passenger to be in possession of 2.5 grams of Methamphetamine and 8 Xana pills. The Officers also located a loaded 44 Magnum pistol, a Remington 12-gauge shotgun and \$3,927 in U.S. currency. The Officers then learned that the passenger was a convicted felon. He was charged with Possession of Marijuana, Possession of Methamphetamine, Possession of Xana pills, Possession of a Firearm while in Possession of a Controlled Dangerous Substance and Possession of a Firearm by a Convicted Felon.

### Arrests

# PEARL RIVER POLICE DEPARTMENT

Total Arrest:      Felony:      Misdemeanor:      Juvenile:2

DWI Arrest: 5      Arrest Warrants: 2      Search Warrants:1

Narcotic Arrest: 17      Narcotic seized: 8 grams of Marijuana, 2.5 Grams  
of Methamphetamine, 8 Xanax.

Weapons Seized:    9mm Smith and Wesson, 10 mm FN, 44 Magnum  
pistol, and a 12-gauge Remington shotgun.

Currency Seized: \$3,927.00

Total Citations: 795



# ***ST. TAMMANY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT NO. 11***

***Jack Dockery, Fire Chief***

P.O. Box 1210  
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[www.stfpd11.org](http://www.stfpd11.org)

December 17, 2024

## Chiefs Report

For November 2024

EMS	35
MVA	6
Service / GI	9
Fire Alarm	4
Police Issue	4
Dispatched/ Cancel	6
Total	64