

MINUTES

**Town of Clinton, Louisiana
Parish of East Feliciana
State of Louisiana
9506 Plank Road
Clinton, LA 70722**

Public Hearing - 5:30 P.M.

Adjusting All Rates for the Town’s Gas System

Public Hearing – 5:45 P.M.

Amend the Current Budget

Regular Meeting - 6:00 P.M.

Tuesday, May 10, 2022

CALLED TO ORDER by Mayor Mark L. Kemp.

The Lord’s Prayer was delivered in unity.

The Pledge of Allegiance was delivered in unity.

The Town Council of the Town of Clinton, Louisiana met on May 10, 2022, at 5:30 P.M. with the following members in attendance:

MAYOR

Mark L. Kemp

COUNCIL MEMBERS

Johnny Beauchamp

Janice Betrece

Bart Blackledge

Mary Dunaway

Kim Young

TOWN ACCOUNTANT

Tim Butler

FIRE CHIEF

Douglas Beauchamp

MAINTENANCE CLERK

Ursula Shaw

Police Chief Ned Davis, Jr., Town Attorney Graham Arnold, and Maintenance Superintendent Kerry Winters was absent.

PUBLIC HEARING - 5:30 P.M.

ADJUSTING ALL RATES FOR THE TOWN’S GAS SYSTEM

Alderman Janice Betrece joined the meeting at 5:34 P.M

Mayor Kemp expressed that a gas survey was prepared by Kel-ar Energy Consulting which they are agents of the Louisiana Municipal Gas Authority and which we are a member.

Alderman Blackledge expressed that there has not been a price increase since 2005 and this study was to bring the town up to an average with all the surrounding parishes in which we would still be below average over the next three years. This study has included variables such as price volatility, weather, equipment, gas leakage, people not paying their bill. This study tried to include everything in calculations. It was discussed an overtime increase of the gas rate only to come into conformance, not necessary to get everywhere but where we should have been ten years ago. We supposed to be at a three percent increase on the average over the last fifteen years which would be forty five percent. There would be 17 parishes still more expensive than the town after all our price increases, now there are 33 parishes higher than the town. This study would bring the town into three quarters and right now we are in the five quarters.

Alderman Dunaway expressed that 0.961 is the starting mark-up; Step 2 after 6 months add 0.113 percent; Step 3 after 12 months get 20 percent and Step 4 after 18 months get up to 35 percent total.

Gradually increasing over 18 months, do not have to jump up 51 percent all at once for residential.

Mayor Kemp expressed that the gas system desperately needs to be upgraded. We have a ten-year agreement with the State to upgrade portions of the gas system. Hopefully, we can look into this, possible using the American Rescue funds. The gas system was not part of the overall focus when the American Rescue Money was implemented but now since been added. Pipeline Integrity completed an assessment on the gas system but did not give the specifics to upgrade the system.

Alderman Beauchamp made the motion seconded by Alderman Young to adjourn the Public Hearing for Adjusting All Rates for the Gas System.

YEAS: Beauchamp Betrece Blackledge Dunaway Young

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

The motion passed with a vote of 5-0.

PUBLIC HEARING - 5:45 P.M.

AMEND THE CURRENT BUDGET

Mr. Butler expressed as to not getting the amended budget out in time before advertising. The biggest obstacle is the gas cost which he is not getting any information on the \$62,000 gas bill that was received back in February. Waiting to get a daily usage and price report from Blackbelt from the first of the year on. We are 17 percent above budget, and it is all related to gas purchases, this will be one change to the budget. This will be determined when the report is received and adjusting the number before advertising and holding another public hearing.

A citizen expressed that the gas leak that have not been repaired on Roosevelt Street by Clovis Matthews resident and there is a gas odor on Cannon Street.

Tabled amending the current budget until further information is collected.

Alderman Betrece made the motion seconded by Alderman Young to adjourn the public hearing to amend the current budget.

YEAS: Beauchamp Betrece Blackledge Dunaway Young

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

The motion passed with a vote of 5-0.

REGULAR MEETING - 6:00 P.M.

CHANGES/ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

There was no changes or additions to the agenda.

Alderman Blackledge made the motion seconded by Alderman Beauchamp to accept the agenda as printed.

YEAS: Beauchamp Betrece Blackledge Dunaway Young

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

The motion passed with a vote of 5-0.

DISPOSITION OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

April 12, 2022, Regular Meeting

Alderman Blackledge made the motion seconded by Alderman Dunaway to accept minutes of the April 12, 2022.

YEAS: Beauchamp Betrece Blackledge Dunaway Young

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

The motion passed with a vote of 5-0.

APPROVAL OF ORDINANCE ADJUSTING ALL RATES FOR THE TOWN'S GAS SYSTEM

Alderman Blackledge made the motion seconded by Alderman Beauchamp to adopt the ordinance to adjusting all rates for the gas system, effective as of the next billing cycle which is end of the month the bill date.

YEAS: Beauchamp Betrece Blackledge Dunaway Young

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

The motion passed with a vote of 5-0.

ADOPTION TO AMEND THE CURRENT BUDGET

Tabled until further information is completed on the gas report.

LOT ON THE CORNER OF JACKSON AND CHURCH STREET

Mr. Kent addressed the lot at the corner of Jackson and Church Street owned by Calvin Sagely. To his understanding the property is zoned residential, and he really do not believe that what Mr. Sagely have going on is not the proper use for the property such as, C-can and construction equipment on the property can't do anything about cutting down the trees and putting gravel in the yard. This is a neighborhood of theirs and this property is beneficial to the town as to it being reserved as a residential lot. Suggested that the town would look into it.

Alderman Dunaway expressed that she inquired as to whether Mr. Sagely had asked for an appointment to discuss a rezoning application, in which he has not.

Alderman Blackledge expressed that if Mr. Sagely applies the process would be forced to accept the application, the rezoning sign will post in the front yard for 45 days at that point the opposition can come but it has already been discussed with Mr. Sagely that he would not get commercial zoning, and that is not decided by the this council or the Planning and Zoning, it is decided by the community which they have already expressed they do not want it. The council will investigate the C-can and the construction equipment and what goes on the lot.

Alderman Dunaway raised a question as to the office, in the duplex across the street that he has a large

sign posted, was it changed because it was residential, and how is he having a sign there if that is his business? Citizen expressed that it is residential, someone has been living there for years. Mayor Kemp expressed that Mr. Sagely is advertising his business there. A citizen also, expressed that Mr. Sagely's is operating business on Church Street. A citizen expressed that there is a sign there but that is for Mr. Sagely's office, and his plan was to have large storage building on the old Dewey DeLee lot at the corner and his business office would be across the street in the duplex. On the north side of the lot of Jackson there was a drainage ditch, and a sidewalk was covered over with red dirt. Alderman Blackledge expressed that this will be looked into and if Mr. Sagely must move his construction equipment, and he does we will not win the C-can battle. If he starts putting half a dozen C-cans there that is a different story. Mr. Sagely's intent was to build a metal building to house his construction equipment across the street from what he was going to make his office. It was explained that it was not going to happen and why, he said if he couldn't do that, he would build a house and sell it.

Mayor Kemp suggested to be patient and that he would contact the attorney for advice.

Alderman Blackledge made the motion seconded by Alderman Young to get the attorney involved.

YEAS: Beauchamp Betrece Blackledge Dunaway Young

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

The motion passed with a vote 5-0.

Mayor Kemp expressed that getting outside individuals that are interesting in looking at the ordinances, making suggestions to see how to amend ordinances to fix the situations for up to date and if needing to amend ordinance, go through the process in starting it.

Volunteers for Blighted Property Committee are Carolyn Ligon, Carol Kent, and Jemel Muse. Volunteers for Ordinance Committee are Wayne Kent, Michaela Wells.

Alderman Blackledge suggested to take one property a quarter, go through the process send the letter, cut the grass, house goes up for sell. For as the heir property, go back to the property tax, who is taking legal responsibility.

A citizen proposed to be focusing on the main entrances of the town which is Plank Road and Highway 10 and to see what we need to do, and to form a committee with one or two people from the board and one of two people from the town to see what is there and how it works.

Alderman Dunaway expressed that the former attorney had stated that the liability that if we send the maintenance crew to do the work insuring them if they got hurt, demolishing someone property, this would be another avenue to get Mr. Arnold to cover, if this is the route to go in cleaning up the property quarterly.

Mayor Kemp expressed to having the proper documents in place before the actual process and the legal process to protect yourself.

APPOINTMENT OF THE OFFICIAL JOURNAL

Alderman Dunaway made the motion seconded by Alderman Young to adopt the Watchman as the Official Journal.

YEAS: Beauchamp Betrece Blackledge Dunaway Young

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

The motion passed with a vote 5-0.

RESOLUTION FOR THE LGAP 2021-2022

Alderman Blackledge made the motion seconded by Alderman Young to approve the Resolution for the LGAP 2021-2022.

YEAS: Beauchamp Betrece Blackledge Dunaway Young

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

The motion passed with a vote of 5-0.

RESOLUTION FOR AUTHORIZED ELECTED OFFICIAL CERTIFIED TO SIGN THE 2021-2022 LGAP

Alderman Dunaway nominated Alderman Betrece as the Authorized Elected Official Certified to sign the 2021-2022 LGAP resolution.

Alderman Dunaway made the motion seconded by Alderman Blackledge to authorize Alderman Betrece to sign the 2021-2022 LGAP.

YEAS: Beauchamp Betrece Blackledge Dunaway Young

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

The motion passed with a vote of 5-0.

PROCLAMATION TO ADOPT MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS FOR THE MONTH OF MAY

Ms. Shaw expressed that May is Mental Health Awareness month and make aware that there is so much

that people are going through, there have been several suicides of young people, older people that is dealing with mental health issues, it comes from every background, and every class.

Alderman Betrece made the motion seconded by Alderman Young to accept a proclamation to adopt Mental Health Awareness for the month of May.

YEAS: Beauchamp Betrece Blackledge Dunaway Young

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

The motion passed with a vote of 5-0.

POLICE DEPARTMENT REPORT

Mayor Kemp gave the April police activity report as to 69 citations issued, 38 calls was made, 2 Arrests made, 2 Summons, 7 Burglary/Thefts, 1420 Outstanding warrants in and out of state, 5 Cases forwarded to District Attorney's office, Fines collected by AMS \$3,256.84. Total fines collected including AMS collections are \$14,591.34.

Alderman Young made the motion seconded by Alderman Blackledge to accept the police department report.

YEAS: Beauchamp Betrece Blackledge Dunaway Young

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

The motion passed with a vote 5-0.

FIRE DEPARTMENT REPORT

Fire Chief Beauchamp gave the April report that they are continuing with the training every other Thursday. Applied two years ago for a Pennington grant along with the other fire district's, which is a \$100,000 for equipment. The grant was completed today it has taken two years due to COVID to get because of supply issues to get all the equipment in. The last six helmets were received today. The fire department was able to get six or eight sets of gear, helmets, and gloves. Clinton fire department received approximately \$18,000 and addition to that, they put up \$8,000, not including the grant to get additional equipment. Pack 60, Local Cub Scouts, asked if the fire department would be interested in sponsoring them, it was verified with their insurance agent if it could be done, they will have to sign some agreements with the cub scouts with the Istrouma Area Council of what is expected of the fire department. There will be no cost to the fire department. They would be a sponsoring organization, basically they would give the cub scouts a place to meet. They are trying to reunite the Pack and the Troop in this area. He will also contact Mr. Arnold with his legal advice in this. People who work at the Exxon Plant, they have a grant program that if they put in a certain number of hours of volunteer work, they would give the fire department or the agency that they work for \$500 a quarter up to \$2,000 for each person that does it. In filling out the application it required a website, the fire department do not have a website and requesting to get on the town's website to complete the grant application.

Alderman Blackledge made the motion seconded by Alderman Dunaway to accept the fire department report.

YEAS: Beauchamp Betrece Blackledge Dunaway Young

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

The motion passed with a vote of 5-0.

MAINTENANCE DEPARTMENT REPORT

Ms. Ursula Shaw gave the April report that ARMCO Electric repaired sewer pump; the breaker was having to be manually started. ARMCO is waiting for parts required to repair the aerators, this is due to supply chain distribution. Manhole was repaired on Pine Street. Repaired gas leak at the corner of Clarence and Reiley Street. The 10-Year Plan for Gas, specification information needs to be determined by an engineering company that represents the town, once specifications are determined then we would advertise and require having at least three bids to follow rules and regulations as required by the American Rescue Plan.

Gas Leak reported at 12011 Jackson Street. Calls have been received reporting potholes; the maintenance is doing their best in repairing them. Continuing to maintain the streets and grass cutting. Stop signs were placed at Clarence and Bayou Street, Clarence, and Wilson Street. Ditches were cleaned out at the corner of Taylor and Oak Street, Spring Street, the canal that runs from Bank Street to Liberty Highway, Kernan Street, and Old South Drive. Continuing checking and cleaning out ditches due to rainwater back-up

A citizen raised the question as to why were stop signs put up in Reileyville? Mayor Kemp replied that there were multiple calls from concerned residents that there are people speeding on Clarence Street they are not obeying the speed limit signs that are posted. Alderman Dunaway gave a comment on the ditches and streets are looking better, fabulous and that she also received a call about the bottom part of Williams Drive, which is behind the baseball field, it holds tremendous amounts of water, sure it is from culverts smashed in, when cleaning out the ditches that would be one to clean.

Alderman Blackledge made the motion and seconded by Alderman Dunaway to accept the maintenance report.

YEAS: Beauchamp Betrece Blackledge Dunaway Young

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

The motion passed with a vote of 5-0.

FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

No report

ACCOUNTANT REPORT

Mr. Butler expressed that the profit and loss statement, through the end of April that the revenues are strong. This time last year collected \$664,000; two to four months this year collected \$1.1 million, the different is the property tax and another \$70,000 was received this month. There are several chipping companies that are domiciling here. The expenses in the Utility fund, the gas purchases, this time last year was \$68,000 and this year so far \$150,000 have been purchased. The gas was averaging \$17,000 a month, this year it is averaging \$38,000. The revenues through four months are a \$157,000 and \$153,000 have been purchase which made \$4,000 in gas. The rate study for adjusting the gas rates will help.

Alderman Blackledge expressed that if you take dollars, \$68,000 and bring up today's price on gas based on last years \$68,000, it would be \$149,672, if no leaks are taken in. We are not charging enough. He thinks that we are on schedule for what we are buying but messing up for what we are selling. Mr. Butler expressed the Utility fund total expenses last year currently were \$453,000 and this year it is \$552,000 and the different is the gas. Through four months last year we were at a positive of \$50,000 as of this year we are at \$105,000 over. Profitability, everything looks good, and we have the solution for the gas just need to implement it. Moving the Utility clerk salary from the Utility fund to the General fund account, it is working out fine, the money in the Utility account it is stabilized, there is \$89,000 in the Utility fund.

Had a meeting with Mr. Billy Nungesser, today about the bond for the streets he will have someone contacting us in the next several days. There is a large amount of \$130,000 under the miscellaneous in the General fund account, will research and bring information to the board. The General fund needs to pay the Sales Tax fund what is owed.

Alderman Betrece made the motion and seconded by Alderman Young to accept the accountant report.

YEAS: Beauchamp Betrece Blackledge Dunaway Young

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

The motion passed with a vote of 5-0.

OLD BUSINESS

Fire Chief Beauchamp raised the question as to have the meeting been set with rural water?

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Jemel Muse suggested to take down the flag at the town hall.

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

None

MAYOR'S COMMENT

Mayor Kemp reminded the board of the Tier III Personal Financial Disclosure Statement is due to the Board of Ethics by May 15, 2022, it could be filed online or fill out and mail in. In the process of having to put in two, 48 inches, 32-foot-long culverts at the intersection of Maple and Willow Street, which is the only entrance to the Hillcrest Subdivision. The culverts were delivered today. Must have a way in and out of the subdivision, while digging up the road and placing the culverts, which should take no more than a two-day process. Contacted Mr. Lee Perry, which he owns the corner lot. There will be a temporary culvert there to cut across the corner. Mr. Arnold has prepared a temporary servitude agreement in which Mr. Perry has signed, notarized and was mailed on Monday. When the original agreement is received mayor will sign, notarize, and will act upon.

Fire Chief Beauchamp expressed as to getting a fire truck of about 14 feet through. Fire Chief also suggested to prepositing a fire truck at someone's house before the repairs begin, due to an emergency. Mayor Kemp will meet with the Alderman Blackledge to select attachments for the steer skid and excavator to have the information available to file with the LGAP application. Mr. Gary McClure, with Shread-Kuyrkendall was contacted to see if their engineering firm does anything with producing specifications with the gas system or if we needed to consider another engineering firm. Recommendations was received from Pipeline Integrity. The company that mayor spoke with today that works with Michael Bradford, with Gas Utility District 2, Mr. Bradford spoke very kindly of the company.

ADJOURNMENT

Alderman Blackledge made the motion seconded by Alderman Beauchamp to adjourn the meeting.

YEAS: Blackledge Betrece Blackledge Dunaway Young

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

The motion passed with a vote of 5-0.

