

**OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS**  
**ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST PARISH COUNCIL**  
**TUESDAY, JULY 27<sup>th</sup>, 2021**  
**CHAIRMAN KURT BECNEL**  
**VICE-CHAIR MICHAEL WRIGHT**

The Council of the Parish of St. John the Baptist Parish, State of Louisiana, met in Regular Session in the St. John the Baptist Parish Government Complex Chambers, LaPlace, Louisiana on Tuesday, July 27<sup>th</sup>, 2021, at 6:30 PM.

**CALL TO ORDER:**

**PRESENT AT ROLL CALL:** Lennix Madere, Jr., Councilman-at-Large, Div. A, Kurt Becnel, Councilman District I, Warren Torres, Jr., Councilman District II, Tammy Houston, Councilwoman District III, Tyra Duhe-Griffin, Councilwoman District IV, Robert Arcuri, Councilman District V, Tonia Schnyder, Councilwoman District VI, Thomas Malik, Councilman District VII, Michael Wright, Councilman-at-Large, Div. B

**ABSENT:** None

Councilman Arcuri led the Prayer. Councilwoman Schnyder led the Pledge.

Legal Counsel Keith Green Jr., Christopher Cortez and Kennilyn Schmill were present.

**MOTION:** Councilwoman Houston moved and Councilwoman Duhe-Griffin seconded the motion to recess to go back into finance meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

**MOTION:** Councilman Malik moved and Councilwoman Houston seconded the motion to go back into regular meeting. The motion passed with Councilman Madere and Wright absent.

**PUBLIC COMMENT - AGENDA ITEMS ONLY (3 minutes per citizen)**

There were no public comments.

**Kurt Becnel - Presentation - Andrea J. Hollins - Selah Productions, Inc. - JaVon Ophelia's ACT Mentorship & Learning for the Performing Arts Program**

JaVon Ophelia Butler and Andrea J. Hollins were present to share information on the program JaVon Ophelia's ACT. The program is funded through sponsors to assist with training students, children, youths, adults, acting, singing, and dancing.

**Rene Pastorek - Presentation - Cost Benefit Analysis and Evaluation of Code Compliance Program**

Rene Pastorek stated, "Thank you Chairman. In accordance with the CEA, between the Parish and South Central Planning for the Building Code Compliance Program, a formal presentation is required to be presented to the Council with the results of an analysis of the benefit to the Parish that this program provides before the Council can consider an extension of this agreement. This extension will be placed to the Council for consideration at the next council meeting. In July

2021, Vermillion Marketing and Opinion Research conducted a cost benefit analysis of the contract, to determine savings and benefits to the parish. The Consultant analysis savings realized by contracting with South Central Planning, instead of performing the services with an inhouse program. The Consultant also determines that contracting these services through a private third-party, is not feasible and would be more expensive to the parish. Giving current budgets, salaries, trainings, certifications, and equipment needs to run this type of program, the parish sees an annual savings between a hundred thousand (\$100,000) and two hundred thousand dollars (\$200,000) per year under the current contract with South Central Planning. This is an increase in savings since the original contract was signed in 2018."

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

**ITEMS:** Approval of Minutes - July 13<sup>th</sup>, 2021, Council Meeting

**MOTION:** Councilman Madere moved and Councilman Malik seconded the motion to approve consent agenda items consisting of Approval of Minutes - July 13<sup>th</sup>, 2021, Council Meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

**REPORTS:**

**President's Report**

**Jaclyn Hotard - Monthly Financial Report (June 2021)**

Jaclyn Hotard stated, "Thank you. This is just confirmation that the monthly financial report has been sent to the Council."

**Tom Malik - Finance Committee Report**

Councilman Malik stated, "Mr. Chairman, the financial meeting was held prior to this meeting, it was attended by all Council members. The Finance Committee approved the following Resolutions R21-102, R21-103, R21-104, R21-105, and R21-106."

**PUBLIC HEARING AND ADOPTION ON ORDINANCES/NEW BUSINESS:**

**21-24** (Public Hearing Held) An ordinance amending Chapter 2, Section 21, of the St. John the Baptist Parish Code of Ordinances to establish and define the St. John the Baptist Parish Precinct Boundaries Merge and Consolidate Precincts and establish Precinct Polling Places (K. Becnel)

**MOTION:** Councilwoman Houston moved and Councilman Wright seconded the motion to approve Ordinance 21-24. The motion passed unanimously.

**21-26** (Public Hearing Held) A millage ordinance - An ordinance providing for the levy and collection of ad valorem taxes in the Parish of St. John the Baptist, to be spread upon the 2021 Assessment Roll (J. Hotard)

**MOTION:** Councilman Wright moved and Councilwoman Houston seconded the motion to approve Ordinance 21-26. The motion passed unanimously.

**Kurt Becnel - Reginald Starks, Civil Service Board Chairman - Authorization to**

**approve the recommendation of the Civil Service Board in the hiring of Gabrielle Griffin-Cannon for the position of Civil Service Administrator**

**MOTION:** Councilman Madere moved and Councilman Malik seconded the motion to approve the recommendation of the Civil Service Board in the hiring of Gabrielle Griffin-Cannon for the position of Civil Service Administrator. The motion passed unanimously.

**Tom Malik - Resolution - R21-101 - Tom Allen - A Resolution supporting the American Legion Post 383 undertaking of building the "Veterans Liberty Memorial Park" at the Southeast Louisiana Veterans Home in Reserve**

**MOTION:** Councilman Malik moved and Councilman Wright seconded the motion to approve Resolution - R21-101 - Tom Allen - A Resolution supporting the American Legion Post 383 undertaking of building the "Veterans Liberty Memorial Park" at the Southeast Louisiana Veterans Home in Reserve. **WHEREAS**, the Parish of St. John the Baptist has since its inception supported the building of The Southeast Louisiana Veterans Home in Reserve by the Louisiana Department of Veterans Affairs, by providing for its construction 20 acres adjacent to the REGALA Recreation Park; and **WHEREAS**, the St. John the Baptist Council recognizes that the Southeast Veterans Home provides a safe haven for the members of our armed services who may require care and day to day and living assistance; and **WHEREAS**, The American Legion Post 383 has undertaken and envisions building of the "Veterans Liberty Memorial Park" at the front entrance to the Southeast Veterans Home, where all residents, visitors, and employees will encounter a visual reminder and my quietly reflect and honor on the service of Louisiana's Veterans; and **WHEREAS**, the construction of the "Veterans Liberty Memorial Park" is contingent on acquiring sufficient funding and to that end Post 383 envisions securing funding through donations from individuals, businesses, and the sale of memorial bricks; and **WHEREAS**, the Council believes that it would be to the benefit of the Louisiana Veterans Residents and the Citizens of Louisiana to have the "Veterans Liberty Memorial Park" constructed at the front entrance of the Southeast Louisiana Veterans Home. **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, the St. John the Baptist Parish Council does hereby declare that it supports the American Legion Post 383 undertaking of building the "Veterans Liberty Memorial Park" at the Southeast Louisiana Veterans Home in Reserve. The motion passed unanimously.

**Jaclyn Hotard - Authorization to engage in a Cooperative Endeavor Agreement between the District Attorney and St. John the Baptist Parish Council to utilize REGALA Gymnasium for "Excellence in Government Training"**

**MOTION:** Councilwoman Houston moved and Councilman Wright seconded the motion to grant authorization to engage in a Cooperative Endeavor Agreement between the District Attorney and St. John the Baptist Parish Council to utilize REGALA Gymnasium for "Excellence in Government Training". The motion passed unanimously.

**Jaclyn Hotard - Authorization to approve the Formal request from the District Attorney for St. John the Baptist Parish Council to provide personnel and equipment to assist with the "Excellence in Government Training"**

**MOTION:** Councilwoman Houston moved and Councilman Malik seconded the motion to approve the Formal request from the District Attorney for St. John the Baptist Parish Council to provide personnel and equipment to assist with the "Excellence in Government Training". The motion passed unanimously.

**DEPARTMENT/ENGINEER REPORTS:**

**Thomas Malik - Glen Dottolo - Discussion regarding Fireworks in Residential neighborhoods**

"Good evening, my name is Glen Dottolo I lived in LaPlace most of my life. I'm asking the Council to consider a ban on the sale and use of fireworks to individuals. An exemption would apply to church, or civic organizations under permit with the supervision of the sheriff department or fire department. The illegal and reckless discharge of fireworks, every holiday it's a threat to public safety and property. Here are a few reasons supporting this proposal: #1) Fireworks are being used as a cover for the illegal discharge of guns. My son is an Army Veteran, and Policeman and has said the rapid sequence in acoustics are clearly distinguishable as gunfire. #2) Powerful explosives such as M80s are being discharged in drainpipes, which amplify sound and the potential for cracks and structural damage. My son said it sounds like throwing a grenade into a cave bunker. #3) Our quality of life is infringed, when sleep is interrupted and dogs are barking in fear. This borage lasted past 2 AM, Friday through Monday night this past 4<sup>th</sup> of July weekend. Permitted time frames are ignored and enforcement by the sheriff's department is nearly impossible. A few irresponsible people are responsible for this mayhem. This is not kids or families using sparklers or bottle rockets, you will not see burst in the sky, and is very hard to pinpoint the location as a result. My neighbors and I strongly urge the Council, to ban fireworks in the parish. We're one of the very few parishes in the Metro area that permit the sale and use of fireworks. I ask you why? Is it for the permit fees and sales taxes? What are the compelling reasons not to ban fireworks? There are enough problems in the parish, we can fix this one. Thank you."

**INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES:**

- 21-25** An ordinance amending Chapter 4, Section 4.1 of the St. John the Baptist Parish Code of Ordinances to make amendments to Loitering on Premises (R. Arcuri)
- 21-27** An ordinance approving the rezoning of Lot 10, Square A, Belle Pointe Subdivision from the Residential District One (R-1) to the Residential District Three (R-3) zoning district located in the area generally bounded by E. 30<sup>th</sup> Street, Dupont Road, Chad B Baker Street, and Highway 44, Reserve, as shown in Exhibit 1 attached (PZR-21-1221) (R. Pastorek)
- 21-28** An ordinance approving a conditional use permit for operation of a tattoo shop on Lot 1T, LaPlace Plantation, which has a municipal address of 1317 W. Airline Highway, LaPlace, as shown in Exhibit 1 attached (PZR-21-1231) (R. Pastorek)
- 21-29** An ordinance approving a re-subdivision of ½ Lot 22 & ½ Lot 23, Cali Subdivision No. 1 Extension, into Lot 22A, Cali Subdivision No. 1 Extension, located in the area generally bounded by Eagle Street, Cardinal Street, and Dove Street, LaPlace, as shown in a survey prepared by Stephen P. Flynn, P.L.S. on May 28, 2021 (PZS-21-1276) (R. Pastorek)

**MOTION:** Councilwoman Duhe-Griffin moved and Councilman Arcuri seconded the motion to go into Executive Session to discuss Louis and Shirley Cook v. St. John the Baptist Parish, et al., Docket No. 73038, Division "C" and Cape Horn Investments, Inc. v. St. John Parish, 40<sup>th</sup> JDC No. 72013 "C". The motion passed unanimously.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

*Louis and Shirley Cook v. St. John the Baptist Parish, et al., Docket No. 73038, Division "C"*

*Cape Horn Investments, Inc. v. St. John Parish, 40<sup>th</sup> JDC No. 72013 "C"*

**MOTION:** Councilwoman Houston moved and Councilman Madere seconded the motion to go back into regular session. The motion passed unanimously.

**MOTION:** Councilman Malik moved and Councilwoman Houston seconded the motion to follow the recommendation of legal counsel in the case of Louis and Shirley Cook v. St. John the Baptist Parish, et al., Docket No. 73038, Division "C". The motion passed unanimously.

**MOTION:** Councilman Malik moved and Councilman Arcuri seconded the motion to follow the recommendation of legal counsel in the case of Cape Horn Investments, Inc. v. St. John Parish, 40<sup>th</sup> JDC No. 72013 "C". The motion passed unanimously.

**CORRESPONDENCE/COUNCIL BRIEFS:**

**ADJOURNMENT:**

At 8:23 PM, Councilwoman Houston moved and Councilman Malik seconded the motion to adjourn. The motion passed unanimously.

/s/Kurt P. Becnel  
COUNCIL CHAIRMAN

/s/Jackie Landeche  
Council Secretary