

OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS
ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST PARISH COUNCIL
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 8th, 2020
VIRTUAL ZOOM MEETING
CHAIRMAN LENNIX MADERE
VICE-CHAIR KURT BECNEL

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, December 8th, 2020, 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

Councilwoman Houston led the Prayer. Councilman Malik led the Pledge.

Legal Counsel Keith Green Jr., Christopher Cortez and Legal Clerk Kennilyn Schmill were present via video conference.

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

There were no public comments.

Robbie Arcuri - Presentation - Shondrell Perrilloux - Campaign Finance disclosure for Parish Contracts

The presentation can be viewed in its entirety at www.sjbparish.com.

CONSENT AGENDA:

ITEMS: Approval of Minutes - November 24th, 2020, Regular Meeting

MOTION: Councilman Wright moved and Councilwoman Duhe-Griffin seconded the motion to approve consent agenda items consisting of Approval of Minutes - November 24th, 2020, Regular Meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

REPORTS:

President's Report

The President's Report can be viewed in its entirety at www.sjbparish.com.

Michael Wright - Finance Committee Report

Councilman Wright stated, "Thank you Mr. Chairman, the finance committee meeting

met before the Council meeting and all Council members were present."

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

20-46 (Public Hearing Held) (Tabled 11-10-2020) An ordinance introducing the annual operating budgets for the St. John the Baptist Parish General Fund, Special Revenue Funds, Enterprise Funds, Capital Project Funds, and Debit Service Funds for the fiscal year beginning January 1, 2021 and ending December 31, 2021 (See attached amendments) (J. Hotard)

Jaclyn Hotard stated, *"Budget workshops and individual budget meetings were held to address questions and concerns about the proposed budget and subsequent questions addressed. Administration recommends approval."*

MOTION: Councilman Wright moved and Councilwoman Houston seconded the motion to remove Ordinance 20-46 from the TABLE. The motion passed unanimously.

Councilwoman Duhe-Griffin stated, *"I would like to make a motion to amend line item #35."*

Jaclyn Hotard asked, *"Can you tell us what, there's more than one (1) line item 35 in the budgets. You think you can tell us specifically, what specific budget?"*

Councilwoman Duhe-Griffin stated, *"It's under, it's under Car Allowance for two-hundred dollars (\$200.00), each Councilperson."*

Jaclyn Hotard asked, *"So, you want to a, I just really needed to know the exact, because there was more there's more than one (1) line item #35, in the actual budget."*

Councilwoman Duhe-Griffin stated, *"No. 35 under General Fund."*

Jaclyn Hotard asked, *"Gotcha. And what, what would you...what are you amending that...let me let the Chair address that."*

Councilman Madere stated, *"Okay, Ms. Griffin."*

Councilwoman Duhe-Griffin stated, *"For Car Allowance. I would like to amend the budget to increase the car allowance for two-hundred dollars (\$200), each Councilperson."*

Councilman Madere stated, *"Council allowance."*

Councilwoman Duhe-Griffin stated, *"That's correct."*

Councilman Madere stated, *"Okay, line item 35 is the line item...I don't have the budget in front me right here."*

Councilwoman Duhe-Griffin stated, *"Yes, under General Fund. Line item 35."*

Councilwoman Houston stated, *"So, if we're approving the budget, then we're approving to give each Council member a two-hundred dollar (\$200) increase in their car allowance, am I correct?"*

Councilman Madere stated, "I think that's what Ms. Griffin is attempting to do."

Councilwoman Duhe-Griffin stated, "Yes you are correct."

Councilwoman Houston stated, "We're asking to give ourselves a car allowance in this, in this climate with COVID and people out of work. We're asking to give ourselves a \$200 increase in our car allowance. I just want to be clear on that, that's what we're doing that's what we're telling the public tonight, am I correct Mr. Chair?"

Councilman Madere stated, "Yes."

Councilwoman Houston stated, "Ok."

Councilman Madere stated, "Yes, that's what we're telling the Chair and that's what we're telling the public on every raise that's in this budget, the same thing."

Councilwoman Houston asked, "The raises, what are the raises that's in the budget?"

Councilwoman Duhe-Griffin asked, "We're going to go over each line item tonight? We can."

Councilwoman Houston stated, "If you want to."

Councilwoman Duhe-Griffin stated, "The employees."

Councilwoman Houston asked, "The employees?"

Councilman Madere stated, "Yeah, there's several raises in the budget."

Councilwoman Houston stated, "Ok. Well in the in our quest to be transparent the way we always scream, we're transparent. Let's say what they are, who's getting a raise? Tell the public inform them."

Councilman Madere stated, "The one's that getting a raise is the parish employees."

Councilwoman Houston stated, "Ok."

Councilman Madere stated, "And I think..."

Robert Figuero interrupting stated, "All the Civil Service employees."

Councilwoman Duhe-Griffin interrupting asked, "What's the percentage for the record? What's the percentage of the, what's the percentage of the parish employees?"

Councilman Madere stated, "Ms. Griffin, hold up for a second. Ms. Hotard you want to answer that question?"

Jaclyn Hotard stated, "Well I just want to ask just for clarification and again this is a strictly Council item. But the motion was made to increase by

\$200...and I don't want to you know we went through this with the Library motion, about whether we needed an appraisal and the motions weren't clear. If I increase the line item by \$200, it needs, the motion needs to be clear. Is it \$200 per month for each Council member? Just for the accounting side of it, I'm not into the conversation about the car allowance, I just want to make sure that what you're attempting to do, Councilwoman Duhe-Griffin, is actually carried out and I won't allow you to you know, like, I know what the intent is...so I don't want you to make a mistake."

Councilwoman Duhe-Griffin interrupting asked, "Yeah you're right. It is \$200 added to the car allowance per month, for each Council member."

Jaclyn Hotard stated, "Yes ma'am. Okay, so just when you make your motion, I would ask that in that line item if you haven't tallied up that total amount, just make sure that you state a motion of an increase of \$200 for each Council member. So that when we get to the when it gets back to Rob, they know exactly what amount needs to be placed in there. And to answer the question about increases, as I explained in the first public budget workshop, there a 3% increase for our Civil Service Employees only. I mentioned to the Council members in that budget workshop that you have the ability to leave that 3% increase in there, as a as an increase or to reduce that. I provided the financials for that, it is only Civil Service Employees in there that are receiving an increase, no department heads are receiving an increase, I'm not receiving an increase, so I don't want there to be any misconceptions that you know, I'm getting one or the CAO, CFO, any department heads, those increases are specific to Civil Service employees, and the Council has the ability as I said in that workshop, to make those adjustments. And that's why I provided the numbers for all of that, those increases as well."

Councilman Madere stated, "Okay thank you Ms. Griffin, I mean Ms. Hotard."

Councilwoman Duhe-Griffin stated, "Yes, I would like to make an amendment to...wait okay hold up! I would like to make a motion to amend the budget in the General Fund, for line item 35 of \$200 each Council person for car allowance."

MOTION: Councilwoman Duhe-Griffin moved and Councilwoman Schnyder seconded the motion to approve amending the budget in the General Fund for Line Item 35 of \$200 each Council person for car allowance. The motion failed with 4 Yeas (Duhe-Griffin, Schnyder, Madere, Torres), 4 Nays (Houston, Arcuri, Malik, Wright) and 1 abstaining (Becnel).

Jaclyn Hotard stated, "So, at this time, you will need a motion to approve the budget as is."

Councilman Madere stated, "Yeah."

MOTION: Councilwoman Houston moved and Councilman Wright seconded the motion to approve Ordinance 20-46. The motion passed unanimously.

Kurt Becnel - Larry Sorapuru - (Carry Over 11-10-2020) Discussion regarding the ramp for the Bike Path Phase I in Lucy

The above item will remain a carry over.

PUBLIC HEARING AND ADOPTION ON ORDINANCES/NEW BUSINESS:

20-50 (Public Hearing Held) An ordinance to add the nomenclature "Christina Marie Green Davis" to the existing Melius Drive in Reserve, Louisiana (T. Schnyder)

Councilwoman Schnyder stated, "Oh yes, I would just like to make a motion that we approve this ordinance, to add the nomenclature "Christina Marie Green Davis" to the existing Melius Drive in Reserve, Louisiana."

Councilwoman Houston stated, "Yes I have a comment. This, this ordinance that was placed in District III, which is the District that I was elected to represent. I think Ms. Davis did a wonderful thing I think she is deserving of accolades. The thing is, this is the position I'm in, because I've had two (2) other people who've lost their relatives and they've come to me and asked me could we rename the street that their parents lived on in honor of them. And I gave them some guidelines and in when I was elected, I promised to be fair to all. So, if the guidelines have to stand for some, then they have to stand for all. So, I just want to go on record as saying I'm not opposed to this, I'm opposed to the process in the way it was done. Because if I'm going to hold some people to our standard, then I have to hold everybody to that standard. And if not, then I have to just start renaming streets, so that's my take on it."

Councilman Madere stated, "Ok, thank you Ms. Houston."

Councilman Becnel stated, "Yes, I'm going to abstain from this, because I don't want to look like we're villains if we vote against this. But Mr. Madere I want to remind you and I'll respect you and Mr. Butch Perrilloux, when I first won before I even put my hand on the bible. You guys told me...that Kurt, there's going to be times when people going to ask questions in each one of Districts, the right thing to do is to follow protocol. What you do is you tell them...hey look, I understand you're asking me, but this is not my District, I will refer you to Mr. Madere or Mr. Perrilloux or whomever. And the thing I have problem with this is, it's called Protocol. And it's almost like you like I give you an example: Ms. Griffin is trying to do something right now in my District she did the right thing. She called me first and asked me if it's okay, and I told her what procedures to follow. I'm just saying we got to follow protocol, it's like you know just stepping on somebody's else District and it's no disrespect to nobody on is. But I cannot support this, I can support it, if it gets TABLED or REMOVED and then do it by protocol. Because Mr. Madere, there's stuff in my head between you and Mr. Perrilloux told me. You know you guys I appreciated you'll, you'll called me in before I put my hand on that bible. And we've got to stick to the rules people, you do not cross over another person's District without talking to them. You know and that's what I feel is missing right here, you know I'm mean I'm serious it's like there's nobody on this Council. But I remember that and it's going stick with me and I'm going to follow it till the day I get out of office. So that's all I have to say. Thank you."

Councilwoman Schnyder stated, "Mr. Becnel, I agree with you 100%, I don't disagree with you at all and I also agree with Ms. Houston. As a matter of fact, Ms. Houston and I had a very extensive conversation about the topic. You know a conversation that I don't really believe is worthy of a public conversation, because I'm not going to entertain it further and tarnish the memory of Ms. Davis, nor will I ruin the special moment for the family by making this a controversial topic. You know this is not about me or Ms. Houston, this is about

Ms. Christina Davis and the wishes of her family. A few meetings ago Ms. Houston, Ms. Hotard honored Ms. Davis and issued a Proclamation to the family in her memory. Ms. Davis is truly deserving of this, I even offered Ms. Houston to remove my name and to put her name on there, she refused to do that. I had to add her name, she refused to do that. So, I agree with you and I agree with Ms. Houston totally. Ms. Houston and I talked for two (2) hours, but I'm not going to sit here and make this a controversial topic of something a woman as well deserving of this. It's not about me."

Councilwoman Houston stated, "Ms. Schnyder's correct she did call, she called after the fact. And I told her the position that I was placed in, I do agree with her. This lady deserves honor without controversy, I do agree with that. But I was not afforded the respect to do this. I have told two...and I told her this, I told two (2) survivors that I would not support naming a street after they're parents without the proper respect of going to their neighbors. What position does this put me in with those two (2) other families in District III? That's all I'm saying, I never said that the lady is not deserving of the honor. But I have, if I set rules for one, I need to set rules for all. That's all I'm saying."

Councilwoman Schnyder stated, "Ms. Houston, with all due respect..."

Councilman Madere interrupting stated, "Hold on, you're finish Ms. Houston, okay Ms. Schnyder."

Councilwoman Houston stated, "All I'm saying is the position I was..."

Councilwoman Schnyder interrupting stated, "With all due respect Ms. Houston, we do have ordinance in place, we have...we, you individually do not make rules and guidelines. There was nothing no guidelines followed..."

Councilwoman Houston interrupting stated, "It was not a rule it was not a guideline."

Councilwoman Schnyder stated, "First of all I do not want to make this a controversial topic, I really don't want to ruin this for this family and I don't want to taunt Ms. Davis family. So, I really don't care to discuss this any further. It's really about Ms. Davis and Ms. Davis only. If you want the spotlight for this, you can have it. But I'm not going to make this a controversial topic."

Councilwoman Houston asked, "Mr. Madere, am I recognized?"

Councilman Madere stated, "Wait one second, Mr. Becnel had his hand up first. Then I'm going to come back to you Ms. Houston."

Councilman Becnel stated, "With all due respect Ms. Schnyder, I do respect that lady, I said some nice comments about her. I would support it 100% if it's done the right way following protocol. I'm all for it I'm 100% for it, but I would've liked to have seen it done differently. Like we would have went through the proper channel, because that's what I was taught by Mr. Madere and Mr. Perrilloux, that you go through the proper channels. I am 100% for this, I wish we could of bring it up at the next meeting and approve it 100%. But I'm a tell you like this, I'm not against it I'm 100% for it, but it's protocol. That's all, I think it's just a miss communication. Cause I know if anybody [INAUDIBLE]"

somebody call me for somebody, somebody call me in your District Ms. Schnyder and say...you know, well how you feel about naming a street? I say well look...check with Ms. Schnyder first, that's all I'm saying. Cause I'm for it I'm all for this, I don't want the family to think I'm against them, and like you say...that's the last thing we want to do, is make this controversial. I was just commenting based on my 5-years on the Council (soon to be 5-years) of what I was taught and follow the word 'protocol'. That's all, no disrespect to nobody [INAUDIBLE] cause I'm not getting involved in controversy, thank you."

Councilman Wright stated, "Thank you. I guess just alluded to what Mr. Becnel said also, and I've been consistence since the first meeting as well as my last 8-years on just crossing District lines. But I will say moving forward, I think we've had this, other Councils have had discussions and I think you know to be consistent moving forward for us, we may need to develop some type of criteria for you know for just naming streets or buildings, but you know I will always yield to the District Council member and their District within reasonable items, and I've always been consistent with that since day one."

Councilwoman Schnyder stated, "I agree with everyone I agree with Ms. Hotard. It was done wrong, and I went to Ms. Hotard/Ms. Houston and I told her it was done wrong. I tried to come up with a resolution to make it right, Ms. Houston didn't want to do that, she wants to be the right one I was right you were wrong. What else can I do; I apologized, I offered to take my name off it and put her name on it, she declined all of that! I tried to make it right, I did my part, what else can I do?"

Councilman Madere stated, "Okay, thank you."

Councilwoman Houston stated, "It never was about me. As I told Ms. Schnyder, I had not a problem, she has a personal relationship with the family, if she would've just talked to me about it, I would've told her what I asked the other people in the District to do, as I regard every person in the District, the people who live on the street I wanted to give them that respect...it doesn't matter whose name is on it, I didn't want my name on it my name doesn't have to be on the ordinance, I didn't have a problem with her name being on there. It's, it's, I need to respect everyone in the District..."

Councilman Madere interrupting stated, "Ms. Houston, Ms. Houston, Ms. Houston, hold up! He asked us to pause a second. You can continue now, it's alright."

Councilwoman Houston stated, "It has nothing to do with my name being on it, Ms. Schnyder can...if she would've come to me and I would've said, this is what I ask...would you please ask the people on the street if they're okay with it, I would not have had a problem with it. I would not, that's her family that's her lifelong friends, I don't have a problem with that. I don't need the glory or the fame, that's not what I'm in it for. I need it to be fair, I asked another family to do this for me so I can take it in account. Everyone in the District, well that's just something I want to do when you come to me or that way, we're going to have people coming saying...name the street after my loved ones every other day. So that was just what I asked them to do, I think Mr. Becnel has that going on in his District, it's just something so we can take everybody into consideration. It has nothing to do with my name being placed on it, it's just a position I was placed in, and I thought I made that clear."

MOTION: Councilwoman Schnyder moved and Councilman Torres seconded the motion to approve Ordinance 20-50. The motion failed with 3 Yeas (Duhe-Griffin, Schnyder, Torres), 2 Nays (Houston, Wright) 3 Abstaining (Arcuri, Becnel, Madere) and 1 Absent (Malik).

20-51 (Public Hearing Held) An ordinance approving a resubdivision of Parcels 2-A & 2-B-1, Lot H, New Era Plantation Subdivision into Parcels 2-A-1-A, 2-B-1-A, 2-C-1, & 2-D-1, located in the area generally bounded by Airline Highway, Belle Terre Boulevard, Tiffany Drive, and Jasper Lane as shown in a survey prepared by Michael P. Blanchard, P.L.S. on September 28, 2020 (PZS-20-1260) (R. Pastorek)

Rene Pastorek stated, *"This resubdivision request to enable further development was recommended with unanimous approval by the Planning Commission at its November 16, 2020 meeting and by the Utility Board at its November 17, 2020 meeting. The Planning and Zoning Department finds this request is consistent with the surrounding neighborhood development pattern, the goals of the Comprehensive Plan and meets the technical sufficiency for consideration by the Parish Council."*

MOTION: Councilwoman Duhe-Griffin moved and Councilman Wright seconded the motion to approve Ordinance 20-51. The motion passed with 8 Yeas and 1 Abstaining (Malik).

Rene Pastorek - Resolution - R20-25 - A Resolution authorizing the Parish President to complete and submit all documents and agreement required in connection with the FY19 EPA Grant through the Lake Pontchartrain Basin Restoration Program for the St. John the Baptist Parish Wet Weather Stormwater Sampling and Analysis Program

Rene Pastorek stated, *"This Resolution is needed to accept and administer funds from the University of New Orleans Research and Technology Foundation for the St. John Parish Wet Weather Stormwater Sampling and Analysis Program. The funds will be used to test and monitor Parish waterways to determine the effect of future green infrastructure projects (LA SAFE) on improving pollution entry into local wetlands and the Parish drainage system. It is funded by grant funds in the amount of \$23,325 with a local match of \$9,996 from the Planning and Zoning budget."*

MOTION: Councilman Wright moved and Councilwoman Houston seconded the motion to approve Resolution R20-25. The motion passed unanimously.

MOTION: Councilman Wright moved and Councilman Malik 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". The motion passed with Councilwoman Duhe-Griffin absent.

MOTION: Councilman Wright moved and Councilman Malik seconded the motion to go back into regular session. The motion passed with Councilwoman Duhe-Griffin absent.

Councilman Madere stated, *"As a result of Executive Session, no action was taken."*

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

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

INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES:

There was no introduction of ordinances.

CORRESPONDENCE/COUNCIL BRIEFS:

The correspondence/council briefs can be viewed in its entirety at
www.sjbparish.com.

ADJOURNMENT:

At 8:38 PM, Councilwoman Duhe-Griffin moved and Councilman Wright seconded the motion to adjourn. The motion passed with Councilwoman Houston absent.

/s/Lennix Madere, Jr.
COUNCIL CHAIRMAN

/s/Jackie Landeche
Council Secretary

The meeting can be viewed in its entirety at www.sjbparish.com.