

**ST. LANDRY PARISH COUNCIL
PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE MEETING
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 7th, 2021
OLD CITY MARKET, 131 W. BELLEVUE ST.
OPELOUSAS, LOUISIANA**

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

1. Public Works Chairman Jimmie Edwards called the Public Works Committee of the St. Landry Parish Council to order.
2. Councilwoman Mildred Thierry led the Pledge of Allegiance and Invocation.
3. Roll Call: Nancy Carriere, Mildred Thierry, Gil Savoy, Alvin Stelly, Jimmie Edwards and Coby Clavier. Ex. Officio Dexter Brown. ABSENT: None.
4. Person to address the Committee:
 - **Mr. Eli Landry** addressed the council regarding Limbs in ditches on Tower Road. He stated each time it rains it floods. The Bayou is plugged up. He called the Core of Engineers and they forwarded his request to the Parish Government. Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “There will be drainage across the whole parish. We have a Consultant Firm that is drafting a major master drainage plan for the whole parish. Once that plan is developed we will apply for a Grant in December that will help. Once this Grant is approve, the road districts will be taken care of thru another fund. We are digging ditches all over the Parish every single day. We don’t have any funding to take care of any type of Bayou’s. We are trying to get the water off of the property right now and have it flow to the main arteries. That Grant that we are applying for will assist with all our main arteries in our parish.”
 - **Mr. Charlie James** addressed the council regarding dilapidated property in the Parish. He commended the Parish President for the work he has done in clearing up 66% of dilapidated properties in the Parish. He stated there is one property that has not been touched and he would like to work with the board to clear a piece of property in the parish. He stated he would like to get with Mr. Lewis to plan to tear down that one piece of dilapidated property and he would like the Parish to pick up the debris. He would like to sit down with the Parish President and come up with a plan to demolish all dilapidated property in the parish.
 - **Mr. Rodney Richard**, Inspection Services, addressed the council regarding dilapidated property in small towns. He stated he inspects dilapidated property for small towns such as Krotz Springs and Sunset. Port Barre is willing to tear down dilapidated property with the parish if the Parish grants them permission. The only thing Port Barre will need from the parish is the assistance with dumpsters. Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “I will have to work with the municipalities and present this to the council. We will be in Port Barre next week and we are tearing down dilapidated properties as they come up.” Mr. Rodney Richard stated he can work with the parish by doing the reports and turning them into the city.
 - **Ms. Jennifer Cravins** addressed the council regarding adjudicated property in the parish. She stated, “I am here to talk about adjudicated property tonight. I did go over the agenda. I was at the last meeting that you all had where you all did approve property to be sold. I noticed on this particular agenda, there are people again with the adjudicated sale. I have been trying for over a year to buy adjudicated property. No one can tell me the process. I know Mr. Lewis is a new employee that is trying to get something in place but I feel that I should have been on the agenda like the other people with the same process that they had. I spoke Mr. Garrett at the last meeting and I have spoken to Mr. Lewis. Everybody that I have spoken to cannot tell me how these people got on the agenda to purchase property. I don’t think that I should have to wait for the process that they are trying to do because these people did not have to. I have been coming here, all I am asking for is how do they get on the agenda? Who fills out their application, who set up their payment amount, no one can tell me. I know Mr. Bellard took over as the Parish President, but somebody sends this stuff in to be put on the agenda for the council to approve this. Nobody can tell me how I can do it. Mr. Floyd did one and it was \$900.00. I see others are trying to be authorized, waiting for Mr. Bellard to sign off. I am not asking for nothing like that. I am willing

to pay all the back taxes and pay forward, but nobody can tell me how I can get on this agenda. Why is it good for them and not for me?" Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, "The process is in place now...." Ms. Cravins stated, "That is not fair Mr. Bellard, I understand that you all were getting with another attorney to do a process. What about all the time I have asked, they have got the process but not me." Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, "The one tonight, I will ask the council to Table the one on the agenda for Mr. Buller. I want to make sure that one is done properly. The other two were done thru Civic Source. Anyone can go on Civic Source and put in a bid to get property." Ms. Cravins stated, "Which other two are you referring too?" Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, "On the next agenda, Item 6 and Item 7." Ms. Cravins stated, "On the last meeting, how did those get approved. It did not go thru Civic Source, it did not." If it was okay for the other guy to get on the agenda and purchase the property without having to wait and go thru the process, why am I not good enough?" Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, "I did not put it on the agenda ma'am." Ms. Cravins stated, "I just want to be placed on the agenda like them and let the council vote to see if I can be approved." Parish President Jessie Bellard asked Legal Counsel Garrett Duplechain to add in regarding this matter. Legal Counsel Garrett Duplechain stated, "The adjudicated property is sold two ways. One way is Civic Source. There is a Resolution before the council this evening. If the council passes that resolution, we can sell it thru Civic Source without having every single buyer go before the council to be approved. The other way we sell adjudicated property is not thru Civic Source. That is Mr. Buller's property. I think Mr. Buller property, a Non-Warranty Cash Sale, was done correctly and it is legal. All the rules were followed. I do think that it is wise on Mr. Bellard's part to maybe step back and take another look to make sure all of the requirements were done on Mr. Buller's property. Mr. Bellard, how would a buyer go about bidding on property?" Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, "Tonight is the night that we will bring the process up to make sure the council is aware of it. We have a process in place but I think what she wants to do is go by the old way." Ms. Cravins stated, "I want to go thru Mr. Buller's process to buy adjudicated property, what was his process?" I have been coming her for a whole year. Why can't I have that process to buy adjudicated property like Mr. Buller? What makes him privileged and not me? I am not here to speak on behalf of no one else but myself. I feel if you are going thru the process, whatever process that it is, why he can be on this agenda to purchase the property, why can't I be on the same agenda? I want to be grandfathered in just like these other people were." Legal Counsel Garrett Duplechain stated, "I don't know how Mr. Buller put his bid in, but he did." Ms. Cravins stated, "Who turned it into the clerk for her to place it on the agenda. How did it get to the clerk? You are the parish attorney, you should know what the process is. I spoke to you last week. I came before last year before the pandemic. I spoke to you then. I still have not gotten the process that these people are getting. Tell me the process that Mr. Buller went thru, you should know the process, you are the parish attorney." Legal Counsel Garrett Duplechain stated, "Maybe the President could enlighten us on that." Ms. Cravins stated, "No, not the President, you are the attorney, you looked at the paper work, what format did he use to get on this agenda? That is what I am asking." Legal Counsel Garrett Duplechain stated, "I did not set the process up." Ms. Cravins stated, "What is the process?" Chairman Dexter Brown stated, "Ms. Cravins, I want to personally apologize to you for not being able to purchase that land. I know you have been here since last year and you have been very patient with us. On behalf of the council and myself, I want to say Thank you, thank you, thank you. Mr. Duplechain, I would like for you to please assist Ms. Jennifer Cravins with her adjudicated property matter so we can solve this situation in these council chambers during our regular scheduled meeting. Something that I don't want to happen is Ms. Cravins to get an attorney and we fight fire with fire. That mean, if we don't have someone in that District Attorney's Office that can handle this adjudicated property matter, we will have to seek outside legal counsel. If that happens, we will be spending tax payer dollars on a matter that could have been solved a long time ago. All she want is a fair chance at the property that she is asking to purchase and the step by step process that they went thru to buy these properties. I, Dexter Quinn Brown, am personally asking you to please assist Ms. Jennifer Cravins along with anybody else that may come up, with her adjudicated property matter that she has been after for over one year. Can you please assist Ms. Cravins with her Adjudicate matter?" Legal Counsel Garrett Duplechain stated, "Yes." Mrs. Cravins

questioned when can she be assisted. Chairman Dexter Brown questioned if Legal Counsel Garrett Duplechain was available tomorrow to start the process with Ms. Cravins? Ms. Cravins stated she can be available to start the process next Wednesday. Legal Counsel Garrett Duplechain stated, "I will get her phone number. I am sure it is a simple process to put in a bid on adjudicated property. I will find out what it is."

5. Public Works Report:

a. **Update on Adjudicated Property in the Parish.**

Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, "Richard and I met with Mr. Bruce Gaudin last week. The process is fairly simple to do this. We will set a minimum amount of money that is going to cost the parish to do the process. We are assuming it is about \$500.00. You come in and place your \$500.00 deposit on a piece of property that you want to buy. It starts the process. The next phase, we will send out the notices, we will send it to the Eunice New, whoever our official journal is at the time. A bid will be submitted to the parish. It will be available whatever day we put down for the council meeting. It is open at that point. The highest bid gets the property. Whenever the purchaser agrees to go do all the notices and all the stuff that needs to be done. We are asking the council to sell the piece of property that has been legally posted and the proper billing process has been done and we will issue a Non Warranty Cash Sale on that piece of property. The process is not difficult. They purchaser will also have the option to go to Civic Source. I think it is better to come with us, we will be cheaper, but that is the choice of the purchaser. I am meeting with an attorney tomorrow that will help us with this so we can get that started and get it moving." Councilman Timmy Lejeune stated, "Can you explain the Non Warranty Cash Sale?"

Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, "A Non Warranty Cash Sale is basically saying we are not guaranteeing that the sale of a property will have a clear title because it won't. They can go to the court system and purchase that property from a private company if they want, but with the Parish, all we have to do is give them a Non Warranty Cash Sale. That \$500.00 deposit is non-refundable and it is charged to the person who gets the property. If a person is not awarded the bid, they get their deposit back. We have some property in Sunset that we cleaned up the other day. It cost us \$4,000.00. That will be our price to try and get our money back on that piece of property. Any type of fees that we have we are trying to get it back on the purchase of that property." Councilwoman Nancy Carriere stated, "The only concern I have is that we have some people in the community that would like to have the opportunity to purchase these properties in a low income area. Some of those people would love to buy it to keep it within that neighborhood. How can we keep people with ownership of property in their heritage and avoid one person with a lot of money to monopolize all of the available property?" Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, "There are certain stipulations in the law. If it is adjourning, they have the first right on that piece of property if they took care of it for a year or so. It has to be public bid." **Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, "Hopefully by the council meeting we will have that in writing and we will submit it to the council and it will be the same process for everybody unless they want to go to Civic Source, unless you all choose not to go with Civic Source. Civic Source is just an option."**

b. **Update on Road Work throughout the Parish.**

Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, "We are still digging ditches, hopefully that continues. Hopefully with this new Grant Money coming in, we can finish up the Parish Road Side Ditching. I am looking forward for that to happen. I will ask the council to forward to the Regular Meeting to have an Intergovernmental Agreement with each Municipality. We can do work with them and they can do work with us to join forces so to speak?"

A motion was made by Councilman Coby Clavier, seconded by Councilwoman Nancy Carriere to forward to Regular Meeting held on **Wednesday, April 21st, 2021** to authorize the Parish President to sign and Intergovernmental Agreement between the St. Landry Parish Government and all Municipalities.

On roll call vote: Nancy Carriere, Mildred Thierry, Gil Savoy, Alvin Stelly and Coby Clavier. ABSENT: None. ABSTAINED: None.

Motion forwarded.

Parish President Jessie Bellard informed the council that Next Tuesday and Wednesday, April 13th, and April 14th, at 11:00 a.m. the Liberty Theater will be open for review. The Mayor and the Opelousas City Council would like for us to join them in a walk-thru. Everyone is welcome to come.

c. Discuss final approval of Country Ridge Estates.

A motion was made by Councilman Coby Clavier, seconded by Councilwoman Nancy Carriere to forward to Regular Meeting held on **Wednesday, April 21st, 2021** to authorize the Parish President to sign the Final Approval of Country Ridge Estates.

On roll call vote: Nancy Carriere, Mildred Thierry, Gil Savoy, Alvin Stelly and Coby Clavier. ABSENT: None. ABSTAINED: None.

Motion forwarded.

A motion was made by Councilman Coby Clavier, seconded by Councilwoman Nancy Carriere to accept the Public Works Report.

On roll call vote: Nancy Carriere, Mildred Thierry, Gil Savoy, Alvin Stelly and Coby Clavier. ABSENT: None. ABSTAINED: None.

Motion carried.

6. Forward all applications received for two appointments to Ward Two Gravity Drainage District No. 1 for a four year term. (04-19-2021 – 04-19-2025).

A motion was made by Councilman Coby Clavier, seconded by Councilwoman Mildred Thierry to forward to Regular Meeting held on **Wednesday April 21st, 2021** all application received for two appointments to the Ward Two Gravity Drainage District No. 1. (04-19-2021 – 04-19-2025).

On roll call vote: Nancy Carriere, Mildred Thierry, Gil Savoy, Alvin Stelly and Coby Clavier. ABSENT: None. ABSTAINED: None.

Motion forwarded.

7. Authorize the Council Clerk to advertise for three appointments to the Bellevue & Coulee Crouche Gravity Drainage District No. 20 for a four year term. (05-02-2021 – 05-02-2025).

A motion was made by Councilman Coby Clavier, seconded by Councilwoman Mildred Thierry to forward to Regular Meeting held on **Wednesday April 21st, 2021** to authorize the Council Clerk to advertise for three appointments to the Bellevue & Coulee Crouche Gravity Drainage District No. 20 for a four year term. (05-02-2021 – 05-02-2025).

On roll call vote: Nancy Carriere, Mildred Thierry, Gil Savoy, Alvin Stelly and Coby Clavier. ABSENT: None. ABSTAINED: None.

Motion forwarded.

8. Authorize the Council Clerk to advertise for two appointments to Fire District No. 2 for a two year term. (05-15-2021 – 05-15-2023).

A motion was made by Councilman Alvin Stelly, seconded by Councilwoman Mildred Thierry to forward to Regular Meeting held on **Wednesday April 21st, 2021** to authorize the Council Clerk to advertise for two appointments to Fire District No. 2 for a two year term. (05-15-2021 – 05-15-2023).

On roll call vote: Nancy Carriere, Mildred Thierry, Gil Savoy, Alvin Stelly and Coby Clavier. ABSENT: None. ABSTAINED: None.

Motion forwarded.

9. Authorize the Council Clerk to advertise for one appointment to the Public Works Commission District Six for a four year term. (05-17-2021 – 05-17-2025).

A motion was made by Councilman Coby Clavier, seconded by Councilman Alvin Stelly to forward to Regular Meeting held on **Wednesday April 21st, 2021** to authorize the Council Clerk to advertise for one appointment to the Public Works Commission District Six for a four year term. (05-17-2021 – 05-17-2025).

On roll call vote: Nancy Carriere, Mildred Thierry, Gil Savoy, Alvin Stelly and Coby Clavier. ABSENT: None. ABSTAINED: None.

Motion forwarded.

- 10. Discuss Storm Drains in Royal Garden Subdivision. (Councilman Wayne Ardoin).**
 Administrative Finance Chairman Wayne Ardoin asked that this item be Tabled until the May Public Works Committee Meeting.
 A motion was made by Councilman Coby Clavier, seconded by Councilman Gil Savoy to Table the discussion of the Storm Drains in the Royal Garden Subdivision until the next Committee Meeting held on **May 5th, 2021.**
 On roll call vote: Nancy Carriere, Mildred Thierry, Gil Savoy, Alvin Stelly and Coby Clavier.
 ABSENT: None. ABSTAINED: None.
Motion carried.
- 11. Discuss the Speed Limit on Country Ridge Road. (Councilman Wayne Ardoin).**
 Administrative Finance Chairman Wayne Ardoin questioned Parish President Jessie Bellard if he got with the Sheriff Department regarding the speed limit on Country Ridge Road. Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “We did and I emailed him and told him about our situation. I have not heard back from him. I will contact him again tomorrow. I will have more information by the Regular Meeting held on **Wednesday, April 21st, 2021.**”
- 12. Discuss missing Road and Street Signs. (Councilwoman Mildred Thierry).**
 Councilwoman Mildred Thierry stated, “I would like for this to be forwarded to the full council for a discussion. I am sure I am not the only one that have concerns about the missing signs and street names. Just before I left home this afternoon, I recall there were stop signs down and are literally in the ditch. I think we need to come up with a plan or a solution to get this resolved. If someone is not familiar with the area and a road sign is not there, it could cause a casualty.” Councilman Jerry Red Jr. stated, “Normally this is forwarded to Public Works. They would make the signs and go back and put them up.” Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “The issue is, we don’t have enough people working. Normally if the Sheriff’s office have the time they would get with one of our guys and they would go and replace signs. We are still making signs in Public Works and they are stacking them up. On a rainy day the guys can take a Trustee and a Motor Grader to go and replace missing signs.”
No Action Taken.
- 13. Discuss adding the Louisiana Department of Transportation & Development Take 10 Litter Pickup Pledge.**
 Councilman Jerry Red Jr. stated, “I believe this is from the Department of Transportation and Development. They are asking that the Parish President take the initiative of getting our workers to take at least ten minutes before they start their daily routine and ten minutes before they get off to possibly pick up trash or litter.” Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “I can ask, that is all I can do. Honestly, I wish I had the people. On the days that they cannot do some things, then they can go out and do the special things like putting out the signs and doing different things. We have trustees that are available to us. I will commit the workers that we have that can go.”
- 14. Discuss any other business properly brought before this committee.**
 Councilman Alvin Stelly questioned Parish President Jessie Bellard if there are any roads that are being graded now. Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “We will start back this week. It is supposed to be drying up. They will not grade to many roads unless it is actually needed because we don’t have the material to put on the roads. Joe is taking care of those roads that are really bad. We have requisitions that we are signing every day. In this year’s bid for Shell, I am putting in a clause stating, if the Shells cannot be provided within 24 hours, we have the option to go to the next available bidder.” Public Works Chairman Jimmie Edwards questioned Parish President Jessie Bellard if the Asphalt from Louisiana Transportation was ever received. Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “We got the first set of loads. District 5 is getting some now, District 6 is getting some and we will be getting some as well. I talked to Nick last week. We are on track to getting it but District 5 has not gotten any in the first round and they are getting their round right now.” Councilman Coby Clavier questioned the right places where the material will be used. Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “We are trying to build up some roads. We have Collins Road and a few other roads that we have built up in our Parish. We are trying to work with Engineers to see what is the best answer. They are telling us to use the material and mix it with dirt to get a good foundation. If we use too much of this material on these gravel roads, it becomes speed bumps at the end of the road. If it is not graded on a frequent bases, it become a bunch of bumps.” Administrative Finance Chairman Wayne Ardoin questioned Parish President Jessie Bellard on how many Grader

Operators do we have employed. Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “We do have two for sure. We have one employee that is sort of a dual purpose employee that we utilize with the Motor Grader and the Excavator.” Administrative Finance Chairman Wayne Ardoin stated, “I am asking because we have some gravel roads in our area that we share the Grader between Mr. Stelly, Mrs. Vivian and another councilmember. I have a gentlemen in the audience tonight. They have not seen a Grader in two months. We need to get some roads Graded if possible.” Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “That will not be a problem. I spoke to Joe this afternoon and he is on it. Again it goes back to same thing I was saying. We don’t want to go Grade a road and not have the material to put on it. Then we have a mud. There is a process behind it. I trust that Joe is doing what is best.”

15. Adjourn.

A motion was made by Councilman Coby Clavier, seconded by Councilman Alvin Stelly to adjourn the Public Works Committee Meeting.

On roll call vote: Nancy Carriere, Mildred Thierry, Gil Savoy, Alvin Stelly and Coby Clavier.

ABSENT: None. ABSTAINED: None.

Motion carried.

**I HEREBY CERTIFY THE FOREGOING TO BE EXACT AND TRUE
KAREN BARLOW, ASSISTANT COUNCIL CLERK**