

**ST. LANDRY PARISH COUNCIL
ADMINISTRATIVE/FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 2nd, 2022
OLD CITY MARKET, 131 W. BELLEVUE ST.
OPELOUSAS, LOUISIANA**

ADMINISTRATIVE/FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

1. Chairman Wayne Ardoin called this meeting of the Administrative/Finance Committee of the St. Landry Parish Council to order.
2. Councilman Timmy Lejeune led the Pledge of Allegiance & Invocation
3. **Roll Call:** Jerry Red Jr., Nancy Carriere, Easton Shelvin, Harold Taylor, Wayne Ardoin, Timmy Lejeune and Ex-Officio Vivian Olivier. **ABSENT:** None.

Administrative Finance Chairman Wayne Ardoin informed the council to speak into their microphones. He stated it is difficult for the clerks to transcribe.

4. Person to address the Committee:
 - Administrative Finance Chairman Wayne Ardoin stated, “Mr. Anthony Bill Goodell is unavailable to address the council regarding the Environmental Lawsuit. He will be available at a later date and time.
 - Mr. Juan M. Joseph addressed the council regarding his candidacy for the SLED Board. He stated, “Good evening to this distinguished body. Councilmembers I thank you for the allotted time. I will be brief. My name is Juan Joseph as I have stated. I am a candidate for the St. Landry Economic Development Board. I am a near lifelong resident of St. Landry Parish. I was born and raised in Opelousas. I am the son of the late John and Cecile S. Joseph. I am one of eight children, married to Janay Fontenot Joseph who was employed by the St. Landry Parish Clerk of Court’s Office, she was the minute clerk for District C, Honorable Judge Ledricka Thierry. As far as my background, I am educated here in the parish public schools and I went on to further my education at Southern University in Baton Rouge with a BS in Liberal Arts. I further studied in Industrial Design focusing on Product Design and Automotive Design. I lived in the Mid-west for five years and Florida for three years. I moved back home in the late 90’s to start a small business of Satellite Sales and Installation. I was the owner of a Dish Network Dealership at some point after establishing that business I did transition into the family business with my father, licensed as a Funeral Director in 2000. I have been a Funeral Director in the Funeral Industry for more than 20 years. I am quite content with the substance of my vocation. I started to call it a business or an industry because I do believe it is a commission. Over the years I have served several thousand families, neighbors, friends and family members in my capacity. I am contend in the substance of what I have done. I do feel that I have a great deal to offer to the St. Landry Economic Development Board. My back ground is in Liberal Arts and I do have the capacity to be discerning, intuitive to think outside of the box. There has been a shift and I no longer think that things are like they used to be nor will they be what they have been. We have been through a pandemic and certainly that creates an opportunity for us to be creative in how we induce or consider development in our area. From a principal standpoint I know that public service that which considers the greater good and it should be based on principal diplomacy or a moral diplomacy considering the constituents of our great parish and city. I think that it is important for us to have a constituency that is engaged and informed in a sophisticated way in educating them, it is a collective effort, there is a proverb that basically says that people are people through people and we have the opportunity and the expectation to live up to our

humanity which is our commonality. With that being said I know that the permits of economic inducement is based on business dynamics, industry and the infrastructure of our parish and city and I am equipped to work and serve. The public deserves and should have coalition building and it should be people that is on one accord and people with the capacity to compromise and make deals and do what is in the interest of the great of good. I don't want to extend my comments but I will leave you with this, my father impressed on us that it is important to have a civic responsibility to be viable contributing members of society and I think that is what is part of the future of our parish going forward and has been in the charter of this great city and this great parish. I will leave you with this quote by Vaclav Havel and I am paraphrasing, he said that he was not an optimist because he did not believe everything ended well, he was not a pessimist because he did not believe that everything ended badly rather he was a person of hope because hope is has equal importance as life itself. I am a child of God and God defines who I am and certainly importing that into the spirit of who I am as a person and everything that I do is a profit for me. I want to thank you for this opportunity and I wanted to be brief and thank you for listening to me and I appreciate any consideration that the councilmembers can gives me.”

- *Ms. Charlene Melton addressed* the council on behalf of Mr. James Smith. She stated, “My name is Charlene Melton from Tyler Texas. I have driven 300 miles to be here for this today. Mr. James Smith is a 79 year old black man that lives between LeBeau and Big Cane. A very precious man who has helped everyone around there. We have a grandson here, who the original landowner is his grandmother, Ms. Verbie Sanders. After she became a widow she asked Mr. Smith if she could get him a travel trailer and put it on her property and he could live there so she would not be there by herself. Of course Mr. Smith said yes and he has been living there on the property for 31 years. There were other widows in the neighborhood that he helped, my mother, he helped so much. There was a curb before you get to her house, she was old and hard of hearing. He would not let here cross the road each day to get her mail he did that for her. He just treated her like she was his mother, which he did to several other people. He is a man of God, a very strict Catholic and he believes in doing the right thing for each one. This place where he lived before Ms. Verbie died went to her granddaughter who is this boy's mother. They moved out there into the house of course allowing James to stay. My Aunt Verbie left him a 99 year lease for him to stay on the property as long as he lived. Now one of the brother of this man would live in the house off and on, just periodically. The house burned down three weeks ago. Mr. Smith got his electricity and his water from that property and he paid my aunt a portion or whoever lived there to pay the electric bill and the water bill. When the house burned down then Mr. Smith had nothing. He had no electricity and this man lives on maybe \$800.00 a month, if that much. He is so dear to our family, this is my niece and my sister and he is so dear to us that we said of course we are going to help you get everything that you need so that you can go back to living your life to the way that you are used to. We had to get someone to come out and put the electric pole up with the meter base everything that he would need to plug his camper into and we paid for that. My sister got an electrician out of Lafayette to come and do this. He was given a permit and they we were told no, that is not the right permit, his cost \$50.00 and he needs to get one that cost \$250.00 but we will take that \$50.00 off of it. Then we were told no he cannot have a permit because he does not have a sewer. Some people went in and talked to someone in the permit office and we know exactly who it is, it is neighbors who have been trying to get this property for years, they said do not give this man a permit. They said he did not have a proper sewer, again we hired a plumber to come out. The motor that had been on this sewer system burned up with the house so we put a new motor there. He ran the lines from the camper to this big septic system that went to the house and he hooked up the wires and everything that was needed for it. The tank had to be pumped out and we got that done, of course all of us paid for that once more and we are still told that he can't have a permit. That is because of those two women that went in and said not to give

this man a permit. I don't know what we are lacking here. We have spent several thousand dollars getting this set up and we are still told no. This man has worried about this so much that he just don't know what to do anymore."

- *Councilman Jerry Red Jr., stated, "Mr. Bellard, do you know about this?"*
- *Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, "Yep, I sure do."*
- *Councilman Jerry Red Jr., stated, "Can you tell us about this please?"*
- *Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, "Well number one, the property is in the person name that died and they never had a secession done so there is no legal owner that is living today to get permission to do this. The section that she is speaking of does not fit our ordinance where you have to have X amount of square footage with a sewer system on that particular property. They want to hook up to the neighbor's property which is adjacent to it but there is nobody that is legally owning that property to allow that to take place."*
- *Ms. Charlene Melton stated, "This is not the neighbor's property. This is the same piece of property. He lives on one little section and the house was right next to him. He is hooked up to the sewer system now that the house ran off of and this great grandson is one of the owners of the property now. He is here along with all of us trying to get this matter solved for the precious man."*
- *Councilman Jerry Red Jr., stated, "My question first of all is this, if he received the permit, why was it taken?"*
- *Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, "I pulled the permit because it was not given in the right order."*
- *Councilman Jerry Red Jr., stated, "What order does it need to go in Mr. Bellard?"*
- *Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, "The person owning the property is no longer living. There is no secession done on the property so there is nobody that can legally give permission to do this type of work."*
- *Councilman Jerry Red Jr., stated, "If he has a 99 year...."*
- *Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, "He does not have a 99 year lease."*
- *Ms. Charlene Melton stated, "He has a lifetime."*
- *Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, "He does not have a 99 year lease he has a right to live on the property as long as he keeps the property up. That is how it is stated in there. We were in the process of sending out letters to get the property cleaned up and that is when the house burnt."*
- *Administrative Finance Chairman Wayne Ardoin stated, "Repeat that Mr. Bellard, you all went to clean up the property?"*
- *Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, "No Sir, we were in the process of sending out letters for the property to be cleaned up when the house burned."*
- *Councilman Jerry Red Jr., stated, "If he has the right permission to use that property from the owner of that property, we have no jurisdiction to stop them. We cannot stop them."*
- *Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, "Mr. Red, it is done and I am not going to discuss it in an open meeting because I know they probably will have a pending lawsuit regarding this. I will not discuss it any further. We took the action needed by the Parish Government and my office and we will stand by it."*
- *Councilman Jerry Red Jr., stated, "Let me finish, we are here and we have done many times when house burn down this council signed off that they don't have to pay for a permit."*
- *Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, "You are absolutely right but this is not the same circumstance."*
- *Councilman Jerry Red Jr., stated, "I am saying that you have the documents to show you that these people own the property. Okay, it will be a lawsuit."*
- *Councilman Alvin Stelly stated, "Why did they sell them a permit then pulled it back? They should have never received a permit if it was not done right."*
- *Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, "I instructed the permit office not to give a permit based off what I was told and the information that I was given. They gave a permit in error and I took it back."*
- *Councilman Alvin Stelly questioned, "Did you all give him his money back?"*

- *Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, "He was able to get his money back if he wanted his money back."*
- *Ms. Charlene Melton stated, "No he has not received it. They said he could have applied that to the \$250.00 permit."*
- *Councilman Alvin Stelly stated, "First it was \$50.00 then it went to \$250.00."*
- *Ms. Charlene Melton stated, "Yes."*
- *Councilman Alvin Stelly stated, "Then denied the permit."*
- *Ms. Charlene Melton stated, "Yes but the permit was denied a couple of days later. SLEMCO has come out there and hooked the wires from the pole to his pole and everything is ready to go."*
- *Councilman Alvin Stelly questioned, "How many heirs are in the family?"*
- *Ms. Charlene Melton stated, "There are three heirs. There is this man, his sister and his brother that occasionally lived in the house."*
- *Councilman Alvin Stelly questioned, "Do they allow Mr. Smith to live there?"*
- *Ms. Charlene Melton stated, "Everybody is trying to do the right thing for this man. This man drove from Belle Chase Louisiana. He is under a doctor's care and he is not even supposed to be riding in a vehicle."*
- *Councilwoman Nancy Carriere questioned, "What is the problem? You are saying that there is no legal land owner, somebody evidently owns the house. That is first thing and the second thing, let's say one of the land owners put a camper on the property because their house burned, what is the difference? Let's say one of the owners had put the camper under their names and put that camper on the lot and decided to use those same things and get the electricity going."*
- *Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, "You all are not looking at the Plat. You all are not looking at what the Plat shows where this camper was living on a section of that property, not on the whole piece of the property, just a section of it. He has Usufruct of only that little section. That little section does not qualify to get a permit for a camper or even a sewer. It does not meet our ordinance. He did not have use of all of the property, he had use of a piece of the property which is a difference ball game. You all don't understand the whole story like I do so that is why the decision was made the way it was done."*
- *Councilwoman Nancy Carriere questioned, "What if they decide to give use of the property a bigger section?"*
- *Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, "I don't see how they can give use of the property whenever they don't legally own the property."*
- *Councilwoman Nancy Carriere stated, "But that is not for us to decide if they legally own it. It is up to the Attorney."*
- *Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, "We need somebody who owns the property to come into the office and give permission to do this and the legal owner of that property is dead."*
- *Ms. Charlene Melton stated, "There they are right there."*
- *Councilwoman Nancy Carriere stated, "So he is willing to go into the office and they are the legal owners. As long as they are presenting the proper paper we should not have to make a decision."*
- *Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, "His name is not on the list of owners on that property. I am sorry."*
- *Councilman Timmy Lejeune stated, "Mr. Bellard, there is a dividing line between the two portions of the property is that what you are saying that is on the Plat?" The trailer is on Part-A on the Plat and the house that burnt is on Part-B."*
- *Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, "That is correct."*
- *Councilman Timmy Lejeune stated, "So therefore he is using a sewer system on Part-B unauthorized. It would be the same thing applying for a driveway permit on somebody else's property you don't own."*
- *Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, "Correct."*
- *Councilman Timmy Lejeune stated, "I can understand that. So my question to the family would be can you create ownership of both pieces under one title or under the same title so therefore it would show that it is one piece of property of usufruct or can*

he move the house where the sewer plant is at? That would be the easiest thing to do but under the law you are going on somebody else's property to put sewer that is not even listed on the title. I understand what he is saying, I do because it is two pieces. Although you may own both pieces it two different pieces. It is Part A and Part B so you are jumping the property line."

- *Ms. Charlene Melton stated, "Has it been drawn up as Part A and Part B?"*
- *Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, "On the Survey it shows and it even describes the dimensions of the property which he has usufruct of. In the legal description it does not give him usufruct of the whole property just a piece of the property. Mr. Lejeune is correct, if you take the trailer and you move it over a few feet and you own the piece of property and you can prove ownership of the property then they can legally do it. But right now there is nobody legally owning that property that can come over here and sign off and give permission to give sewer. I am sorry, I can't help that."*
- *Ms. Charlene Melton stated, "This really just boils down to semantics. That is what it is. This man has helped everybody around there. I just think that you should see that he can use some help now. He is 79 years old, he is diabetic and he is just a good person."*
- *Councilman Dexter Brown stated, "Mr. Bellard, until the secession is complete or whatever legalities have been settled do we have an elderly living facility like Holy Trinity Village in that area of the parish where we can assist Mr. Smith with his living arrangements?"*
- *Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, "We don't have anything as far as Parish Government is concerned. I am sure that they have something in Palmetto or whatever but not from the Parish Government, no."*
- *Councilman Dexter Brown stated, "Could you get the members of your office, if you don't mind, to look into it starting tomorrow and see if we can help Mr. Smith with his living arrangements until he can get all of these legalities solved, please?"*
- *Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, "I don't have a problem with that at all."*
- *Councilman Dexter Brown stated, "Thank you very much."*
- *Councilwoman Mildred Thierry questioned, "If he would take his camper and you all would give him permission to put this camper where the house burned could that be solved in that way with him getting a permit?"*
- *Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, "I think it still goes back to the legal owner of the property. I understand that but when it comes down to the Clerk of Court having the records showing that the person who owns the property is deceased."*
- *Councilman Alvin Stelly questioned, "Nobody owns the property?"*
- *Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, "What I mean is somebody is paying taxes on it. If they would just do a succession and let it fall where it falls then somebody legally owns the property then that person can give authority to do whatever they want to do on the property. But as of right now from what I am understanding nobody legally owns the property and it is still wide open. Like anything, if you don't do a succession then the land stays there. People pay taxes all the time on land that their father and their mothers die on. It does not make it their property, it is still in the legal name of the person deceased. I am sorry. The rules are the rules and the laws are made the way it is done. If you go back to Mr. Jerry's thing, if a house burns on a piece of property we can waive that permit for that individual to do something on their house if they reconstruct it and they are building a house, yes we can do that because that is what the law says but this is not the same thing."*
- *Councilman Harold Taylor stated, "Mr. Bellard, the piece of property that the trailer is on does it have the sixteen thousand square feet, it is not taking up the sewer plant?"*
- *Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, "No it is not. I think it is a 90 x 90. I forgot what it is. It is a small piece. It does not meet the frontage or the square footage."*
- *Councilman Timmy Lejeune stated, "Mr. Bellard for a trailer house, they put a bunch of them on one piece of property."*
- *Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, "This is a camper."*

- *Councilman Timmy Lejeune stated, "I get it, it is how you define a trailer or how it is defined. We call storage buildings today mini homes. So my question is, can this qualify in any way for them to put a sewer system on the piece of property in question that is too small? If you go through a lot of areas in the parish you can almost hit the window next door with a bat. That is how close they are. Their square footage per resident on a piece of property is extremely narrow. I can bring you to some now so I am just wondering. I haven't seen the piece of property so that is why I am asking these questions."*
- *Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, "The s 60 feet of frontage and we require 90 feet of frontage, which is in the ordinance. Plus we require sixteen thousand square feet of land on there to get those two things. This piece of property does not meet that criteria and it is cut out and that is the usufruct that they are speaking of. If they would do a succession and get it done then there won't be an issue. They can do whatever they want, they can put him on their property or anywhere on that property. It won't be a problem at that time."*
- *Councilman Jerry Red Jr., questioned, "I have two questions. The first question is, did the two ladies that Ms. Charlene Melton is speaking about come to your office and ask you to withdraw the permit?"*
- *Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, "Yes they did come to my office. They did not ask me to withdraw the permit."*
- *Councilman Jerry Red Jr., questioned, "They did not ask you to withdraw that permit?"*
- *Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, "They brought me the paper work that shows all the information about that property."*
- *Councilman Jerry Red Jr., questioned, "So you are believing what they are saying and you are not looking at their papers?"*
- *Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, "I am not believing anybody. I am looking at what the paper calls. That comes from upstairs in the Clerk of Court's Office."*
- *Councilman Jerry Red Jr., stated, "My second question. Okay Garrett you supposed to be our Legal Counsel. Can you tell us anything on this?"*
- *Legal Counsel Garrett Duplechain stated, "If you own a piece of property you have two things. You have the usufruct meaning you use it, you get to live there and you have the naked ownership which is a title ownership but you can split that. This fellow was given apparently the usufruct, he can use it and he can live there but the naked owner, the title owner died. Once you open the secession of the naked ownership, the title ownership and have judgement possession, the judgement possession is recorded in the Clerk of Court's Conveyance Records and that ownership will transfer to the person who died children. I say their children because I am assuming they did not leave a will. That naked ownership that title ownership will transfer to the heirs, the children of the person who died. Once that happens those title owners can come forward and do what they have to do."*
- *Councilman Jerry Red Jr., stated, "But two questions. If you have right of habitation you have a right to live on that property, not right of usufruct. If you have right of usufruct you could rent that property and still collect the money off of it, am I correct?"*
- *Legal Counsel Garrett Duplechain stated, "Yeah, if you have the usufruct you can collect the um....."*
- *Councilman Jerry Red Jr., stated, "Yes, but if you have the right of habitation and if he has 99 years of using it you have the right to habitat on that property."*
- *Legal Counsel Garrett Duplechain stated, "We would have to take a look at the lease where he has to lease it or he has the usufruct. It makes a difference. If it says usufruct, lifetime usufruct that is a big difference. He gets to live there and he gets to use it but if he does not have that and he just have the right to habitat and he is leasing it that is a different matter. I don't think that lease goes away because the heirs will inherit that lease but the person to come forward has to be the naked owners the title owners."*
- *Councilman Jerry Red Jr., stated, "Thank you."*

- *Councilwoman Nancy Carriere questioned, "I am just curious, where was the sewerage before the house burn? Was it connected with the house?"*
- *Ms. Charlene Melton stated, "Yes, it was the sewer for the house which is a much bigger one than what he needs for one person in a little camper. We spent the money to get this hooked up because we were told that was what we had to do."*
- *Councilwoman Nancy Carriere questioned, "Before the house burned was it hooked with the house?"*
- *Ms. Charlene Melton stated, "Yes."*
- *Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, "Not before the fire, after the fire."*
- *Councilwoman Nancy Carriere questioned, "That is what I am asking, what kind of sewerage did he have before the fire?"*
- *Ms. Charlene Melton stated, "Oh him. I don't know for sure what it was. I know he had some kind of little system. To keep from having to go thru any arguing we just went ahead and paid the money to get him hooked up to the big system to try to get this done."*
- *Councilwoman Nancy Carriere stated, "I understand. It is more frustrating because the bucks have been passed."*
- *Ms. Charlene Melton stated, "Yes and we have put out quite a bit of money so far. This does say the right of use and habitation."*
- *Legal Counsel Garrett Duplechain stated, "May I take a look at that please?"*
- *Administrative Finance Chairman Wayne Ardoin questioned, "At this time can I ask a question? Where is that gentleman living at now?"*
- *Ms. Charlene Melton stated, "Some nights he stays in his camper with no electricity. He does have water now. He has no electricity at all. Some nights he stays with a friend that lives in LeBeau. He goes and spend the night there. He is back and forth all the time, his life has been totally disrupted. He has told me and others that he feels like he is about to have a nervous breakdown."*
- *Administrative Finance Chairman Wayne Ardoin stated, "The property, do you all have any inkling on who owns that property?"*
- *Ms. Charlene Melton stated, "This is one of the great grandsons who is the heir."*
- *Administrative Finance Chairman Wayne Ardoin stated, "But yet is there some paperwork/will that is stating that when they pass it all goes into his name?"*
- *Ms. Charlene Melton stated, "It is for the three of them."*
- *Administrative Finance Chairman Wayne Ardoin stated, "Come up sir. I would rather that you come up and speak in the microphone so we will have it for a matter or records."*
- *Mr. Adrian Gaskill Sr. addressed the council. "I am an heir of that property that was willed to me. The will got lost in that fire."*
- *Administrative Finance Chairman Wayne Ardoin stated, "The will got lost in the fire."*
- *Mr. Adrian Gaskill Sr. stated, "My stepfather was allowed to live there after my mother died. He was allowed to live there and there was some trouble with him and family matters. I do believe that he took the will."*
- *Administrative Finance Chairman Wayne Ardoin stated, "So in other words it has been a continuing situation."*
- *Mr. Adrian Gaskill Sr. stated, "But these two neighbors approached Mr. Bellard has been fighting my mother, fighting my family for this property for over twenty plus years. My mother spent over \$150,000.00 fighting these two ladies. Last year they approached Mr. Smith to get in contact with my number to have me come to them and talk about selling that property. The have been after that property for a very long time, why, I don't have no idea."*
- *Administrative Finance Chairman Wayne Ardoin questioned, "How much land are we talking about sir?"*
- *Mr. Adrian Gaskill Sr. stated, "I believe it is 110 acers which they have acquired through my great grandmother. They acquired everything except this one acre with sits in the middle. They are after this property."*

- *Administrative Finance Chairman Wayne Ardoin questioned, “What road is that on in St. Landry Parish.”*
- *Mr. Adrian Gaskill Sr. stated, “HWY 361.”*
- *Administrative Finance Chairman Wayne Ardoin stated, “HWY 361, is that when you take a right out of LeBeau on HWY 71?”*
- *Mr. Adrian Gaskill Sr. stated, “Yes sir. After the house burned I went out there, I went again today and I went out there the Sunday of the burning to see what I have to do to start cleaning up that property.”*
- *Administrative Finance Chairman Wayne Ardoin stated, “Is there anyone else that would like to speak? In the meantime that gentleman is staying with a friend and sometimes he stays in the camper. Mr. Duplechain with everything that was stated and what you were asked about your input on, where do we go from there and where does Parish Government go from there?”*
- *Legal Counsel Garrett Duplechain stated, “This act of correction refers to as a Grant of Usufruct that was recorded with Clerk of Court October 1991. It looks like Harry Garland was the attorney. I am sure this was done correctly. He refers to as a Usufruct in the act of correction so he has a right to live there/to be there. It is not title ownership or naked ownership that has to be inherited by the children of the person who passed away. It was recorded with the Clerk of Court so that is good.”*
- *Administrative Finance Chairman Wayne Ardoin stated, “So where do we stand or what do you advise Parish Government to do as far as the permit situation from what you have heard here tonight?”*
- *Legal Counsel Garrett Duplechain stated, “If they can open the secession they will get an attorney who not only opens secession but maybe can guide the new owners through this and they go to Parish Government and they have to meet Parish Government requirements. It probably can be solved like that I supposed.”*
- *Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “Mr. Chairman, if there is a will it is not recorded upstairs in the Clerk of Court’s Office. That would answer the question right there.”*
- *Mr. Adrian Gaskill Sr. stated, “I have looked into it and I have been told no. I spoke to the Clerk’s Office.”*
- *Legal Counsel Garrett Duplechain stated, “I can tell you that is why attorneys always kept fire proof safes in their office to store wills in. It has always been the case for decades or centuries.”*
- *Administrative Finance Chairman Wayne Ardoin stated, “Harry Garland has longtime passed away.”*
- *Legal Counsel Garrett Duplechain stated, “Long time ago his office was right out there but he has passed away.”*
- *Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “So if they open up secession does that automatically give permission to the kids or the grandkids? Is that what you are saying Garrett?”*
- *Legal Counsel Garrett Duplechain stated, “Right once the secession is completed there will be a judgment procession that will transfer the ownership from the person who died to their children. Now if there is no will that means that it goes to the children. It is there separate property the children get it, if it is community property the surviving spouse will get half and the usufruct over the other half. If there is no surviving spouse, no will, the children will inherit this property.”*
- *Administrative Finance Chairman Wayne Ardoin stated, “If I understand you right, that will he got from Mr. Harry Garland, it was for his parents or his stepmother or his stepdad, am I correct?”*
- *Mr. Adrian Gaskill Sr. stated, “It was for me, my sister and my brother but she had in the will that as long as my stepfather was alive he can live in the house. My brother is in and out of the prison system here. When he is there I had an agreement with him to maintain the property as long as he lives there as part of his rent.”*
- *Administrative Finance Chairman Wayne Ardoin stated, “Are you in favor of getting you an attorney to get involved with our attorney here. Maybe you all can start the*

- process. We are talking about time. This gentlemen, how long has he been living in that camper since the fire?”
- *Ms. Charlene Melton stated, “He does not live in it full time. There is no electricity.”*
 - *Administrative Finance Chairman Wayne Ardoin stated, “So he is in and out of the camper. In the meantime Mr. Bellard there is no way that the Parish Government can help these people?”*
 - *Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “The ordinance is the ordinance. If we do it for one we will have to do it for all.”*
 - *Administrative Finance Chairman Wayne Ardoin stated, “I so realize that but yet we have a gentlemen that is homeless.”*
 - *Mr. Adrian Gaskill Sr. stated, “If these two ladies would have never went to Mr. Bellards office.”*
 - *Administrative Finance Chairman Wayne Ardoin stated, “Does those two ladies live next door?”*
 - *Ms. Charlene Melton stated, “One on each side. The want the property.”*
 - *Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “Again, I want to explain something. I say this all the time. If I don’t know something, I am okay with messing up but if I know something and the law is on my side I cannot go against it. I don’t care how good this person was to anybody. We will follow the law to the ‘T’ every time. Now if I did not know about it you are absolutely correct I would have given that permit not knowing any different. But once I know about it I can promise you that they will not get a permit. I am sorry that is just how it is.”*
 - *Mr. Adrian Gaskill Sr., stated, “What about me filing for a permit.”*
 - *Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “Now that I know everything, you don’t own the property. That is what I am saying if you owned the property this would not have been an issue. That is what I am saying. It is a simple fix. Open the secession and get it fixed. If I was you all I would have done that a long time ago to make sure you have the property on your name.”*
 - *Administrative Finance Chairman Wayne Ardoin stated, “I think what he said right there sir is the way it should be. It would have to cost you some money to get a local attorney.”*
 - *Mr. Adrian Gaskill stated, “I follow. I am 100 percent disable and I am under the doctor’s care. I live on a fixed budget.”*
 - *Administrative Finance Chairman Wayne Ardoin stated, “I feel for the gentleman that is living in and out of that camper. I feel for all of you all that is involved but yet this is one little matter in a parish with 800 square miles. How we are going to fix it I don’t know because he is the one that issues the permits. The thing about is that is where we stand at. Mr. Duplechain I think you have given us what we need and what is the wishes of the committee? Where do you all want to go with it?”*
 - *Ms. Charlene Melton stated, “He had the permit. It was not withdrawn until those two women went in and said do not give him a permit. Do you want some history to know why they are saying that? The old lady, his great grandmother that got the gentlemen to move onto her property, she decided in her later years that she wanted to sell the land. She sold the land all around and just kept the house there. This was sold to those two women father. His great grandmother did not have a high school education but when they got ready to close on this she had made the deal with him and he had the papers drawn up. She took him at his word and found out after they closed on it that he has a statement on the back page saying that house could never be sold unless it was sold to him or his family for \$20,000.00. We are talking about a four bedroom, two bath, large kitchen, large living room and porch all the way across. That is what he said she would have to sell for \$20,000.00. It is one acre of land. When this boy’s mother was living there they did everything they could to run her off the property. They called the cops over and over again about menial things just to try to get them off of the property.*
 - *Mr. Adrian Gaskill Sr., stated, “They had her put in jail for just washing her car.”*

- *Administrative Finance Chairman Wayne Ardoin stated, "So where are we going committee. This person will have to live like he is living right now until he files for secession."*
- *Councilwoman Nancy Carriere stated, "The other thing was if they could move the trailer a little bit I think that would be a cheaper way for them?"*
- *Administrative Finance Chairman Wayne Ardoin stated, "Mr. Bellard would you be able to help them after that part?"*
- *Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, "It still goes back to the proper ownership of the property."*
- *Administrative Finance Chairman Wayne Ardoin stated, "So a secession has to be filed."*
- *Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, "And that answers the question. That is the easiest way to do it and the ownership is given. Then that person can get permission to do whatever they want to do on their property."*
- *Ms. Charlene Melton stated, "If you have to follow the law and can't consider any of the circumstance then why did they give the permit and pull it when someone had said don't give him a permit. That is not following the law either."*
- *Administrative Finance Chairman Wayne Ardoin stated, "Ma'am I understand your fight right there. I am just one person. I can't make the rules, the rules are already set. We pass ordinances and we have to follow our ordinances. So would you all please file for the secession like the attorney said and let's start that rolling whereas you all can satisfy this gentleman here?"*
- *Councilman Harold Taylor stated, "It is a one acre tract of land that this gentleman live on a portion of that one acre?"*
- *Ms. Charlene Melton stated, "That is correct."*
- *Councilman Harold Taylor stated, "And there are three heirs?"*
- *Ms. Charlene Melton stated, "Yes."*
- *Councilman Harold Taylor stated, "Are all three heirs together on this or you are divided?"*
- *Mr. Adrian Gaskill Sr., stated, "When the house burned my brother left."*
- *Councilman Harold Taylor stated, "So if it goes into secession, go ahead Legal Counsel."*
- *Legal Counsel Garrett Duplechain stated, "Is your brother an heir?"*
- *Mr. Adrian Gaskill Sr., stated, "Yes."*
- *Legal Counsel Garrett Duplechain stated, "So the attorney will put it under administration and try to do it like that. If he can't get the heirs to sign off on it. Your brother is not here you can put it under administration and try to do it like that."*
- *Councilman Harold Taylor questioned, "What does it cost to do a secession?"*
- *Legal Counsel Garrett Duplechain stated, "That can vary. Some are not expensive and some are."*
- *Administrative Finance Chairman Wayne Ardoin questioned, "What are you talking about, where is the start, how much money, what price are we talking about?"*
- *Councilman Harold Taylor questioned, "What price would you do it for?"*
- *Legal Counsel Garrett Duplechain stated, "It can go from \$700.00 to \$5,000.00, it just depends."*
- *Ms. Charlene Melton questioned, "What is included in the \$700.00? How far does that go?"*
- *Legal Counsel Garrett Duplechain stated, "There are attorneys who can help you with this and I would be glad to talk to you about that. It is not going to be me. I do not believe that this will lead to a lawsuit. I can have a conflict of interest here but there are attorneys who can definitely help you with that. I will put it like that."*
- *Councilman Harold Taylor stated, "Here is my follow-up on my question. If there are three heirs and all three of them agree it is not a problem. But if one disagree and say we will not honor that and you subdivide the property?"*
- *Legal Counsel Garrett Duplechain stated, "You mean if you have two heirs in conflict? Each can hire an attorney then you have a problem for a while. That is not going to happen here because one of them is out of town."*

- *Councilman Harold Taylor questioned, “So they all say yes on having this guy stay there?”*
- *Ms. Charlene Melton stated, “The one that would be hard to get in contact with that may be solved easily because he is running from the law at the moment. There is a warrant out for his arrest.”*
- *Administrative Finance Chairman Wayne Ardoin stated, “There are a lot of if’s but yet this gentleman, our attorney who represents Parish Government and this council would be willing to help you all so let’s shake it from there and hopefully you all can get a permit and let this man that is living over there on an off live comfortably for the rest of his life.”*
- *Ms. Charlene Melton questioned, “Can you tell me what the \$700.00 would include?”*
- *Legal Counsel Garrett Duplechain stated, “It is not going to be me. I am not going to have a conflict of interest. There are definitely some attorneys who can help you and I will be glad to talk to you after the meeting if you want. I can’t hire an attorney during a Parish Council Meeting but you can definitely discuss that after the meeting.”*
- *Ms. Charlene Melton stated, “Thank you.”*
- *Administrative Finance Chairman Wayne Ardoin stated, “The rest of them who signed the slip to speak does any of them have any other comments? I want to go over them, Ms. Beulah Swarouth, Carleen Naumann, Mr. Adrian Gaskill Sr., and Ms. Charlene Melton. So that will take care of you all on Public Comments. I want to thank you all and hopefully you all can get something done.”*
- *Ms. Charlene Melton stated, “I would hope you could get something done to prevent something like this from happening in the future of some walking in and saying do not give a permit.”*
- *Administrative Finance Chairman Wayne Ardoin stated, “I have never seen this happen. But yet there is always a first time for everything. It is a shame. You all are not living in town and you all have to come from out of town to take care of this business. I am sorry. Thank you.*
- *Ms. Lena Charles addressed the council. She stated, “Good evening councilmen and councilwomen, I appreciate the opportunity to come before you. Excuse my appearance we are getting ready for the Creole Festival this weekend at Holy Ghost Catholic Church so please come out and patronize it. I am standing before you to voice my wishes to be reappointed to the SLED Board, St. Landry Parish Economic Development Board for another three year term. I served in that capacity on the Board and I was appointed to the initial Downtown Development District Board and I still served as the Chairperson between the two boards. Having that Board appointment on SLED has afforded this board to develop a Master Plan for the City of Opelousas and to complete that Master Plan and proceed the first initiative that we have. Being the seed of the parish is Opelousas and the seed of Opelousas is this Court House. We did a Power Chemical Wash of the Courthouse. We actually paid for the trimming of the trees and the landscaping to preserve the oaks on the property. It was timely because it right before one of those devastating storms, I think it may have been Hurricane Ike. We are very conscious of a roll between Opelousas Downtown Development District as well as the St. Landry Parish Economic Development and on the highway CSLED, they are all working together. I have enjoyed the relationship that I have with this council and I appreciate it. I also want to let you all know, because of this joining commission of boards and working directly with the city and the parish. In 2023, the first and second quarter will be a landmark for this parish. We will be breaking ground on the TAP Grant which is on Landry. Around the courthouse we had 2014 funds to go all around, when we picked it up in 2018 we just had enough funds with our matching funds to do Landry from Market to Court and that would be a landscape. We put in some more Capital Outlay to go around the Courthouse which we do believe that will happen. We also did two drawdowns with Capital Outlay for the Vine Street Project. It is no longer on a dream list it is actually on a list. Engineers are assigned to it and we have work that is being*

done and we are excited about that. With the widening of the Wallior we have put in an additional turn lane. We do matching funds to get that done as well as the first quarter so that we can also bring in a Chick-Fil-A. The Chick-Fil-A in that section will be a load on the traffic. Another initiative that we found necessary is the water and sewerage not brought from the west side of Wallior to the east side which is the 47 acre of the Boagni Property. It is up to \$250,000.00 that is coming up for bid to put water and sewage on that side. All of these infrastructures are part of our job. It is to make a position for economic growth and that whole intersection will benefit from it doing a traffic study with DOTD. Billy's Boudin and What-A-Burger is coming up on the side of Lowe's. That developed property is under the Down Town Development District as well. I wanted to say that I enjoy working very hard for this parish in so many other capacities. I never thought I would be in a position to serve and make the infrastructure in Economic Development other than Tourism work for our city and for our parish. I would like your vote of confidence to continue and re-appoint me to the St. Landry Parish Economic Board. Thank you."

5. Parish President & Finance Report:

Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, "In your packet you have a PILOT program for Light Source BP regarding the Solar Farm. In our discussion with Light Source it was discussed about a couple of issues that we want to amend our ordinance. One is being the decommissioning side of it. The other part does not really come into play with Light Source. We have two other amendments to it. One of the Amendments is a 1.5% of the Gross Ad Valorem Tax to be put in a fund for Legal Fees regarding any Solar Litigations in the future and another 1.5% in a separate fund for the same way but for Economic Development which will be housed in a separate bank account and the plan with that money is for a plan or any type of development in the parish they will have to come to this council to get approval and award that money to the agency or whoever is asking for it by a majority vote of the council. Those are the things that I think is the only changes that I think is in there. Jack Steele from Light Source is here and he can discuss the issues that they have agreed to the stipulations or to what we have discussed in our meetings to approve the permit contingent upon the changes in the ordinance. I will let Jack come up and discuss it."

Mr. Jack Steele addressed the council. He stated, "Good evening. I am Jack Steele and I am the Development Manager with Light Source BP representing the Prairie Rhonde Solar Project. We have been in discussion with St. Landry Government about this Piolet Program. We have had discussions with all of you and we are happy to abide by and support if necessary the amendment to include decommissioning security in the ordinance that you all have already passed, however that needs to be handled. I think we had discussed and we are fine with any permit or Piolet Approval being issued conditional upon following any changes to that ordinance that have maybe made like we have discussed."

Councilman Harold Taylor stated, "Mr. Steele it is good to have you here and congratulations on coming to St. Landry Parish. Just for the folks here, the discussion that we have had with the group was to amend our ordinance to include some areas of decommissioning of the Solar Farms. Just for purposes that everyone understands what we had discussed and we are in an agreement on, one of the conditions that we will add as an amendment is a plan for the Proposed Solar Farms shall include a decommission plan for the remediation of the area of the Solar Farms upon secession of the operation of the Solar Farms. The second piece would be to decommission plan shall provide for the removal of Solar Panels of auxiliary structures and other infrastructures utilized in operation of the Solar Farms. The Third one would be to decommission plan shall provide for the remediation of any environmental hazard remaining on the property of the Solar Farms as determined by EPA, DEQ and St. Landry Parish Government. The fourth one is any lease forming of a portion of the application of the original permit shall include reference to the decommissioning plan and the funding thereof as a necessary term therein. The fifth one is the decommission plan shall provide for decommissioning fund with sufficient funding to remediate the property and compensate the solar funds

and restoring the property back to its original purpose. The developer of the Solar Farms shall present documentation to St. Landry Parish Government of the decommissioning fund is established. As Mr. Bellard said it pertains nothing to the Solar Farms but the funds that we get in lieu of taxes we will take 3% off the top and divide it in half and 1.5% for Economic Development and the other half have to go for legal. Is that what you understand?"

Mr. Steele stated, "Yes."

Councilman Harold Taylor stated, "Okay. Thank you."

Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, "Can we get a motion to forward this to full council."

Councilman Harold Taylor stated, "I move that we forward to Full Council the Application with the understanding that the Amendments will be effective when we finalize the plan."

A motion was made by Councilman Harold Taylor, seconded by Councilman Timmy Lejeune to forward to Regular Meeting held on **Wednesday, November 16th, 2022** the Application for the Pilot Program with the understanding that the Amendment will be effective when we finalize the Plan.

On roll call vote: YEAS: Jerry Red Jr., Nancy Carriere, Easton Shelvin, Harold Taylor and Timmy Lejeune. NAYS: None. ABSENT: None. ABSTAINED: None.

Motion forwarded.

Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, "We will have the Pilot Program, the actual contract and stuff available for you all prior to the council meeting for introduction at the council meeting. As soon as we get it we will forward it to you all so we can introduce it at the council meeting in November. Also, Adjudicated Property Ordinance Amendments, I think Mr. Duplechain had those done. We will bring that up at the full council meeting as well. We were giving them 90 days and gain the 9 month. They will have 90 days to start the process. Once the award letter is given they will have 9 month to complete the process. That will be the only amendments that we will have on the Adjudicated Ordinance. You all should have this in front of you all and it should be introduced at the full council meeting. One of the ordinances and I am not sure if Mr. Duplechain had time to get that done yet because I was just talking to him about that this morning. The tall grass or the noxious ordinance that we have in the parish now, we have the ability to make it faster by a 15 day notice. Instead of the council sending a letter, the Parish President will send the letter and it can be done within 15 days instead of waiting to come in front of the council. So we will have that ordinance to be amended and we will introduce it at the third Wednesday of the month as well. That will speed that process up when somebody has tall grass instead of having to go thru all of the process we will give the people the letter and they will have 15 days to comply. If they fail to comply we can go and cut the grass and charge them with that and also part of the ordinance is to give out a citation and they will have to pay the citation within 45 days. We will have to put some teeth in it in order for people to help us with it."

Councilwoman Nancy Carriere questioned, "I know we talked about the length of the process to complete the adjudicated property sale but the young man that was here last time had concerns about if it not completed will it go back to the second highest bidder. Do we need to include that in the ordinance?"

Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, "That is in the amended ordinance."

Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, "The next thing, you all may get some calls about the Group Home. The investigators that we have now are actually going to these Group Homes in the Parish that are not in Compliance with our new Ordinance which nobody, not one have come in and applied. So now we are going to them. They had ample time to come in and apply. So now we are going into them and giving them their chance to come the office and file for their permit which will come before the council. You all may be getting some phone calls from some people saying that we are doing that but that is what we are doing so they can come and be in compliance. The next thing, a while back the Economic Development, Mr. Bill Rodier the Director came to us and asked us to agree on giving Walmart Distribution, to make some changes to their contract that they

have. The agreement reads that after 20 years they can either go into another 10 years or they can come and be tax payers of the Parish of St. Landry. So the agreement was and we had agreed on it as a parish was to allow the SLED Board to get their money off the top and the tax money comes to the parish. Since then two other entities have said that they were not going to do that because they said that they can't do it. So that kind of halted everything for a while. I did make contact with Eric LeFleur who is the Attorney who is representing the parish in regards to this. I asked him to contact Walmart again because it has just been sitting there and no taxes are being paid. It is like two years out of their contract. So either they will have to come up with a plan or they will have to start paying taxes. I just want you all to know that that is on the table as well. We have not seen any traction and we have not seen any movement on the SLED side and I just want to make sure that we are get what is coming to the parish. If they wish to honor their side of the contract and go another 10 years which Eric is telling me that he don't think that it is solid, he thinks that it can be beat in court. We are not here to go to court we just want to make sure that they pick one way or the other so we will know how to proceed with that. So that is where we are."

Councilman Wayne Ardoin questioned, "You are saying if they decide to pay their taxes so if they decide to pay their taxes they would pay inventory and property tax?"

Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, "That is correct. Right now they are not paying any taxes. They are paying \$186,000.00 through their program that they had with SLED directly to SLED. So they are not paying any taxes they are just making a payment to SLED and no taxes are being paid to us.

Councilman Wayne Ardoin questioned, "If they would decide to pay the taxes would you go back two years or it would start.....?"

Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, "I am not sure how that would work, that is another legal issue that I don't know the answer to."

Councilman Jerry Red Jr., questioned, "So Mr. Bellard, they had 20 years where they did not pay any taxes, is that correct?"

Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, "That is correct from what I am being told, yes."

Councilman Jerry Red Jr., stated, "Two more years that they did not pay any taxes but SLED did receive the \$186,000.00 twice."

Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, "From my knowledge yes, correct. All we are saying is since it was brought up we need to just finish it one way or the other because when it is brought it and the 20 years is up we just want to get an end so we will know how to move forward."

Councilman Jerry Red Jr., questioned, "My only take on that is they benefited for 20 years and now it is time for them to pay up."

Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, "They have a deal. They have a deal on the table. All I am asking Eric to do is find out what the deal is so we can close that chapter and move on to something else."

Councilman Jerry Red Jr., stated, "I agree. Thank you."

Councilman Harold Taylor stated, "I have not been in that discussion. All Walmart has to do is renew it for 10 years at their option. We missed our opportunity to rewrite the thing because we had a couple of agencies that said that they could not do it. But all they have to do is say that they will renew it for 10 more years because it is a 30 year exemption. That was done by the IDET.

Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, "That is all I have unless you all have any other questions."

Finance Director Caryn Fulop stated, "The General fund had revenue of:

General Fund: \$3,528,349.00

Expenditures: \$5,001,670.00

Road and Bridge: \$3,016,013.00

Expenditures: \$4,172,776.00

Administrative Finance Chairman Wayne Ardoin questioned, "The \$150,000.00 that was transferred in on the Road and Bridge where does that come from?"

Finance Director Caryn Fulop stated, "Video Poker."

Administrative Finance Chairman Wayne Ardoin stated, "You have the Racino Fund and it just says transfer in so is that Video Poker?"

Finance Director Caryn Fulop stated, "Yes."

Administrative Finance Chairman Wayne Ardoin questioned, "Is that usually the monthly deal or does it come in spirits?"

Finance Director Caryn Fulop stated, "No, we just transferred it because we needed it. We had budgeted that also. It was in last year's budget."

Administrative Finance Chairman Wayne Ardoin questioned, "Do you have other money that is Video Poker that is sitting that you have not transferred in?"

Finance Director Caryn Fulop stated, "Yes."

Administrative Finance Chairman Wayne Ardoin questioned, "Where is that on our report?"

Finance Director Caryn Fulop stated, "It is in a different fund we just deposit the money in there. Fund 107."

Councilman Jerry Red Jr., questioned, "But we won't see it is that correct?"

Finance Director Caryn Fulop stated, "No, I don't have it in this paper work. It is just collected revenue and then we transfer money if we need to use it for something."

Councilman Jerry Red Jr, questioned, "Do you have an amount of how much that needs to be transferred?"

Finance Director Caryn Fulop stated, "Yes, about \$600,000.00 a year."

Councilwoman Nancy Carriere questioned, "I noticed that Mr. Bellard had to tell you \$600,000.00. Did you know that it was \$600,000.00?"

Finance Director Caryn Fulop stated, "Not right off hand, no."

Councilwoman Nancy Carriere stated, "But you do all of the Finances."

Finance Director Caryn Fulop stated, "I did not know what the total was for the whole year. It depends on how much Video Poker is being played."

Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, "I have been around for 14.5 years in the Government since we took office. I am familiar with all of the funds that we have in Government and I can pretty much tell you how much money is coming in on each one of these funds because that what I choose to do. That is what I want to make sure that everybody knows. I make sure that all that stuff is done. She has been here for one year and having to grasp everything. I don't expect her to know exactly dollar for dollar on what comes in every given moment. We have 40 plus funds. I know the funds and I know how much money generally comes in because I have been around for so long. I don't expect her to know exactly every dollar that comes in to the 'T."

Finance director Caryn Fulop stated, "I will learn them, I just have not learned them all yet."

Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, "She will, she will learn them."

Councilman Timmy Lejeune questioned, "Mr. Bellard, that Video Poker, we did a Resolution that they would send it directly to Road and Bridge Fund and that is where that money is to be sent is that correct?"

Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, "We did it in an ordinance with the budget, yes."

Councilman Timmy Lejeune stated, "I just wanted to make sure."

Finance Director Caryn Fulop continued with Finance Report, She stated:

Health Unit Fund: \$786,406.00

Expenditures: \$1,508,014.00

Administrative Finance Chairman Wayne Ardoin questioned, "So you have \$721,608.00, are you short that much or we are alright?"

Finance Director Caryn Fulop stated, "We are alright. The Ad Valorem Taxes will start to come in next month. I got the Millage Report this past week. That will start taking the Property Taxes Out."

Jail Maintenance:

Revenue: \$205,994.00

Expenditures: \$703,398.00

Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, "Mr. Ardoin, I don't know if you all remember but we talked about this between me and you and a couple of other people. The Ad Valorem Taxes are in here. They are not showing because she is doing it a little bit differently."

She is only showing what incurred in this Fiscal Year. I think when next year comes around we will start seeing it like it should be.”

Administrative Finance Chairman Wayne Ardoin stated, “The reason I had a question on the Finance for the Road and Bridge is because I had a question last month and we were almost bottomed out. Now we are up to par on what we have. I just have a question about the \$150,000.00. If you bringing in \$150,000.00 you should state where you got it from, you understand what I am saying. Say what fund you are getting it from. It just says transferred in.”

Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “If you look at the Ad Valorem Tax across the board on all of our funds it will show a decrease of a lot of money. The cash is in there and we are not recognizing that cash in the financials.”

Finance Director Caryn Fulop stated, “We will recognize December’s Revenue when we receive it in December. I think before they were keeping it on the books and reversing it at the end of the year. I am just showing what is there.”

Councilman Harold Taylor questioned, “Okay, the money that you will receive beginning this month probably, the Ad Valorem Tax is actually for 2022 correct?”

Finance Director Caryn Fulop stated, “Yes, 2022.”

Councilman Harold Taylor stated, “Prior to you taking over we did it a little different. The whole Financial Statement is different than it was or what the previous Financial Director did. What she would do is recognize all of the dollars from the year before in November until we collect the last dollar in the next year. You are doing it differently. You are doing it on a Calendar Year or it is also our Fiscal Year which is January to December. Okay.”

Finance Director Caryn Fulop continue with the Financial Report. She stated:

Road District 12 of Ward 2 Maintenance

Revenue: \$126,851.00

Expenditures: \$275,755.00

Road District 1 of Ward 3 Maintenance

Revenue: \$151,505.00

Expenditures: \$164,459.00

Sub-Road District 2 of Road District 11-A of Ward 1

Revenue: \$80,735.00

Expenditures: \$154,755.00

Administrative Finance Chairman Wayne Ardoin questioned, “I have a question on that one. On Road District 1 of 11-A which is in District 9. Are we doing any Road Side Spraying right now Mr. Bellard?”

Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “Yes we are.”

Administrative Finance Chairman Wayne Ardoin stated, “The grass is growing on the roadside. Are you just tidying up for the winter?”

Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “Grass is actually growing on the roadside right now. We will kill it and make sure that we start off with next year with a fresh start so we don’t get bombarded with the spring.”

Administrative Finance Chairman Wayne Ardoin stated, “Okay, thank you.”

Finance Director Caryn Fulop continue with the Financial Report. She stated:

Sub-Road District 1 of Road District 3 of Ward 1 Maintenance:

Revenue: \$27,008.00

Expenditures: \$119,714.00

Sub Road District 1 of Road District 11-A Maintenance 42

Revenue: \$109,324.00

Expenditures: \$206,889.00

Airport Fund:

Revenue: \$325,181.00

Expenditures: \$496,826.00

American Rescue Act (158)

Revenue: \$7,976,319.00

Expenditures: \$4,893,163.00

Councilman Jerry Red Jr., questioned, “Mr. Bellard, you weren’t going to bring up the Lawtell Water?”

Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “I am sorry, yes. There were some discussion about Lawtell Water, the Lawtell Water System. The recommendation from me and Mr. Red and Mr. Lejeune that we get the Louisiana Rural Water Association in to kind of go over and look at their operations with discussions after that. Mr. Red, I don’t know what are you all plans on that but I am good with Louisiana Rural Water Association coming. I think they will come in and do an Audit so to speak.”

Councilman Jerry Red Jr., stated, “The plan was to get LRWA to come in and speak before the council and the board, Lawtell Water. Then we would give Lawtell six months and see where we go from there. If things are not improving like we said then we will proceed from there but first we want to get LRWA to come before this council and Lawtell Water Board.”

Administrative Finance Chairman Wayne Ardoin stated, “At this time everything stays the same until we get these people in here.”

Councilman Jerry Red Jr., stated, “Everything will stay the same until we hear from LRWA and come before this council and the Lawtell Board and from there we see where we stand at. Then they will have 6 months. If it is not straightened up then we will proceed with the process.”

Councilwoman Nancy Carriere questioned, “Maybe everybody is not familiar but what is exactly is going on. Could somebody explain what is the deal with Lawtell Water Board?”

Councilman Jerry Red Jr., stated, “I would wait until LRWA come in and speak before this council and then the council would know everything that is going on with Lawtell Water.”

Councilwoman Nancy Carriere questioned, “Who is LRWA? I have no idea.”

Councilman Jerry Red Jr., stated, “Louisiana Rural Water Association.”

Councilman Dexter Brown stated, “I see that you have three members of the Lawtell Water District Board in the audience. I don’t know if they would like to come up and speak.”

No one from the Lawtell Water Board addressed the council.

A motion was made by Councilman Jerry Red Jr., seconded by Councilman Timmy Lejeune to forward to Regular Meeting held on **Wednesday, November 16th, 2022** to authorize the Council Clerk to contact someone from the Louisiana Rural Water Association to come and address the council.

On roll call vote: YEAS: Jerry Red Jr., Easton Shelvin, Harold Taylor and Timmy Lejeune. NAYS: Nancy Carriere. ABSENT: None. ABSTAINED: None.

Motion forwarded.

A motion was made by Councilman Timmy Lejeune, seconded by Councilman Jerry Red Jr., to accept the Parish President and Finance Report.

On roll call vote: YEAS: Jerry Red Jr., Nancy Carriere, Easton Shelvin, Harold Taylor and Timmy Lejeune. NAYS: None. ABSENT: None. ABSTAINED: None.

Motion carried.

6. Discuss Attorney General’s Opinion on Parish Council Authority to approve contracts on maintenance, renovations or improvements to the St. Landry Parish District Courthouse. *Legal Counsel Garrett Duplechain stated, “The Parish Council requested an opinion from the Attorney General’s Office on authority of the St. Landry Parish Council to approve contracts for maintenance renovations or improvements to St. Landry Parish District Courthouse before the Parish President signs the contract. We have the opinion here today.*

Councilman Jerry Red Jr., stated, “Will it be sent out?”

Legal Counsel Garrett Duplechain stated, “You should have received it on last Thursday.”

Councilman Harold Taylor stated, “They would like the Legal Mind to explain it to us.”

Legal Counsel Garrett Duplechain stated, "So it reads the opinion of the Attorney General's Office that the St. Landry Parish Charter states that the Parish President, not the council is the official who selects person or firms to perform public works and service to the parish. The Parish President also executes a contract with such persons and entities selected provided funds have been appropriated for the expenditures of funds for that purpose."

Councilman Harold Taylor questioned, "What is the question, what did we ask the Attorney General to offer an opinion on?"

Legal Counsel Garrett Duplechain stated, "The council requested an opinion from Attorney General's Office asking about the authority of St. Landry Parish Council to approve contract for the maintenance, renovations or improvement of the St. Landry Parish District Court House before the Parish President signs the contracts. That was the opinion requested by the Attorney General's Office."

Councilman Harold Taylor stated, "I think the question was, what do we do when we approve a budget for a certain amount and we go over the budget without the council's approval? That was the question."

Legal Counsel Garrett Duplechain stated, "What do you do?"

Councilman Harold Taylor stated, "Yes, that was the question. That was why we needed an opinion."

Legal Counsel Garrett Duplechain stated, "You mean is there some kind of mechanism to halt the spending is that it?"

Councilman Harold Taylor stated, "I will refer to that report and the foot notes that the Attorney General included in his Opinion if you go to number 12-0133. It says that the Parish President has the authority to select and hire consulting engineers and contractors for architectural services for the parish based on the St. Charles Home Rule Charter. Now why? I guess that is one that they did for St. Charles. It says that this authority is limited to the funds for the services must be appropriated by the council. Well that does not get to close to my question. But Opinion 14-0085 says pursuant to the provision to St. John Baptiste Charter and the Louisiana Local Governmental Act, the Parish President, the Chief Executive must also execute the authorization that set forth in the budget ordinance. Signing contracts on behalf of the Parish is an Executive Function. We never question that, therefore the council may not enter into contract without the president's signature. That was not the issue. Opinion 14-0013. The Parish President pursuant to the General Executive Authority granted under the Parish Charter may select persons or firms to provide professional services to the parish. However the Parish President may not sign contracts for professional services without the council's approval. If the contract does not fall under the budget account. The charter also authorize the council to retain a special attorney to represent the parish. This is not our parish. My point is this: When we pass a budget and we did in this particular case to put windows in the court house and we set a price of whatever it was \$500,000.00 or \$300,000.00 and we actually end up doubling that without amending the budget to give more money to do it. It was done without the council's approval. That is what the question was. According to the Attorney General's Opinion do you feel that they answered our question?"

Legal Counsel Garrett Duplechain stated, "I fell that they answered the question to the extent that whatever....."

Councilman Harold Taylor stated, "Thank you very much."

Legal Counsel Garrett Duplechain stated, "Okay."

7. Forward all applications received for four appointments to the St. Landry Parish Economic Development (SLED) for a three year term. (12-31-2019 – 12-31-2022).

A motion was made by Councilman Harold Taylor, seconded by Councilman Easton Shelvin to forward to Regular Meeting held on **Wednesday, November 16th, 2022** all applications received for four appointments to the St. Landry Parish Economic Development (SLED) for a three year term.

On roll call vote: YEAS: Jerry Red Jr., Nancy Carriere, Easton Shelvin, Harold Taylor and Timmy Lejeune. NAYS: None. ABSENT: None. ABSTAINED: None.

Motion forwarded.

8. Discuss any other business properly brought before this committee.
None.

9. Adjourn

A motion was made by Councilman Harold Taylor, seconded by Councilman Timmy Lejeune to adjourn the Administrative/Finance Committee Meeting.

On roll call vote: YEAS: Jerry Red Jr., Nancy Carriere, Easton Shelvin, Harold Taylor, and Timmy Lejeune. NAYS: None. ABSENT: None. ABSTAINED: None.

Motion carried.

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