ST. LANDRY PARISH COUNCIL

SPECIAL MEETING

**WEDNESDAY, MARCH 29th, 2023 @ 6:00 P.M.**

**OLD CITY MARKET, 131 W BELLEVUE ST**

**OPELOUSAS, LOUISIANA**

**MINUTES**

1. This meeting was called to order by Chairman Jerry Red Jr.
2. The Pledge of Allegiance and the Invocation was said earlier in the meeting.
3. **Roll Call: PRESENT**: Nancy Carriere, Mildred Thierry, Harold Taylor, Alvin Stelly,

Vivian Olivier, Wayne Ardoin, Dexter Brown, Timmy Lejeune, Jimmie Edwards and

Coby Clavier. Ex Officio: Jerry Red Jr. **ABSENT**: Easton Shelvin and Gil Savoy.

1. **Item for Discussion:**

• **DISCUSS 2023 PROPOSED OPERATING BUDGET**.

*Chairman Jerry Red Jr., stated*, “Meeting is called to order. Item up for discussion: The Proposed Operating Budget. I hope everyone have their booklet. We will start off by letting the Parish President give us a synopsis of what we have before us.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* **“**It is a simple process. I gave you all a letter before the meeting. The budget is the budget. It did not change much from the last time, we cut about $200,000.00 across the board on different expenses and the salaries but it is what it is.”

*Chairman Jerry Red Jr., stated,* “Can you go over that $200,000.00 that was cut.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*In salaries.”

*Councilman Alvin Stelly questioned*, “All on salaries Jessie?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “Yes, in salaries, across the board.”

*Chairman Jerry Red Jr., stated*, “Do you want to discuss that with us before we start.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*I just explained in salaries Jerry, I don’t know what you want me to tell you all. It is across the board in the salary category. Road and Bridge got cut and the Health Unit got cut a little bit and then General Fund.”

*Chairman Jerry Red Jr., stated*, “I am just trying to see a breakdown on where the salaries were cut at.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*In the Road and Bridge Fund 21, 23 and Fund 11.”

*Chairman Jerry Red Jr., stated*, “So you are saying the workers that work in Road and Bridge are cut?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*Not the workers that are presently here, no. The ones that are here now are staying. I am just not going to be replacing a couple of them.”

*Councilman Timmy Lejeune stated*, “I just want to understand that. We did no go to an individual and say from now on you are making $10.00 an hour instead of $12.00 an hour, what we said was Ms. Vivian lost her job and we will not replace her. Is that correct? I just want to make sure that I understood that.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “Mr. Bellard, our accountant is not here and she sent us a change in the Airport Budget. Would you want to explain what the change is?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*The change is to put some Capital Funding inside of the Airport just in case the need is going to come around. We have Grants that are coming through and we are going to need to have some funding to do the matching parts of some of these grants that are coming in.”

*Chairman Jerry Red Jr., stated*, “What page are we talking about.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “Well it starts on page 42. It is in your book on page and then we have a print out on our desk that was changed and we got this today. I have been going over this budget for 2 weeks and thought I had all of my questions together but I understand that I don’t. This is Budget No. 4.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “That is only one number.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “This is the fourth time that we have changed the budget since December 8. Is that correct Mr. Bellard?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “If you say so.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor started*, “Well we have four books.”

*Chairman Jerry Red Jr., stat*ed, “Let’s keep it in order.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*You all did not accept the last one.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “I am not going to argue with you. I do have some questions. To balance the Airport Budget.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “It is not to balance it. It is to put it in there for when the need arises this year if we get the grant funding coming through we have to have some matching money for that. It is $186,000.00 that was put in there from Fund 96.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated, “*That is correct. That is the General Fund Contingency Fund which is the money that we set aside back in 2020 to cover the Cash Flow for the Ad Valorem Tax. Now we have already spent $450,000.00 year before last.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*If you would read this right here it will tell you right now.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “I don’t want to read that. I want to look at the numbers.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “That is what it has in there. It has the numbers.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “The numbers are in the book that you gave us.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “It is going to match up to the same thing. If you all read this part right here.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “I am not going to argue with Mr. Bellard. Just tell us why you changed the Airport Budget.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “I just finished telling you why.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “So the Grant that you got we have to participate in them so what are we doing with the grant money?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “We are going to do safety improvements to the airport. Restriping the runways, painting, different things.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “We increased the salaries for the airport by 50%, can you explain why we did that?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “We hired additional personnel.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated,* “To do what.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “To take care of the airport.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated,* “50%, we doubled the people on salary.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “We got an extra person over there, correct.”

*Chairman Jerry Red Jr., stated, “*Do you mind saying who the person is.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “We got Lloyd who is the Airport Manager. He is still a part-time employee but he is doing more hours.”

*Chairman Jerry Red Jr., stated*, “Do you mind saying what his salary is now.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “It is the same. It is $90.00 per hour.”

*Councilman Alvin Stelly questioned*, “How much?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “$90.00 an hour.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated,* “What does he do for $90.00 an hour?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “He takes care of the running of the Airport.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated,* “How many hours does he work a month?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “He usually averages around $2,500.00 - $3,000.00 per month. It is all depending on how many hours he works.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “Thank you.”

*Councilwoman Nancy Carriere stated*, “I know that you said part-time and his average is about $3,000.00, so full time he would make about $6,000.00. It is doubled.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “I am not exactly sure how many hours that he is putting in but I can see what the bills are.”

*Councilwoman Nancy Carriere stated*, “He is part time making $90.00 per hour. What are his qualifications? What is it that he does? I don’t think a doctor makes that.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “Well he made $40,000.00 a year when he was full time. So I don’t know what $90.00 adds up times $2,000.00 in 20 hours per year. You all can do the math on that which is about $180,000.00 per year.”

*Councilwoman Nancy Carriere stated*, “I was just wondering what he does, what are his qualifications for $90.00 an hour. What is his job title?”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “So let me see, $90.00 times $2,000.00 is $180,000.00. So if he was full time he would be an $180,000.00 per year employee.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “He is not going to be full time.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “I understand but the numbers are the same.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “He is not going to be full time. He is only doing certain hours of the month to help us out.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “You haven’t come to an agreement as to how many hours he can work a month?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “Whenever he needs to work the hours we know he is working the hours. He don’t just work hours just because. That is my part of the job.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “This is a ho-kay-po-kay budget there sir.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated*, “I figured you would say that so it is okay.”

*Councilwoman Nancy Carriere stated*, “Well my question did not get answered for $90.00 an hour. What are the qualifications?”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “$90.00 an hour is like $180,000.00 for a full time employee. A part time employee is one half of that and that is $90,000.00 and that is doing 20 hours per week.”

*Chairman Jerry Red Jr., stated,* “This is where I wanted us to go. I want us to go from the beginning to the end. The first page is General Fund. If you all are fine with the budget somebody can make a motion and we will forward it and somebody can introduce it. But if you are not fine with it say what you would like to change on it and we will move on from that.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “I am ready.”

*Councilman Coby Clavier stated*, “On the first page. I just noticed how the Severance Tax have double from what it was in the past. So that is a good thing.”

 *Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “Yes, that is that self-reporting. Last year it was good and this year they predicted it to be the same thing. It has not been like that in a while. It has been years.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated,* “Let’s get back to that Severance Tax. The Severance Tax is Oil, gas and timber.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated*, “That is correct.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “We were paying $5.00 for gas a year or so ago, is that correct?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated*, “Yes, roughly.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “Now it is $3.00, so what percent of that is the reduction? Oil has gone from $130.00 to $70.00 and you will plug in about $677. I think that is too much. I think we order reduce that to the number that we had before.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated*, “That is up to you all, you all can make that decision. That is why we are here.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated,* “I would certainly suggest that we lower that expectation, we can always raise it in six month. Listen, the General Fund Budget, I made a spread sheet here. In 2020 the General Fund Budget was $4,300,000.00. In 2021 it $4,500,000.00. In 2022 the adopted budget was $4,600,000.00. The amended budget which we did December 8 was for $6,500,000.00. The budget for this year is $6,500,000.00. We have a spending increase of $1,900,000.00. A 40% increase from the 2022 to the 2023 Budget and I don’t see the revenue to cover that. That is my concern. If we want to compare from 2020 to 2023 it is a 49% increase of $2,000,000.00. Ladies and Gentleman this is unsustainable. When we run out of money from ARA we are in deep stuff.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated*, “That is not correct.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “Didn’t you have a meeting with the Sheriff? I think that the reporter reported in Daily World Sunday that the Prisoner Housing, we spent $800 and a few thousand dollars for off campus and we amended the budget for $1,000,000.00 in December so where is the other $200,000.00?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “So you are comparing apples and oranges. You are saying that we are going to be broke by the end of the year.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “No you said 6 months in the paper.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “No.

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “I think that is what the paper said, I have it right here. Do you want me to read it to you?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “Let me explain to you what I did.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “Do you want me to read it to you?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*No, you don’t have to read it to me. I am not a kid.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “It is $846,000.00.

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “Mr. Chairman, if I can’t answer the question I will just get up and leave and you all can do what you all have to do with the budget. I don’t have time to argue with Mr. Taylor.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “Just answer the question.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated*, “I am trying to answer your question Harold. Anyone else have a question for me because I am not answering anymore of his questions.”

*Chairman Jerry Red Jr, stated*, “Go ahead and answer his question.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*He read the paper. That is fine. That is what he said and that is good. You read the paper.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “I am asking you to clarify it and that is what I am saying.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*That is the reason why I did not want to have a meeting with Harold and Wayne.”

*Chairman Jerry Red Jr., stated*, “Look, they are part of this council. I am not going to kick them to the curb because they are a part of this fraternity. We have to work together as a family. We have to work together with Parish Government and Parish Government have to work together with Parish Council. That is the only what that we will get this done. Regardless of what kind of hate that we have within us against someone else, we have to put that on the side. How can two walk together unless they agree? We have to agree.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “Listen, I poured over this this budget for two weeks.”

*Chairman Jerry Red Jr., stated*, “I understand that Mr. Taylor.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “I have met with you on one occasion.”

*Chairman Jerry Red Jr., stated*, “Yes you did.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “I want to tell you something. I am not doing this from anger or hatred. My job is to protect the money of the people of this parish. He has got a budget which was amended four times and I am just wanting to get questions answered.

*Chairman Jerry Red Jr., stated*, “You have every right to do that. This is my point. My point is and I ask this question to all councilmember, we look at this budget and you see something that you don’t like and you want to change bring it before us and we will make the change. Coby brought up the Severance and you said that the number was too high. If you feel that the numbers need to be changed we can tweak it. I feel that we have two investigators and at our last meeting it was a laughing stock to the parish council, to the parish government and the people being arrested in this meeting. They could have been arrested once they walked out of this door. I think somebody should have been told something, we did not know so what I would suggest that we get rid of the investigator. My reason for saying that is because we have people on the road. I talked to the Sheriff today and the Sheriff said that they are getting paid more than what he is paying his deputies. I am not in favor of paying two investigators when they investigate the same for Parish Government when we have the Sheriff, the Marshal and we have the City Police. Everything is not fair but we have to do what is right for the people of St. Landry Parish. We may not like it but we have to do what is right. So let’s start all over again. I know you have a lot of good information in your book. You mind going over it with everyone please.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “I will be happy to. He is not answering my questions so maybe you all should ask questions.”

*Chairman Jerry Red Jr., stated*, “I agree. I am asking you to go over what you have highlighted. If the council see fit or so choose to want to make that change we can make that change. If they don’t want to change it, leave it in there and let’s move on and then next year we can make whatever change we have. Is that fine with everyone?”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “Under the General Fund, page 4. State Budget Appropriations, $215,000.00 and there is a $500,000.00 appropriations apparently from last year, what is that for?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “Debris pick up.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “Debris pick up, okay. Flipping over to page 5.

*Chairman Jerry Red Jr., stated*, “Before you move forward do you have any changes for the first page?”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “No, the only change that I had is I think that we need to reduce the amount of Severance Tax from $677,900.00 to what we actually budgeted or actually took in which is $338,953.00.

*Chairman Jerry Red Jr., stated*, “You want to drop that down.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “Yes, we can make a note of it.”

*Chairman Jerry Red Jr., stated*, “I am just asking the council if they want to put this down as marking it down to 377. Are you all in favor of bringing that down?”

*Councilman Timmy Lejeune stated*, “I am good with Mr. Taylor’s question. I want Mr. Bellard to try to explain himself on the $677,900.00 versus the $338,587.00. Explain to me how you figure that number.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “We are just following prior years of revenue. That is all it is.”

Councilman Timmy Lejeune stated, “It doubled.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*In 2022.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “Remember petroleum went up $130.00.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*In 2022 that is what we received.”

*Councilman Timmy Lejeune stated*, “This revenue comes from exactly where?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated*, “That is going to be the Oil and Gas Severance.”

*Chairman Jerry Red Jr., stated,* “And Timber.”

*Councilman Timmy Lejeune stated*, “That severance is based on the actually cost of oil and gas.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “Correct.”

*Councilman Timmy Lejeune stated*, “Do you have any kind of data that says that we can expect oil and gas to go back to where it was in order to create that type of same revenue. That is where I am a bit confused with it. It if comes from that and we expecting oil and gas to stay at the rate that it is now and it could fluctuate $10.00 or $5.00. That is not going to make that fuel severance packet go up that much in revenue. So that is where I am a little bit confused and uncomfortable with that. I hope to God that it does not go back up because we won’t be able to afford to live. I am just trying to figure out how you created that number without the major increase or the double in oil and gas.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*Prior year’s revenue. That is all that we are doing.”

*Councilwoman Nancy Carriere stated*, “I agree with Mr. Taylor to lower it down to $338,953.00.”

*Chairman Jerry Red Jr., stated*, “Okay, next page.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “Page 5. Expenses, GA Salaries. General Administration, we actually budgeted $740,900.00 in 2022, the amended budget was $898,816.00 and the proposed budget is $875,140.00. You just said that you reduced it. Was that $875,140.00 still the number since you reduced it?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*It is down from $898 to 875.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “That is not a lot of money. That is $24,000.00. You said that you reduced payroll by $200,000.00 I believe.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “Across the board.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “Across the board, we can move on from there. Payroll taxes is the next item. We budgeted $17,900.00 and the proposed budget is $14,755.00, did payroll taxes go down?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*No.”

Councilman Harold Taylor stated, “Well we did $17,900.00 on a $740,000.00 appropriations and now we have $875,000.00 and it is going down. Any logic to that?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*It what was given to us by the payroll department. Everything is done by spread sheet.”

Councilman Harold Taylor stated, “But it looks kind of funny. I have never heard of Government going down on payroll taxes. But you might want to check and run those numbers again. By the same token in retirement. The original budget in 2022 was $64,000.00 and the amended budget was $92,095.00 and the proposed budget is $96,815.00. Do we have more folks?”

 *Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “It just depends on who is into the retirement system. Basically it could be one person. Not everybody takes that option to go into retirement if they have the age.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “I see. In 2022 we budget $875,600.00 for the GA Personnel Expense and the new budget shows $1,067,560.00.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “In 2022 it was $1,116,460.00.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “That was the amended budget. I am talking about the adopted budget with $875,600.00. That is a pretty good increase. Moving on. I don’t want to occupy the entire meeting Mr. Chairman so if someone wants to jump in and ask a question I would certainly appreciate it.”

*Chairman Jerry Red Jr*., stated, “Go ahead just say what page that you are on.”

Councilman Harold Taylor stated, “Page 8, Prisoner Housing, we have no money appropriated for prisoner housing in the General Fund Budget, is that correct Mr. Bellard?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*That is correct.”

Councilman Harold Taylor stated, “So the money that we are going to take is going to be from ARA correct?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “Correct.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “That is what, $600 and a few thousand dollars.

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated*, “$634,500.00.

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “Last year we appropriated $1,000,000.00. Can you explain why we are going from $1,000,000.00 to $634,500.00?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated*, “Right now we have one half of the inmates out of parish that we use to have.

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “I want to talk in general about Mandated Expenses which is an expense that we mandate by state law to pay and prison housing is one of them. In 2020 we appropriated $730,000.00 out of the General Fund and there was no Rescue Money appropriated. In 2021 we appropriated $622,000.00 and there was no American Rescue. In 2022 we appropriated $665,000.00 and we appropriated $1,000,000.00. In 2023, $689,000.00 that is a pretty good flip around. I will give you the bottom line on this. We are going to use a onetime fund for mandated expenses in the tune of $1,800,000.00 to balance the 2023 budget. What happens when we run out of ARA money? How much money do we have in ARA now?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “I will have to look at the balance sheet. I am not sure.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “Do you want to guess?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “Around $6,500,000.00.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “How do we make up that $1,800,000.00 whenever we run out of money.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*We are not going to need ARA. Our plan is working to get the inmates either out or get them some help.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “We have all of these other mandated expenses that we have to take care of like the District Attorney.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “That is already in there.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “I got that. Part of that is funded to the tune of $1,800,000.00.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “No, whatever is funded in the ARA ends at the end of ARA. The DA ask that we pay salaries with that and the agreement is that it pays the salaries that he asked for instead of giving him the money like others did, they ask us just to pay the salaries for his department in different areas. Whenever that money runs out then that is it. There is nothing more for him.”

Councilman Harold Taylor stated, “But it is a Mandated Expense.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “Not that part. The Mandated Expense is in the General Fund. That ARA Money, like we gave $500,000.00 to the city, $500,000.00 to this one he choose to take his money in salaries.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “That is okay, I got that, but the point that we are using one time money for reoccurring expenses.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated*, “That is not true.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “Do you think that the DA will lay off people when he does not have the funding?”

 *Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*That is not true. That is him. That was his choice that he made.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “Jessie, that law says that it is a mandate.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “Our mandate is right here in the DA salaries. We paid the DA’s Office a little over $1,000,000.00 a year.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “Is that just an understanding that we have.”

 *Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*That is just how it have been.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “So it is an understanding.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “Yes, it was always an understanding.”

Councilman Harold Taylor stated, “So it is not in writing.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “No, nothing is in writing. I don’t want Mr. Taylor to start confusing the people here. The money that was allocated to the District Attorney’s Office chose to take it in salaries instead of windows.”

Councilman Harold Taylor stated, “That is not the issue. The issue is the amount that we are using one time dollars.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “The District Attorney’s Office, the $600,000.00 that he was allotted through this program chose to put it in salaries. The one time money is one time money and that is it. Nothing is going beyond that.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “Okay, moving on. I will highlight because I don’t want to dominate the meeting.”

*Councilman Coby Clavier stated*, “I have a question on page 8. It is just a curious question. $344,021.00 for Court Reporters, about how many Court Reporters do you think there are? I am just curious.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “There are 8. Eight Court Reporters. Each Judge have two.”

*Councilman Coby Clavier stated*, “Thank you.”

*Councilman Wayne Ardoin questioned*, “That is not going to go away. That is always going to be there every year is that correct?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “That is correct.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “On page 11. It is just a question. The sale from Asset Proceeds and this is in the Road and Bridge Fund, $83, 868.00 which was for last year, did we sell something?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated*, “We had a Public Auction of the old equipment.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “Page 13, Scoot on down to Payment on LOC, that is the Line of Credit that we put together and took out in 2020 and it was converted into a loan. I learned about it when I asked about it here at the previous meeting. The payment on that is $201,327.00, is that Principal and Interest?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “That is Principal and Interest. That is correct from my knowledge, yes.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated, “*Do you plan to borrow more money this year?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “Everything is closed, no.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated,* “What do you mean everything is closed.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*There is no more line of credit. We are not borrowing any more money.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated, “*What did we actually borrow?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “Right at $1,000,000.00 for equipment.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated, “*$1,100,000.00 I believe.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*I don’t know exactly but yeah.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated,* “Scoot on down to Other Financial Sources. Transferring in from Fund 107. Help me Jessie, what is 107.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “That is Video Poker.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated,* “Video Poker, $893,840.00. Animal Control on page 14. We budgeted in 2022, $250,000.00 and the proposed budget is $289,640.00. That does not cover the investigators, they don’t like for me to call them pet detectives but the sheriff is the one that calls them pet detectives, I thought that was what their title was but the detectives have $120,000.00 plus. What is their retirement? What does that come up to? $40,000.00 per year or so.

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*Oh no.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated, “*Well it is 40% of $60,000.00.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “No sir. It is not 40%.

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated,* “What is the retirement?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*I will have to check with HR tomorrow to find out but it is not 40%.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated,* “Could you do that. Moving on.”

*Chairman Jerry Red Jr., stated*, “The investigators, where are they located?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “They are paid out of that fund, General Fund and the Road and Bridge. They are spread out across.”

*Chairman Jerry Red Jr., stated*, “So there are over 3 funds.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*Yes, I don’t know how many funds but it is across the board. They don’t just do animal control stuff they do all of our Code Enforcement stuff, all of our Ordinances, liter and everything else. They go out and enforce those issues and give out citations across the board.”

Councilwoman Nancy Carriere stated, “So only things that is related to the Animal and Code Enforcement, are they commissioned to do any criminals.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “I can’t say this fast enough. These Officers are Law Enforcement Officers. They are Post Certified Law Enforcement Officers. They can do any type of crime. They can do investigations on any type of crime. The agreement that me and the sheriff had is that they will do all of animal control, liter abatement and the heavy trucks on some of our parish roads that take the route that they want to take and mess up our roads. They do that as well and any other duties that can be assigned. The Sheriff and I have an agreement, if there is anything outside of that scope he and I talk about it and decide from there. They can make an arrest just like any officer. There is no such thing as a Pet Detective, they are law enforcement officers and I wish people would respect them as that. But that is you all.”

Chairman Jerry Red Jr., stated, “Have anyone been ticketed for oversize trucks?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “Not over-sized trucks but a lot of liter, nuisance and animal control. We have a lot of those tickets out now. Oversized trucks, I don’t think that we will give a ticket for that. I think from my understanding is maybe just to stop them and talk to them and see where are they going and see if we can give them an alternate route, not to go on some of our roads.

*Chairman Jerry Red Jr., stated, “*That is what is tearing up our roads.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*I will agree. We are trying not to do that. We are trying to get them an alternate route. To weight out these oversized trucks it takes special equipment. Basically we are just trying to give them another route to take.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated,* “On page 16. Health Unit. In 2020 the budget was for $775,000.00 and it was amended to $923,811.00 in December and the proposed budget is $842,170.00. That is $100,000.00. What happened there?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*We just cut some salaries and some positions in those departments.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated,* “Like what positions?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “Maintenance, basically the maintenance crew.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated, “*Okay, on page 17 what is CEC?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*Coroner Emergency Certificate. That is when the Coroner have to sign off on the Death Certificate that comes from other parishes. They have been paying them from out of this fund since I have been back.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated, “*So that is part of the Coroner’s Budget? Is that who we pay? Do we pay the Coroner?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “We pay other Coroner’s. Whenever a person dies in another parish they build us and we pay them directly. I think it is $100.00 or $125.00 per certificate.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated,* “When you look at Other Financial Sources transferred from Fun 158 American Rescue, $277,500.00, explain.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “That was last year. That was to offset the nurse’s increase whenever we had to hire all of those contract nurses because we could not get anybody to work with COVID. We had to hire contract nurses and that just paid it back.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated, “*Okay, on page 18, Jail Maintenance Fund. Salaries, the 2022 Budget was for $169,300.00. We actually spent $266,047.00 and $249,025.00. That is an increase of about $79,000.00. Do you want to explain that?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “We have extra people working in the jail. We have a person that sits there all of the time, a maintenance guy. There is so much needs for the jail so instead of having a maintenance guy work all over he just stays there, also there is another cook I believe we had to hire to put inside of the jail.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated, “*I will skip over the Road District unless somebody have a question. I haven’t even looked at that. On page 27, Capital Project Fund 70. There is a list of State Funds here. Court House Roof, Jail House Roof, Parish Wide Drainage, Veterans Memorial, FAA and Solar Farm Revenue. Just recap for us Jessie on the Courthouse State Funds, was that a Grant?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*No. Anything that is coming from the state was the Capital Outlay.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated,* “That was done several years ago and we are just getting the money now.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*We did this year before last and some last year, correct. The Parish Wide Drainage is this year and the roof. Just keep in mind when I came back we started asking for this Capital Outlay Request for Parish Government. It was not asked before. Just for the record.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated, “*Tell me about the Solar Farm Revenue.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*That is that $4,000,000.00 that is in place for NexEra. That is one half of the state tax that they agreed to pay.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated, “*That is the sales tax from the state in other words in lieu of the sales tax.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “Correct.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated, “*Do we have a document saying that they are going to pay us that this year?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*That is going to be signed. SLED is going to be passing that over there. I am not sure if they passed.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated, “*In other words have they already calculated that it is $4,000,000.00?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*That was their estimate.

Councilman Harold Taylor stated, “So we are not sure it will be $4,000,000.00. It could be more or it could be less.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated*, “Yes, they just gave me an estimate.”

*Councilwoman Nancy Carriere questioned*, “The Equine Property Sale and you explain?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated*, “That is that building over there that CSLED would like to purchase. They are in the process of working that. They asked us to help with that. That is why it is in here. No decision have been made one way or the other. We just put it there because that is what they asked us to do. If they decide to buy it and it goes through then I am coming back to the council for that to happen.”

*Councilman Alvin Stelly questioned*, “Who wants to buy that?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “CSLED is trying to buy that Equine Property. CSLED is that other part of SLED. It is to put it back into commerce and bring the Louisiana Breed Horses back to Louisiana to sell at that location. They have to work with property owners around us so it is not a done deal. They have been working on that for a couple of months.”

*Councilwoman Nancy Carriere questioned,* “What percentage, I know you have a proposed original budget on that.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “$2,500,000.00. Is that our share?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated*, “That is what they are predicting to go for the $5,000,000.00 with the building and the property on the side.”

*Councilwoman Nancy Carriere stated*, “It was 20 acers at $80,000.00 an acre.

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated*, “I think it was $62,000.00 an acre or something like that.”

*Councilwoman Nancy Carriere stated*, “That is 20 acers is that correct?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated*, “I think that it might be a little more than 20 acres but it is something like that.”

*Councilman Timmy Lejeune stated*, “The question that I have is concerning that Equine Property. I want to know the revenue that is generated, where is it going to go? If this place generates revenue where is it going to go before we contribute $2,500,000.00, who is going to man that and who is going to be responsible for that facility? If we are going to give up $2,500,000.00, how long will it take for us to get our investment back?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated*, “That is what they are working on right now. They are working on a plan and they are asking all of those questions as we speak. They have not put up a plan that can answer those questions yet because they are still trying to negotiate with land owners around the area. Before it even start the process of Parish Government getting involved that plan will be presented to the council at that time we can make a decision whether we do or don’t.”

*Councilman Wayne Ardoin questioned*, “If it gets purchased will it belong to St. Landry Parish Government or will it belong to CSLED?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated*, “I think it have to belong to both if we both contribute, either one can own it. They can own property just as well as us. Like I said, none of that was even discussed yet until they come up with some type of agreement if they even can buy the property.”

*Councilman Wayne Ardoin*, “Who approached you about this? Did CSLED approach you or the Investors over there?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated*, “Both. Not CSLED but Bill Rodier and Representative Miller and myself.”

*Councilman Wayne Ardoin stated*, “They own the building there and the parking lot. How many barns are there?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated*, “They have 238 Stalls. I want to say they have 4 buildings but it is 238 stalls all together at the Equine Sales Facility in the back.”

*Councilman Wayne Ardoin questioned*, “Do they still have sales over there?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated*, “No, not to my knowledge. There is none. The sales have moved to Dallas Texas. Louisiana Breed Horses are being sold in Dallas right now.”

*Councilman Wayne Ardoin questioned*, “Why did it all go to Texas?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*I am not sure.”

*Councilman Wayne Ardoin stated*, “Is it a fact that there is nothing going on here anymore. We are suppose to be the Equine State. Louisiana suppose to be the Equine Capital of St. Landry Parish.

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*Correct.”

*Councilman Wayne Ardoin stated,* “And all of a sudden there is nothing going on over there but then we are going to invest in this. Are we going to rent this building out or rent these stalls out?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*From what I am understanding once the plan is put in place yes, that is what it would be. It would be rented out and it would attract those sales to come back. One of the biggest questions, if we can’t get the quarter horse and the thoroughbred industry back then it is really not even issue, we just can’t do it. If we can’t make some of the agreements with them to come back to Louisiana then there is really no point in buying it.”

*Councilman Wayne Ardoin stated, “*But it don’t take a brain child to figure this out. It is not going on now but is it going to come back. There is no guarantee that it is going to come back, am I right?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “That is correct.”

*Councilwoman Nancy Carriere questioned*, “Can we afford this? Can we afford to contribute to this $2,500,000.00? Is this just an estimate because it may be more than the $2,500,000.00 that we have to contribute? Can we afford this?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “This is that one time money. It is up to the council. If the council doesn’t want to put that money towards that I am good with that. This is what is on the table. If the council says no we don’t want to do it, it won’t break my heart. The issue is a return on our investment is what we are looking at. Right now because we are the Equine Capital of the State that is why it was focused more toward the Equine Industry.”

*Councilman Coby Clavier questioned*, “Is that property privately owned now?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated*, “It is a company that owns it. It is about 98 investors I believe that are actually in there. It is a bunch of people.”

*Councilman Wayne Ardoin stated*, “Are you all finished with page 27. I want to go back to page 25.”

*Councilman Alvin Stelly stated*, “If the Quarter Horse and Thoroughbreds come back then we can invest in it. If it does not come back then we don’t have to invest.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “If we can’t make the deal with them then it really does not pay for us to buy it.”

*Councilman Alvin Stelly stated*, “If it does come back it will bring a lot of revenue.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated*, “It will bring a lot of revenue but it is also for the working quarters as well, not just the racing. There is a lot of discussion going on and they would like to come back to Louisiana, they would like to be right here in our parish because it is centrally located. If they can’t make a deal and agree to that then I don’t see where we should be involved in that at all.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “Just to add the finishing touch on Equine Property, I don’t think that we should put it in the budget like that. I think that we should withdraw that from the budget and we will deal with it later. You will not appropriate it to anything else so it will just sit there. What are you all consensus on that?”

*Councilman Timmy Lejeune sated*, “We can leave it sitting there. If we don’t want to use it for that we don’t have to. It does not matter because you are going to vote it down if you don’t want it or you are going to vote it in if you do. We can take it out, it does not matter.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “I have to plug it somewhere. I have to put a line item for it. I just can’t have the $4,000,000.00 as a revenue and not have the expense on the side. I don’t care what we put it in to be honest with you.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “You mean that you have to spend the $4,000,000.00?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “No, I have to be able to allocate it somewhere in there or I will have an unbalanced budget.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “You can put it in a savings. We can do another Fund 159 or something for a savings.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated*, “We put it in the Capital Outlay Fund.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “If you put it in the budget you can spend it.”

*Councilman Timmy Lejeune stated*, “Put it in the Capital Outlay fund and it has to be approved by the council.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*If you all put it in a Capital Outlay then it can be spent. If it stays right here it can’t be spent because I am can’t buy a building without the council’s permission anyway. If you put it in Capital Outlay then I can spend it. Right now it is dedicated to something that we might buy.

*Councilman Wayne Ardoin stated*, “Before you purchase it you still have to have our signature.

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*Exactly. It is an immovable piece of property.”

*Councilwoman Mildred Thierry questioned*, “Can it be put somewhere else?”

Chairman Jerry Red Jr., stated, “Even if it is there it does not have to be spent.”

*Councilwoman Mildred Thierry stated*, “I was wondering about Road and Bridge. We have a lot of need in that area. I have a lot of gravel roads that is in need of material presently as I speak. I was just wondering if it could be place there at least some of it.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated*, “It can.”

*Chairman Jerry Red Jr., stated*, “If you move it, it has to be as is. If you leave it there you could always take it and put it somewhere else.”

*Councilwoman Mildred Thierry stated*, “You can take it and put some in Road and Bridge if you need to.”

*Chairman Jerry Red Jr., stated*, “If the council so choose. It is lying dormant right now.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “Right now it will not be touched.”

Councilman Harold Taylor stated, “If we can’t put it in a savings, well, let me ask you this, if we have $6,000,000.00 left in the ARA it is unappropriated, right?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “No, it is appropriated.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “It is appropriated.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*Yes sir.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “Is it in this $7,400,000.00 project?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “Fund 158 is the ARA Funding.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “What page is that Jessie, Page 54, it says Fund Balance after everything is spent is $5,826,358.00. So that is not appropriated is that correct?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “No everything in there is appropriated. You have $5,000,000.00 appropriated. Everything that you see in the expense column is what we plan on spending to make it all work.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “Okay, I see you have down here the ending balance is zero.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*Yes sir, I have to spend it by 2024.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “Got it.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*If you all want to put that money in a savings account that is fine to. I just have to put it.”

*Councilman Dexter Brown stated*, “I know at the Equine Center they have two sales a year. One in October and one in April. I don’t know who sponsor’s it.”

*Councilman Alvin Stelly stated*, “They use to, they don’t have any more sales.”

*Councilman Dexter Brown stated*, “Last year they had one in October.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated*, “I am not exactly sure when the last one was but there was none last year at all.”

*Councilman Timmy Lejeune stated*, “You said that we could put that $2,500,000.00 in a savings account?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “Yes.”

*Councilman Timmy Lejeune stated*, “What I am thinking is if we do move it from where it is at and you move it to a savings account we will still have to be able to control how you spend it regardless.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated*, “Regardless how it is, yes. If you all want I can check with the bank and see what they can give us on CD’s for that amount of money.”

*Councilman Timmy Lejeune stated, “*How much of a time frame do we have before we can spend that money.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated*, “This is that $4,000,000.00 from NextEra. That is anticipated this year. We don’t have it in the bank.”

*Councilman Wayne Ardoin stated*, “You don’t have a guarantee of the $4,000,000.00 from NextEra yet? They have not signed the final papers yet.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “The only guarantee that we have from them is that they will give us one half of what they would have paid in State Sales Tax on that same equipment out there.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “Getting down to the Parish Wide Drainage Project of $1,333,333.00 on Page 27, is that the One Million Dollars from Capital Outlay from ARA for the match?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “Correct.”

*Councilman Wayne Ardoin stated*, “On Page 25, Mr. Bellard you are showing that it has $574,112.00. Are you still planning on doing Suzanne Dejean Drive with part of this money?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “We have $309,000.00 that we hope to get in this year. We should be getting that money in. I am not sure exactly what we have in so far. I am actually waiting to see what their tax is going to do. I am not sure what we are going to do with that money just yet.”

*Councilman Wayne Ardoin stated*, “You are talking about the Renewal Tax?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “Correct.”

*Councilman Wayne Ardoin stated*, “Let’s face the facts. Mr. Brown has got his tax up for renewal, his was defeated, mine was defeated and Ms. Nancy has a new one that she has ask to be placed on the ballot and we also will have the School Board Tax that will be on the Ballot. Ms. Thierry says that she have some Gravel Roads, Ms. Vivian said that she has some Gravel Roads, are we spending our money wisely as far as putting some material on those road? Sure you are putting some Limestone or you are putting some gravel whatever is available but the thing about it is here we are we want to talk about buying this Equine Center, this is money that could be put on some roads. Sure will have to prioritize, she might get her heart broken or my heart broken or Ms. Vivian’s heartbroken because we will not get any roads done. I am just asking, are you plan on doing any roads in District 9 that people pay the taxes? They have paid their taxes this year. What is the possibility that it does not get renewed? I am just asking what roads you are going to try and overlay this year. You sent out that letter the other day to those residents on Suzanne Dejean and said that you were going to do it at a later date. We are also collecting Smooth Ride Home. Can we put matching funds there and do one of these roads?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “We always do.”

*Councilman Wayne Ardoin stated*, “I ask that we get a price from Mr. Jarrell.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “You still have people in your district that have gravel roads and you want me to overlay people roads that have been overlaid before. I am trying to do what is right for the people.”

*Councilman Wayne Ardoin stated*, “Suzanne Dejean is turning up-side down. What are we going to do, are we going to turn it to a gravel road?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated*, “William Jarrell and I are looking at everything right now to figure out what will be the best spot to do it. Suzanne Dejean, because of the amount of houses and the amount of traffic it is one of them that will possibly be done this year, I really believe that but I hate to say that we will and we don’t.”

*Councilman Wayne Ardoin stated, “*If you have the money available I am asking that you put matching funds with the Smooth Ride Home and use the Tax Payers Money and put it on the roads. You have Flag Station that is another road and some sections is bad and Aspen Lane. That is the three roads that I have brought up numerous times.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated*, “I understand. We are definitely looking at them. I have ask William Jarrell to look at Nap Lane.”

*Councilman Wayne Ardoin stated*, “That is in Mr. Brown’s District, am I correct?”

*Councilman Dexter Brown stated*, “It is half and half between me and Mr. Timmy.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated*, “So Nap Lane needs to be widen and it needs to have drainage and a lot of different things. I have ask for $5,000,000.00 from the State through Capital Outlay. William Jarrell estimate came in at $5,100,000.00 and that is today’s numbers. It is unbelievable what it cost but that road needs to be widen. There are a lot of issues on that road. That is one of our priorities with some more money that comes in.”

*Councilman Wayne Ardoin stated*, “I realize that everything has gone up as far as the material to overlay some roads. We have overlaid some roads, you overlaid Fusilier Lane the other day and that is good but we have others that needs to be overlaid. It needs to be brought back up to par so people can use them and maybe we can pass the taxes if they see that their tax dollars are being spent.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated*, “I agree 100%.”

*Chairman Jerry Red Jr, stated*, “When we went to Washington DC one thing that you really pushed hard for was to try and get $40,000,000.00.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated*, “That is still being pushed right now through infrastructure money. We have not heard anything in the last 4-6 weeks but we are still pushing for that. We had a call yesterday with Senator Cassidy. Like I said there are no guarantees obviously but like I told him, I will take $15,000,000.00.

*Chairman Jerry Red Jr., stated*, “That would be a big plus if we would get that or anything to help out all over the parish.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated*, “I will agree.”

*Councilwoman Nancy Carriere stated*, “If that $2,500,000.00 is up for grabs I want a piece of it. I have roads in my district also. I did not mention it a minute ago so with that being said just know that I will be up for the fight for my constituents in District 2 for that $2,500,000.00 if it ever become available. On Page 27, the Trustee Dorm Facility, that is the building that you were purchasing, did you all complete it? I see you have budgeted. Is that the budget to do the work?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated*, “No we did not complete it. I believe the bid came in at $1,170,000.00 on that project. We have a little bit more than what we bid on because they will have change orders, they always have change orders so we are just making sure.”

*Councilwoman Nancy Carriere questioned*, “When do you anticipate all of this happening?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated*, “We had a meeting two weeks ago with the construction crew. It won’t be long before they actually start changing the roof and doing all kinds of different things.”

*Councilwoman Nancy Carriere stated*, “You said that we bided $1,170,000.00 and we are at $1,200,000.00, we should be good with that?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated*, “I am hoping, change orders come through. I don’t think we will have too many change orders with this it is not a very big building with 60 inmates.”

*Councilwoman Nancy Carriere stated*, “Some of those 60 inmates are they coming from out of state? You said that we are not housing as many so we are not spending that much money to ship them out of the state is what you said earlier.

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated*, “That is correct, we only have 51 I believe, I did not check the numbers this morning but as of yesterday I think that it was 51.”

*Councilwoman Nancy Carriere questioned*, “Are all of those core? None of them will be considered Trustees? Only the people that are here now in St. Landry Parish.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated*, “The ones that are here now and they are in the Trustee Dorm can go across and the ones that are out of Parish come back in and go in that place here.”

*Councilwoman Nancy Carriere questioned*, “How are we standing with the City? Are we taking in their inmates?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated*, “I want to say that we have 5 city inmates that are considered city inmates. I think a lot of people misunderstand just because Opelousas Police bring an inmate to the jail does not make it a city inmate as it is a parish inmate. It they are charged with a city crime or if they are convicted of a city crime I think that we have 5 right now that are technically a city inmate.”

*Councilwoman Nancy Carriere stated*, “There were some questions brought out about the jail that is completed. We were housing their inmates at one time and we had to still pay that fee. That was my question about the Trustees and the city inmates and the parish inmates.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated*, “The city jail from my knowledge is complete. I just don’t think that the city will open it back up anytime soon. That is my understanding from the chief.”

*Councilwoman Nancy Carriere stated*, “Mine to. I was just concern because we are still paying the bill.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated*, “Actually that $160,000.00 from the Racino, instead of them getting their share we will get it.”

*Councilwoman Nancy Carriere stated, “*I remember when we had that issue before and I did not think that we were getting anything.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated*, “I think you all changed it in 2017 or something.”

*Legal Counsel Garett Duplechain stated*, “We changed it in 2019 I believe.”

*Councilman Dexter Brown stated*, “Regarding the City Jail that is basically a Juvenile Holding Facility.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated*, “We can’t. We tried that last year. We approached the legislature and asked them to loosen the restrictions on what would be considered a Juvenile Facility so we could maybe house some there on a temporary basis. It did not pass. That jail is not being used at all right now.”

*Councilman Dexter Brown stated*, “I went back there the other day. I saw all of the renovations and everything else. The last of my knowledge was when the Opelousas Police Department would arrest them and detain them until their parents would come.”

Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “That is still being done on a temporary basis. It is not like it is over night. They are not in a cell but they are in that area.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “Moving on. Page 28. On the Opioid Abatement Fund, I see that we have a Second Chance Program of $117,222.00. Is that 100% of the expenses?

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*Yes, it will cover the salaries of the employees and the benefits.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “What did we fund with before?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*That was coming from General Fund and the Jail.”

*Councilwoman Nancy Carriere questioned*, “The Second Chance, the employees, are they only working for Parish Government or is that through the Sheriff Department? How many do you have?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “Only Parish Government and we have 3.”

*Councilman Wayne Ardoin questioned*, “You have 3 employees that are being paid out of that $117,222.00.

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*That is correct.”

*Councilwoman Nancy Carriere questioned*, “Are they all full time?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated*, “No, one is par time.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “On Page 30. The BBQ Festival, $50,000.00, the Haunted House, $4,400.00. Do you think maybe we could get the Tourist Commission to help us with that?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*We met with them two weeks ago and we are waiting on an answer from them.”

*Councilman Coby Clavier questioned*, “On the BBQ Festival, what is all involved in that to cost $50,000.00. I never been so I don’t understand.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “The rides and the bands.”

*Councilman Coby Clavier stated, “*So we actually put it on.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*Correct, we actually sponsor it and put it on. Right now I think we have $17,000.00 in Sponsor Ship money that came in so far. We dropped the rides down to make it to where it is more affordable. We won’t have as many rides but we will have the right kind of rides. We dropped the cost down considerably this year.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “It was like $155,000.00 last year and we took in $60,000.00 and the tax payers had a bill for $95,000.00.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated*, “Just for the record the Delta Grand Fund is a Tourism Related Activity Fund and it is made for that. It is made to bring people into our parish.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “It is a Tax.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*It is a tax that the parish citizens do not pay unless they go and sleep in a hotel.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “I will not argue with you there. Getting onto salaries. The Delta Grand, we budgeted $63,260.00. In 2022 we spent $77,943.00 on the Amended Budget and we are asking $115,840.00 for 2023. Can you explain?

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “We added staff full time at those 3 locations so they can maintain the Delta, Ag Arena and the Yambilee Building to make sure that it is taken care of.”

Councilwoman Nancy Carriere questioned, “Do we have any other festivals that we are going to be sponsoring? I know that there is one that will be coming up. Do we have anything to do with that? Like the one in Palmetto. I see you on television promoting.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “No ma’am that is theirs. We will promote them.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “The Mardi-Gras Festival, was that on us?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*That was an event that day and that was ours.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “What did we spend on that?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*$15,000.00”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “Do you have that in the budget for next year. You said that it would better than this year.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “It will be better next year.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “Yes, I know but you don’t have it in the budget.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*Let me see where it is in here. We do have an event Expense of $22,100.00 on page 30.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “What is the Event Expense covering?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*It will cover that but we have sponsors. The cost was there but the sponsorship come in and it offset some of those costs. Each event that we have we get sponsors for.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “Moving on. On page 33, we talked about the General Fund Contingency Fund 96. General Fund Admin 4% Fees is $333,800.00 and $103,000.00 for Administration Fees for the Racino Fund. We are going to take out of that fund to place in Fund 11 $221,140.00, Criminal Court Fund $29.730.00 and Airport $186,000.00. I know that we are okay with ARA because we can cover these expenses. Don’t misunderstand my question, the intent of this fund was to cash flow us because our Ad Valorem tax is collected at the end of the year. We had a loan for $1,000,000.00 one year and $600,000.00 for one year. This would eliminate that. We have reduced that fund from $1,000,000.00 to $506,663.00.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*As of right now in that fund we are owed $275,000.00 from the state for the debris. With that receivable it is $920,000.00 in that fund.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “I understand but you are borrowing from Peter to pay Paul. The fees that we collect were suppose to be put in to build $1,000,000.00.

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “No, it is not robbing Peter to pay Paul. The money was in the account. We used the money for the debris because that was money that was available to be used. The state is going to reimburse us the $275,000.00. You put all of that together with the cash that is in the bank right now and we will have $926,000.00 in that account.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “That is not what it says on here but I will pass on that.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*I am talking about today.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “We just got a report today on another item. You could have said that and updated us. I would have not have to question it. Moving on.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*We also have $875,000.00 in Video Poker that we have set aside. We have been saving that for the last 2 years. So right now we have approximately $2,000,000.00 of cash on hand that could be used for emergencies if we need to.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “Is all of that in this budget?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*Yes it is in the budget, every last dollar. I just want the people to know and I hope the Media push this out, I got here in 2020 and they had $806,000.00 in Fund 96. That was it. Nothing else. Nowhere else. As of today we have approximately $2,000,000.00 saved up money that they did not have before. That is not an assumption.”

*Councilman Wayne Ardoin questioned*, “Where are you showing it at on this budget right here.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated*, “That is the budget that nobody passed yet. The cash is in the bank and it is all in the budget.”

*Councilwoman Nancy Carriere stated, “*On Page 30, the Travel Fund, can you explain.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*It was spread out for the Director that works in that Department, Alicia.

*Councilwoman Nancy Carriere questioned*, “What kind of travel is she doing?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated*, “She went to Washington DC this year.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “Of course we talked about Adjudicated Property and we took in $84,413.00. We spent $84,400.00. We don’t have any salaries in her Mr. Bellard. Can you tell us what the salary is for the folks that work in Adjudicated Property?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “We don’t pay salaries out of that fund. I would love to say that we can collect all of this money but we did not collect it yet, we did have 27 completed sales.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “Where does the $84,000.00 come from?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*That is what I am saying. That is where it is coming from. I don’t budget salaries out of there. Just in case we don’t get that kind of money. Everything else in here is adjustable as far as demolition and everything else. If the money is not available we just not going to do it.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor state*, “I am confused. It says sale of Adjudicated Proceeds is $84,400.000.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “Right. That is what we are projecting. If we don’t get $84,000.00 this year I don’t want to be bound to pay salaries out of that fund. I cannot demo a house and I cannot do a lot of things.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “What are the salaries?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “We have only 1 person in there and it comes out of Fund 21, Road and Bridge, Code Enforcement.”

Councilman Wayne Ardoin stated, “So you are paying Code Enforcement out of Road and Bridge.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “Yes.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “That is how much?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*$45,000.00 plus benefits.”

*Councilwoman Nancy Carriere questioned*, “How much did we collect on Adjudicated Property. An amount that you can say that we cleared.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*On last year, $84,000.00.”

*Councilwoman Nancy Carriere stated, “*We actually collected that amount.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated*, “Correct.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “Moving on, Page 42. Airport, Fuel Revenue. We budgeted $279,200.00 for 2022 and the Amended Budget was $345,057.00 and we Proposed $408,400.00. It says Fuel Resale on the Expense Side and it shows $267,800.00. We are buying a lot of fuel and only selling roughly one half of it. Is that correct?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*No, we are buying the fuel and selling it. We are making a profit on it. About $1.00 on a gallon and $1.50 - $1.60 on the other.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “That is a pretty hefty increase, what is happening over there?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*We have a lot more activity. All we did was look at the percentages of moving up every year since 2020 and we adjusted it accordingly.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “Total Revenue is $565,775.00 is that correct?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*All together, yes sir.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “This is the one that she amended today. The sheet that is on your desk is the new budget for the Airport. I glanced at it. I do have a question. The total revenue according to her new numbers are the same as it was, $565,775.00 but the expenses changed from $620,000.00 to $751,775.00. Can you explain that Mr. Bellard.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “If you look at each line itemit tells you where the expenses are going. I don’t know what more to tell you.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “I got all of that. We budgeted $391,900.00 for Expenditures in 2022. We ended up spending $1,110,196.00. We are proposing to spend $751,775.00 and at the same time we are only taking in $565,775.00.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*The Capital Outlay, that Pension Program that came up this past year. We do have some of that left this year. That is from DOTD Aviation. That is for the fencing project that we started 2 year ago. That is that extra expenses in that category.”

*Councilman Alvin Stelly questioned*, “Are they putting up a new fence around the Airport? How much will that cost?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*Yes Sir they are putting up a new fence. I forgot the exact amount. That have been in the works for the last 3 years. It came in Phases but they are finishing it up. It is a very expensive fence.”

*Councilman Alvin Stelly questioned, “*What was the reason for that expensive fence?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*It is to keep all of the animals off of the property. They were having trouble. It is just a safety program that DOTD Aviation puts in place. We were fortunate enough to get it.”

*Councilwoman Nancy Carriere stated,* “It is really a nice fence. You need to go and look at it Mr. Stelly. The land clearing, are they finished with that?

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*We still have some left. On the West side of the Airport we did some land clearing there so we can start planting beans in that area. It was just trash so we cleaned it up. Whatever is left that is what we will use that money for. We do have some on the Northern Part of the Airport that still needs to be cleaned out but that is about it. We will not move those big trees on the South Part. We just have to clear the spot.”

*Councilwoman Nancy Carriere questioned*, “Those 2 jobs for the fencing and the clearing of the property, was that all sent out for bid? Did one contractor do both jobs?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*Two separate contractors and they were bided out to those people.”

*Councilman Wayne Ardoin questioned*, “On the Airport, where do you put the rental of that building that we had the controversy with the school board. That building that is on Airport Property. We are collecting rent. It is the Head Start Building. Where are you putting that rent at? Where do you show it on the budget? Is it on the Airport Budget?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*It is in the Airport. It will be under the Land Lease. I will have to check to make sure exactly where it is put. I will have to check and see because it is part of the property. I will check to make sure but I think it is out of the Land Lease.”

*Councilman Wayne Ardoin stated*, “Clearing out on the Northern End. Those property owners, did you all send them some letters? Letters regarding taking out some trees on their property. When is that going to take place?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated*, “I hope not anytime soon. The state is requiring us to take care of it. When you are looking at the airport and you are leaving off of the runway there is a certain pattern that has to be cleared of obstruction. We had to send out letters and let them know in the near future that will be one of the things that will be required to do. They have an Ordinance in place that requires them to do that as well. It will be paid for by the state and they will pay them for their trees or whatever has to be done.”

*Councilman Wayne Ardoin stated*, “I know it was brought up and I was wondering if that will happen soon.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*I don’t think that it will. I know that the talks are there and the letters were sent to start the process as far as the state is concern.

*Councilman Wayne Ardoin stated*, “Will you get back with us on that rental of that Head Start Building? Show us where those funds are placed.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*Yes, I will check on that*.”*

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “Moving on to Page 46. Road District 1 Construction Fund. The Capital Outlay is $1,383,870.00 and the Professional Fees are $100,000.00 and Bond Expenses are $16,129.00. The Total Expenditures are: $1,500,000.00 and we transferred $1,500,000.00 in from the Sales Tax Fund. So the $1,383.870.00 and the $1,500,000.00 add up to the $2,800,000.00 that we have to do construction with this year.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “No Sir. $1,500,000.00 is the total expenditure.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated, “*Okay, I see what you did. On the next page, page 47. We took in $8,702,367.00 in the Sales Tax Revenue for the Smooth Ride Home. The interest is $300.00. It seems like that is a small amount of interest for a large amount of money.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “I agree.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “What can we do about that.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*I don’t know what to tell you. That is what we are getting from the banks right now. I can check. I know that they went up this year but I am not sure home much we are going to be getting.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “We have it in the bank. Is it the document that states that they don’t have to pay us interest?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “Oh no, they pay interest. I can check with the bank to see but I know that the interest rate went up.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “$300.00 for interest.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “You have to keep in mind. We don’t always have that kind of money in the bank.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “I can tell you what you are taking in every month because I get a copy of that. In three months you will have several million dollars. If you have 1% on $3,000,000.00 that is $30,000.00. So $300.00 is an insult. We need to beat that up. I noticed in Mr. Alvin’s Fund for the Hospital. We have $1,300.000.00 in that fund and you only have $2.00 in interest. Something is not right here.”

*Councilman Alvin Stelly stated,* “I saw that. I was going to ask Jessie about that. What bank is paying interest like that?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*Washington State Bank. That is our Physical Agent but they send the money out.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “There is another fund that has a $2.00 interest. Maybe we can get our Legal Counsel to check into that for us.”

*Councilman Alvin Stelly stated*, “Can somebody answer that. How can we get only $2.00 on $1,300,000.00 dollars?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*The interest rate that we are getting is .10.”

*Councilman Alvin Stelly stated,* “We would still make more than $2.00.”

*Councilman Wayne Ardoin questioned*, “On that Road District, on the Sales Tax, Mr. Bellard where are we going to get the money for that bridge that is by Solid Waste? Where is that money going to come from?

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated*, “That is coming from that $8,500,000.00 from the state for this year for bridge improvements.

*Councilman Wayne Ardoin stated*, “I see right here Bridge Improvement.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated*, “It is not coming through us. It is state allocated money. They just asked us for our priority.”

*Councilman Wayne Ardoin stated*, “Have you received any money from them?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated*, “We don’t get any money from that. That is sort of that same thing as that Off System Bridge Replacement Program. This is $8,500,000.00 on top of that that the state gave us for our parish. The state is doing everything on that.”

*Councilman Wayne Ardoin questioned*, “Do you have a time line on that?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*No, they did not tell us a time line. We met with them last year and they put the priorities in place. I am not sure when they are going to have it done.”

*Councilman Wayne Ardoin stated*, “If that bridge goes out we are blown up.

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated*, “That bridge is still good. It has been inspected so we are good. We don’t see a problem in the foreseeable future.”

*Councilman Wayne Ardoin stated*, “I saw the bridge improvements on that page and I was wondering.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “Moving on to Page 47 under Expenditures for Road Improvements. Can you explain the $647,800.00?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*That is whenever we go over these gravel roads or other roads with that 2.5 inch layer of asphalt to recap them. That is what we use to recap the roads with that 2.5 inch asphalt.

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “Okay for roads that just needs to be overlaid. And the Bridge Improvement, $333,333.00, what bridge was that?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*They have W P A Bridge that will be needing help. We have several bridges in the parish now that will need some assistance this year, they are not failing and we are trying to make sure that we have some money set aside for that. For instance that bridge in your area.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated,* “That Wooden Bridge on Catabola? I will make my request like the others. That bridge needs repair.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated*, “Yes that bridge that is another one. They have some problem bridges and we know that we will have some issues.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “Road side drainage, is that still digging ditches along the roads that you blacktopped and overlaid.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*Yes.”

*Councilman Alvin Stelly questioned*, “Exactly how much did it cost for that bridge in my district. Was it close to $180,000.00? We had to order more wood because somebody stole some of the wood.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “I will have to pull the record. I don’t remember. I had it at one time but I forgot. I can find out. It was around $200,000.00 I want to say, maybe $225,000.00 or something like that.”

*Councilman Wayne Ardoin questioned, “*On Page 49, Crown Parc Joint Commission, what is that Mr. Bellard?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*That is that CSLED. They collect their own money now. They use to pass through the Parish Government before but now they collect their won sales tax and they do their own thing.”

*Councilman Wayne Ardoin questioned*, “So why do we have it on here?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated*, “Only because we had it in 2021 and we had some in 2022 so after this year we don’t have to show it anymore. We can omit it after the years have passed.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “On page 53, the ARA Funds, we have $8,047,506.00 in there and we have earned $677.00 in interest. Something is not right on the interest.”

*Councilman Alvin Stelly questioned*, “Is that Washington State Bank also?”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “Washington State Bank is the Clearing House for several banks in the parish,

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*Correct, they are our Fiscal Agent and they pledge out the money to other local banks.”

*Councilman Timmy Lejeune questioned*, “Mr. Bellard on this ARA Fund, do you have to spend every dollar that you have in that fund or send it back?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated*, “At the end of 2024 we will have to have it incumbent at some point where we have it allocated to spend.”

*Councilman Timmy Lejeune stated*, “Are you using any of this money here that would cripple Parish Government if you spent it all in the 2023 budget? Why I am asking you that is because I want to make sure that we are not being dependent on that in terms of employees or equipment. We went through a phase in our government where we virtually had no employees left. Now we have a full staff of employees. I just want to make sure that we are not dependent on this fund in your budget process. What will happen when it runs out next year? Will all of these people get laid off and we will be back in the same boat? I just want clarity on that.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “None of this money in here is being used for salaries at all. It is a onetime expense. The overcrowding of the jail was due to the COVID in 2020. That is why that money is being used to take care of those overcrowded inmates which is why we brought the building to do the Trustee Dorm with this money to stop that expense.”

*Councilwoman Nancy Carriere questioned*, “I know what we spent on Graders and the Dump Trucks but what total amount do you have on the regular vehicles such as the SUV’s, the Cars and the Trucks?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*I can get that for you. We gave you all that a couple of months back.”

*Councilwoman Nancy Carriere stated*, “I know that we got the graders.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated*, “No, we did not buy the graders yet. We did not do anything with Graders yet. The list that I gave you all a couple of months back had everything in there. It had every piece of equipment that is inventoried.”

*Councilwoman Nancy Carriere stated*, “I am just curious, I saw that they have a lot of storage containers, what is in there?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*That is Walmart Distribution that put that there and pays us rent. It is Airport property so they put containers there ad pay us rent as part of the land lease.”

*Councilwoman Nancy Carriere questioned*, “How much are they paying us? Are they paying us monthly or do we have a contract with them?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*That is a yearly contract. I want to say that it is $3,400.00 per year for them to rent that piece of property where those containers are placed at.”

*Councilman Wayne Ardoin questioned*, “Mr. Timmy was talking about employees. How many employees do we have now Mr. Bellard?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “I can’t answer that question. I will have to get the list.”

*Councilman Wayne Ardoin stated*, “Will you give us a list of the vehicles that she is asking.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated*, “I gave you all that to you all a couple of months ago. I gave you all a list of the employees.”

*Councilman Wayne Ardoin stated*, “That was pertaining with that money when you had taken out that loan. I think that is when you had the list of the vehicles. You don’t have a ball park figure of the employees?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “Let’s clarify something. I did not go out and get any loan. I just want to make sure that we are clear on that.”

*Councilman Wayne Ardoin stated*, “So that line of credit was not done as a loan?”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “So we had a line of credit.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “The Line of Credit was put in place and in the same documents that you all are speaking of whenever Mr. Clavier was Chairman. It passed across the street at the Delta and that is when it was signed. There was nothing else to do with the line of credit. It automatically converted into a Loan Payment for the next 8 years. After that after 2 years. It is in the documents. So I don’t know what more to tell you all. We did not go out and get a loan. The line of credit was in place and it reverted to a loan exactly 2 years after the documents were signed.”

*Councilman Wayne Ardoin stated*, “Will you get us some figures on the employees? Will you give us another list of the vehicles? Can you handle that?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated*, “It is not about handling that. I gave it to you all 2 months ago. I can give you another copy. That is not a problem.”

*Councilman Wayne Ardoin stated*, “I would like another copy, thank you.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “I have two questions on that. Can you give us the reason we took out the line of credit, the LOC in 2020?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*You all put it down as to offset the Operating Expenses.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “No, that is not what the documents says.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*Okay then why did you ask me that question?”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “To avert the impact of COVID 19. Did we spend the money to avert COVID 19?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*We did not have to borrow no money to do anything with Operational Expenses of our Government since I have been back.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “The intent of the LOC, because our Financial Adviser said that you will be short of revenue because the Racino is going to be shut down. We set up the LOC to avert the impact of COVID 19. That is what the Bond Commissioned approved it for. I want to know if we spent it on COVID to avert COVID 19.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “No. That is your opinion Harold.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “I can only tell you what I read. Secondly, what did we spend the money on?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*On Equipment,”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “That list that you gave us a few months ago or whatever it was.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “Correct, yes.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “That had nothing to do with COVID 19.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*I am not going to answer the question again Harold. Let me clarify. You will not make accusations and expect me to just sit here. Here is the issue, this council knows that whenever we sat down in the basement whenever I was called and asked you all to come and sit with me so we can discuss these issues it was asked I you all wanted me to do this with the ARA Funding or do you all want me to borrow the money through the Line of Credit. They said for me to do whatever I thought was best. This is what we did, no there was no vote by the council but what we did do when Mandy was here, Mandy did contact Eric LeFleur and got him to give us his opinion. Everything is documented, everything that we did is documented and not one thing was done illegal or unethical with this Line of Credit. We did exactly what we were suppose to do with the money that was available to us. Again we have councilman who talk and say stuff but they cannot back it up. I can back up what I say.”

*Councilman Wayne Ardoin stated, “*We never had a vote on what you are saying. We just talked about it. You never came to the council.

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated*, “You did not need a vote.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “So to sum that summary we borrowed $1,300,000.00 or whatever it is without a vote of the council, that is the point.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*I can buy movable equipment with the funds that is correct.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “Moving on, Courthouse Window Replacement. We budgeted $341,711.00 and we amended the budget to cover $644,775.00 and we have another $379,905.00 as budgeted for 2023 which is $1,000,000.00. That is a lot more than $350,000.00. That is a bad estimate that you have. Don’t you think?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*I am good, I can stand by my numbers this year.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “I am sure that is what it cost. You kind of estimated different.

Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “I did not estimate nothing.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “Moving on, The Ag Arena, $343,884.00 for the amended budget in 2022. The proposed budget of $229,824.00, can you tell us what you want to do with that money?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “We are adding on to the building. We added some Fans, LED Lighting and some work that is being done around the Ag Arena with some panels and we added another sound booth I believe.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “The Delta Grand, Yam, Ag Arena Improvement and other we have $250,885.00 in it for 2023 can you tell us what you will do with that?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*That will be more work done at the Yambilee. We already painted.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “What kind of work. What are we adding?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*I am fixing to tell you. We painted those Hutches in the back, we did painting at the Yambilee and we did the black top in the front of the driveway and other improvements. I can’t tell you off the top of my head but we did a lot of work over there already.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “I am talking about the 2023 budget. You already did the black top in the front of the place?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “Yes.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “In 2023?

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*No, I think that it was in 2022 but yes we did black top.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “Why do you have it in 2023 budget?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*I don’t have it in 2023 Budget. I am trying to explain it to you what I did over there. I can’t tell you exactly where every single dollar goes Harold, if I could I would not be the Parish President, I would be doing something else on Wall Street.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “You just put this in the budget, $250,000.00 for improvements. Do you have any idea what you are going to do with it?

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*Exactly andI am trying to give you a general statement but for you I have to give you specifics and I cannot give you specifics and I cannot give you specifics.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “I am a detailed guy and I would like to know.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “You know what, I will give you what I can. If I can’t give it to you tonight I will give it to you in writing tomorrow. But you know what it might not be tomorrow I will do it when I can. How about that. When I have time.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “Okay.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*I am tired of playing the games.”

*Councilwoman Nancy Carriere stated*, “I have to make a comment. Mr. Bellard, my thing is this, I know that you cannot tell us about every dollar but that is why we are paying Ms. Caryn to be able to tell us.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “She is not coming to the meetings.”

*Councilwoman Nancy Carriere stated*, “She don’t have to come. What I am saying is that you cannot tell us.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “I can tell you. I can tell you anything in that budget. That is one thing that not one of you all can say that I don’t know about this budget. Not one of you all can look at this budget and tell me everything in this budget. I can tell you all like this, I can tell you all everything in this budget to the General Statements. But for the specifics there is nobody, not even Harold Taylor that can come in here and give you specifics.

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “Don’t talk for me.”

*Councilwoman Nancy Carriere stated*, “You have expressed yourself today. You have answered most of our questions.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*I have answered all of you all questions. It is not the answers that you all wanted to hear but I have answered all of you all questions.”

*Councilwoman Nancy Carriere stated*, “I know that you don’t want Ms. Caryn to come in front here but what I am saying is that she would be able to answer every question.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “She can, yes she can.”

*Councilwoman Nancy Carriere stated*, “You said that you were not going to allow her.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*She is not coming in front of this council.”

*Councilwoman Nancy Carriere stated*, “She is getting paid to answer the questions. That is another thing, she got a raise and I did not know that until Mr. Red mentioned it. To me she should be here.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*It is not about her coming in front of this council and it is not about her not knowing what she is doing because she knows exactly what she is doing. She is very capable of what she is doing. I am not going to put any of my employees in front of this council to be degraded or humiliated. It is not going to happen. I am required to be here and I am here. Nobody else is required to be here but me, that is it. I have answered every question that you had. Maybe the answers that I gave you is not what you want to hear but it is the answers that you all will get.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “We can move on Mr. Chairman if you are ready.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “No Nancy is not finished.”

*Councilwoman Nancy Carriere stated, “*Years ago we ask and request that Amanda come when we would go over the budget and she could answer questions and we have a person that is capable of answering those questions. I am only reminding the council that we did make that request. We can continue like this and all of the questions are not being answered.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*The questions are being answered but they are not the answers that you all want to hear. I don’t know what more to tell you all. I can give you the answers in this book but I cannot be specific. Nobody can be specific because it is a budget. It is not something that is so detailed that every little line item is followed to a‘T’. It will not be followed to a ‘T’. It is a General Statement of our Revenue and Expenses and that is what it is for. It is a Guide. Period.”

*Councilwoman Nancy Carriere stated*, “Mr. Bellard, I just want you to understand, when we ask Ms. Caryn a question it is to explain something that we don’t understand. You just confirmed that even Harold Taylor don’t know everything. Ms. Caryn prepares this so that is why I think that it would be more fitting for her to answer and explain to us.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated*, “She is not coming before this council and that is my final answer.”

*Chairman Jerry Red Jr., stated*, “We went over this budget and we have made some changes. I would like to know if anyone would like to introduce this Ordinance.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “Mr. Chairman, I think that we need to look at this thing and look at it in detail to do the cuts. We talked in general about what the budget had in it and what it suppose to do. Mr. Bellard will get us some information on exactly what he is going to do with some of the money like the $250,000.00 that he does not have at his hand. I think we need to schedule another meeting to do the line item cuts that we need to do. That would be my suggestion.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*I am in no hurry. We can run on the prior year’s budget for as long as we can. I am in no hurry.”

*Chairman Jerry Red Jr., stated*, “My only question is this, what questions do we need Mr. Bellard to answer that he did not answer. Ms. Nancy do you have any questions that you need answered tonight?”

*Councilwoman Nancy Carriere stated*, “Well I did not write them down. There maybe a few questions that I have. That is why I think that we can have another meeting and I will be better prepared.”

*Chairman Jerry Red Jr. stated*, “Ms. Thierry, do you have any questions that you need answered?”

*Councilwoman Mildred Thierry stated*, “No.”

*Chairman Jerry Red Jr., stated,* “Mr. Taylor, you do want to have another meeting.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “Yes.”

*Chairman Jerry Red Jr, stated*, “Mr. Stelly, do you want another meeting?”

*Councilman Alvin Stelly stated*, “Let’s go for another meeting if that is what you all want. That is good with me another meeting.”

*Chairman Jerry Red Jr., stated*, “Ms. Olivier, do you want another meeting?”

*Councilwoman Vivian Olivier stated*, “No, I don’t want another meeting. I am sick of meetings.”

*Chairman Jerry Red Jr., stated*, “Mr. Ardoin, do you want another meeting?”

*Councilman Wayne Ardoin stated*, “Yes, Mr. Bellard you said that you had to cut some employees.

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated*, “I did not cut employees, I just cut positions.

*Councilman Wayne Ardoin stated*, “You cut positions. Are you going to give us a list of employees and the ones that you cut out?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated*, “I will give you a list of employees that the budget is asking for.”

*Councilman Wayne Ardoin stated*, “You are also going to show us the raises that were given?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “It will show it in the salaries.

*Councilman Wayne Ardoin stated*, “You made the statement when we first started this meeting that you cut some positions and you gave some raises.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated*, “I did not say that tonight but okay.”

*Councilman Wayne Ardoin stated,* “You gave some raises am I correct? Ms. Caryn got a raise.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “Yes.”

*Councilman Wayne Ardoin stated, “*You are going to show who all got raises?”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*I will give you a copy of the employees and their salaries like I always do. I don’t know what more to tell you.”

*Councilman Wayne Ardoin stated,* “Will you show where there is raises or decreases*.*

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,* “Yes, if I can I will. That is not a problem.”

*Councilman Wayne Ardoin stated, “*That is the only question that I have with you. Even though you said that you don’t want to answer no questions for Harold and Wayne I have not even ask you nothing yet.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*That is 100% correct.”

*Councilman Wayne Ardoin stated*, “You threw me in that basket right away.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “*Oh yes, right away. I won’t be talking behind your back.”

*Chairman Jerry Red Jr., stated*, “Mr. Brown, do you want another meeting?”

*Councilman Dexter Brown stated*, “Can you come back to me after Mr. Coby?”

*Chairman Jerry Red Jr., stated*, “Mr. Lejeune, you want another meeting?”

*Councilman Timmy Lejeune stated*, “It if it all necessary then yes.”

*Chairman Jerry Red Jr., stated*, “Mr. Edwards, do you want another meeting?”

*Councilman Jimmie Edwards stated*, “I fell the say way. If it is necessary I will go along with it.”

*Chairman Jerry Red Jr., stated*, “Mr. Clavier, do you want another meeting?”

*Councilman Coby Clavier stated*, “I don’t have any more questions to be answered. I agree with Mr. Harold. We can come back at another time to get things answered.”

*Councilwoman Mildred Thierry stated*, “Mr. Chairman, I have a question. What is the purpose of another meeting? If there are more questions other than the ones that were discussed tonight that we want to change. We have other things that we want to change Mr. Taylor other than the ones that we pointed out tonight. Do we have anything else?”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated,* “I think that we need to make a list of the cuts that we want to make and what we want to cut and how we want to do it. That is what the next meeting will be in my opinion.”

Councilwoman Mildred Thierry stated, “I just was not clear about the purpose of another meeting. I thought we had gone over the areas that we felt that needed to be changed tonight. I just wanted to be clear.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “We did but we never voted on it.”

*Councilwoman Mildred Thierry stated*, “I know that we did not vote on it. I was thinking that we had addressed the areas that we wanted changed tonight. I just wanted to be clear.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “You are right. We have talked about the areas that we need to change and it is just a matter of putting the numbers down on how we want to change it. That is in my opinion. Others may have questions, I don’t know.”

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated*, “Mr. Chairman, if I am listening correctly you all will provide a list of changes that you all want to provide to the budget. So l will wait for those changes to come through.”

*Chairman Jerry Red Jr., stated*, “I guess they will do it at the next meeting.”

*Councilman Timmy Lejeune stated,* “Are we going to provide him with the changes that we requested so he can adjust it and present it back to us so we can get this show on the road and be done with that.”

*Councilman Dexter Brown stated*, “At this time I would like to make a motion to approve the Proposed Budget by Mr. Bellard and make any amendments in the future we can. That is my motion.

*Parish President Jessie Bellard stated*, “I don’t think that we can. We did not have a Public Hearing or anything. It is not ready to be approved.”

*Councilman Dexter Brown stated*, “I would like to Sponsor the Budget.”

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated* “I would like to make a motion that we call another special meeting.”

*Chairman Jerry Red Jr., stated*, “We will call another special meeting. It is just that he is introducing this budget.

*Councilman Harold Taylor stated*, “Do we need to take an official vote on that?”

*Chairman Jerry Red Jr., stated, “*No, we don’t have to vote on that.”

1. **ADJOURN:**

A motion was made by Councilman Coby Clavier, seconded by Councilman Wayne Ardoin

to adjourn the Special Meeting.

On roll call vote: YEAS: Nancy Carriere, Mildred Thierry, Harold Taylor, Alvin Stelly, Vivian Olivier, Wayne Ardoin, Dexter Brown, Timmy Lejeune, Jimmie Edwards, and Coby Clavier. NAYS: None. ABSENT: Easton Shelvin and Gil Savoy. ABSTAINED: None.

WHEREUPON, this motion was adopted on this, the 29th, day of March, 2023.