

**ST. LANDRY PARISH COUNCIL
SPECIAL MEETING
WEDNESDAY, MAY 31st, 2023
OLD CITY MARKET, 131 W BELLEVUE ST
OPELOUSAS, LOUISIANA**

MINUTES

- I.** This meeting was called to order by Chairman Jerry Red Jr.
- II.** Councilman Harold Taylor led the Pledge of Allegiance and the Invocation
- III. Roll Call: PRESENT:** Easton Shelvin, 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:** Nancy Carriere and Gil Savoy.
Councilwoman Nancy Carriere was absent for roll call but later joined the meeting.
- IV. Item for Discussion:**

- **Discuss Council Clerk Sherell Jordan's Sick Leave**

Chairman Jerry Red Jr., stated, "The first item will be pulled. It is to discuss the Council Clerk Sherell Jordan's sick leave. I spoke to Ms. Jordan. I told her once she gets a full release from the doctor she is welcome to come back."

- **Discuss the 2023 Proposed Operating Budget**

Chairman Jerry Red Jr., stated, "Would anyone like to discuss anything before we start working on this?"

Councilman Coby Clavier stated, "Mr. Chairman, I had brought this up before. I would like to revisit it with Mr. Jessie. The Severance Tax Figure is quite a bit more than the previous years. I am just wondering if that will be an accurate assessment based on the current oil prices related to getting that tax."

Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, "As of right now the payments that are coming in are staying pretty much what we have been getting. I know that there was something in the Legislature this year to increase it. I have not followed up on it until today but I know there is some talk about increasing the Severance Tax. As of right now we feel comfortable with the numbers unless something happens that drastically changes. The first quarters of the year are coming out the same as last year."

Councilman Harold Taylor stated, "Mr. Chairman, to follow up on that question just so the council understand we budgeted \$249,900.00 in the gas and oil Severance Tax for 2022. It actually came in at \$677,906.00. If you recall in 2022 gasoline prices went to nearly \$5.00 per gallon but we are back down to the \$3.00 level. I doubt seriously that we will get \$677,000.00 but the better estimate would be close to \$350,000.00. I just wanted to make a note because we are talking about a good deal of money here. Secondly I know each of you have looked at the fourth and final budget that is being proposed. The problem is that we only estimated for \$6,500,000.00 and we will spend \$7,200,000.00. I find that hard to believe. I would like to make an offer right now that we cut the expenses on the budget 10% across the board."

Councilman Coby Clavier stated, "I will second that motion."

Chairman Jerry Red Jr., stated, "We have a motion and a second to make a cut to the budget 10% across the board."

Councilman Timmy Lejeune questioned, "Mr. Bellard, if this motion goes through what are you going to do?"

Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, "You all can make the motion and do what you all want to do with the budget that is up to you all. The \$6,500,000.00 is indicated in here. If you go to

the last page on page 10 you will see where the transfers are coming in to offset the difference of that \$6,500,000.00 to the \$7,200,000.00. We are taking in \$6,500,000.00 in revenue and we are transferring in on the bottom side and it is a little over \$7,200,000.00. It will come out to a zero in budget.”

Councilman Harold Taylor stated, “Mr. Bellard, in 2021 we budgeted \$594,000.00 for Prisoner Housing. Last year we budgeted zero. We spent \$1,000,000.00 from ARP Money. This year you are budgeting nothing for the General Fund and \$689,000.00 from ARP. You told us at the last meeting that all of the ARP Money will be down to zero after this year. It has been dedicated. Is that correct?”

Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “We have the money dedicated but I don’t think it will be zeroed out by the end of the year.”

Councilman Harold Taylor stated, “We have to stick with numbers. Hope is not a strategy. We have to have a strategy to balance the budget.”

Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “Everything is allocated in the budget.”

Councilman Harold Taylor stated, “What do we do since Housing Prisoners is a mandated expense? That is the first thing that we have to do even before we have to pay salaries. That is \$689,000.00 that we will not have next year to plug that hole. Ladies and gentleman, if we cut the budget 10% that will give us \$720,000.00. At least we can take care of people that commit crime.”

Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “We talked about this for the last 6 months. The Trustee Dorm is going to be open by next year. When it is open we will not have the out of parish prisoners, we will have them here and that is the difference. That is why that one time money was spent on the trustee dorm to stop the bleeding of the outer parish prisoners. I don’t know what more to say. This is our plan and that is what it is.”

Councilwoman Nancy Carriere stated, “Mr. Chairman, we have a motion on the floor.”

A motion was made by Councilman Harold Taylor, seconded by Councilman Coby Clavier to cut the Expenses on the Budget 10% Across the Board.

On roll call vote: YEAS: Nancy Carriere, Easton Shelvin, Mildred Thierry, Harold Taylor, Alvin Stelly, Wayne Ardoin, Jimmie Edwards, and Coby Clavier.

NAYS: Vivian Olivier, Dexter Brown and Timmy Lejeune. **ABSENT:** Gil Savoy.

ABSTAINED: None.

WHEREUPON, this motion was adopted on this, the 31st, day of May, 2023.

V. ADJOURN:

A motion was made by Councilman Wayne Ardoin, seconded by Councilman Jimmie Edwards to adjourn the Special Meeting.

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

WHEREUPON, this motion was adopted on this, the 31st, day of May, 2023.

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