ST. LANDRY PARISH COUNCIL

SPECIAL MEETING

**WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 9th, 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. Councilman Easton Shelvin led the Pledge of Allegiance and the Invocation
3. **Roll Call: PRESENT**: Nancy Carriere, Easton Shelvin, Mildred Thierry, Harold Taylor,

Gil Savoy,Alvin Stelly, Vivian Olivier, Wayne Ardoin, Dexter Brown, Timmy Lejeune and

Jimmie Edwards**. Ex Officio:** Jerry Red Jr. **ABSENT**: Coby Clavier.

1. **PERSONS TO ADDRESS THE COUNCIL:**

***Ms. E. Lynn Lejeune addressed the council*. She stated, “**I am here this evening because I wanted to ask your support for the interim appointment for District 13. I want to be real, real clear that I am not running for any kind of office, it is just for the interim position. I would appreciate your support. I do have a resume for each of you. I would like to step in as interim until the next election that is coming up.”

***Councilman Harold Taylor stated***, “Thank you for coming, Thank you for offering your time for interim to serve that position. I am sure that the community will be well served.”

***Ms. Lynn Lejeune stated, “***Thank you. I look at all of the work that you all are doing and all of the extra hours that you all spend developing our district, community and our parish. I would like to join hands and work with you all jointly to make things continue until January 2nd, 2024, whenever the elected councilperson steps in.”

***Mr. Leward Lefleur addressed the council***. He stated, “Good evening, my name is Leward Lefleur. I live in Eunice Louisiana on Donald Richard Road. I have been in Eunice for 42 years and I am running for St. Landry Parish Council, District 13. I am looking forward to working with each and every one of you. Thank you for your time and service.”

1. **ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION:**

***Discuss possible Voting Precinct Merger for St. Landry Parish***

***Mr. Byron Stelly, Registrar of Voters addressed the council. He stated, “***Good evening.

All of this may look a little unfamiliar to you all because it has been about five years since the surveys had to be done because they were frozen for a period of time before during and after reapportionment. This is my first time doing the surveys before they were frozen I was still in college. From now until the next time they are frozen after every canvas period we will have to do these survey on precinct that are over 2200 voters which St. Landry currently has none of those. Those that are under 300 voters which we have 28 total in St. Landry right now. Out of the 28 we have 18 that are eligible to be merged. It is up to you all to decide whether or not you all want to merge them or keep them as it is. I will say that out of the 18 there are 5 of them that would not change polling locations for the voters because they already vote there. Not all councilmembers have precincts that are affected by this. Depending upon what you all decide tonight I will be happy to sit with those affected councilmembers and go through everything individually.”

***Chairman Jerry Red Jr. questioned***, “Being that the election is held on October 14th, 2023 and if we plan to leave it as it is so we won’t have any hick-ups or any problems as far as the election that is coming up can make those changes after the election?”

***Mr. Byron Stelly, Registrar of Voters stated, “***Any changes that you all make would not go into effect until the spring 2024. This is good as it currently stands. It won’t affect this election.”

***Councilman Wayne Ardoin stated, “***You made a statement that it will cost more money to have this election because of the way that the situation is.”

***Mr. Byron Stelly, Registrar of Voters stated, “***Right, if you all choose not to merge those precincts that are eligible to be merged then the parish will incur 100% of the cost for those precincts and there will be no cost sharing except for when there is a state wide election on the ballot like this for, the Governors, the state will cost share with those. Let just say for an example the score board would decide to place a tax on the ballot and it is the only thing that is on the ballot, those 18 precincts, the school board would not cost share with the parish for those 18 precincts and the parish would be responsible for 100% of those 18 precincts.”

***Councilman Wayne Ardoin stated,*** “Do you have a figure on how much this election will cost this parish?”

***Mr. Byron Stelly, Registrar of Voters stated, “***Roughly in an election that does not have a state wide race like Governor, the estimate that I received from the state was about $36,000.00.”

***Councilman Wayne Ardoin stated***, “With the State sharing it how much money are we looking at. The election that we are getting ready to have the state is involved. So how much money are we talking about?”

***Mr. Byron Stelly, Registrar of Voters stated,*** “It varies on ballot items and things like that. It is about 25%, give or take a few percent that the parish would be responsible for on these big elections.”

***Councilman Wayne Ardoin stated***, “You don’t have a dollar amount.”

***Mr. Byron Stelly, Registrar of Voters stated, “***No I don’t have a dollar amount because there are other factors that goes into it. I did request it but I have not received it.”

***Councilman Wayne Ardoin questioned***, “If a precinct has 2,200 voters how many machines do you place at that precinct?”

***Ms. Lisa Doyle, Clerk of Court stated, “***Three or four.”

***Councilman Wayne Ardoin stated***, “Opelousas High School is in District 9, a lot of those people were moved back from Sunset to Opelousas High School. Some were moved from OHS have been voting across the street from OHS and now they are going to Park Vista. The ones from Sunset to OHS, how many people are we talking about that will be voting at OHS?”

***Ms. Lisa Doyle, Clerk of Court stated***, “They have quite a bit that will be voting at OHS.

They will have enough Commissioners there to accommodate them.”

***Councilman Wayne Ardoin stated***, “We need to make it convenient for the tax payers to go and vote and have the poles as close as possible.”

***Councilwoman Mildred Thierry stated***, “Mr. Stelly, what you are saying is that we don’t need to be concerned about this election but the election in the spring when we will need to make any changes.”

***Mr. Byron Stelly, Registrar of Voters stated,*** “From the spring election moving forward. I think the day is around the end of September for you all to submit the surveys to the state. I think that Mr. Hefner stated the 24 of November is the deadline to apply any of the mergers.”

***Councilman Alvin Stelly stated***, “It is not law that we have to change those precincts is that correct Mr. Stelly?”

***Mr. Byron Stelly, Registrar of Voters stated, “***You all can leave it as it is. As I preciously mentioned those that are eligible, you all would be responsible for the cost.”

***Councilman Harold Taylor stated, “***Mr. Stelly, thank you for coming and explaining this to us. We have been through reapportionment and I understand that we may do some more reapportionment next year. We may not have the same senator, representative and there is a lawsuit that is sitting at the Supreme Court of the United States as we speak. They have already answered the Congressional and that will be reapportioned and we will have a different congressman more than likely. A democracy cannot survive unless we have a convenient way for our citizens to cast their ballots. I live on the north end of the parish and my district is 52% of the land mass of St. Landry Parish, it is very rural. I have probably 8 or 9 of those precincts that you all want to combine or that is being proposed. We spend a lot of money in this Government, if we had to prioritize the money that we spend that would be number one that we would finance, whatever it would cost to have elections and people would have convenient ways to vote. I have been doing this for a very long time. I was 22 when I was first elected to a public office and I worked election days to get people to vote and if we did not get 65% of the folks in this parish to go to the poles and cast their ballots we did not do our job. We are electing people now with 20% of the voters going to vote. We can’t make it harder for them, we have to make it easier for them. I suggest that we just leave it like it is. We have been through this three times. I just think that we need to leave it alone.”

***Mr. Byron Stelly, Registrar of Voters stated, “***I think that we finally got the majority of the people satisfied on where they go and vote and things of that nature. I don’t know parish finances and I don’t need to know but I would really like to see it stay the same. I think the people are satisfied. That would be my profession recommendation if it is feasible for the parish.”

***Councilman Timmy Lejeune stated***, “Mr. Bellard, can we afford to do this financially?”

***Parish President Jessie Bellard stated***, “Yes, I believe it is only $9,000.00 to $12,000.00 per election. Again we have to remember, when this council voted to do this they were told less than 300 hundred you risk the chance of having the merger come back on us. We took this and we said that we did not want to do this so I agree, let’s just keep it like it is, it was changed to many times and it will start confusing the voters. Like Mr. Taylor stated we have to make it easier for the people to come to vote, not harder. I think if we change anything, anyhow if it is one precinct, it will cost confusion. My recommendation is the same as Mr. Taylor’s and Mr. Stelly’s and that is to leave it alone.”

***Mr. Byron Stelly, Registrar of Voters stated, “***If you all are worried about the cost there are 5 precincts that if they were to be merged it would not change the polling location for the voters. That is something to consider as well, if you all would want.”

***Chairman Jerry Red Jr., stated***, “With that being said, I am concerned if there are any in my district, I will speak for the people in my district, if we can conjoin and put them in one location where it will benefit the parish lets’ do that. If the others want to leave it like that, so be it. I know if we can make it a whole lot better where you have 5 or 6 people going to one pole that does not make sense. Put it in a precinct where they all can travel there to that precinct that makes more sense.”

***Councilman Timmy Lejeune*** ***stated,*** “On this report that we have, it says Fire District 6 Substation, same location, what does that mean?”

***Mr. Byron Stelly, Registrar of Voters stated,*** “Look at the top of page one where the Ward and Precinct is listed. Whatever precinct is 44A and where you see same location that means that precinct is at the same location as 44A.”

***Councilman Timmy Lejeune stated***, “They would still vote in the same building just at a different table.”

***Mr. Byron Stelly, Registrar of Voters stated, “***Not necessarily. The precincts that are in your district would change locations.”

***Councilman Timmy Lejeune stated***, “I don’t want to change anything until after this election is over with. I will make a motion that we leave all precincts as listed.”

***Councilman Harold Taylor stated***, “Second.”

***Chairman Jerry Red Jr., stated***, “Lets finish the discussion then we will go to the motion.”

***Councilwoman Nancy Carriere stated***, “I want to remind everyone when a precinct is overcrowded and there is not enough parking space we need to remember that not everybody is willing to let you use their facility. This is a good idea to keep it as it is and make it affordable because everybody has a right to vote.”

***Councilwoman Mildred Thierry stated***, “I have a concern in the district that I represent. I have situation where Washington Town Hall, 758 voters and Washington Elementary School, 135 voters and that is about four tents of a mile from the town hall, would it be possible to help save a little on that to have them merge?

***Mr. Byron Stelly, Registrar of Voters stated, “***If you look where the chart is, I have the lines and somethings cannot be moved because it would change the State District or Parish District. If that was something that you wanted to look at I could sit with you and go over everything to see if that would be something that would be possible.”

***Councilman Dexter Brown stated***, “I have been contacted by members of Community Chapel Church and Opelousas Junior High School. They don’t have vehicles. When they go and vote they walk to these precincts. I would be in favor of leaving these precincts as it is in District 10.”

***Councilman Wayne Ardoin stated***, “I am not fond of what happened at OHS and Park Vista because of the situation. People live right across from OHS and they have been voting there since they moved there. My concern is for you to look at it right there. I don’t know why it was done that way but you have 62 people that would have to go to Park Vista. Why was it done that way?”

***Mr. Byron Stelly, Registrar of Voters stated, “***The reason why I had to change those people is because I was going through the maps and I noticed that they were incorrectly placed in a precinct from the start.”

Councilman Wayne Ardoin stated, “They have been voting there all of these years.”

***Mr. Byron Stelly, Registrar of Voters stated, “***I noticed an error and I had to correct it. We can work in the future to try to correct it and move the lines.

***Councilman Wayne Ardoin sta***ted, “When people come vote here at this court house can we try to accommodate them a little better? I know you had talked about going to the Delta Grand, maybe the Delta Grand may be booked up with a function but lets’ try to accommodate the voters better. You made that promise when you came here.”

***Mr. Byron Stelly, Registrar of Voters stated, “***I am all for it. I did inquire about the Delta Grand. I did put my name down but I think there was a discrepancy in the booking. There are events during that week but that is a goal to make the space better for the voters.”

***Councilman Dexter Brown stated***, “Have you thought about the Yambilee Building?”

***Mr. Byron Stelly, Registrar of Voters stated,*** “I never thought about the Yambilee Building because we have to stay in a close proximity to our office. The Delta Grand was the ideal location.”

A motion was made by Councilman Timmy Lejeune, seconded by Councilman Harold Taylor to keep all precincts remaining as it is written for this period of time and the parish will assume the extra cost.

***Chairman Jerry Red Jr., stated***, “Does this have to be done by an ordinance?”

***Mr. Byron Stelly, Registrar of Voters stated,*** “Yes, it is my understanding once the survey is complete and they have been submitted to the state they will approve the surveys. At that point the ordinance can be passed to make mergers or keep as it is.”

***Councilman Harold Taylor stated***, “We can have our attorney draft an ordinance. If we announce it at our meeting next week we can vote on it for the middle of September.”

A motion was made by Councilman Timmy Lejeune, seconded by Councilman Harold Taylor to keep all precincts remaining as it is written for this period of time and the parish will assume the extra cost.

On roll call vote: **YEAS**: Nancy Carriere, Easton Shelvin, Mildred Thierry, Harold Taylor,

Gil Savoy, Alvin Stelly, Vivian Olivier, Wayne Ardoin, Dexter Brown, Timmy Lejeune and Jimmie Edwards. **NAYS**: None. **ABSENT**: Coby Clavier. **ABSTAINED**: None.

WHEREUPON, this motion was adopted on this, the 9th, day of August, 2023.

***Chairman Jerry Red Jr., stated***, “Once again we would like to say thanks to the Registrar of Voters, Demographer and Clerk of Court for coming out and addressing the council.”

***Ms. Becky T. Rogers, MBA, SPHR* addressed the council. She stated, “**I will just tell you all a little bit about myself. My name is Becky Rogers. I have worked in Human Resources since 1987, actually it was called Personnel back then. For the last 35 years I have worked as an HR Professional. I retired from Coca-Cola about 5 years ago. I was the Director of Human Resources for Coca-Cola Bottling Company for about 15 years. I currently teach Human Resource Management, Employee Selection & Placement in Leadership through LSU on line program. I currently do HR Consulting. I have a Master’s Degree from Jack Welch Management Institute. I have several hours toward my Doctoral Degree in Organizational Leadership. That is a little bit about my academic background as well as my professional background.”

***Councilman Harold Taylor stated***, “Ms. Rogers, thank you for coming. I think you know a little bit of what we are about. I think the young lady attorney that was originally going to do this has moved out of the state. The firm has recommended you. I am glad that you came and gave us your background. You sound eminently qualified to do what we have to do. The issue is that we had some employees terminated and we just want to make sure that we are following our charter, state and federal laws. Do you have any questions or problems about that?”

***Ms. Becky T. Rogers, MBA, SPHR stated, “***No, we just need to make sure that we know what the expectations were and make sure that those expectations were carried through.”

***Councilman Wayne Ardoin stated***, “What is your rate if you are active in this investigation?”

***Ms. Becky T. Rogers, MBA, SPHR stated,*** “I will tell you all that I have been charging $185.00 per hour but I will reduce it to $165.00 per hour. I will definitely manage the amount of time so there is no surprises. I have estimated it initially based upon the scope of the project about 10 hours. It could be less than that, it depends on after I go through the process of the procedures and look at what have occurred. I do not charge any travel time. I do not charge any mileage or extra expenses. It is strictly the time allocated toward doing the work.”

***Councilman Wayne Ardoin stated, “***You are looking at 2-3 hours per employee?”

***Ms. Becky T. Rogers, MBA, SPHR stated, “***I don’t think it will take that long.”

***Councilman Timmy Lejeune questioned***, “I would like to know how many employees you may know that we have to question? Mr. Bellard, can you answer that question?”

***Parish President Jessie Bellard stated***, “Nope, I can’t. That is an investigation that you all want to do so you all should know who you all want to investigate and how many. I can’t answer that.”

***Chairman Jerry Red Jr., stated***, “I believe there were 21 employees. I believe that was the number.”

***Councilman Timmy Lejeune questioned, “***Did you realize it was 21 employees?”

***Ms. Becky T. Rogers, MBA, SPHR stated, “***No, I did not.”

***Councilman Timmy Lejeune questioned,*** “Will the rate stay the same? Did you honestly think that it still will be one, two or three hours per employee? I would like to have a better understating about what this will actually cost us.”

***Ms. Becky T. Rogers, MBA, SPHR stated, “***It was my understanding that we had some terminated employees who felt like they were not dismissed properly so they are appealing that. I thought it was just a handful of employees, maybe 3-5 employees who were unjustifiably terminated. I was going to look at your ordinances, look at the process and find out the paper trail of expectations. I don’t know if you have an employee hand book, training or if the employee failed to follow direction or failed to do something. I was going to look at what the standard was and look at the documentations of disciplinary actions, if there were any. I don’t know if you all do three strikes and you are out of if you can only terminate for cause. I was going to look at those kinds of things. It was my understanding that they were only maybe 3-5 people who were unjustly terminated. That is what I was thinking. It will just take me a while to find out what your standards are and go back and do an audit. I typically go and do a human resource audit just to make sure that that companies are doing sexual harassment training or they have a good employee handbook so thy will know what the expectations are and they are filing regulatory forms timely with cobra and all of that stuff. From the Audit standpoint I just go in and see your 5500 and make sure that they were filed timely. I go in with a Compliance mindset to make sure that there is no exposure. I did not know that there were 20 people that had been terminated and felt concerned about that. It may be beneficial for me to learn more about the scope. It was my understanding that the scope was just to look at the ordinance and make sure that we don’t have any exposure or risk because we want mitigate that. I could come in, look at it, access it and give you all a recommendation but I was going to talk individually to the employees. I was thinking it was only a handful. You raise a good point.”

Councilman Timmy Lejeune stated, “Would you rather us wait and give you a chance to think about this or look into this before we would actually vote to say we want to hire you for 21 employees?”

***Ms. Becky T. Rogers, MBA, SPHR stated, “***This is nothing for me. I do HR Consulting every day. I do leadership development training every day. I teach at LSU everyday so I am happy to help.”

***Councilman Timmy Lejeune stated***, “Based on the information that you just received, how much do you think and how much time do you think you need? What do you think my invoice will be? What will my billing cost be?”

***Ms. Becky T. Rogers, MBA, SPHR stated,* “**I will talk to 21 employees who feel like they were wrongfully terminated. I did not realize the scope of that. I initially said 10 hours but I think we would probably have to say maybe 20 hours. There is 40 hours in a work week and I will spread it out because I want to sit down face to face and I want to listen. When you sit down and listen to people tell their story it is not going to take them one hour. They will be able to say this is how I feel, this is what happened and this is why I am going to pursue litigations against St. Landry Parish. I don’t think that it will take that long to do that. I can schedule those. I am happy to do milestone feedback to let you know what my accomplishment and what my findings are so I don’t have to wait until the very end. The first thing to do is to find out what the standard is and did we follow our own policy.”

***Councilwoman Mildred Thierry stated***, “I would feel more comfortable with us giving her the opportunity to go through the things that she needs to through and then we decide what we are going to do and not rush to judgement.”

***Councilwoman Nancy Carriere stated***, “We had approximately 21 employees that were terminated. The purpose is to find out why and if it was justified.”

 ***Ms. Becky T. Rogers, MBA, SPHR stated, “***What is the relevant period? What date are we going back to? Are we going back a long time?”

***Councilman Harold Taylor stated***, “There were 21 employees terminated in 2022.”

***Ms. Becky T. Rogers, MBA, SPHR stated, “***What is the total population of the employee base?”

***Councilman Harold Taylor stated***, “130 employees, is that correct Mr. Bellard.”

***Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,*** “I can’t give you all a number because I don’t know exactly how many employees we have.”

***Ms. Becky T. Rogers, MBA, SPHR stated, “***I don’t need to know the exact amount of employees. Do you have 25 employees or 100 employees? I just need a ball park figure.”

***Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,*** “They are the ones that is hiring you. You need to ask them the questions. I am not answering any questions.”

***Ms. Becky T. Rogers, MBA, SPHR stated, “***Do they report to you?”

***Parish President Jessie Bellard stated,*** “Everybody that works in Parish Government except the two employees that work for Parish Council report to me directly, not to this council.”

***Councilman Harold Taylor stated***, “I think it is about 130, 135, maybe 140.”

***Chairman Jerry Red Jr. questioned***, “How long have you been practicing?”

***Ms. Becky T. Rogers, MBA, SPHR stated, “***Since 1987.”

***Chairman Jerry Red Jr., stated***, “Your cost is almost $165.00 compared to $465.00 and that is a big difference. That is the price that Ms. Rhines was going to charge. Your price for 20 hours would equal around $3,300.00. For 10 hours for Ms. Rhines it would be about $4,600.00. My question is this: If we do hire you and you are doing the job for the council, I am not sure it will be 21 employees like they were speaking but the least employees the price would be a lot cheaper. If we do hire you next week will you start then?”

***Ms. Becky T. Rogers, MBA, SPHR stated, “***Absolutely. I would say that I would like to wrap it up in about 2-3 weeks. It will take me a while to get down in the weeds. I need to find out what happened? I will be totally flexible and I will go where they are. There is a lot of communication that is nonverbal. I really like to sit and look at their eyeballs and listen to them.”

**Councilman Harold Taylor stated**, “Ms. Becky we have a pending lawsuit right now from one of these folks. We are going to have to hire an attorney to represent us. We don’t have insurance to cover that. That is just one lawsuit. We will hire someone to represent us to hear the facts from these disgruntled employees. Regardless if we have another lawsuit we need to get this done from a professional or at least have this on record that if we are sued, here is what we found. If I am in order I would like to entertain the motion to go forward to hire Ms. Rogers to do this.”

A motion was made by Councilman Harold Taylor, seconded by Councilman Wayne Ardoin to approve hiring Ms. Becky T. Rogers, MBA, SPHR to investigate the firing of the 21 employees from the Parish Government.

On roll call vote: **YEAS**: Jerry Red Jr., Nancy Carriere, Mildred Thierry, Harold Taylor,

Gil Savoy and Wayne Ardoin. **NAYS**: Easton Shelvin, Alvin Stelly, Vivian Olivier,

Dexter Brown, Timmy Lejeune and Jimmie Edwards. **ABSENT**: Coby Clavier. **ABSTAINED**: None.

***Tie Vote.***

**Chairman Jerry Red Jr., stated**, “I would like to make a motion to give the council time to think about this instead of making a choice now. We have a meeting coming up next week. Let’s think about it and you all can decide next week.

***Parish President Jessie Bellard stated***, “Since it was a tie vote it failed. It will have to come from the winning or the losing side. I think if you all place it back on the agenda it will be the same vote and it will be the same issue. But in your packet you have a letter from me explaining to you all what the process could be and simple because I am just going to tell you all in front of the people here, I am not giving you all personnel files. That will be the issue at hand. The option on the table is for you all to ask the employees to come and get their own personnel file if they want to do it and I can give it to them and you all can do whatever they want to do with it. As far for the parish government I am not releasing the personnel file to anybody.”

***Chairman Jerry Red Jr., stated***, “So you are saying that the former employees can come to parish government and pick up their file.

***Parish President Jessie Bellard stated***, “Yes, they can come and pick up their own files. Whatever they do with it is on them. This way will save a lot of time and a lot of money.”

***Chairman Jerry Red Jr., stated***, “We will give you all time and you all can make that decision next week. If it fails then it fails.”

***Councilman Wayne Ardoin stated***, “The previous lady, Ms. Helen, she well stated that we could be held personally liable if these people start suing. Now we don’t have any insurance and as a council member we will have to hire us an attorney to represent us.”

***Legal Counsel Garett Duplechain stated***, “There is insurance on every officer, director, official, councilman, parish president for any decisions that you all make if you all are sued but the loophole is it will not cover termination of employment.”

***Parish President Jessie Bellard stated***, “It does cover errors and omissions. That is what this insurance is for. They would be covered in the scope of their duties but it did not have nothing to do with the termination of employees so it is irrelevant.”

 ***Ms. Becky T. Rogers, MBA, SPHR stated,*** “So yes you can be held personally liable. My concern is that you all will get into a class action. It is not just one or two people, now they all will get together and it will snowball.”

***Parish President Jessie Bellard stated***, “I have a legal question, Mr. Duplechain, if an employee is terminated, how long they have to file suit against you?”

***Legal Counsel Garett Duplechain stated***, “They have one year.”

***Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “***Okay, that takes care of that. So that is the answer to the question Mr. Ardoin.”

***Councilman Alvin Stelly stated***, “I am loss on this. The council does not hire nor fire so how can those people sue the council when the parish president hires and fires. So why should we be liable?

***Legal Counsel Garett Duplechain stated***, “When the plaintiff files a lawsuit they can name any defendant they want. After they do that whatever happens with the defendant exception, no cause of action, no right of action, whatever happens after that happens but a plaintiff can name any defendant they want if they have the wrong defendant they have no cause of action those exceptions will be filed and a lawsuit can fail, many lawsuits fail.”

***Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “***If he council is sued personally they can opt out and file a motion in the court to show cause why they can just opt out of the lawsuit.

***Legal Counsel Garett Duplechain stated***, “The plaintiff may have no right of action or no cause of action and the attorney will file that exception and the exception if filed right after the lawsuit is heard by the judge. If the judge finds that plaintiff has no right of action against that defendant or no cause of action against that defendant then that lawsuit will fail as to that defendant.”

***Update on Litigation in Executive Session***

A motion was made by Councilman Wayne Ardoin, seconded by Councilman Jimmie Edwards to enter into Executive Session, turn off recording and have the audience leave the council chambers so Legal Counsel Garett Duplechain can give the council updates on a Litigation.

On roll call vote: **YEAS**: Nancy Carriere, Easton Shelvin, Mildred Thierry, Harold Taylor,

Gil Savoy, Alvin Stelly, Vivian Olivier, Wayne Ardoin, Dexter Brown, Timmy Lejeune and Jimmie Edwards. **NAYS**: None. **ABSENT**: Coby Clavier. **ABSTAINED**: None.

WHEREUPON, this motion was adopted on this, the 9th, day of August, 2023.

***Chairman Jerry Red Jr., stated****, “*The first item for discussion is Parish Government versus St. Landry Parish Council. The second item is Ms. Terri Courvelle vs. St. Landry Parish Government. That is what the two executive sessions are about.”

A motion was made by Councilman Harold Taylor, seconded by Councilman Wayne Ardoin to return back into Regular Session and turn on the recording.

On roll call vote: **YEAS**: Nancy Carriere, Easton Shelvin, Mildred Thierry, Harold Taylor,

Gil Savoy, Alvin Stelly, Vivian Olivier, Wayne Ardoin, Dexter Brown, Timmy Lejeune and Jimmie Edwards. **NAYS**: None. **ABSENT**: Coby Clavier. **ABSTAINED**: None.

WHEREUPON, this motion was adopted on this, the 9th, day of August, 2023.

***Councilman Timmy Lejeune stated, “***I would like to make a motion that we hire Mr. Lance Pearson as our representing attorney being he was approved by the DA’s Office. This is dealing with Terri Courville vs. the St. Landry Parish Government.”

A motion was made by Councilman Timmy Lejeune, seconded by Councilman Jimmie Edwards to hire Mr. Lance Pearson as the council’s representing attorney.

***Councilwoman Nancy Carriere stated, “***I want to make a substitute motion that we wait after we get more information tomorrow about an extension from the DA.”

***Chairman Jerry Red Jr., stated, “***The motion is that we wait until we get a call back and ask for 30 days and then we will make a decision on hiring an attorney.”

***Councilman Timmy Lejeune stated***, “I withdraw my motion.”

A motion was made by Councilwoman Nancy Carriere, seconded by Councilman Easton Shelvin to wait until we get further information from the DA to extend 30 days before we hire an attorney.

On roll call vote: **YEAS**: Nancy Carriere, Easton Shelvin, Mildred Thierry, Harold Taylor,

Gil Savoy, Alvin Stelly, Vivian Olivier, Wayne Ardoin, Dexter Brown, Timmy Lejeune and Jimmie Edwards. **NAYS**: None. **ABSENT**: Coby Clavier. **ABSTAINED**: None.

WHEREUPON, this motion was adopted on this, the 9th, day of August, 2023.

***Parish President Jessie Bellard stated***, “I will contact the DA in the morning. I will ask him if he can ask for that time and I will copy you all in an e-mail.”

***Councilman Timmy Lejeune stated***, “What happens if they say ‘no’.”

***Chairman Jerry Red Jr., stated***, “There will be two people that they will contact. They will contact the DA’s Office and the other attorney. We are asking for favor for 30 days. If the answer is no we will have to take another route.”

***Parish President Jessie Bellard stated***, “I will call a special meeting.”

***Discuss appointing someone to fill the remaining interim seat for Council Member District 13 at the Regular Meeting held on Wednesday, August 1, 2023.***

**Councilman Wayne Ardoin stated, “**No one has come forward except for Ms. Lynn Lejeune. I will offer a motion that we place her on the parish council as an interim until the election is held and someone has been elected. I would like to forward her name to the full council. I would like to have it as the first item on the agenda that night so that she would be able to participate in the meeting. We also need someone available here to swear her in so we can move on and have someone representing District 13.”

***Council Clerk Sherell Jordan stated***, “Mr. Chairman, we do have more than one person that have offered to be interim. His name is Mr. Darryl Huckby. He spoke at the last meeting.”

***Councilman Jimmie Edwards stated***, “Mr. Huckby is not planning on running. He just want to finish the term.

***Councilman Harold Taylor stated***, “There were 3 people here. Mr. LeFleur, Mr. Blanchard,

Mr. Huckby and they said that they were seeking the office. I think that is when I made the dissertation about we should appoint someone that is not going to run. That is where this all came in. I think that we have a motion and a second, I think that we should just vote on it, if it fails then we will do something else.”

A motion was made by Councilman Wayne Ardoin, seconded by Councilman Harold Taylor to forward to Regular Meeting held on ***Wednesday August 16th, 2023*** to appoint Mr. Darrell Huckaby or Ms. E. Lynn Lejeune to fill the seat for the remainder of a 4 year term expiring January 1, 2024 for Councilman District 13.

On roll call vote: **YEAS**: Nancy Carriere, Easton Shelvin, Mildred Thierry, Harold Taylor,

Gil Savoy, Alvin Stelly, Vivian Olivier, Wayne Ardoin, Dexter Brown, Timmy Lejeune and Jimmie Edwards. **NAYS**: None. **ABSENT**: Coby Clavier. **ABSTAINED**: None.

WHEREUPON, this motion was adopted on this, the 9th, day of August, 2023.

***Chairman Jerry Red Jr., stated***, “Whoever wins we will have a judge at the meeting and we will sweat that person in so they can join in on the meeting.

1. **ADJOURN:**

A motion was made by Councilman Dexter Brown, seconded by Councilman Wayne Ardoin,

to adjourn the Special Meeting.

On roll call vote: **YEAS**: Nancy Carriere, Easton Shelvin, Mildred Thierry, Harold Taylor,

Gil Savoy, Alvin Stelly, Vivian Olivier, Wayne Ardoin, Dexter Brown, Timmy Lejeune and Jimmie Edwards. **NAYS**: None. **ABSENT**: Coby Clavier. **ABSTAINED**: None.

WHEREUPON, this motion was adopted on this, the 9th, day of August, 2023.