

Parish President Jessie Bellard was absent for this meeting

**ST. LANDRY PARISH COUNCIL
ADMINISTRATIVE/FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 3, 2024
OLD CITY MARKET, 131 W. BELLEVUE ST.
OPELOUSAS, LOUISIANA**

ADMINISTRATIVE/FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

1. Administrative Finance Chairman Harold Taylor called this meeting of the Administrative/Finance Committee of the St. Landry Parish Council to order.

Councilwoman Mildred Thierry led the Pledge of Allegiance & Invocation

2. **Roll Call:** Nancy Carriere, Faltery Jolivette, Harold Taylor, Ken Marks, Dexter Brown and Ernest Blanchard. Ex-Officio Wayne Ardoin. **ABSENT:** None.
3. **Person to address the Committee.**
Laruby May – Class Action Lawsuit Against Insulin Manufacturers and Providers was not available to address the council..

4. **Parish President & Finance Reports:**

Mr. Van Reed stated, “I am acting for Jessie while he is out. He could not make it to the meeting tonight so he asked me to step in. I am going to turn the meeting over to Ms. Cynthia, she has some adjudicated property stuff to talk to you all about.”

Ms. Cynthia Fontenot, Code Enforcement Officer stated, “Good afternoon Mr. Chairman, fellow council and acting President. This afternoon if you will look in front of you I did place a copy of an Affidavit of an adjoining landowner that was presented to St. Landry Parish Government by Ms. Rachel Clark. She owns the property at 240 Nimitz Street, Eunice, Parcel No, 060075709, she is requesting that she would be approved. We are asking for a special ordinance for her to purchase the property with Parcel No. 8600742500. If you would look at that attached Assessment Sheet the value of this property according to the St. Landry Parish Assessors site is \$4,600.00. Are there any questions?”

Administrative Finance Chairman Harold Taylor stated, “Counselor, have you reviewed this?”

Legal Counsel Garrett Duplechain stated, “Yes, the adjoining property owner, right.”

Ms. Cynthia Fontenot, Code Enforcement Officer stated, “Yes sir.”

Legal Counsel Garrett Duplechain stated, “You and I spoke about it earlier. We spoke to our Council Clerk and we have the information for that ordinance to start the process for the adjoining property. We also have the list of adjudicated properties that is going to be put up for sale so we can do that ordinance for all on the **April 17th, 2024** meeting.”

Administrative Finance Chairman Harold Taylor stated, “Do we have a motion to send it to the full council?”

A motion was made by Councilman Ken Marks, seconded by Councilman Faltery Jolivette to forward to Regular Meeting held on **Wednesday April 17th, 2024** to introduce an Ordinance to sell a parcel of adjoining property to Ms. Rachel Clark, Parcel No. 8600742500.

On roll call vote: YEAS: Nancy Carriere, Faltery Jolivette, Ken Marks, Dexter Brown, and Ernest Blanchard. **NAYS:** None. **ABSENT:** None. **ABSTAINED:** None.

Motion forwarded.

Ms. Cynthia Fontenot, Code Enforcement Officer stated, “The next thing I know is that Attorney Duplechain just mentioned about the properties that presenting to the council and asked for an introduction of ordinance to sell these properties on April 17th, 2024. You will see attached it is going to be for the sale date of June 27th, 2024 at 6:00 p.m. There is a list of properties. You will note that whatever properties the bids do not begin at \$500.00. They have an amount and that is where the bid is going to start. You will see that I attached an Assessment Sheet for each property so that you can get an idea and look at the documents and see where those properties are located. I did place it all on the sheet on the front but I did attached that sheet. If you see those different amounts that mean that we did some demolition, clean up or something and the parish would like to be reimbursed for that and that is where the bids would start at that amount. We are presenting it to you all and asking for that introduction to be presented at the April 17th, 2024 meeting.”

Administrative Finance Chairman Harold Taylor stated, “Do you need any action on this?”

Ms. Cynthia Fontenot, Code Enforcement Officer stated, “Yes sir.”

Administrative Finance Chairman Harold Taylor stated, Counsel, are you familiar with everything that is legal on this?”

Legal Counsel Garrett Duplechain stated, “Yes. Which one are you addressing again?”

Ms. Cynthia Fontenot, Code Enforcement Officer stated, “That is the one with the list of the properties that we need to get an introduction of the ordinance on the April 17th 2024 meeting.”

Legal Counsel Garrett Duplechain stated, “Yes, that ordinance is to be introduced April 17th, 2024 for those adjudicated properties. That is correct so you all can pass it to that date.”

Administrative Finance Chairman Harold Taylor stated, “Well if it is going to be introduced it does not need any action for the Committee. It can be introduced by any councilmember.”

Legal Counsel Garrett Duplechain stated, “This is just for your information. It will be introduced at the April 17th, 2024 meeting.”

Administrative Finance Chairman Harold Taylor stated, “Is there anything else?”

Ms. Cynthia Fontenot, Code Enforcement Officer stated, “No sir.”

Administrative Finance Chairman Harold Taylor stated, “Thank you.”

Mr. Van Reed stated, “You should have in front of you the Finances for the month of February. It should be in front of you.”

Administrative Finance Chairman Harold Taylor stated, “Does that conclude your report?”

Mr. Van Reed stated, “That does. I was waiting to see if there were any questions?”

Administrative Finance Chairman Harold Taylor stated, “I have a few questions. I have been out of town for eight days and I did not get to make the meeting that Jessie presented on the budget but I do have a question. I did get a copy this afternoon and I had ask Jessie to give us a copy of the December 31st, 2023 Actuals along with the Balance Sheets on each of the funds, can we get that? The date on this is October 31st, 2023 so we had a few more months that we have not seen what we received or did not receive or did not spend. It is absolutely necessary that we have the real numbers and of course the Charter requires you to have it to us by the end of March so it is a double whammy if we don't get it. Thank you.”

Mr. Van Reed stated, “Yes, we can take care of that for you.”

A motion was made by Councilman Ken Marks, seconded by Councilman Faltery Jolivette to accept the Parish President & Finance Report:

On roll call vote: YEAS: Nancy Carriere, Faltery Jolivette, Ken Marks, Dexter Brown, and Ernest Blanchard. **NAYS:** None. **ABSENT:** None. **ABSTAINED:** None.

Motion carried.

5. **Forward all applications received for one appointment to the St. Landry Parish Solid Waste Disposal District for the remainder of a four-year term expiring 09-02-2026.**

A motion was made by Councilman Faltery Jolivette, seconded by Councilman Ernest Blanchard to forward to Regular Meeting held on **Wednesday, April 17th, 2024** to forward all applications received for one appointment to the St. Landry Parish Solid Waste Disposal District for the remainder of a four-year term expiring 09-02-2026.

On roll call vote: YEAS: Nancy Carriere, Faltery Jolivette, Ken Marks, Dexter Brown, and Ernest Blanchard. **NAYS:** None. **ABSENT:** None. **ABSTAINED:** None.

Motion forwarded.

6. **Forward all applications received for one appointment to the Teche-Vermilion Pumping Station. (No term set).**

A motion was made by Councilman Ken Marks, seconded by Councilman Ernest Blanchard to forward to Regular Meeting held on **Wednesday, April 17th, 2024** to forward all applications received for one appointment to the Teche-Vermilion Pumping Station. (No term set).

On roll call vote: YEAS: Nancy Carriere, Faltery Jolivette, Dexter Brown, and Ernest Blanchard **NAYS:** None. **ABSENT:** Harold Taylor. **ABSTAINED:** None.

Motion forwarded.

7. **Discuss the CEA between the St. Landry Parish Government and the City of Opelousas for Wastewater Treatment Facility. (Chairman Wayne Ardoin).**

Chairman Wayne Ardoin stated, “Thank you Mr. Chairman. I have some minutes here that I think we need to verify. In September of 2020 there was a Cooperative Endeavor Agreement between Central St. Landry Economic Develop District at the request of Mr. Helton to do a Cooperative Endeavor Agreement between the Parish and the City in reference to this Sewer Plant that is located on the South end of Opelousas on the West side of I-49. They also have some minutes that says a motion was made by Councilman Wayne Ardoin and seconded by Councilwoman Mildred Thierry to authorize the Parish President to sign a CEA between the Parish and the City for the Waste Water Treatment Facility and Associated Improvements. I understand that nothing has been done. I discussed it with the Parish President at our meeting last Thursday. We had a meeting with a couple of Councilmembers, Mr. Jody White was there and myself and Ms. Milburn and the Parish President. He is under the assumption or he advised that Mr. Pierson’s, his attorney advised that the city cannot take over this Water System even though it was done as an Cooperative Endeavor Agreement. We have to keep this system for 10 years before we can turn it over to the city. I asked him that day and Ms. Milburn is here to attest that we get an Attorney General’s Opinion on that. Before the Attorney General Opinion letter from Mr. Pierson’s whoever, I have never met him I don’t think, that we look at and get our attorney to approve it before it is sent out to the Attorney General. I thought it was our understanding as councilmembers and some of them are not here anymore that this Waste Water Treatment Facility money was received by the parish and Central St. Landry Economic that that Plant was going to be turned over to the city being they are operating it at this time and they are collecting the money from its works and we should not accept this Plant. I am asking you as the Committee and I was at that meeting and I don’t know if it was discussed at any other meeting that we look at getting an Attorney General’s Opinion and ask where are we at on this. I see Mayor Alsandor is here. Mayor would you like to shed some light? Do you want to come up to the mic and shed some light before a vote is taken or before we send it to the full council?”

Opelousas Mayor Julius Alsandor stated, “Good evening Mr. Chairman and to the board and to the audience. Thank you for allowing me to say a few words. I am not going to

duplicate everything that you said Mr. Ardoin but that is the case. The CEA was voted on by this council back in September of 2020. There was an understanding through that language that once this Sewer Plant was completed in its entirety that it would be turned over to the city for the entire operation run and becoming part of the city itself. That paperwork unfortunately it has not been signed over yet to us but as I stand in front of you all today we are doing everything that we can to make sure that that plant is operated at the best of its ability and provide the services that needs to be provided to those that needs service on the South side of town. We just want some closure on this so we can move forward. Everything that you stated is a fact.”

Mr. Van Reed stated, “My understanding is that Lance is working on that request from the Attorney General. Lance Pierson, the Attorney.”

Administrative Finance Chairman Harold Taylor stated, “He does not represent us does he? What about our attorney, is he involved in this?”

Legal Counsel Garrett Duplechain stated, “I have spoken to Bruce Gaudin who represents the Central Economic Development District. I have gotten his side of it and I reviewed the Resolution that is drawn up by Mr. Pierson. I will approve it if it needs to be approved so that the council can seek an opinion from an Attorney General as to whether this facility and the land that it sits on should be turned over to the city. I have been in contact with Mr. Gaudin who is on one side of this and I will contact Mr. Pierson who is on the other side. If the Attorney General’s Opinion is what the council seeks to have then I will review all documents requesting that opinion which would be a Resolution. If that is the way the council wants to go we can go forward to seek an Attorney General’s Opinion on this matter to see whether or not this facility and land should be turned over to the City of Opelousas.”

Administrative Finance Chairman Harold Taylor stated, “I have a few questions if you don’t mind. I am looking at the Resolution dated August 19th, 2020 where St. Landry Parish Council resolves and authorizes St. Landry Parish Designee Amanda Cain to Execute the Cash Sale for Lot 30-B in the Linwood Subdivision for \$4,000.00, was that Executed? Was the lot purchased? Can you tell us?”

Mr. Frank D. ‘Buddy’ Helton addressed the council and stated, “Good afternoon, Frank D. Buddy Helton. I Chair the Central St. Landry Economic Development District. Pretty much everybody in here knows me. I see a few new faces that don’t know me. With that being said as it relates to that lot in the Linwood Subdivision that was purchased for the relocation of a Forced Sewer Main which services some of the old original what they call Linwood West. The pump that was originally put in the ground next to the Coolie or the Bayou or whatever, Bayou Callahan right there was problematic because it flooded. We purchased that and when I say We, CSLED paid for that and purchased that under the Parishes Name.”

Administrative Finance Chairman Harold Taylor stated, “In other words we were just a past through.”

Mr. Frank D. ‘Buddy’ Helton stated, “You all were the past through. At the end of the day this no money came out of pocket from Parish Funds that were not allocated from Capital Outlay from the State. None of your local taxing money that was dedicated to the Parish was used. It was all Capital Outlay and CSLED’s match. We also purchased cash sale the property, the acreage from Mike Richard where the actual Treatment Facility sits and we furnished all of the funding for that but it was put in the Parishes Name in lieu of being transferred upon completion by the agreement to the City. This Plant was set up and permitted through the city who has the correct operators and such and it actually initially redirected Existing City Sewer Services to that facility. It used old existing to service that facility.”

Administrative Finance Chairman Harold Taylor stated, “I understand. I have a couple of more possibilities here. So Parish Government has no skin in the game as far as money is concerned for this facility is that correct, your understanding.”

Mr. Frank D. 'Buddy' Helton stated, "Short of Capital Outlay as it pass through, no sir."

Administrative Finance Chairman Harold Taylor stated, "As it pass through from the state. How much did you guys put in?"

Mr. Frank D. 'Buddy' Helton stated, "We as to date put over \$2,000,000.00."

Administrative Finance Chairman Harold Taylor stated, "Two Million and what was the amount from the State?"

Mr. Frank D. 'Buddy' Helton stated, "The state, the first one we put up I think 3 or 4 hundred thousand and we got 1.3. The second part was totally us."

Administrative Finance Chairman Harold Taylor stated, "Excuse me for interrupting but I am trying to get through this logically. You all put up the money, the state put up the money, passed through us to pay the bills and when it was all over there were documentation where the council authorized the parish to give it to the city is that correct?"

Mr. Frank D. 'Buddy' Helton stated, "That is correct."

Administrative Finance Chairman Harold Taylor stated, "So what are we arguing about here can you tell us Van? Why do we want that thing we don't have anybody that know anything about sewer. I was a Mayor for about 30 years and I can tell you about the Sewer. It is not a money making business. This parish has no expertise in it what so ever. It would take us two or three hundred thousand dollars just to staff up to run the thing. This is ridiculous."

Councilwoman Nancy Carriere stated, "I do remember the meeting and I remember us voting on it. I remember us agreeing to turn it over to the city. I guess I did not hear your response Van of what we are going to be doing with it. Why is there a disagreement or an argument? I think if we pull the cart before the horse because we did vote on it. I know that you mentioned something about 10 years."

Mr. Van Reed stated, "I am not aware of it. I would have to defer that to Jessie who would have to get back to you on that. I can't answer these questions right now."

Councilwoman Nancy Carriere stated, "I think that question that Mr. Ardoin was bringing up was that when the attorneys do draw up the letter to the Attorney General we would look over it first and let our attorney approve the letter."

Chairman Wayne Ardoin stated, "We want to make sure that the right verbiage is in it. Out of all due respect for Mr. Reed he just came on board this evening. It was discussed in our meeting. Mr. Jody White is not here but Ms. Milburn is here and Jessie well said that our attorney said that we have to keep for 10 years. I asked why and that is when I suggested that we get an Attorney General's Opinion. The minutes are here and the CEA is here, we need to move on it. We are not in the Sewer Business."

Administrative Finance Chairman Harold Taylor stated, "Are there any other questions? One thing we can consider ladies and gentlemen of the council is that in April we can offer an ordinance authorizing this facility to be given to the city and let them weight it out in court if they would like. I understand Jessie's point that it was done by Resolution, is that what you understand Van? So all we have to do is change the Resolution to an Ordinance. In good faith we all voted for this and now we are going back on our word. It just does not make sense ladies and gentlemen. I will sponsor the Ordinance, Counselor will you get me one ready. Thank you. Are there any other questions? Anyone else? Thank you very much."

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

9. **Adjourn.**

A motion was made by Councilman Ken Marks, seconded by Councilwoman Nancy Carriere to adjourn the Administrative/Finance Committee Meeting.

On roll call vote: YEAS: Nancy Carriere, Faltery Jolivette, Ken Marks, Dexter Brown, and Ernest Blanchard **NAYS:** None. **ABSENT:** None. **ABSTAINED:** None.

Motion carried.

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