

**ST. LANDRY PARISH COUNCIL
PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE MEETING
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 5th, 2025
OLD CITY MARKET, 131 W. BELLEVUE ST.
OPELOUSAS, LOUISIANA**

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

1. Chairman Jody White called this meeting of the Public Works Committee of the St. Landry Parish Council to order.
2. **Pledge of Allegiance and Invocation was said earlier in Special Meeting.**
3. **Roll Call:** Nancy Carriere, Mildred Thierry, Alvin Stelly, Vivian Olivier, Wayne Ardoin and Jimmie Edwards. Ex-Officio Jody White. ABSENT: None.
4. **Elect Chairman:**

Chairman Jody White stated, “We need to elect a Chairman.”

Councilman Wayne Ardoin stated, “If I am in order I nominate Ms. Nancy Carriere.”

Councilman Alvin Stelly stated, “Second.”

Chairman Jody White stated, “Are there any other nominations?”

Councilman Wayne Ardoin stated, “Mr. Chairman I move that the nominations to be closed.”

Councilwoman Mildred Thierry stated, “Second.”

A motion was made by Councilman Wayne Ardoin, seconded by Councilwoman Mildred Thierry to close all nominations and elect Councilwoman Nancy Carriere as the Public Works Chairwoman for 2025.”

On roll call vote: YEAS: Nancy Carriere, Mildred Thierry, Alvin Stelly, Vivian Olivier Wayne Ardoin, and Jimmie Edwards. **NAYS:** None. **ABSENT:** None. **ABSTAINED:** None. **Motion carried.**

5. **PROCLAMATION TO BALFA**

Chairman Jody White stated, “At this time we have a Proclamation and the parties are available for the Proclamation.”

“Good evening, my name is Jeanne Solis I am the Executive Director of the Louisiana Folk Roots Organization. Thank you so much for having us here this evening. First of all, you should have got a flyer that looks like this and we will talk briefly about that. I would first like to know how many know about Louisiana Folk Roots? Have any of you heard of Louisiana Folk Roots before? Ok well this is a great opportunity to let you know about some of the cultural economy and activities we are involved in St. Landry Parish. We are here on behalf of Dewey Balfa Cajun and Creole Heritage Week which will take place at the end of March in St. Landry Parish. We are very grateful for the support that tourism has provided for us and we also want to let you know we have another activity that we started about three years ago which is our kids camp. That is the very beginning of our cultural music, workforce development where we teach kids ages 8-14 how to the accordion, how to play the fiddle, how to use a rub board, a t-far, how to sing in French, how to dance, and do a show for their Mommy’s, Daddy’s, and Grandparents at the end of it. Our third kids camp in Eunice, La this summer. We started in Opelousas three years ago and it has been going on in Lafayette for about fifteen years. Thank you again for the Parish Support and Tourist Commission Support in making this possible. I am joined this evening by one of our Folk Roots board members Colby Martin who will be assisting with the proclamation reading. Thank you so much for your support in creating a Proclamation for the Dewey Balfa Cajun

and Creole Heritage Week. We do have a little sign down here and I would love to do a photo afterwards if that is possible and Harlen thank you so much also.

PROCLAMATION

Whereas, the mission of Louisiana Folk Roots, Inc., a non-profit organization, is to nurture, share and perpetuate Louisiana's traditional cultural expressions with an emphasis on Cajun and Creole Heritage through performances and related educational activities, and

Whereas, the 2025 Dewey Balfa Cajun & Creole Heritage Week activities will be based in the City of Eunice, in St. Landry Parish, and

Whereas, the Dewey Balfa Cajun & Creole Heritage Week has a positive impact on the region's music industry, tourism, and folk life activities, and

Whereas, we stand together in supporting a vibrant cultural economy that engages local residents with visitors to St. Landry Parish,

THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED, that the week of Monday, March 24th - Friday, March 28th, 2025, is designated as "Dewey Balfa Cajun & Creole Heritage Week in St. Landry Parish, Louisiana.

Chairman Jody White stated, "In reference to the Proclamation we are going to have that Proclamation read in French at this point. Ms. Jeannie Solis read the Proclamation in French."

Councilman Faltery Jolivette questioned, "Can you repeat the dates in March."

Ms. Jeanne Solis stated, "Monday, March 24, 2025 to Friday, March 28, 2025."

Chairman Jody White stated, "I think all of the councilmembers have a form in front of you them. That will give you all the dates and more information in reference to the events."

Councilman Ken Marks questioned, "Would this be annually?"

Ms. Jeanne Solis stated, "Yes, it is annual."

Councilman Ken Marks stated, "Are you considering coming east along 190 to have something in Opelousas similar to that type of situation?"

Ms. Jeanne Solis stated, "That is a great question, Louisiana Folk Roots is now 25 years old and we will be celebrating our 25th anniversary. There are only 4 locations in South Louisiana for the Dewey Balfa Cajun & Creole Heritage Week. So post pandemic when our board of directors were exploring what is the right thing to do we looked at different parishes and decided on St. Landry. This is our third year hosting it here and the board is interesting in continuing it for another 3-5 years so we need you. Last year we had folks from 7 countries, 20 different states including Louisiana participating. We had about 700 folks during the week, it is very much an education base activity. At night there are dances with top notch bands open to the public. It does have an impact and we hope to be staying here in St. Landry Parish."

Councilman Jimmie Edwards questioned, "Where will it be located?"

Ms. Jeanne Solis stated, "The camp will kick off on the Monday at the National Park Service, Prairie Acadian Cultural Center with a day in Louisiana French. We will be learning French all together and then we will go over to Lake View Park for the Education and Dancing during the week."

Councilwoman Mildred Thierry questioned, “Did you all get this information out to the schools in the area?”

Ms. Jeanne Solis stated, “Certainly we could use help with that.”

Councilwoman Mildred Thierry stated, “Maybe you all could get some flyers within the schools for the kid camps.”

Ms. Jeanne Solis stated, “Absolutely. We do offer a couple of scholarships. We have generous help from this community right here and others who make it possible for some kids to attend who may not be able to attend. We have a partnership with UL College in music for the Accordions and other instruments because not everybody has an accordion lying around so we do make those available to the kids.”

Councilwoman Vivian Olivier questioned, “If we wanted to send a donation where would we send it?”

Ms. Jeanne Solis stated, “Louisiana Folk Roots and I would be happy to work with you on that.”

Councilwoman Mildred Thierry stated, “Just for a suggestion should you decide that you are going to get this into the schools an easier way would be to get it to the Central Office. Each school has a box and anything that comes there they would put it into the box and it is delivered to each school. That way you all would not have to go to each individual school. Just bring enough fliers to the Central Office to cover each school.”

Ms. Jeanne Solis stated, “Good advice, thank you.”

Councilman Dexter Brown stated, “To piggy-back on what Ms. Mildred said, one school that they won’t need to bring fliers to is the Great Eunice High School, I can do that tomorrow morning. So I have Eunice High School covered for you all. Is there a cost for this camp?”

Ms. Jeanne Solis stated, “Yes, there are tuitions for the camps. They are all inclusive as far as the meals and the classes and things like that. It does not cover your lodging or transportation. We have tuition rates from 1 day up to the whole week. Some people like to come for 2 days or 3 days. We also offer student discounts and group discounts.”

Councilman Dexter Brown questioned, “They just have to scan this QR Code or go to the website and everything is there. We have some great members from Eunice on our council and we would all be willing to help you. We have some members from Eunice here and also the Eunice City Council is a great group of individuals alongside Mr. Scott Fontenot, the Mayor. He would give you anything that you may need.”

Ms. Jeanne Solis stated, “Thank you, I will remind him of that because we did visit there two weeks ago.”

Councilman Dexter Brown stated, “I will pass this on to Eunice High School and the area elementary schools. My principal Ms. Irma Trosclair is our Principal Supervisor and she can get that as well.”

Ms. Jeanne Solis stated, “That is wonderful. Thank you so much Mr. Dexter. The Eunice camp will kick off July 21st, 2025.”

Councilwoman Vivian Olivier stated, “I would like some fliers to put out at our schools in Sunset. How do I get them?”

Ms. Jeanne Solis stated, “We have a board member there who will make sure that will happen. Ms. Christine Dugas in Sunset. I will make sure of that. You all have been awesome. Thank you all so much for the support tonight.”

Public Works Chairwoman Nancy Carriere stated, “We will begin our Public Works Meeting.”

Council Clerk Sherell Jordan stated, “Ms. Carriere, you have a paper to amend the agenda.” Mr. Jimmie, can you pass that paper down to Ms. Nancy. Do you have the paper?”

Ms. Cynthia Joubert stated, “It is to amend the agenda to add Blighted Property. We have one on the agenda already. I can do it at that time if it is okay to amend the agenda to add that item.”

Councilman Wayne Ardoin stated, “Can you come to the Microphone.”

Ms. Cynthia Joubert stated, “A document was given to Mr. Jimmie Edwards and he was going to request to amend the agenda to add another Blighted Property. We have one on the agenda already. If you all would like to do it at that time.”

Councilman Wayne Ardoin stated, “I am going to make a motion to amend the Public Works Agenda to let Ms. Cynthia Joubert bring up her Blighted Properties.”

Councilwoman Mildred Thierry stated, “Second.”

A motion was made by Councilman Wayne Ardoin, seconded by Councilwoman Mildred Thierry to amend the Public Works Agenda to add an additional Blight Property located at 154 Tesson Street, Parcel No. 0105083000.

On roll call vote: YEAS: Mildred Thierry, Alvin Stelly, Vivian Olivier, Wayne Ardoin, and Jimmie Edwards **NAYS:** None. **ABSENT:** None. **ABSTAINED:** None.

Motion forwarded.

6. Person to address the Committee:
None.

7. Public Works Report:

Mr. Barry Soileau, Public Works Director addressed the council. He stated, “For the month of January we:

Boom Axed	3 Roads
Culvert Cleaned	4 Roads
Culvert Installation	10 Roads
Debris Removal	53 Roads
Ditching	5 Roads
Grading	84 Roads
Material Spreading	6 Roads
Patching	3 Roads
Sign Installation	23 Roads
Tree Removal	6 Roads
Washout	5 Roads

For the snow we graded several miles of snow that we graded and the Highway Department also. I don’t have the exact miles but we did about three days of grading. That is it.”

Public Works Chairwoman Nancy Carriere stated, “Does anyone have any questions?”

Councilman Ken Marks stated, “It was a very texting situation with the amount of snow that we had and the shutdowns. Basically I want to commend you all for doing what you did and the citizens for not getting on the highway at that time and listening to the authorities to keep them safe. This was unprecedented as well as anybody knows but it is a learning curb that we have and again I want to commend you guys for what you all did.”

Public Works Director Barry Soileau stated, “I want to also add that everyone that I called at the Road Districts assisted me without hesitation and I want to thank them for doing that because we worked as a team and they came when we called them. We work well together as a parish.”

Councilman Ken Marks stated, “Councilman I will agree.”

A motion was made by Councilman Jimmie Edwards, seconded by Councilman Wayne Ardoin to accept the Public Works Report.

On roll call vote: YEAS: Mildred Thierry, Alvin Stelly, Vivian Olivier, Wayne Ardoin, and Jimmie Edwards. **NAYS:** None. **ABSENT:** None. **ABSTAINED:** None.

Motion carried.

8. **Discuss creating an Ordinance to amend the speed limit on Compress Road. The speed limit in the school zone should be 20 mph within 500 feet on each end of the schools property. A sign should be placed at each end. (Councilwoman Mildred Thierry).**

Councilwoman Mildred Thierry stated, “I would like to forward this to the full council to amend the speed limit ordinance on Compress Road to where it will state 20 mph within the school zone. Within 500 feet of each end of the school property and a sign will be placed.

Public Works Chairwoman Nancy Carriere questioned, “Ms. Thierry would you like to include a certain time or all day.”

Councilwoman Mildred Thierry stated, “No, No time. All day. I had that discussion with Barry. Sometimes you may have activities going on after hours.”

A motion was made by Councilwoman Mildred Thierry, seconded by Councilman Alvin Stelly to forward to Regular Meeting held on **Wednesday, February 15th, 2025** to authorize Legal Counsel to create an Ordinance to amend the speed limit on Compress Road. The speed limit in the school zone should be 20 mph within 500 feet on each end of the schools property. A sign should be placed at each end.

On roll call vote: YEAS: Mildred Thierry, Alvin Stelly, Vivian Olivier, Wayne Ardoin, and Jimmie Edwards **NAYS:** None. **ABSENT:** None. **ABSTAINED:** None.

Motion forwarded.

9. **Update on cleaning Bayou Carron. (Councilwoman Mildred Thierry).**

Councilwoman Mildred Thierry stated, “Mr. Bellard, where are we with that? I know several times it had been approved but we never did make it to the next phase.”

Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “We started on Bayou Mallet a couple of weeks back. They are in that portion right now and they are going to go to Bayou Carron shortly after this is done. It is in the process and it is getting done. The contractors are ready to go.”

Councilwoman Mildred Thierry stated, “Okay, Thank you.”

10. **Discuss and forward to Full Council the donation of Parish Adjudicated Property at the corner of Pernie Bailey Road and Highway 190 to District 6 Public Works commission.**

Councilman Ken Marks stated, “That is something that I wanted to discuss if I can get the floor. Our District 6 Public Works had approached us on the possibility of taking a look in our parish for property and accessibility that they can take a look at for possibly purchasing down the road. I did call the Parish President Jessie Bellard about that initially and the Chairman for the District, Jason Fritzgerald and I reached out to our lawyer to start researching the property as a Feasibility Study and see if we can go forward with it. I don’t know if you want to offer anything now but we are still in the process I guess.”

Legal Counsel Garrett Duplechain stated, “So the council needs to forward this to the Full Council Meeting on February 19th, 2025 and vote to go forward with it. It has been entailed for an Ordinance to convey the ownership of the property to that commission for a public purpose, so you can do this for a public purpose, and also it will entail an Intergovernmental Agreement between the Parish Government and that Commission for a public purpose. It is adjudicated property and you can donate adjudicated property. A notice will go out to the newspaper and a letter to the former owners who lost it notifying them that they have 60 days to redeem it if they can. Our Council Clerk and I take care of that, we know how to do that. It was adjudicated to St. Landry Parish Government in 1993 so I don’t think they are going to redeem it or not. It was owned by Estee K. Industries. The end of the process is a no warranty active

donation where the ownership would be transferred. The only thing that the parish government warrants is that it won't lose it because it was alienated before the conveyance but it is by statute and by donation a non-warranty act of donation and that is how the process finishes whenever this property is going to be donated to the commission for a public purpose. We will begin this on February 19th, and you have to give them 60 days to redeem it. In 3 months it will end with an ordinance and an Act of Donation. It is just like whenever we had the property on Bernice Street, the City of Opelousas that we donated to the city for that sewage treatment plant. It is the same thing only this is adjudicated property."

Councilman Ken Marks questioned, "Ms. Cynthia, were you aware of that particular property prior to tonight or are you just hearing about it now?"

Ms. Cynthia Joubert stated, "No Sir, I am aware."

Councilman Ken Marks stated, "Jessie do you have anything that you want to say."

Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, "We have these liens against the property. We send letters to DEQ to get these liens released. Until that happens I don't think that we take ownership of it because we don't want to have those liens. I think that we will be okay."

Councilman Ken Marks stated, "Okay, sounds great. It is about 6.5 acres. The locations is being asked about. It is at the corner of HWY 190 and Pernie Bailey Road which is just east of Port Barre. Once you leave the caution light on the left."

A motion was made by Councilman Wayne Ardoin, seconded by Councilman Alvin Stelly to forward to Regular Meeting held on **Wednesday, February 19th, 2025** authorizing Legal Counsel Garrett Duplechain to create an ordinance to donate Parish Adjudicated Property at the Corner of Pernie Bailey Road and HWY 190 to District 6 Public Works Commission.

On roll call vote: YEAS: Mildred Thierry, Alvin Stelly, Vivian Olivier, Wayne Ardoin, and Jimmie Edwards **NAYS:** None. **ABSENT:** None. **ABSTAINED:** None.

Motion forwarded.

11. Authorize the Council Clerk to advertise for five appointments to the St. Landry Parish Waterworks District No. 5 for a three-year term. (4-21-2025 -04-21-2028).

A motion was made by Councilwoman Mildred Thierry, seconded by Councilman Jimmie Edwards to forward to Regular Meeting held on **Wednesday, February 19th, 2025** to authorize the Council Clerk to advertise for five appointments to the St. Landry Parish Waterworks District No. 5 for a three-year term. (04-21-2025 – 04-21-2028).

On roll call vote: YEAS: Mildred Thierry, Alvin Stelly, Vivian Olivier, Wayne Ardoin, and Jimmie Edwards **NAYS:** None. **ABSENT:** None. **ABSTAINED:** None.

Motion forwarded.

12. Authorize the Council Clerk to advertise for two appointments to Ward Two Gravity Drainage District No. 1 for a four-year term. (04-19-2025 – 04-19-2029).

A motion was made by Councilwoman Mildred Thierry, seconded by Councilman Jimmie Edwards to forward to Regular Meeting held on **Wednesday, February 19th, 2025** to authorize the Council Clerk to advertise for two appointments to Ward Two Gravity Drainage District No. 1 for a four-year term. (04-21-2025 – 04-21-2029).

On roll call vote: YEAS: Mildred Thierry, Alvin Stelly, Vivian Olivier, Wayne Ardoin, and Jimmie Edwards **NAYS:** None. **ABSENT:** None. **ABSTAINED:** None.

Motion forwarded.

13. Forward all applications received for one appointment to Ward 3 Consolidated Gravity Drainage District No. 1 for the remainder of a four-year term. James Keith Richard has resigned. (12-21-2024 – 12-21-2028).

A motion was made by Councilman Wayne Ardoin, seconded by Councilwoman Mildred Thierry to forward to Regular Meeting held on **Wednesday, February 19th, 2025** all applications received for one appointment to Ward 3 Consolidated Gravity Drainage District No. 1 for the remainder of a four-year term. (12-21-2024 – 12-21-2028).

On roll call vote: YEAS: Mildred Thierry, Alvin Stelly, Vivian Olivier, Wayne Ardoin, and Jimmie Edwards **NAYS:** None. **ABSENT:** None. **ABSTAINED:** None.
Motion forwarded.

14. Authorize the Council Clerk to send a certified letter to Joseph Hayes III and Elizabeth Jones advising them to come and address the council regarding debris removal on the property located at 190 Veterans Drive Opelousas, LA 70570. Parcel No. 0104946000.

A motion was made by Councilman Jimmie Edwards, seconded by Councilwoman Mildred Thierry to forward to Regular Meeting held on *Wednesday, February 19th, 2025* to authorize the Council Clerk to send a certified letter to Joseph Hayes III and Elizabeth Jones advising them to come and address the council regarding debris removal on the property located at 190 Veterans Dive, Opelousas, LA 70570. Parcel No. 0104946000.

On roll call vote: YEAS: Mildred Thierry, Alvin Stelly, Vivian Olivier, Wayne Ardoin, and Jimmie Edwards **NAYS:** None. **ABSENT:** None. **ABSTAINED:** None.
Motion forwarded.

15. Discuss any other business properly brought before this committee.

Cynthia Fontenot Code Enforcement Officer stated, “We had that additional property. It is Parcel No. 0105083000. The physical address is 154 Tesson Street. You will see in your packet that Parish Government is requesting at this time that the council will send notice to the property owner. In reference to the Tesson Street I did do some research and the parties are deceased but we have to go through the process. You will also see the photographs attached.”

A motion was made by Councilman Wayne Ardoin, seconded by Councilwoman Mildred Thierry for forward to Regular Meeting held *on Wednesday, February 19th, 2025* to authorize the Council Clerk to send a certified letter to 154 Tesson Street, Parcel No. 0105083000.

On roll call vote: YEAS: Mildred Thierry, Alvin Stelly, Vivian Olivier, Wayne Ardoin, and Jimmie Edwards **NAYS:** None. **ABSENT:** None. **ABSTAINED:** None.
Motion forwarded.

Councilman Wayne Ardoin questioned, “Ms. Cynthia Joubert, how are you all coming along with Mayflower?”

Ms. Cynthia Joubert stated, “That is scheduled for tomorrow morning at 7:30 a.m.”

Councilman Wayne Ardoin stated, “Thank you very much.”

Councilwoman Mildred Thierry questioned, I would like to mention that I have been having conversations and over hearing conversations about the broadband and the side roads about when are they ever going to get to them. We don’t have the answer for that but they can google Louisiana Broad Band Maps and you will find the maps for the State of Louisiana and possibly find your road on that map and you will know more information than what you have now. I just wanted to say that. You can google Louisiana Broad Band Map.”

Councilman Dexter Brown stated, “I want to say thank you to the residents of St. Landry Parish for following the warnings from our snow week that we had about staying off of the roads. We minimized the accidents even though we had our Parish President on motor grader clearing off the ice and all of that but I just wanted to thank all of the residents for adhering to the warning of staying off of the roads. I would like to thank all of the local municipalities for assisting. I would like to thank the Law Enforcement Officials, the Louisiana DOTD and especially the Governor Mr. Jeff Landry for all of the resources that he put out to keep everyone safe and clearing the roadways. I would like to thank all parties involved.”

Councilman Timmy Lejeune. I would like to make sure that we understand that our staff at St. Landry Parish Government did a fabulous job. Thank you all very much.”

Councilwoman Mildred Thierry stated, “Let’s not forget our very own Mr. Bellard and his team. They did an excellent job. They were out there in the weather when we were in the comfort of our own homes. To everyone, not just parish government, not just St. Landry

Parish but everyone who played a role of helping to make sure that the people were safe, we thank you, job well done.”

Public Works Chairwoman Nancy Carriere questioned, “Mr. Bellard, how many people were in the Shelter?”

Parish President Jessie Bellard stated, “37.”

Public Works Chairwoman Nancy Carriere stated, “Are there any other questions? Roll Call Ms. Sherell.”

16. Adjourn.

A motion was made by Councilman Jimmie Edwards, seconded by Councilman Wayne Ardoin adjourn the Public Works Committee.

On roll call vote: YEAS: Mildred Thierry, Alvin Stelly, Vivian Olivier, Wayne Ardoin, and Jimmie Edwards **NAYS:** None. **ABSENT:** None. **ABSTAINED:** None.

Motion carried.

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