

GENERAL MEETING
TOWN OF MAURICE MINUTES
Wednesday, March 20, 2024

The general meeting of the officials of the Town of Maurice was opened by Mayor Neil Arsement at 6:00 p.m. at the Maurice Municipal Building, 405 Lastie Ave., Maurice, Louisiana

Mayor Arsement led the assembly in Prayer and Alderwoman Megan Landry-Lalande led the Pledge of Allegiance

Roll call of officers

Present: Mayor Neil Arsement; Alderwoman Megan Landry-Lalande; Alderman Troy Catalon; Alderman Jonathan Schlicher; Alderman Matthew Trahan; Alderman Scott Trahan

Absent: None

Also present: Melanie Denais; Joan Methvin; Nichole Bonin; Claire Meche; Shakyla Brailey; Nick Sonnier, Sellers & Associates; Richard Meche, Maintenance Supervisor; Chief Guy Nerren; John Sonnier; Kayla Link; Amanda Daigle

Public Hearing for the Purpose of: An Ordinance to Amend the Subdivision Ordinance's

Mayor Arsement announced the Public Hearing would be postponed until 6pm during the April 17, 2024 General Meeting to be held in the Town of Maurice Meeting Room, 405 Lastie Avenue, Maurice LA 70555 since Legal Ricky Lafleur was unable to attend General Meeting.

Approval General Meeting Minutes of February 21, 2024

Motion: Landry-Lalande/M. Trahan moved, seconded and carried to dispense with the reading and accept the minutes of the February 21, 2024 General Meeting as submitted. Yay-All Present

Public comment period on agenda items listed- Add item 4-b. Possible Purchase of a Vehicle; Delete items 2-a., 2-d, & 6-a.; Move items 2-b. & 2-c. under item 6;

Motion: Schlicher/Catalon moved, seconded and carried to accept the agenda as amended. Yay- All Present

Kayla Link, Vermilion Economic Development Parcel Fee- explained the importance of VEDA to the economic development of Vermilion Parish businesses. VEDA helps promote existing businesses and helps to attract new businesses to Vermilion Parish. They also work with Vermilion Parish School Board to advocate proper training for local students to gain the work skills needed to thrive in the local area. Link advised VEDA is funded by donations which are not enough to keep the organization functioning properly. She advised Council members of VEDA's attempt to have a flat parcel fee attached as a line item on Vermilion Parish property taxes. The parcel fee was placed on the March 23, 2024 ballot for voter approval. Link asked Council members to reach out with any questions about program opportunities and advised Mayor Arsement of possible grant opportunities for Maurice. Discussion was held

Nick Sonnier, Sellers & Associates- Petition for Annexation- Mr. Sonnier presented a Petition for Annexation and advised Council members if they accept the Petition, an Ordinance would need to be introduced at the April 17, 2024 General Meeting where a Public Hearing would need to be set for the May 15, 2024 General Meeting. The Parcel 1- Leblanc, Annette Trahan ETAL Property Petition for Annexation was signed by neighboring residents for consideration by Council members. Council members had questions about sewer discharge if accepted, possible capacity issues, and exact property location. Developers would bear expenses including pump upgrades if necessary. Capacity should be sufficient. Discussion was held

Motion: Landry-Lalande/S. Trahan moved, seconded, and carried to introduce an Ordinance for Annexation of the Parcel 1- Leblanc, Annette Laura Trahan ETAL Property at the April 17, 2024 General Meeting so a Public Hearing can be set. Yay- S. Trahan, Landry-Lalande, Catalon, Schlicher; Abstained- Matthew Trahan

The Charter School is interested in annexation. If proper paperwork is presented, Council members can consider the annexation in the future.

Chief Nerren Updates- Nerren discussed the data which showed Council members the number of calls Maurice Police Department receives on a daily basis. Scott Trahan and Matthew Trahan advised the data Nerren provided, shows the Maurice Dispatchers are necessary because the call volume for Maurice Police Department is extremely high and would put stress on the Vermilion Sheriff Office. Arsement advised he will look into other avenues to stabilize the Department's finances so Nerren can keep dispatchers and officers. Discussion was held

Consider Purchase of a Vehicle- Nerren advised vehicle repair costs are increasing. He looked into used units but the mileage is too high. Council members asked about fleet leasing and vehicle warranty. Nerren advised he can get the information to present to Council members but there may be an issue with the number of miles officers put on units for patrol and costs associated with leasing may not be favorable with the Town's auditors. Arsement suggested Council members consider the purchase of a new police unit instead of used. The vehicle could be paid for out of the Town's Capital Improvement budget. Arsement feels a new vehicle would be more beneficial to the Police Department. Nerren agreed that a new vehicle would cut repair costs significantly in the Department's budget. Council members would like to see the Department purchase new if possible.

Nerren advised the Police Department is hosting a Family Fun Day at Maurice Park on March 30, 2024 from 10am until 2pm. Council members suggested having North Vermilion student volunteers to help with activities. Arsement suggested putting a donation box for anyone wanting to contribute funds to the Department. Nerren also advised the Department will be having their BBQ Fundraiser on Father's Day and will announce ticket sales at a later time.

Richard Meche, Maintenance Supervisor- February 2024- 8,325,000 gallons of water produced; 6,819,868 gallons of water sold; 1,505,132 gallons of water unmetered; 18%. Meche was made aware of 2 large water leaks which is why unmetered water is high. The maintenance crew began mowing and using the sidearm to cut ditches. Meche has begun using the new excavator around Town to clean ditches. Arsement and Council members complimented the maintenance crew on their efforts. Meche asked Council members to report issues with grass and ditches. Discussion was held

Mayor Arsement- Intergovernmental Agreement- Arsement asked Council members to consider adopting a Resolution Authorizing him to enter into and sign an Intergovernmental Agreement with City of Abbeville, VPPJ, VPSB, Town of Erath, Town of Delcambre, Town of Kaplan, Town of Gueydan, and VPSO to work together to offer voluntary mutual aid assistance to each other in the case of a locally declared emergency event. Discussion was held

Motion: M. Trahan/Catalon moved, seconded, and carried to adopt a Resolution Authorizing Mayor Neil Arsement to enter into and sign an Intergovernmental Agreement with City of Abbeville, VPPJ, VPSB, Town of Erath, Town of Delcambre, Town of Kaplan, Town of Gueydan, and VPSO. Yay- S. Trahan, Landry-Lalande, Catalon, Schlicher, M. Trahan; Nay- None

Resolution Authorizing Mayor Arsement to Apply for a Town Credit Card- Arsement advised the Town is working on getting new email addresses for employees but the domain requires a credit card to be on file. He does not want to use a personal credit card in the event that he is no longer employed with the Town. The credit card would only be used for the domain filing and membership at this time. Landry-Lalande asked if a credit card policy will be established for use and was advised a policy is currently being put together for Council members to review. Arsement also advised Bank of Abbeville suggested a \$5000 credit limit. Schlicher asked about providing emails through the current Town of Maurice domain, but was informed the Town does not own the current domain. Arsement does not want to have issues in the event the current holder is terminated. Discussion was held

Motion: S. Trahan/Schlicher moved, seconded, and carried to adopt a Resolution authorizing Mayor Neil Arsement to apply and sign a credit card contract with Bank of Abbeville. Yay- Landry-Lalande, Catalon, Schlicher, M. Trahan, S. Trahan; Nay- None

Sales Tax Update- January 2024 sales tax is \$97,697.38 which is up 12.1% from last year. Arsement asked residents continue supporting local businesses. He also advised he has gotten numerous calls about when new restaurants will be coming to Maurice. Arsement advised new restaurants will not come to Maurice if the current businesses are not thriving. Discussion was held

The Fire Marshal approved the Maurice Park bathroom plans. Kim Touchet is currently reviewing plans. Winter grass is dying off and Arsement advised the Spring grass should begin growing. He also thanked the Maintenance crew for the work they are doing around Town.

Council Concerns: Schlicher asked Nerren if he has considered getting a motorcycle for the Police Department. Nerren advised he is not for the idea at this Time but has considered bicycle patrol. Catalon advised there is an alligator hanging around the Coulee near the slaughterhouse at the Lafayette Parish line on the North side of Town. The animal has also been spotted in Vincent Trace's retention pond. Nerren will call Wildlife & Fisheries to investigate and remove the animal. Matthew Trahan advised there is trash at a local business. People getting fuel are placing trash in the outside cans and garbage and is overflowing. Nichole Bonin advised the business has been partially permitted and she will contact the owner about the garbage issue. Discussion was held

Citizen Concerns: None

Motion: Schlicher/Landry-Lalande moved, seconded and carried to adjourn at 7:09 pm. Yay- All Present

s/Nichole G. Bonin

Nichole G Bonin, Assistant Clerk

s/Neil Arsement

Neil Arsement, Mayor