

GENERAL MEETING
TOWN OF MAURICE MINUTES
Wednesday, August 20, 2025

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 Alderman Matthew Trahan led the Pledge of Allegiance

Roll call of officers

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

Absent: Alderman Jonathan Schlicher

Also present: Joan Methvin; Nichole Bonin; Shakyla Cormier; Erica Arceneaux; Nick Sonnier, Sellers & Associates; Richard Meche, Maintenance Supervisor; Chief Guy Nerren; Ricky Lafleur, Legal Advisor; John Sonnier; Fire Chief David Landry; Shaun Hearon, Abbeville Meridional

Motion: Landry-Lalande/S. Trahan moved, seconded, and carried to open the Public Hearing. Yay- All Present

Public Hearing for the Purpose of:

An Ordinance to Amend the Water Use Ordinance to Increase Water or Sewer Meter Install Rates- Ricky Lafleur presented an Ordinance which allows the Town to increase meter installation costs at a rate of 20% above the total cost of meter costs and installation labor charges. If costs for parts and labor rise in the future, the ordinance also allows for an automatic increase. Arsement explained the proposed increase in meter and installation charges is due to parts and the rates of installation increase. Scott Trahan asked if meter installations greater than a 2-inch are ever presented and Meche advised 2-inch is the largest common install. Anything larger would be a special case and looked at individually. No public comments

Motion: Landry-Lalande/Catalon moved, seconded, and carried to close the Public Hearing and enter the General Meeting. Yay- All Present

Mayor Arsement asked Council members and Chief Nerren to recognize budget to actual financial statements included in their monthly binders

Approval General Meeting Minutes of July 16, 2025- No Council nor public comments

Motion: Landry-Lalande/M. Trahan moved, seconded and carried to accept the minutes of July 16, 2025, as submitted and unread. Yay-All Present

Agenda Approval- Scott Trahan asked to add item 3-b. Elaine Corners Construction Plan Approval. No public comment

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

David Landry- Maurice Volunteer Fire Chief- Updates- Landry advised Council members that the Town's Fire Rating was completed and remained at a 4. Part-time firemen have been on staff since May 30th and has helped with call response time. A total of 6 certified part-time firemen rotate out during the week and work shifts from 8am-4pm, Monday-Friday. There was an increase of at least 30 calls over the last month. The department has 20 volunteer firefighters on the roster responding to various calls, most of whom work during the daytime. The paid part-timers are necessary for daytime calls. Scott Trahan asked about plans for the department. Landry advised the goal is to have 2 people at the station 24/7 and is trying different avenues for funding to provide accurate services to the community. Landry investigated millage collected for fire protection and how funds are distributed in the parish but still has questions.

Arsement advised there is a potential to add a millage to the Town of Maurice Property Tax, but he is waiting on Chief Landry's investigation of funding before Starting any discussions with Council members and the public. Landry advised the department works on a very limited annual budget. He also advised a Ladder Truck is now necessary for the area due to larger structures being built. Grant funding for the truck is harder to get since the department does not own one already. Arsement advised he asked the Town's grant writer to be on the lookout for grant funding opportunities. Discussion was held

Ricky Lafleur- An Ordinance to Amend the Water Use Ordinance to Increase Water or Sewer Meter Install Rates- Lafleur presented the Amended Ordinance for consideration. No Council nor public comments

Motion: Landry-Lalande/M. Trahan moved, seconded and carried to Adopt the Ordinance to Amend the Water Use Ordinance to Increase Water or Sewer Meter Install Rates. Yay- Catalon, M. Trahan, S. Trahan, Landry-Lalande; Absent- Schlicher

Lafleur gave updates on current landowners who were sent non-compliance letters. One of the 3 landowners has complied. Citing some of the owners is not feasible due to having to serve documents to the Baton Rouge area. Lafleur will discuss with Arsement, procedures according to the Ordinance to begin cutting all non-compliant property and place property liens against owners for the maintenance costs. Arsement will get 3 quotes to begin the process.

Nick Sonnier- Updates- The Maurice Park Drainage Project contracts and bonds were delivered for Arsement to sign, execute, and record. The notice to proceed is issued after the completed recordation. Sonnier explained this was a bided project previously awarded to Glenn Lege Construction by Council members. Arsement reminded everyone that most of the project will be covered by grant funds. Sonnier also advised he and Mayor Arsement attended the LA Hwy 92 turn lane plan in hand. The project has been in discussion since 2017 and was finally funded. The Town was invited to discuss utilities that need to be relocated. Sonnier is reviewing the easements which determines if DOTD will pay for the relocation of utilities. Applications for funding assistance from DRA are due. Sonnier is applying for funding on behalf of the Town. If approved, a Resolution would be presented. US Hwy 167 J-Turns near Nunu's preliminary layout was received and presented to DOTD for review, revision if necessary, and approval. The installation would help with traffic coming from Nunu's parking lot. Sonnier advised a preliminary plat layout was submitted subdividing the undeveloped property near Nunu's where additional development is being considered. The foundation for the Water Tower Project is complete, but the actual Tower fabrication is still ongoing. Once complete, it will be delivered and constructed onsite. The contractor installing the waterline graded the ditch and shot the grade for drainage. One culvert was not set correctly, but the landowner pulled a culvert permit to correct the issue. Arsement advised that culvert work is done, and drainage is flowing. Scott Trahan asked about the Picard Farms drainage ditch. Arsement advised DOTD started moving the Picard Farms drainage ditch earlier during the day. Discussion was held

Nick Sonnier, Sellers & Associates- Elaine Corners Construction Plan Approval- Sonnier reminded Council members the area would consist of 5 lots. Approval was recommended contingent upon the developer providing written permission of access on Helaire Pvt Lane. A letter was provided to the developer regarding access. The utility access would be on the opposite side of the existing home. Everything previously approved for this development was contingent upon the access document between landowners. Discussion was held. No public comments

Motion: Landry-Lalande/Catalon moved, seconded, and carried to approve Elaine Corners Construction Plan Approval contingent the developer address comments by Sellers & Associates in the letter dated August 15, 2025. Yay- M. Trahan, S. Trahan, Landry-Lalande, Catalon; Absent- Schlicher

Chief Nerren, Police Chief- Approval of Cost Increase for Crime Fighters Camera Subscription- Nerren advised the monthly camera subscription service fee increased from \$600 to \$1,250 per month. Arsement and Nerren both felt the cost was worth keeping the community safe. Nerren advised 4 cases were solved using the camera system last week. Scott Trahan asked about the type of cameras being used. Nerren advised cameras are upgraded to federally approved as they go out. Trahan Also asked if Nerren had any trouble with accessing video footage if requested. Nerren does not have any issues with getting footage and it does not cost him anything additional to request videos. The Vermillion Sheriff was assisted by the owner of the Crime Fighter Camera System in getting a real-time crime center set up. The real-time crime center utilizes the camera system. Arsement advised the Town could invest in their own camera system, but then would only have access to the city limits and not to the real-time call center which accesses all the nearby communities. All Sheriffs in the surrounding communities are having discussions about plans in the event this camera system would no longer be available. Arsement asked Council members for consideration to amend the Police Department budget to include the additional cost of the camera subscription. John Sonnier advised, he accessed Lafayette Police Department and State Police Department Cameras through this system to solve several vehicle burglaries. Discussion was held. No public comments

Motion: Landry-Lalande/M. Trahan moved, seconded, and carried to Amend and Increase the Police Department Budget by \$7,150 for the current fiscal year to cover the increase of the Crime Fighters Camera. Yay- M. Trahan, S. Trahan, Landry-Lalande, Catalon; Absent- Schlicher

Updates- Nerren advised the Officer recently sent to the Academy seems to be doing well. The department is paying more for overtime right now but another applicant just finished a satisfactory psychological examination, and Nerren is still seeking officers to employ. Arsement will continue circulating hiring details which now include the Town providing health insurance. Nerren advised the department secured 8- AEDs with the help of OEP and advised David Landry one more may be available for the Fire Department. Discussion was held

Richard Meche, Maintenance Supervisor- July 2025- 8,798,000 gallons of water produced; 8,614,500 gallons of water sold; 183,500 gallons of water Unmetered; 2%. Meche advised there is an error in the report numbers but presented them as they appeared. The Maintenance Crew is mowing, edging, painting curbs and cleaning up along LA Hwy 167. LRWA should have the results for the wastewater rate study within the next month.

Mayor Arsement- Permission to Open a CD with ARPA Funds- Arsement advised the actual ARPA funds were used for payroll per the program's guidelines, but the amount paid out is still sitting in the Town's checking account. He asked Council members to consider opening a CD with some of the ARPA line-item funds in the amount of \$500,000. Discussion was held. No public comments

Motion: Landry-Lalande/Catalon moved, seconded, and carried Authorizing Mayor Arsement to Invest \$500,000 of ARPA line-item funds into a CD. Yay- S. Trahan, Landry-Lalande, Catalon, M. Trahan; Absent- Schlicher

New Hire for Maintenance Department- Arsement asked Council members to consider hiring another employee for the Maintenance Department to be trained during the slow season. Arsement and Meche are looking for someone to train on the sidearm and assign other duties. Eventually Arsement would like for the Maintenance Department to take over installing meters. Salary is administrative decision and will be determined by experience of applicants. Employee benefits would also be included. Discussion was held. No public comments.

Motion: Landry-Lalande/Catalon moved, seconded, and carried to approve a New Hire for the Maintenance Department. Yay- Landry-Lalande, Catalon, M. Trahan, S. Trahan; Absent- Schlicher

Removal of Trees on Town Property- Arsement asked Council members to consider bids for complete tree removal on the property where the New City Hall will be built. Catalon and Landry-Lalande wanted Arsement to ask the Police Jury to assist before considering bids. Discussion was held. No action taken

Sales Tax Update- June 2025 sales tax is \$155,031.76 which is up 24.3% from last year. Arsement asked residents continue supporting local businesses or shop online and thanked everyone for continuing to support the local community businesses.

Updates- Arsement advised the Maurice Park bathrooms are waiting on door installation. Toilets and fixtures will be installed soon. Arsement hopes to have a Grand Opening in September 2025. Matthew Trahan is assisting with streetlight reporting for the Town. Trahan advised 10 lights have been repaired already.

Council Concerns: Catalon asked if the Town would cut trees on Catalon and advised Entergy must cut these trees. Meche stated Entergy had an Engineer look at the area and they did not think the trees needed to be cut. They will cut near the coulee. Lafleur spoke about the current lawsuit with Entergy and advised everything is still in discovery. The Town received 3 checks that expired. Lafleur did not agree with the memo language for these payments so the Town did not deposit them. Catalon asked about No Parking Signs along E. Vincent. Lafleur advised the town could place if they would like. Nick Sonnier advised to use judgment on spacing. Arsement wanted every 200ft. Landry-Lalande asked if money was allocated in the budget for new decorative flags around Town. Arsement advised money was not allocated in this budget he had not forgotten about the flags. Discussion was held

Motion: Landry-Lalande/M. Trahan moved, seconded and carried to adjourn at 7:47 pm. Yay- All Present

s/Nichole Bonin

Nichole G Bonin, Assistant Clerk

s/Neil Arsement

Neil Arsement, Mayor