ORDINANCE NO. 26-9

AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN OF MAURICE, LOUISIANA

ADOPTING A COMPREHENSIVE WATER UTILITY ORDINANCE; CONSOLIDATING AND REENACTING THE TOWN'S REGULATIONS GOVERNING WATER SERVICE, CONNECTIONS, METERS, RATES, DEPOSITS, BILLING, DELINQUENCIES, DISCONNECTION, RECONNECTION, LEAKS, TAP FEES, MISCELLANEOUS CHARGES, AND ENFORCEMENT; REPEALING THE PRIOR WATER UTILITY ORDINANCES IDENTIFIED HEREIN; AND OTHERWISE PROVIDING WITH RESPECT THERETO.

BE IT ORDAINED by the Mayor and Board of Aldermen of the Town of Maurice, Louisiana, acting as the governing authority of the Town, that the following Water Utility Ordinance is hereby adopted:

ARTICLE 1 - GENERAL PROVISIONS

Section 1.1. Title.

This Ordinance shall be known and may be cited as the "Town of Maurice Water Utility Ordinance."

Section 1.2. Purpose.

The purpose of this Ordinance is to consolidate the Town's existing water utility regulations into one ordinance and to establish uniform requirements for water service, connections, rates, billing, collection, discontinuance, and related matters.

Section 1.3. Applicability.

This Ordinance applies to each person requesting, receiving, connecting to, or using water service furnished by the Town.

Section 1.4. Administration.

The municipal water system shall be administered by the Mayor or the Mayor's authorized designee, subject to the legislative authority of the Board of Aldermen.

ARTICLE 2 – DEFINITIONS

For purposes of this Ordinance, the following terms have the meanings stated:

Board. the Board of Aldermen of the Town of Maurice.

Customer. the individual or entity applying for or receiving water service and responsible for all fees, charges, and assessments on the account.

Improved property. property containing a dwelling, business, commercial establishment, or other improvement capable of receiving water service.

Meter. the device used by the Town to measure water furnished to a customer.

Owner. the individual or entity holding legal title to the property served.

Premises. the property, building, residence, business, or other location for which water service is furnished.

Service line. the water pipe extending from the Town's water main to and through the customer's premises, excluding portions expressly owned by the Town.

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Town. the Town of Maurice, Louisiana.

Unoccupied property. improved property that is uninhabited or unused as a dwelling, business, or commercial establishment.

Water User Agreement. the utility user agreement approved and authorized by the Mayor and executed by a customer before service begins.

ARTICLE 3 - REQUIRED CONNECTIONS AND APPLICATION FOR SERVICE

Section 3.1. Mandatory connection.

All improved property within the Town that is located within three hundred (300) feet of a Town water main and is also served by the Town sewer system shall connect to the Town water system.

Property qualifying as unoccupied property on January 27, 1981, remains exempt while it continues to qualify as unoccupied property. When the exempt status ends, the property shall comply with this section within fifteen (15) days.

The Town is not obligated to provide water or sewer service when the Mayor or authorized utility superintendent determines that providing the service would be detrimental to the water or sewer system.

Section 3.2. Private water sources.

No private water source shall be connected to a household or business water system connected to the Town system, and no interconnection is permitted between a private water system and the Town water system.

Section 3.3. Written application and agreement.

Application for water service shall be made in writing to the municipal clerk. Before service begins, the customer shall execute the Water User Agreement and pay all required deposits, tap fees, and charges.

Section 3.4. Authorized activation.

Water service shall be turned on only by the utility superintendent or another person authorized by the Town.

Section 3.5. Customer responsibility.

The customer shall be responsible for all utility fees, charges, assessments, and water use associated with the account until service is properly terminated.

ARTICLE 4 – DEPOSITS

Section 4.1. Service deposit.

A deposit of one hundred fifty dollars ($150.00) shall be paid with each application for water service, whether or not the applicant owns the property for which service is requested.

Section 4.2. Refund.

When service is permanently discontinued, the deposit, less any amount due for water service or other lawful charges, shall be refunded without interest upon written notice by the customer.

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ARTICLE 5 - CONNECTIONS, SERVICE LINES, PLUMBING, AND METERS

Section 5.1. Plumbing compliance.

Water shall not be turned on at premises where the plumbing does not comply with applicable codes. Water may be furnished temporarily for construction work in an unfinished building, subject to applicable codes.

Section 5.2. Permit, notice, and inspection.

No connection to a Town water main shall be made without a permit and reasonable notice to the utility superintendent. Connections shall be made under Town supervision and shall not be covered until inspected.

Section 5.3. Cost of connection.

The applicant or owner shall bear the cost of the connection, furnish required materials, and pay the applicable tap fee. Work shall be performed by the Town or by a contractor acceptable to the Town.

Section 5.4. Service lines and repairs.

Service lines from the meter to the premises shall be installed at the cost of the owner or applicant and under Town inspection. Repairs to service lines and building plumbing shall be made at the owner's expense. In an emergency, the Town may make repairs and charge the cost to the owner.

Section 5.5. Excavations.

Excavations for installation or repair of service lines shall comply with applicable requirements for street excavations. A water service line shall not be placed in the same excavation with, or directly over, a drain or sewer pipe.

Section 5.6. Meters.

The Town shall determine the type and location of each meter. Meters shall be installed in an accessible location and shall be read as necessary for timely billing. A Town meter shall be tested upon a customer's complaint.

Section 5.7. Access.

The customer shall provide reasonable access to the premises and meter for inspection, observation, measurement, sampling, testing, reading, maintenance, connection, disconnection, and enforcement.

Section 5.8. Resale or extension of service.

Water furnished for one premises shall not be resold or distributed to another premises for which no application has been made, except in an emergency.

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ARTICLE 6 - WATER USER RATES

Section 6.1. Residential customers.

The monthly charge for residential customers is twenty-one dollars ($21.00) for the first two thousand (2,000) gallons or part thereof, plus six dollars and eighty-five cents ($6.85) for each additional one thousand (1,000) gallons or part thereof.

Section 6.2. Commercial, nursing home/assisted-living, and industrial customers.

The monthly charge for commercial, nursing home/assisted-living, and industrial customers is twenty-one dollars ($21.00) for the first two thousand (2,000) gallons or part thereof, plus seven dollars ($7.00) for each additional one thousand (1,000) gallons or part thereof.

Section 6.3. Multifamily housing facilities.

A multifamily housing facility shall be charged a monthly flat rate of twenty-one dollars ($21.00) per apartment, plus six dollars and eighty-five cents ($6.85) for each one thousand (1,000) gallons or part thereof measured at the facility's meter or meters.

Section 6.4. Annual rate adjustment.

In January of each year, the minimum charges and volumetric charges in Sections 6.1 through 6.3 may be increased by the Two (2) percent. The adjusted rates shall appear in the first January billing period.

Section 6.5. Asset Reserve Fund.

The Town water system shall deposit at least One Thousand sixty-seven dollars and eighty-five cents ($1,067.85) each month into an Asset Reserve Fund for twenty (20) years for repair or rehabilitation of the elevated water storage tank at the Town's South Wastewater Treatment Facility.

ARTICLE 7 - BILLING, DELINQUENCY, DISCONNECTION, AND RECONNECTION

Section 7.1. Due date and delinquency.

A water service account is delinquent if it is not paid by the due date stated on the bill.

Section 7.2. Late fee.

A fee equal to twenty percent (20%) of the payment due shall be assessed on amounts paid after the due date.

Section 7.3. Disconnection for nonpayment.

Water service shall be discontinued for an account that remains unpaid through the fifteenth (15th) business day following the due date.

Section 7.4. Disconnection.

When water service has been disconnected for nonpayment, disconnected at the customer's request, or disconnected for another reason, other than termination of services, a Disconnection fee of Seventy-Five dollars ($75.00) shall be paid before service is restored, unless a different charge is subsequently fixed by ordinance of the Board.

In addition, before service is restored:

A. All delinquent utility charges, penalties, fees, and the applicable disconnection fee shall be paid in full;

B. Any condition requiring disconnection shall be corrected, if applicable; and

C. Payment for accounts disconnected for nonpayment shall be made by cash, money order, or credit or debit card only. Personal checks shall not be accepted for restoration of service following disconnection for nonpayment.

Section 7.5. Returned payments.

A fee of twenty-five dollars ($25.00) shall be assessed for each check or other payment item dishonored or returned by a banking institution.

Section 7.6. After-hours utility calls.

A fee of twenty-five dollars ($25.00) shall be assessed for each after-hours utility call-out requested for a customer.

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ARTICLE 8 - LEAKS AND CUSTOMER PLUMBING

Section 8.1. Responsibility for water loss.

The owner, the owner's agent, tenant, and customer are responsible as consumers for water lost through leakage in pipes or plumbing beyond the discharge side of the meter or otherwise located on the property. Water lost through leakage shall be billed at the rates established by this Ordinance.

Section 8.2. Nonpayment and repair.

If charges for water lost through leakage are not paid when due, service may be discontinued until all amounts due are paid. Service shall not be restored until the leak has been repaired to the satisfaction of the Town.

Section 8.3. Nuisance, unsafe condition, or waste.

When a leak beyond the discharge side of the meter causes or may cause a public nuisance, unsafe condition, or waste of water, the Town may terminate service after 48 hours' (2) days' written notice to the owner and occupants. Notice shall be personally delivered or attached to the front door of the residence or premises. Service shall not be restored until the leak is repaired to the Town's satisfaction.

ARTICLE 9 - TAP FEES

Section 9.1. New water and sewer taps.

The fee for each new water or sewer tap shall equal one hundred twenty percent (120%) of the Town's vendor cost for materials and labor, as follows:

A. Three-quarter-inch meter: short connection, bore, or state road bore.

B. One-inch meter: short connection or bore.

C. Two-inch meter: short connection or bore.

The applicant shall pay the required amount before the work is performed. Any additional cost necessary to extend or bring a Town water line to the property shall also be paid by the applicant, subject to available system capacity and Town approval.

ARTICLE 10 - UNAUTHORIZED USE AND ENFORCEMENT

Section 10.1. Prohibited acts.

No person shall:

A. Connect to a Town water main without a permit or authorization.

B. Turn on or reconnect water service unless authorized by the Town.

C. Bypass, alter, damage, remove, or tamper with a meter, valve, lock, seal, or other Town water facility.

D. Obtain or furnish water service through an unauthorized connection.

E. Interconnect a private water source with the Town water system.

F. Obstruct an inspection or otherwise violate a requirement of this Ordinance.

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Section 10.2. Administrative remedies.

The Town may immediately discontinue unauthorized service, remove or secure an unauthorized connection, recover the value of water used, and charge the person responsible for labor, materials, damages, and other reasonable costs incurred.

Section 10.3. Penalty.

Upon conviction of a violation of this Article, the offender may be fined not more than Five Hundred dollars ($500.00), imprisoned for not more than sixty (60) days, or both. Each continuing day may constitute a separate violation.

ENACTMENT PROVISIONS

Section 11.1. Repeal and replacement.

The following ordinances are repealed and replaced by this Ordinance, except that repeal shall not affect any charge accrued, violation committed, enforcement proceeding begun, or right vested before the effective date:

- Ordinance No. O-76-7B (1976 water user agreement and connection conditions);
- Ordinance No. 80-9-A (Water Use Ordinance);
- Ordinance No. 92-11B (water user rates);
- Ordinance No. 93-8-A (mandatory connection amendment);
- Ordinance No. 94-10A (outside-corporate-limits residential service);
- Ordinance No. 94-10B (water user rates);
- Ordinance No. 98-2-B (water and sewage use amendment);
- Ordinance No. 05-11-A (water use amendment);
- Ordinance No. 06-4E (fees and charges amendment);
- Ordinance No. 07-4A (fees and charges amendment);
- Ordinance No. 07-5-A (penalty amendment);
- Ordinance No. 07-11-A (water user rates);
- Ordinance No. 09-4A (water user rates);
- Ordinance No. 09-8 (after-hours utility call-out fee);
- Ordinance No. 11-9C (multifamily and nursing home/assisted-living rates);
- Ordinance No. 12-5 (returned-item fee);
- Ordinance No. 13-10 (deposits);
- Ordinance No. 18-2 (water user fees);
- Ordinance No. 24-6D (water user fees);
- Ordinance No. 24-6E (tap fees);
- Ordinance No. 24-11 (water user fees and Asset Reserve Fund);
- Ordinance No. 25-8 (tap fees); and
- Ordinance No. 26-4 (delinquency, disconnection, and leak provisions).

Section 11.2. Other conflicts.

All other ordinances or parts of ordinances in conflict with this Ordinance are repealed to the extent of the conflict.

Section 11.3. Severability.

If any provision of this Ordinance is held invalid, the remaining provisions shall remain in full force and effect.

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Section 11.4. Effective date.

This Ordinance shall become effective upon publication as required by law.

WHEREUPON, the above Ordinance was read section by section and submitted to a vote, the vote thereon being as follows:

YEAS: Alderman Troy Catalon, Alderman Jonathan Schlicher, Alderman Matthew Trahan & Alderman Scott Trahan

NAYS: None

ABSENT OR PRESENT AND NOT VOTING: Alderwoman Megan Landry Lalande

The above Ordinance was declared adopted on the 16th day of September, 2026, at Maurice, Vermilion Parish, Louisiana, to become effective upon publication.

TOWN OF MAURICE

By: _____
Neil Arsement, Mayor

By: _____
Erica Arceneaux, Municipal Clerk

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APPENDIX A - LEGISLATIVE CROSSWALK

This appendix is for review and legislative history only and is not intended to be codified as part of the Ordinance.

Source Ordinance	Subject	New Location	Treatment
O-76-7B	Water User Agreement; original connection conditions	Art. 3 and Art. 9	Original dollar amounts superseded by later deposit and tap-fee ordinances.
80-9-A	Applications, deposits, plumbing, connections, service lines, meters	Arts. 3-5	Preserved except where later amended.
92-11B	Residential, commercial, industrial rates	Art. 6	Rates superseded; customer classifications retained through later rate enactments.
93-8-A	Connection required within 300 feet	Sec. 3.1	Later narrowed by 98-2-B to properties also served by sewer and subject to exemptions.
94-10A	Outside-limits residential service; access; participation fee	Secs. 5.7 and 9.1	Rates and fixed participation fee superseded; access concept preserved.
94-10B	Rate amendment	Art. 6	Superseded by later rates.
98-2-B	Mandatory connection exemption; customer responsibility; deposit	Secs. 3.1, 3.5, Art. 4	Deposit superseded by 13-10.
05-11-A	Water User Agreement; delinquency; deposit	Secs. 3.3, Art. 4, Art. 7	Delinquency amended by 26-4; deposit amended by 13-10.
06-4E	Reconnection, NSF, late fee, tap fees	Arts. 7 and 9	Reconnection amended in 07-4A; NSF amended in 12-5; tap fee amended in 25-8.
07-4A	Reconnection charge increased to $50	Sec. 7.4	Preserved, subject to 26-4 language allowing Board to fix the charge.
07-5-A	Penalty up to $300 and/or 60 days	Sec. 10.3	Preserved.
07-11-A / 09-4A / 11-9C / 18-2 / 24-6D	Rate amendments	Art. 6	Superseded by 24-11, except classifications and structure.
09-8	After-hours call-out fee	Sec. 7.6	Preserved.

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12-5	Returned-item fee increased to $25	Sec. 7.5	Preserved.
13-10	$150 deposit for owners and nonowners; $50 disconnect deposit	Art. 4	Preserved.
24-11	Current base rates, annual CPI adjustment, reserve deposit	Art. 6	Preserved.
25-8	Tap fee equals 120% of vendor material and labor cost	Art. 9	Preserved.
26-4	Delinquency, 15th business-day shutoff, leak responsibility and notice	Arts. 7-8	Preserved.

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APPENDIX B - REVIEW ITEMS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The following items should be confirmed before introduction. They do not prevent use of this document as a working draft.

Reconnection charge. Ordinance 07-4A established $50. Ordinance 26-4 later stated that the charge shall be fixed by the Board without restating an amount. Confirm that $50 remains the current Board-fixed charge.

Meter ownership and cost. The 1980 ordinance provided that the municipality furnished the meter but the consumer paid for it. Current tap fees appear to incorporate vendor material and labor costs. Confirm that the Town retains ownership of installed meters and that the tap-fee language fully captures current practice.

Outside-corporate-limits service. Ordinance 94-10A contained special rates, a $175 participation fee, inspection access, and a Vermilion Village Subdivision exclusion. Later ordinances superseded the rate structure and tap fees. Confirm whether any special service-area limitation or subdivision exclusion remains administratively relevant.

Penalty enforceability. The $300/60-day penalty is carried forward from Ordinance 07-5-A. The Town Attorney should confirm consistency with current Louisiana municipal penalty authority and prosecution procedure.

Water and sewer tap scope. The source amendments combine water and sewer tap fees. This draft retains that language because the requested consolidation includes it, but the Town may prefer a separate sewer ordinance or a clearly labeled combined utility-tap section.

Drafting recommendation. After utility staff confirms the listed operational items, the Town Attorney should review the repeal schedule, penalty provision, mandatory-connection requirement, and current rate schedule. Those confirmations can be made without changing the overall structure of this working draft.

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