

Town of Abita Springs

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**MAYOR
GREG LEMONS**

ALDERMEN
GINA KILPATRICK HARPER
(MAYOR PRO-TEM)

PATRICK BERRIGAN
DANIEL J. CURTIS
RYAN MURPHY
LESLIE BLITCH WELLIVER

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TOWN MARSHAL
MIKE SLEMMER

The following minutes were taken at a special meeting of the Mayor and the Board of Aldermen at 7:30pm on December 19, 2017 at the Town Hall in the Planning and Zoning conference room in Abita Springs, Louisiana. Mayor Lemons called the meeting to order.

Council Members Berrigan, Curtis, Kilpatrick-Harper, Murphy and Blitch Welliver were present.

Mayor Lemons opened discussion of Instrument 2017-010 AN ORDINANCE TO PROVIDE FOR THE REZONING OF 44.37 ACRES SITUATED IN SECTIONS 29 AND 38, TOWNSHIP 6 SOUTH, RANGE 12 EAST, ST. TAMMANY PARISH, LOUISIANA, AS A PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT AND TO PROVIDE FOR RELATED MATTERS (QUAIL FARM TRACE.) Community members asked questions related to the location of and plans for the proposed project. In response, Mayor Lemons stated that the property is located at the corner of Hwy 435 and Allen Rd. He added that the proposed plans call for a second entrance/exit on Teal Rd to Allen Rd. Alderman Kilpatrick-Harper commented that the Hwy 435 entrance/exit is planned just south of the current Quail Farm entrance. A local resident asked the Aldermen to carefully consider the request and to ensure that the proposed rezoning is in the Town's best interest. Another resident expressed concern that the introduction of the instrument as part of the special meeting proceedings did not allow citizens ample time to participate. It was noted that a discussion of the topic was conducted at a prior regularly scheduled Public Committee meeting and that it will be discussed further and in more detail at upcoming meetings. Alderman Murphy introduced the instrument, seconded by Alderman Kilpatrick-Harper.

Mayor Lemons opened discussion of an amendment to INSTRUMENT 2017-007 AN ORDINANCE ADOPTING AN OPERATING BUDGET OF REVENUE AND EXPENDITURES FOR THE YEAR BEGINNING JANUARY 1, 2018 AND ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2018. The Mayor reviewed the content of the amendment including the following points: 1. Each employee shall contribute \$100.00 per month for the coverage of their spouse or 10% of the costs of such coverage whichever amount is greater. 2. Each employee shall contribute \$150.00 per month for the coverage of their family or 10% of the costs of such coverage whichever amount is greater. 3. There shall be a \$100.00 surcharge per month for spouse/family coverage which could otherwise be obtained from the employer of the spouse of the Town employee. Alderman Blitch Welliver explained that the implementation of the proposed changes will provide more consistency and begin to address the rising cost of health care. Alderman Murphy commented that they have no desire to financially burden employees, but with an everchanging health insurance market, the Board must assess the sustainability of the Town's benefit programs and consider its fiscal responsibility to Town residents. Alderman Kilpatrick-Harper reminded everyone that the Town will continue to pay 100% of the employee premium. Abita Springs residents and community members communicated the value of the process and the importance of avoiding anything that will diminish the voice of the people. Several suggested that the Board allow more time for review and consideration of employee compensation, addressing necessary changes in the next budget cycle. Museum Committee Chairman Martha Gruning summarized how a clerical mistake brought the benefit issue to light. Ms. Gruning noted that the employee benefits are generous which helps compensate for other things such as salaries which might not be as competitive. Ms. Gruning added that it is

unfortunate that the discussion had to take place at the end of the year but thanked the Board for working out a viable solution. Mayor Lemons asked the Board for motions. Alderman Blitch Welliver moved to adopt the amendment to INSTRUMENT 2017-007, seconded by Alderman Kilpatrick-Harper. The vote was Yeas: 5, Aldermen Berrigan, Curtis, Kilpatrick-Harper, Murphy, and Blitch Welliver, Nays:0, Absent:0, Abstain:0.

Mayor Lemons next presented the amended INSTRUMENT 2017-007 AN ORDINANCE ADOPTING AN OPERATING BUDGET OF REVENUE AND EXPENDITURES FOR THE YEAR BEGINNING JANUARY 1, 2018 AND ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2018 for consideration. Alderman Blitch Welliver moved to adopt the instrument as amended, seconded by Alderman Murphy. The Mayor asked for comment. Community members asked questions related to the line item expense for the installation of solar panels, how many employees are on the plan, the effective date of the changes and the increase or decrease anticipated. Mayor Lemons answered that the budget instrument will not change due to the difference in solar panel installation expenses, that thirteen employees are covered by the health plan, that changes will be effective January 1, 2018 and will decrease expenses by approximately \$4000.00. A roll call vote was called and the results were Yeas: 5, Aldermen Berrigan, Curtis, Kilpatrick-Harper, Murphy, and Blitch Welliver, Nays:0, Absent:0, Abstain:0.

Alderman Kilpatrick Harper moved to adjourn the Town Council Meeting, seconded by Alderman Berrigan.

MEETING ADJOURNED

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED THIS 19th DAY OF DECEMBER 2017.

Kathy Armand, Town Clerk

Honorable Greg Lemons, Mayor