

Town of Abita Springs, La.

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MAYOR
GREG LEMONS

ALDERMEN
GINA KILPATRICK HARPER
(MAYOR PRO-TEM)
PATRICK BERRIGAN
DANIEL J. CURTIS
RYAN MURPHY
LESLIE BLITCH WELLIVER
UTILITY MANAGER
DEBRA MACLEAN
UTILITY CLERK II
LINDA MEKER
PLANNING & ZONING DIRECTOR
CINDY CHATELAIN
TOWN MARSHALL
JOE CANDILORA

The following minutes were taken at the regular monthly meeting of the Mayor and the Board of Aldermen on July 19, 2016 at the Town Hall in Abita Springs, Louisiana. Mayor Lemons called the meeting to order. The Mayor asked everyone to stand for a moment of silence for the brave members of the Baton Rouge law enforcement community who recently lost their lives in the line of duty. Alderman Murphy gave the invocation; Alderman Kilpatrick-Harper led the pledge of allegiance.

PUBLIC HEARING:

The hearings began with Mayor Lemons providing information on the three millage resolutions presented to the Council. The Mayor began with a resolution to adopt the 2016 adjusted millage rates. He explained the rates were rolled back to keep revenue neutral after property assessments increased. There were no comments from the public on the roll back resolution.

Mayor Lemons reported that he was recommending a roll forward of the millage rate. The roll forward resolution would allow for an increase of .15 mils and would not exceed the prior year's maximum rate. The Mayor explained that Parks, Playgrounds, and Street Lighting are underfunded and draw revenue from the General Fund. The Mayor pointed out that this type of activity impacts the Town's creditworthiness, and could potentially detrimentally effect its ability to secure competitive funding for capital improvements. The Mayor asked for public comment. Eleven members from the community spoke. The overwhelming majority supported the roll forward with only two residents voicing opposition. Several residents took exception to the description of the roll forward as a tax increase. One speaker commented that the increase is actually in the assessments, adding that the roll forward percentage or millage maintains the status quo. Alderman Kilpatrick-Harper shared that while she appreciated the good attendance and participation by residents that the decision as to whether to roll forward is the Aldermen's to make. Aldermen Berrigan, Curtis, and Blitch Welliver expressed their desire to see a reduction of expenses rather than a roll forward of the millage. Alderman Murphy added that a little belt tightening is in order until the burden of the Parks and Playground Certificate of Indebtedness matures in 2019.

Mayor Lemons then opened discussion of the adoption of the street bond millage of five mills. The millage is dedicated to repay bonds for the street overlay project in the Town of Abita Springs. Alderman Kilpatrick-Harper stated that the Town must pay its bonds. There were no public comments.

Mayor Lemons opened discussion of the de-annexation of the Star Acquisitions property on Prats Rd. Comments from the public revealed opposition to the de-annexation. Points included the time and expense associated with the annexation and now the de-annexation. It was noted that the decision should be based on what is in the best interest of the Town not the developer.

MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Mayor Lemons recognized Town Clerk, Kathy Armand as Employee of the Month. The Mayor expressed his appreciation noting Ms. Armand's unwavering dedication to the Town.

ROLL CALL:

Aldermen Berrigan, Curtis, Kilpatrick-Harper, Murphy, and Blitch Welliver were present. Alderman Kilpatrick-Harper moved to accept the December 2016 Financial Report, seconded by Alderman Blitch Welliver. All present were in favor. Alderman Kilpatrick-Harper moved to accept the June 21, 2016 Town Council Meeting minutes, seconded by Alderman Curtis. All were in favor.

FARMER'S MARKET REPORT:

Market Manager, Mike Norman, reported on the statistical growth of the market over the prior quarter. Mr. Norman updated the Aldermen and attendees about the community outreach programs the Market has undertaken. These include donation of fresh fruits and vegetables in cooperation with Ruth's Pantry to the Samaritan Center, participation in nutrition education classes for the elderly, and efforts between the Market and the Louisiana Department of Agriculture to implement a program for WIC recipients. Mr. Norman also invited everyone to attend the Market on Sunday, August 7th for the kick-off of National Farmer's Market Week. Scheduled will be a full day of programming with speakers, informational exhibits, music, and giveaways.

STPSO:

Lt. Williams gave a brief report of calls including several domestic disturbance calls.

FIRE DISTRICT 8:

Chief Glenn reported 65 calls for the month of June, the same number as reported in May.

TOWN MARSHAL:

Marshal Candilora reported three code violations for the month of June for a year to date average of 2.4 per month.

TOWN ENGINEER:

Mayor Lemons reviewed current projects including the cemetery parking lot, the striping project, and water tower maintenance. Mayor Lemons then directed attention to garbage, public works, and maintenance reports.

OLD BUSINESS:

Mayor Lemons asked for deferment of INSTRUMENT 2015-007 AN ORDINANCE TO PROVIDE FOR THE ZONING AND ANNEXATION OF CERTAIN LAND INTO THE CORPORATE LIMITS OF THE TOWN OF ABITA SPRINGS. Alderman Kilpatrick-Harper moved to defer the Instrument until the September 2016 Town Council meeting, seconded by Alderman Blitch Welliver. The vote was: Yeas: 5 Alderman Berrigan, Curtis, Kilpatrick-Harper, Murphy, and Blitch Welliver, Nays: 0, Absent: 0, Abstain: 0

Alderman Curtis moved to defer INSTRUMENT 2016-004 AN ORDINANCE PROVIDING FOR THE DE-ANNEXATION OF A PARCEL OF PROPERTY ON PRATS RD FROM THE TOWN OF ABITA SPRINGS CORPORATE LIMITS until the August 2016 Town Council Meeting, seconded by Alderman Murphy. The vote was: Yeas: 5 Alderman Berrigan, Curtis, Kilpatrick-Harper, Murphy, and Blitch Welliver, Nays: 0, Absent: 0, Abstain: 0

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Mayor Lemons read aloud and in full Resolution No. 1 setting the **adjusted** millage rates for 2016. Alderman Blitch Welliver moved to adopt the resolution, seconded by Alderman Berrigan. There was a call for comments and there were none. The result of the roll call vote was Yeas: 5 Alderman Berrigan, Curtis, Kilpatrick-Harper, Murphy, and Blitch Welliver, Nays: 0, Absent: 0 Abstain: 0

2. Mayor Lemons read aloud and in full Resolution No. 2 setting the adjusted millage rates and the roll forward of millage rates, but not in excess of the prior year’s maximum for 2016. Mayor Lemons called for motions. Alderman Murphy made said motion for Resolution No. 2. There was a failure to pass Resolution No. 2 due to the lack of a second.

3. Mayor Lemons read aloud and in full the Resolution to levy the street bond millage on the 2016 tax roll on all property subject to taxation by the Town of Abita Springs. Alderman Kilpatrick-Harper moved to adopt the resolution, seconded by Alderman Blitch Welliver. There was a call for comments and there were none. The result of the roll call vote was Yeas: 5 Alderman Berrigan, Curtis, Kilpatrick-Harper, Murphy, and Blitch Welliver, Nays: 0, Absent: 0 Abstain: 0

OPEN/ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Alderman Kilpatrick-Harper mentioned upcoming Town events including the Quilting Friendships Guild, the Men’s Club Meeting, Friday Night Bingo, the Farmer’s Market, and the Abita Bees Dance on July 23rd.

Local resident, Ron Blitch addressed the Board and notified them that the Historic Commission is working with the Mayor to resolve issues associated with the enforcement of Historic Guidelines.

Property owner, Ray Pasqua, stated he is experiencing difficulty in his efforts to develop his property.

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

MEETING ADJOURNED

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED THIS 19th DAY OF JULY 2016.

Kathy Armand, Town Clerk

Honorable Greg Lemons, Mayor