

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
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LINDA MEEKER

PLANNING & ZONING DIRECTOR
CINDY CHATELAIN

TOWN MARSHAL
JOE CANDILORA

The following minutes were taken at the regular monthly meeting of the Mayor and the Board of Aldermen on August 18, 2015 at the Town Hall in Abita Springs. Mayor Lemons invited Sheriff Jack Strain and any other candidates participating in the upcoming election to introduce themselves and say a few words. Others who spoke included Lee Barrios, Donald Castell, and Rykert Toledano. Following the brief presentations Mayor Lemons called the meeting to order. Alderman Kilpatrick-Harper gave the invocation; the pledge of allegiance was led by Alderman Blitch Welliver.

Mayor Lemons announced implementation of the agreed upon changes to the Historic application cut-off date requiring a fifteen day lead time prior to review along with the posting of the application on the Town website. The Mayor also informed the Board that the Town was awarded a grant for a little over \$14,000.00 by the Louisiana Government Assistance Program for sewer repairs. Additionally announced was the street overlay contract signing scheduled for August 21st at the Town Hall.

ROLL CALL:

Aldermen Berrigan, Curtis, Kilpatrick-Harper, Murphy, and Blitch Welliver were present. Alderman Kilpatrick-Harper moved to accept the July 21, 2015 Town Council meeting minutes, seconded by Alderman Blitch Welliver. Alderman Blitch Welliver moved to accept the Second Quarter 2015 Financial Report, seconded by Alderman Murphy. All were in favor.

STPSO:

Lt. Williams gave a brief report of calls and citations noting that reported incidents included fraud, traffic violations, and animal cruelty.

FIRE DISTRICT 8:

Chief Gorrondona reported that calls for July were high but lower than the same period last year. The Chief advised that Station 83 is nearly complete except for some painting work.

TOWN MARSHAL:

Marshal Candilora presented his monthly report of code violations. The Marshal reported that a recent incident related to the construction of a carport without proper historic approval has been addressed by the Historic Committee.

TOWN ENGINEER:

Town Engineer Jean Thibodeaux communicated that shortly after execution of the Street Overlay Project work will commence with completion projected for the end of the year. Mr. Thibodeaux announced that the soft surface playground access has been completed and that additional projects in the wetland area near the playground are under review. Mayor Lemons thanked the Friends of the Park for their contribution to the community and for making the playground access possible.

OLD BUSINESS:

Alderman Berrigan moved to defer INSTRUMENT NO. 2015-004, AN ORDINANCE TO DECLARE A PORTION OF CARNATION ST. NO LONGER NECESSARY FOR PUBLIC USE AND TO PROVIDE FOR THE SALE OF THAT PORTION OF PROPERTY LOCATED IN THE TOWN OF ABITA SPRINGS, ST TAMMANY PARISH, LOUISIANA, seconded by Alderman Curtis. Vote was: Yeas: 5, Aldermen Berrigan, Curtis, Kilpatrick-Harper, Murphy, and Blitch Welliver. Nays: 0, Absent: 0, Abstain: 0.

Mayor Lemons opened a discussion regarding A RESOLUTION BY THE BOARD OF ALDERMEN OF THE TOWN OF ABITA SPRINGS AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO EXECUTE AN AGREEMENT WITH WHOLESOME WAVE FOUNDATION CHARITABLE VENTURES, INC., AS A SUBRECIPIENT UNDER WHOLESOME WAVE'S FOOD INSECURITY NUTRITION INCENTIVE ("FINI") GRANTS PROGRAM AWARD.

Meeting attendees were invited to comment. Opinions supporting the Farmer's Market were expressed by several speakers including a local business owner. Others expressed concerns regarding market oversight and management. Market Coordinator, Mike Norman, addressed the Board presenting a document signed by several local businesses stating that they benefit from the Farmer's Market. Mr. Norman also presented a Farmer's Market support petition with 231 signatures and followed up with a slide presentation outlining the Food Insecurity Nutrition Grant proceeds budget. The presentation reflected that 85% of first year grant proceeds are allocated to providing funding for food, fresh fruits and vegetables, to eligible participant consumers. Alderman Curtis noted that he met with Farmer's Market Improvement Advisory Board members, Bryan Gowland, and Jan Biggs, who expressed support for the Market and the grant if the Manager and the Town chooses to pursue it. Alderman Blitch Welliver stated that while she supports a farmer's market in Abita Springs her concern is that the market and the grant are properly managed. Alderman Kilpatrick-Harper agreed with Alderman Blitch Welliver and suggested the possibility of establishing a full-time Advisory Board. Alderman Curtis expressed his support of the grant. Alderman Murphy thanked Mr. Norman for providing business plan details and asked if expenditures will be pre-approved. Mr. Norman replied in the affirmative. Alderman Berrigan expressed his position that it is premature to go after this grant. Alderman Blitch Welliver stated that at this time she would be opposed to approving a contract agreement for more than one year and would only support the measure with establishment of an oversight committee. The Mayor said he would agree to a board and applauded the Alderman's desire to participate. Alderman Curtis moved to adopt the RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO EXECUTE AN AGREEMENT WITH WHOLESOME WAVE FOUNDATION CHARITABLE VENTURES, INC., ("WHOLESOME WAVE"), AS A SUBRECIPIENT UNDER WHOLESOME WAVE'S FOOD INSECURITY NUTRITION INCENTIVE ("FINI") GRANTS PROGRAM AWARD, seconded by Alderman Murphy. The vote was Yeas: 3 Alderman Curtis, Murphy, and Blitch Welliver, Nays: Alderman Berrigan and Kilpatrick-Harper, Abstain: 0, Absent: 0.

Mayor Lemons introduced Adrienne Juttner to update the Aldermen on Keep Abita Beautiful activity. Ms. Juttner advised that she and Ms. Gruning met with the Friends of the Park group to determine whether joining together might be a viable course. A follow-up meeting will be scheduled to make final decisions.

NEW BUSINESS:

None

OPEN-ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Local resident, Donna Caire, communicated problems with the tree ordinance and the spraying of herbicide by utility companies to the Board. She informed meeting attendees and participants that the chemicals currently used are deadly to honeybees. She asked that she be allowed to be part of the process to remedy these issues.

Sandra Glass addressed the Board regarding an increase in wild pack animals including coyotes in the area. Ms. Glass advised that a coyote attacked her pet cat. Lt. Alan Williams suggested that she and her neighbors contact the Sheriff's Office if they continue to observe wild animals in the area.

Evette Randolph spoke to the Board about a recent request to no longer use trustee or 8 to 4 labor at Town festivals and events held in the Trailhead Park area. Ms. Randolph is a museum board member, she serves on the Friends of the Park Board, is a member of the Ladies Progressive Club and is involved as coordinator of several local events. Ms. Randolph reported her experience with trustees has been positive and believes that they make a valuable contribution to the community. She encouraged communication, education, and proper supervision as alternatives to the elimination of their participation and assistance.

Mayor Pro Tem Kilpatrick-Harper reviewed upcoming events and the meeting of the Men's Club, and the Ladies Progressive Club, the Cajun Dance, the Water Festival, and Halloween.

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

MEETING ADJOURNED

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED THIS 18th DAY OF AUGUST 2015.

Kathy Armand, Town Clerk

Honorable Greg Lemons, Mayor