

TOWN OF MANY

August 17, 2021

Regular Session

The Mayor and Aldermen of the Town of Many met in regular session, Tuesday, August 17, 2021, at 5:00 P.M. at Town Hall. Present were Mayor Robert H. Hable, Jr., Mayor Pro-Tem Bobbie Jackson and Council Members Mary Brocato, Mary Perry, Anita Darwin, and Cherry Williams. Also present were Town Clerk Amie Brown, Chief of Police Cheryl Wooley, Lee Woods, Town Attorney Chris Sylvia, Grant Writer Suzanne Williams, Jeremy Wilkerson, Streets Manager, Roger Dew, Water Manager, and Valisa King, Water Clerk. ABSENT: None.

Mayor Robert Hable called the meeting to order. Prayer was offered by Councilwoman Anita Darwin, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by Mayor Hable.

Minutes: Minutes for July 20, 2021, regular session were tabled until next meeting. Bobbie Jackson made the motion, seconded by Mary Brocato. Vote unanimous.

Amend Agenda: Mayor added item 23 requested by Valisa King, Water Clerk, to ask the Council for a new collection Agency for the Water Department. Motion by Mary Brocato, seconded by Cherry Williams. Vote Unanimous.

Open to Public Comments relating to items on agenda: None.

Guest(s): Chip Davis, new Executive Director for Sabine Parish Tourist & Recreation Commission.

Old Business: Appoint members to Zoning Commission: Chairman John Testa, Jeanetta Dean, Kim Hunt, Ernest Williams, Adina Manshack, Monte Davis, Odis Faust

New Business:

1. Adopt Resolution #5 of 2021- To Participate in LAMATS Administered Cooperative Purchasing Joint Commission. Suzanne Williams explained what they could do for the town for submitting bids for services and purchases and that their services were free. Passed with a motion by Brocato; seconded by Jackson. Vote unanimous.

2. Appoint Representative for the LAMATS Administered Cooperative Agreement on behalf of the Town of Many. Motion to appoint Mayor Hable by Williams, second by Perry. Vote unanimous.

3. Review and Award Bid for 150# Liquid Chlorine Cylinders to DPC Industries, \$250 delivered. Passed with a motion by Brocato; seconded by Jackson. Vote unanimous.

4. Renew Airport Liability Insurance with Phares Lites & Walsworth Agency for period of 8-5-2021 to 8-5-2022 for \$2257.00. Motion by Brocato, second by Perry. Vote unanimous.

5. Open separate checking account for American Rescue Plan Act of 2021. Mayor Hable explained that the Town has been earmarked, but money has not been yet received, to be awarded in two installments of about \$495,000 apiece, dedicated strictly to water and /or sewer. He also said that every penny that is spent from that award has to be 100% documented on what it went toward or we could be liable to pay it all back. As many checks that he and Clerk Amie Brown sign on a weekly basis, it would be in the town's best interest to open a separate account and have the checks deposited and expenses be drawn on that one account. Mr. Fremeaux, our accountant agrees wholeheartedly. The account would be opened at Community bank. Motion by Williams, second by Brocato. Vote unanimous.

6. Discussion only on setting tax millage for 2021. Hable stated different circumstances didn't allow us to publish in newspaper in time for public viewing to either keep the millage at the same rate or make a change. We will need to call a Special Meeting this month so the Tax Assessor, by September 30th, can either keep the millage at 5.34 or make a change. Hable asked for a motion to call a Special Meeting prior to the end of August regarding this millage. Motion by Williams, second by Jackson. Vote unanimous.

7. Christmas Parade Date: Brocato explained that usual by this time the parade is planned and that we need to set a date. She recommended it be December 11, as the Stewart Family Concert is the same date and it would be a good ending to the day. Clerk Brown said the Christmas Committee is meeting soon to discuss holiday festivities. Motion by Perry to have the Christmas Parade on Dec 11, second by Jackson. Vote unanimous.

8. Reports: Council was presented with the **Profit & Loss Performance Budget** for July 2021 showing \$ 2,254 in the black for this fiscal year-to-date ending in July; Brocato asked where did the Town have Direct TV and it was stated that it was at the lobby at the Airport. **Payables Log** for July 2021 with evidence of invoices paid but if there is a balance it was because it was not paid

prior to July 31, 2021; balanced & reconciled; **Bank Statements:** Hable stated that because the Town changed Fiscal Agents from Bank of Montgomery to Community Bank there were still a couple of active accounts still waiting for ACHs to process and clear. Community Bank in checking accounts include our General Fund, Streets, Water Works, Fines, Sales Tax, Payroll, Meter Deposits and UDA Grant money; all accounts total \$1,504,207.79. Savings accounts at Community Bank include our Depreciation Account, Water Works Equipment, Street Savings, Town Vehicles, Police Vehicles, Special Police Account & Police Trust totaling \$ 140,800.98 **Bank Statements** at soon-to-be closed BOM accounts showing same checking accounts as at Community, General Fund, Streets, Water Works, Fines, Sales Tax, Payroll, Meter Deposits, LCDBG grant account, USDA grant account, Audit Escrow Account totaled as of July 31, 2021 \$ 320,687.37 in checking accounts. Saving accounts at BOM for July 31, 2021, include Depreciation Account, Water Works Equipment, Street Savings, Town Vehicles, Police Vehicles, Police Special Account & Police Trust totaling \$340,660.88. **Overtime report** of \$ 137,128.26 paid for the whole fiscal year July 2020-July 2021; Verification of Federal & Louisiana **Taxes paid** for July 2021, as well as our Utility, General, Sales, and Use, for the period ending 7-31-2021 and Verification of **Insurance paid** Blue Cross Blue Shield, Boston Mutual, Colonial, Retirement, for July 2021. All reports were accepted as written and presented with a motion by Perry and seconded by Jackson. Vote unanimous.

9. Chief's Report: Council was provided with a written report. Chief said we are working on getting some grants. A letter from the Attorney General's office was received regarding Highways 171 and Highway 6 to Wal-Mart and the High School, and where our city limits were and the annexed parts. We need a sign posted to where they begin and end. She stated that the Many PD could not patrol the school zone or write tickets there. Now that we have this letter, how do we get the areas annexed for the highways, as we now have an opinion and clarification. Now we need to annex the area and decide how to get there. Officers have been replaced and they are in training in the FTO program now and will be going to POST in January. Even with COVID we have kept up with our revenue better than last year and we only had 1 case of COVID in the officer and they have recovered now. PD is keeping up with sanitation and other precautions such as handwashing, etc. Sub-item a. Chief's Recommendation to remove the 18-hr cap on Brian Mattison's hours due to an increase in workload as he was part-time, but 18 hours is not enough. Passed with motion by Brocato; seconded by Perry. Vote unanimous.

10. Sales Tax Report: Increase of over 8% from July 2020, which is good since there was a decrease of 6% from May of last year to May of this year.

11. Tourism Report: Alderwoman Jackson recognized the Director of the Tourism Committee, Chip Davis in attendance; she stated that 2 members resigned, Daniel Bennet and Lance Rivers and a new member was appointed, Hannah Savell. The overnight room sales and occupancy tax deposit was up 30%; from June 2019, it's up 3%. Google Analytics has been good. Meetings, webinars and conference calls totals 13. Upcoming meetings, August 24-26 in New Orleans is up in the air if it will happen due to the increase in COVID. Seven ads placed; upcoming events are the Tackle Box Toledo Bend Open Shoot Out Tournament at Big Bass; RTT Toledo Bend Bass Tournament, Sportsman's bass Club of SWLA at Big Bass Marina; RTT Rodeo, Zwolle, Converse small business meeting, Sept 4, Music in Many Flashback Rock & Roll; Movies in Many. CHIP DAVIS addressed the Council and introduced himself, thanking Mrs. Bobbie for he being on the Commission. He stated he was there to assure us that he is here to do what we can to improve the quality of life and how to improve the area in economic development. He welcomed visitors to stop by the office and share ideas. Also, they are going update their social media presence and invited everyone to given their input or constructive criticism.

12. Cultural District & Historical Committee Report: Alderwoman Brocato provided a written report but stated Movies in Many has resumed with the Lion King with between 50-60 attended with social distancing, wearing masks, 2 emotional support dogs attended. All concessions were free and Lion King posters, coloring books, were given out. The Spiderman movie is this Saturday and we have door prizes that is going a long way to build our audiences. We pick children's movies and we have seen families and extended families attend. She thanked the city workers who passed out masks and helped make the evening successful with all the details it takes to get the show started. She complimented Suzanne Ammons for keeping the theater in pristine condition. Willie Stewart and his family played in July and Flashback will play Sept 4. Brocato encouraged the council members to attend events at the theater. The PBS premier was scheduled for Sept 8, but it was postponed because of COVID. We will partner with the SPTRC and Cane River Heritage to get our museum up and running. No meetings scheduled of the Cultural District because of the DELTA variant.

13. Fire Board: Mayor Hable reported that there were 92 calls in the Central area with the 53 for EMS. Mayor says there is an ongoing issue with false fire alarms going off in the middle of the night. Chief Scott Gowen has stationed a couple volunteers at Central Station in the overnight hours during the time the alarms are going off at Apollos Apartments. It was explained to him that these alarms in the apartments are so sensitive that cooking or even a really hot shower can set off the alarms. He said the low response rate is the problem in going to these false alarms and will affect our fire rates negatively next year. We put Chief Gowen in charge of assigning a couple of volunteers overnight to respond to these calls. Hopefully when we are rated next year our property insurance will go down and we can save the taxpayers on their insurance if our rates go down.

14. Airport: Airport Manager Lee Woods reported a 10 a.m. meeting with contractors and engineers to discuss Phase 3 the final phase of the runway improvement. Hope to start after Labor Day and then the runway will be redone completely.

15. Zoning: Mayor stated there was no report. The next meeting will be soon.

16. Grant Report: Suzanne Williams provided a written report. Two historical marker grants were obtained, one for the KCS Depot, one for Sabine High School. Grant for Many PD for trauma kits, camera gear of \$140; received LGAP grant of \$9408 went to the fire hydrant maintenance program to help drive down our fire rating. Still waiting on CWEF announcement. Received \$70,000 from legislature; \$25,000 for the museum and \$45,000 for a new chipper, which will lower costs of clean up as the town now has to contract out that work. Working on COVID grant for new HAC at theater. Still working on FEMA snow storm; submitted CDBG and received Priority 5 which promises us that the state understands our needs; filed a grant for \$49,475 with LCLE to get the cost of SRO covered instead of the 3-way agreement we have now with the SPSO, SPSB and Many PD to share the cost. Applied for grant for mobile license plate readers for each police unit. Williams explained how they work. Will submit for Cane River Heritage grant when it opens in the fall. Attended LMA conference, meetings with engineers to discuss funding for major water and sewer projects; Nominated to broadband coalition for the parish and elected officials focus group at the Tourism Commission office; board member of Sabine Prevention Alliance; member of Sabine Parish Child & Youth board, attending all scheduled meetings.

17. Street: Street Supervisor Jeremy Wilkerson reported that getting caught up with mowing, and will have to stop filling pot holes until they are done. 4 mowers and brush cutter will be going to see can get side streets done. PTO on drive shaft on tractor is down again and it appears to be a manufacurting issue. Started piling litter and trash in a line to make it easier to pick up instead of all of the guys going every which way to pick it up. Trying to maximize our time as we've had manpower shortages due to illness. Patching pot holes as we can. Brocato complimented about the good job done on Mc Donald Drive with filling pot holes. Mayor Hable also complimented them on a job well done in the light of being short-handed.

18. Animal Control: Street Supervisor Jeremy Wilkerson reported that 3 dogs and 2 cats were picked up. Had calls about dogs loose on Middlecreek but by the time they arrived, the dogs were gone. If dogs are located, they will be taken to shelter.

19. Water: Roger Dew, Water Supervisor said the well on Natchitoches Highway was pulled and still trying to get disinfectants levels; no leaks; working on instrumentation at water plant. We check for leaks on the mains and don't always know if there's a leak on the customer side until the bill is received or meters read. Meters are locked out for non-payment of bills. Most customers are proactive and report water on the ground. Perry complimented the department for their quick response.

20. Sewer: Josh Darden reported that he used the brush cutter and mowed all the levees at the plant. There's a washout at the effluent gate and he's been hauling dirt there to shore it up. Helped read meters this week. Waiting for chlorine burnout and getting water sampled pulled and will report to the state. Manholes will be repaired with concreted to help the I & I issue. We are doing everything we can do ourselves to save money and not hire outside help. DEQ reports will be done next week. He asked the Grant Writer for a list of grants to show to DEQ we are working on alleviating issues. Parts for the shafts at the sewer plants were incorrect and had to be returned and reordered.

21. Garbage: No trucks are running but we have a contingency plan with Waste Connections. New truck is in Shreveport for transmission repairs. Old truck will be ready tomorrow and trash pick up crew will come in tomorrow on their day off and finish the route.

22a. Discussion on how many days will the grace period (10 days) be for water bills before being cut off and using new CBS collections as well. Motion to approve request by Brcato, second by Perry. Vote unanimous.

22b. Remarks from Council Members: **Perry:** 475 Georgia Ave has a culvert that is too high and will have to removed and replaced to be lower. Same thing is happening on Byles St. **Darwin:** Nothing. **Jackson:** People want speed bumps on Trace Street; need to get a petition from residents living on the street. Wilkerson stated that he is waiting for rubber spikes to come in to replace the metal ones that tend to give a flat tire. **Williams:** Asked on ordinances and what is going to be enforced related to trash, litter, old cars and non-running vehicles. She said the longer we let our town go down, it will continue to go down. There are 18 wheelers parked all over town and ordinances need to be enforced. Brocato agreed it makes the town look trashy but if the property owner gives permission to park there, we can't do anything about it. Chief Wooley said maybe we can find a place to park and Williams said maybe they could park on McDonald Drive as it would be out of sight. Any parking place needs to be maintained. Discussion ensued about finding or providing a place to park big rigs. Attorney Sylvia is not aware of any ordinance prohibiting the parking around dry cleaners, and old fire station. Large pile of concrete rubble from where the old fish shop used to be at the 5-way on MLK that needs cleaned up. Williams wants to send letters to people in her district to clean up their property and then follow through with it. Clerk Brown explained the procedure of 10 days to clean up property or the town would clean it up and bill the resident. **Brocato:** Need to follow-up on grease traps on Middlecreek Road as they were given a month extension to fix them. It was Middlecreek Apartments who got a letter from the former city attorney. Roger said he got a letter from LDH saying they can't run regular sink trash through the grease trap. Attorney Sylvia will work on the issue as soon as he does the research. Darden said he does need to do grease trap inspections.

Next scheduled Regular Council Meeting is on September 21, 2021 at 5:00 p.m.

Motion to adjourn meeting at 6:03 P.M. was made by Williams and seconded by Jackson. Vote unanimous.

ROBERT H. HABLE, JR., MAYOR

AMIE BROWN, TOWN CLERK