

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL
OF THE CITY OF ST. MARTINVILLE, LOUISIANA
HELD ON THE 21st DAY OF OCTOBER, 2024.

The Mayor and City Council of the City of St. Martinville, Louisiana met in Regular Session on the 21st day of October 2024 at City Hall, their regular meeting place, pursuant to the call of the Mayor.

THERE were present: Jason Willis, Mayor

Mike Fuselier, Councilman

Carol Frederick, Councilman

Jonas Fontenette, Councilman

Janise Anthony, Councilman

Flo Chatman, Councilman

Allan L. Durand, City Attorney

THERE were absent: None

Mayor Jason Willis presiding called the meeting to order.

Due to the absence of Lorrie M Poirier, Candy Bertrand substituted as Clerk of the Council.

It was moved by Janise Anthony duly seconded by Flo Chatman and unanimously carried that the minutes of the regular meeting held October 7, 2024 hereby be approved for publication in the Teche News, the Official Journal of the City of St. Martinville.

It was moved by Carol Frederick duly seconded by Mike Fuselier that Accounting Specialist Katy Bujard be appointed as interim CFO to replace Avis Gutekunst with a 34% pay increase until someone is hired or Ms Bujard officially applies and is appointed to the position.

A substitute motion was made by Jonas Fontenette duly seconded by Flo Chatman that Accounting Specialist Katy Bujard be appointed as interim CFO to replace Avis Gutekunst with a pay increase from \$19.39/hr to \$30.59/hr.

Mr. Fontenette's motion being submitted to a vote, the vote thereon was:

Yeas: J.Fontenette, J.Anthony and F.Chatman

Nays: M.Fuselier and C.Frederick

Absent: None

It was moved by Carol Frederick duly seconded by Flo Chatman and unanimously carried that Mayor Willis be authorized to sign a contract for engineering services for drainage improvements of Durand Drainage Phase II Planning & Design(50-MQ5-20-1) contingent upon receipt of an email from McBade Engineering to charge the City for only work that is performed as a result of the scope of work being reduced.

It was moved by Flo Chatman duly seconded by Janise Anthony that Mayor Willis be authorized to sign renewal of contract with La Louisianne for two years. The writing and administration of grants will also be included in the contract.

A substitute motion was made by Mike Fuselier duly seconded by Carol Frederick that Mayor Willis be authorized to sign renewal of contract with La Louisianne for one year.

Mr. Fuselier's motion being submitted to a vote, the vote thereon was:

Yeas: M.Fuselier and C.Frederick

Nays: J.Fontenette, J.Anthony and F.Chatman

Absent: None

Mr Fuselier's motion failed.

Ms. Chatman's motion to renew La Louisianne renewal contract for 2 years being submitted to a vote, the vote thereon was:

Yeas: J.Fontenette, J.Anthony and F.Chatman

Nays: M.Fuselier and C.Frederick

Absent: None

Upon request of Eric Martin to hold a BBQ benefit for Blake Douet on Sunday, February 9th from 9:00 am until 12:00 noon, it was moved by Mike Fuselier duly seconded by Carol Frederick and unanimously carried that permission be granted for the use of the Pavilion in Magnolia Park. Councilman Fuselier and City Attorney Allan Durand will split the cost of the rental for the pavilion.

Upon request of Mayor Willis, it was moved by Mike Fuselier duly seconded by Carol Frederick and unanimously carried that Mr George Choplin be granted permission to organize the Annual Christmas Parade sponsored by the City to be held Sunday, December 8th. The parade will be held annually on the 2nd Sunday of December for the remainder of this term. The mayor stated that he is not recommending the City host any other parade, only the annual Christmas Parade. An entrance fee will be charged for parade participants. The entrance fee funds will pay for security. The theme for this year's parade is A Cajun Creole Christmas in the Ville.

Delana Owens request for a variance to obtain a liquor license in the vicinity of a church was removed from the agenda due to the location not being within 300 feet from a church.

Following requests of Pharmacists David Dorcey, Ji Sonnier, and Michael Moresi, it was moved by Mike Fuselier and unanimously seconded that the City withdraw from the Opioid Lawsuit against Louisiana Wholesale Drugs.

Upon request of Councilman Jonas Fontenette, it was moved by Mike Fuselier duly seconded by Janise Anthony and unanimously carried that a request by Notre Dame Church for a Special Event permit to sell alcohol be added to the agenda of this meeting.

It was moved by Jansie Anthony duly seconded by Mike Fuselier and unanimously carried that the hiring of Avis Gutekunst as CFO Consultant be added to the agenda of this meeting.

It was moved by Mike Fuselier duly seconded by Carol Frederick and unanimously carried that the appointment of three Planning & Zoning Commission members be added to the agenda of this meeting.

Councilwoman Flo Chatman tabled her agenda item to discuss term limits for the City Council that were approved during the last administration.

It was moved by Jonas Fontenette duly seconded by Janise Anthony and unanimously carried that a Public Hearing be opened for the La Economic Development Restoration Tax Abatement requested by Michael Leblanc of Duchamp Opera House.

SMEDA Director Jennifer Stelly explained the tax abatement through the State would only abate property taxes for all new investments/improvement he has made following the purchase of the property.

It was moved by Mike Fuselier duly seconded by Carol Frederick and unanimously carried that a Public Hearing be closed for the La Economic Development Restoration Tax Abatement requested by Michael Leblanc of Duchamp Opera House.

It was moved by Mike Fuselier duly seconded by Carol Frederick and unanimously carried that the La Economic Development Restoration Tax Abatement requested by Michael Leblanc of Duchamp Opera House be approved.

It was moved by Mike Fuselier duly seconded by Flo Chatman and unanimously carried that City Attorney prepare a resolution to the State to object that the municipality pay expenses related to Tax Abatement.

The following updated resolution was introduced by Jonas Fontenette, duly seconded by Flo Chatman and unanimously adopted:

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the City of St. Martinville intends to submit budget requests to the Division of Administration for Capital Outlay Funds; and

WHEREAS, the City of St. Martinville does not have the financial resources necessary to fund projects of this size; and

WHEREAS, the City of St. Martinville has selected and authorized the submission of the following State Capital Budget Requests for year 2025-2026.

Priority #1	
St. Martinville Electrical System Improvements	\$1,066,667
Priority #2	
St. Martinville Main Street Enhancement	\$1,680,000
Priority #3	
St. Martinville Public Works Building Renovations	\$ 500,000
Priority #4	
St. Martinville Water Drainage New Durand Subdivision	\$1,200,000
Priority #5	
St. Martinville Water Drainage Old Durand Subdivision	\$ 300,000
Priority #6	
St. Martinville City Wide Sidewalk Project	\$2,400,000
Priority #7	
Sewer Extension to SLCC	\$2,000,000

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City of St. Martinville, in regular session convened this 21st day of October, 2024, does hereby certify to the Division of Administration, Facility Planning and Control, that it does not have cash or bond funding available to fund these projects.

This Resolution having been submitted to a vote, thereon was as follows:

YEAS: M.Fuselier, C.Frederick, J.Fontenette, J.Anthony and F.Chatman
NAYS: None
ABSTAIN: None
ABSENT: None

And the Resolution was declared adopted this 21st day of October, 2024

Jason Willis, Mayor
City of St. Martinville

It was moved by Mike Fuselier duly seconded by Flo Chatman and unanimously carried that Nuisance Ordinance be amended to provide for a \$50.00 administrative fee be incurred by all residents if no action is taken in the amount of time allotted after notification is sent to property owners.

RESOLUTION

A by the City Council of the City of St. Martinville

WHEREAS, the Louisiana Legislature has appropriated funding for the Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Local Government Assistance Program (LGAP); and

WHEREAS, the Local Government Assistance Program offers grants to eligible municipalities and parishes for a wide range of projects to improve public health, public safety, living conditions and for economic development purposes; and

WHEREAS, it is deemed necessary and proper to submit applications to the Louisiana Office of Community Development under the Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Local Government Assistance.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of St. Martinville that the Mayor is hereby authorized to sign and submit an application to the State of Louisiana, Office of Community Development under the Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Local Government Assistance Program for technology upgrade and also execute any and all documents should this grant be funded; and

The foregoing Resolution was offered by Mike Fuselier, duly seconded by Flo Chatman, and upon being submitted to a vote, the vote was:

Yeas: M.Fuselier, C.Frederick, J.Fontenette, J.Anthony and F.Chatman

Nays: None

Absent: None

The Resolution above was thereon declared adopted on the 21st day of October, 2024

Jason Willis, Mayor

RESOLUTION

A by the City Council of the City of St. Martinville

WHEREAS, the Louisiana Legislature has appropriated funding for the Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Community Water Enrichment Fund (CWEF) Program; and

WHEREAS, the Community Water Enrichment Fund Program offers grants to eligible municipalities and parishes for rehabilitation, improvements and new construction projects for community potable water systems; and

WHEREAS, it is deemed necessary and proper to submit applications to the Louisiana Office of Community Development under the Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Community Water Enrichment Fund Program.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Mayor is hereby authorized to sign and submit an application to the State of Louisiana, Office of Community Development under the Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Community Water Enrichment Fund Program to purchase control valves and also execute any and all documents should this grant be funded.

The foregoing Resolution was offered by Jonas Fontenette, duly seconded by Janise Anthony, and upon being submitted to a vote, the vote was:

Yeas; M.Fuselier, C.Frederick, J.Fontenette, J.Anthony and F.Chatman

Nays: None

Absent: None

The Resolution above was thereon declared adopted on the 21st day of October, 2024

Jason Willis, Mayor

It was moved by Mike Fuselier duly seconded by Flo Chatman and unanimously carried that the low bid for lawn service for Magnolia Park, Adam Carlson Park, Swimming Pool and the Festival Grounds be awarded to Lawn Magic LLC in the amount of \$63,900.00 annually.

Upon request of Mayor Willis, it was moved by Mike Fuselier duly seconded by Flo Chatman and unanimously carried that Executive Administrative Assistant/Clerk Lorrie Poirier be allowed to work from home to prepare agendas and minutes for council meeting while on FMLA Leave for 5 weeks.

It was moved by Mike Fuselier duly seconded by Janise Anthony and unanimously carried that the following Corporate Authorization Resolution hereby be adopted:

Corporate Authorization Resolution

This is to certify: That a meeting of the Mayor and City Council of the City of St. Martinville, LA, duly called and held on October 21, 2024, the following resolution was adopted:

RESOLVED, that Avis Guteknust be removed from all accounts drawn on _____ and that checks of this corporation drawn on said bank and orders for transfers or withdrawal of funds of this corporation on deposit in said Bank, in whatever form, shall be signed by two of the following:

Jason Willis, Mayor

Kathryn Bujard, Chief Financial Officer

Lorrie M Poirier, Executive Administrative Assistant

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that said Bank is hereby authorized and directed to honor and pay any checks so drawn as above set forth, whether or not such checks be payable to the order of one of the foregoing persons either in his individual or official capacity or deposited to his individual credit.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto affixed by name as Clerk and have caused the corporate seal of said corporation to be hereto affixed this 21st day of October, 2024.

I, Lorrie M Poirier, Clerk of said corporation, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a copy of the resolution passed as therein set forth.

Clerk

A discussion was held regarding invoice from Kolder, Slaven & Co dated September 31, 2024 relative to management advisory services and allegations provided by the Legislative Auditors Office. Mayor Willis advised that Mr. Kolder was contacted to provide more information. No payment will be made until more details are provided to the council.

Mayor Willis provided an update from the utility department regarding installation of AMI meters, replacement of broken water meters, collection letters, software, and gone list.

It was moved by Mike Fuselier duly seconded by Jonas Fontenette and unanimously carried that permission be granted for Notre Dame to obtain a special event permit to sell alcohol for the Church Fair.

It was moved by Mike Fuselier duly seconded by Carol Frederick and unanimously carried that Ms Avis Gutekunst be hired as CFO Consultant at a rate of \$50.00/hr. Mayor Willis will monitor the amount of time worked and the charges.

Upon request of Mayor Willis, it was moved by Janise Anthony duly seconded by Jonas Fontenette and unanimously carried that Jessica Aubry, Mike Formeller, and Floyd Johnson be appointed to the Planning & Zoning Commission.

Mayor Willis reported on the following:

SMSH Alumni Homecoming parade

Hometown Halloween to be held Sunday, October 27th from 4:00pm-8:00pm

Scope of Work for Electrical Upgrade Grant has been approved/Bids submitted

Clearance Grant Environmental Review complete-waiting on asbestos test results

There being no further business to come before the Mayor and City Council, Mayor Willis adjourned the meeting upon motion of Janise Anthony and duly seconded by Mike Fuselier.

JASON WILLIS, MAYOR

ATTEST:

LORRIE M POIRIER, CITY CLERK