

REGULAR MEETING UNION PARISH POLICE JURY

Farmerville, Louisiana
September 4th, 2018

The Union Parish Police Jury met this date in regular session in the Police Jury meeting room, Courthouse Annex, Farmerville, Louisiana with the following present: Charles Sawyer, Lanny Parker, Jerry W. Taylor, Glenn Hutto, Nathan Futch, Mike Jones and John Watley. Absent: Derek Kennedy and Stan Smith. Also present was Michael Mahaffey, Assistant District Attorney. The President called the session to order and welcomed all guests. Hank Hamilton, Preacher at the United Methodist Church offered the invocation and Greg Gossler, Union Parish Homeland Security Director led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

President Taylor welcomed the elected officials in the audience: Foster Campbell (Public Service Commissioner), Tommy Bennett (Union Parish School Board Member), Lennie Smith (Justice of the Peace) and Lance Futch (Union Parish Assessor). President Taylor asked if anyone in the audience would like to register for public comment. The public was given the opportunity to comment on any item shown on the agenda.

Mr. Watley would like to recognize the family of Dennis Franklin who recently passed away. Mr. Franklin was on the Bernice Town Council. Mr. Sawyer would like to congratulate the Union Parish High School Football team on their first victory in their new football stadium.

After the opportunity for public comment was given, a Motion was made by Mr. Hutto, seconded by Mr. Watley and declared adopted by unanimous roll call vote of the Jury to approve the agenda with the following additions:

#10A-1 Discuss and take action, if necessary, on the following two proposed abandonments:

- (1) Partial abandonment of a ROW located on Lots 4 and 5 of the Pleasure Island Marina Subdivision.**
- (2) Portion of Old Pleasure Island Road (formerly known as Louisiana Highway 15) as it traverses through the NE ¼ of Section 12 and the S ½ of SW ¼ of SE ¼ of Section 1, Township 21 North, Range 1 West over those land(s) owned by J. Thomas Properties of Union, LLC.**

#19 Homeland Security update regarding the potential for severe weather.

Motion Mr. Sawyer, seconded by Mr. Jones to adopt the minutes of the August 7th, 2018 Regular Meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

The Secretary/Treasurer presented the Budget to Actual Revenue and Expense report and explained to the jurors that the report reflects what has been budgeted for the year compared to what has been spent. The jurors were given time to comment on the report. No questions were asked. **Motion Mr. Hutto, seconded by Mr. Sawyer to adopt the**

Revenues and Expenditures Report for the month of August 2018. Motion carried unanimously.

Ricky Taylor addressed the jury regarding the Concord Water System. Mr. Taylor asked the Police Jury for help in finding information regarding the water system because its members cannot access what information is supposed to be readily available to them. Mr. Taylor and others in his area are interested in merging with Salem Water System and there is the possibility of a sizable grant if that were to happen. Mr. Taylor urges the jury to help in any way they can. President Taylor explains to Mr. Taylor that the Police Jury does not govern small non-profit water systems and therefore has no say in what they do or how they run things, but the jury would help facilitate a meeting between representatives of the two water systems if that is what was decided upon.

Foster Campbell addressed the jury regarding Claiborne Electric's Fiber to the Home Project which concerns high speed internet. Mr. Campbell is in favor of high speed internet, but he expresses his concerns about Claiborne Electric Co-Op jeopardizing their electric rates by entering a business they know nothing about. Mr. Campbell states that he asked Claiborne Electric to pay for an independent review/feasibility study. The cost would have been \$37,000. Mr. Campbell states that if Claiborne Electric wants to borrow 82 million dollars then the cost of the study should not matter. If the Fiber to the Home project were to fail then the cost {82 million dollars} would be passed on to the co-op members in the form of higher rates. Mr. Foster claims he is trying to protect the co-op members. Mr. Foster also claims that Mr. Brown tried to circumvent him and get the other commissioners on board for the project. Bill Robertson with Foster Campbell's office states that as of today Claiborne Electric has spent \$19,791 on a feasibility study which is just a little over half of what was agreed to. Mr. Robertson also presented the jury with a timeline of events relating to Claiborne Electric's project. Mr. Campbell states that he never received a courtesy call when Claiborne Electric dropped their application. He heard about it two months after the fact. Mr. Campbell thanks the jury and the public for their time.

Motion Mr. Watley, seconded by Mr. Hutto to open a public hearing concerning (a) the partial abandonment of a ROW located on Lots 4 and 5 of the Pleasure Island Marina Subdivision and (2) the proposed abandonment of a portion of Old Pleasure Island Road (formerly known as Louisiana Highway 15) as it traverses through the NE ¼ of Section 12 and the S ½ of SW ¼ of SE ¼ of Section 1, T21N, R1W over those land(s) owned by J. Thomas Properties of Union, LLC. Motion carried unanimously.

President Taylor declared a public hearing in session. Mike Duty, professional land surveyor, addressed the jury regarding the two abandonments. Mr. Duty was employed several months ago to survey a lot on Pleasure Island Road by Ms. Spicer. While performing the survey, Mr. Duty discovered that Ms. Spicer did not have the room to move in a double wide trailer. Pleasure Island Road was originally a state highway. The original ROW was unusually wide. In front of Ms. Spicer's property the ROW is 60 feet out of the middle. Mr. Duty is recommending a reduction from a 60 foot ROW to a 30 foot ROW. The second abandonment that the police jury is considering deals with a strip of Old Highway 15 that goes across the water. There were no comments from the public. Motion Mr. Hutto, seconded by Mr. Sawyer to

close the public hearing. Motion carried unanimously. *President Taylor declared the public hearing closed.*

Motion Mr. Futch, seconded by Mr. Hutto to abandon a partial ROW located on Lots 4 and 5 of the Pleasure Island Marina Subdivision as per the plat of survey prepared by Mike Duty. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion Mr. Watley, second by Mr. Parker to abandon a portion of Old Pleasure Island Road (formerly known as Louisiana Highway 15) as it traverses through the NE ¼ of Section 12 and the South ½ of SW ¼ of SE ¼ of Section 1, Township 21 North, Range 1 West over those land(s) owned by J. Thomas Properties of Union, LLC. Motion carried unanimously.

Minor Patton addressed the jury regarding financial support in the amount of \$4,000 for the crappie fishing tournaments. The Town of Farmerville and the Tourist Commission have already committed their sponsorship of the tournament. Mr. Patton stated that last year he requested \$6,000 and only used \$3,800. **Motion Mr. Hutto, seconded by Mr. Sawyer to give support in the amount of \$4,000 as requested by Mr. Minor Patton, to support the crappie fishing tournament. Motion carried unanimously.**

Motion Mr. Parker, seconded by Mr. Sawyer to appoint Mike Duty, who will replace Mrs. Marilyn Smith, to the Union Parish Library Board. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion Mr. Jones, seconded by Mr. Sawyer to appoint Jerry W. Taylor, who will replace Charles Sawyer, to the Union-Lincoln Regional Water Supply Initiative Board. Motion carried unanimously. Mr. Taylor thanked Mr. Sawyer for his service on the Union-Lincoln Regional Water Supply Initiative Board.

Motion Mr. Watley, seconded by Mr. Sawyer to assist the Village of Junction City with pothole repairs with the Village of Junction City paying for the cost of the materials. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion Mr. Hutto, seconded by Mr. Jones to appoint Stacy Foote to the Board of Commissioners for Ward Five Fire District Board to fill the unexpired term of Steven Murry whose term ends on December 31, 2019. Ms. Foote's term shall begin on September 13, 2018 and end on December 31, 2019. Motion carried unanimously.

Airport Committee Recommendations:

Motion Mr. Parker, seconded by Mr. Sawyer to approve hangar construction/lease agreements for Bradley Jones, Caskey Terral and Troy Pardue; authorize the President to execute all necessary documents. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion Mr. Parker, seconded by Mr. Futch to accept the lowest bid from Lincoln Plumbing, LLC in the amount of \$2,700 for a water treatment system and authorize the President to execute all necessary documents. Motion carried unanimously.

Personnel Committee Recommendations:

Motion Mr. Jones, seconded by Mr. Parker to hire Jean Branton (temporary) for the Landfill Office Assistant/Rover position at the rate of \$10 per hour; with a starting date of September 10, 2018. Motion carried unanimously.

Road Committee Recommendations:

Motion Mr. Watley, seconded by Mr. Jones to recommend to the full jury to accept Change Order No. 1 in the amount of \$15,070 for the Wallace Road Pipe Replacement Project and authorize the President to execute all necessary documents. Mr. Futch expressed his displeasure with spending that amount of money to relocate the water line. He states that the relocation can be done for a more affordable price, but the jury is spending unnecessary money on the advice of the engineer. Mr. Hutto addresses the jury and public and explains why the water line is being relocated using the more expensive method. **Motion carried with the following vote:**

YEAS Sawyer, Parker, Taylor, Hutto, Jones and Watley
NAYS Futch

Motion Mr. Watley, seconded by Mr. Jones to use \$200,000 out of Road Construction for the purpose of hot mixing roads with Mr. Rugg determining where the hot mix is to be best utilized. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion Mr. Watley, seconded by Mr. Jones to move forward with a capital outlay request for the Rocky Branch Road/Bridge and authorize the President to execute any necessary documents. Motion carried unanimously.

Greg Gossler, Union Parish Homeland Security Director, gave a status update on the potential for severe weather. Tropical storm Gordan has taken a turn over the past few hours and the impact will not be as severe as initially thought. Over the next 36 to 48 hours Union Parish could get approximately 2 ½ inches of rain.

In accordance with Ordinance 549, time for public comment was given.

Lynn Ramsey, 167 Jerry Ramsey Road, Farmerville. Mrs. Ramsey addressed the jury concerning her road. She has contacted Mr. Futch, Mr. Taylor, Ms. Strickland, Ms. Williams and Mr. Rugg and can't get her road fixed.

Judy Auger, 844 Alton Auger Road, Marion. Mrs. Auger addressed the jury concerning Mill Road and Camp Road.

David Garris, Sterlington. Mr. Garris addressed the jury concerning the Wallace Road project. He states that the water line relocation is a necessity for Wallace Road, but thinks there was a more economical way to go about relocating it.

Jeremy Williams, 518 Laran Church Road, Spearsville. Mr. Williams addressed the jury concerning his support of Claiborne Electric's Fiber to the Home project.

Greg Taylor, 747 Ervin Road, Spearsville. Mr. Taylor addressed the jury concerning his support of Claiborne Electric's Fiber to the Home project.

Jackie Hill, 3728 Highway 15, Spearsville. Mrs. Hill addressed the jury regarding a request from DART to place silhouettes of domestic abuse victims on the Courthouse lawn to honor the memories of those people who lost their lives in domestic violence episodes. Mrs. Hill was asked to provide a written request to the jury.

Nathan Futch, 2658 Game Reserve Road, Marion. *Mr. Futch left his juror seat and entered the public seating area.* Mr. Futch states that he ran for police juror three years ago. At that time his wife had worked for the police jury for fourteen (14) years. Mrs. Futch would tell Mr. Futch what was going on at the jury office and encouraged Mr. Futch to run for office. Mr. Futch states that he has personally seen how much money the jury throws away. Mr. Futch says he sits in his jury seat and is not proud of what he witnesses. Mr. Futch urges members of the public to get more involved in what their police juror is doing and maybe some of this spending can be stopped.

Mark Brown, CEO - Claiborne Electric. Mr. Brown thanks the jury for letting him speak. He states that Foster Campbell has demanded several meetings with the Claiborne Electric Board and he {Mr. Campbell} will come in for a brief meeting and then leave without ever addressing the pertinent issues. Mr. Brown states that his timeline starts way before Bill Robertson's. Claiborne Electric started talking about Broadband in 2013. Over the next couple of years Claiborne Electric researched broadband. A survey was sent out to the co-op membership and the response was overwhelming. Eighty (80) percent of the co-op membership positively responded. Next, an independent company was hired to survey co-op members and non-members alike to see if they would be interested in broadband. Another company was then contracted to put together a full business model. A lot of time and effort has been put into this project. The proposal was presented to the co-op financier. The co-op financier looked at the proposed model and asked the co-op to tweak the proposal. They ultimately approved the model and requested that the project be performed in phases over a five-year period. At this point Mr. Brown conferred with attorneys and wanted to file for a *Letter of No Opposition* with the Public Service Commission to get the ball rolling. Foster Campbell was then approached with the proposal and copies were left with Mr. Campbell and his staff for review. Foster Campbell's office wanted a separate independent study and Claiborne Electric did agree to that study which was to begin in November of 2017. There was no communication in November, December or January. At the end of January Mr. Brown called the consultants and wanted to know the progress of the study. They had not even started yet. Claiborne Electric requested an appointment and representatives traveled to Wisconsin to go over the business model and answer more questions. Another thirty days passed, and another call was made. The study still had not been started. The consultant said they needed one more filing with the Public Service Commission. At the end of March 2018 Claiborne Electric got the first set of questions that needed a response. Mr. Brown confirms that during the waiting period conversations were had with the other commissioners but nothing underhanded was done. Claiborne Electric was not sneaking around and there was nothing improper. Mr. Brown states that any time Claiborne Electric files anything with the commission it is always sent to all five commissioners. Claiborne Electric simply took our

business model to the commissioners, not to circumvent anyone, but to make sure all of the commissioners understood our project and what we were trying to do. The reason the application was ultimately cancelled by Claiborne Electric was because close to \$20,000 had already been spent and we saw that the commission was not going to approve the project. Claiborne Electric did not need to notify Mr. Campbell or the other commissioners because the paperwork would have been sent to all five of the commissioners after the filing was made. The companies that Mr. Campbell mentioned that he said wanted to work with Claiborne Electric never contacted us. A for-profit company is not interested in helping Claiborne Electric because we are a non-profit. Claiborne Electric cares about taking care of our membership and community, and we are not in it for the money. The co-op members came to us and asked for help. Just because Claiborne Electric cancelled the application does not mean that we are done. Claiborne Electric is now trying to come up with alternative financing options which would not require the Public Service Commission's involvement. Mr. Brown also told the audience that one of his prior job experiences was the running of a company that provided Internet service, including the fiber service that Claiborne Electric seeks to provide its members.

Mr. Taylor addressed the public and thanked them for their patience. He stated that it is very important that we understand the issues facing our parish and it is only through working together that we will be able to achieve what we need to do.

There being no further business to come before the Jury, the President declared the meeting adjourned upon motion by Mr. Futch, seconded by Mr. Watley on this the 4th day of September, 2018.


PAULA STRICKLAND
Secretary-Treasurer


JERRY W. TAYLOR
President