

The following minutes were taken at a Special Meeting of the Mayor and the Board of Aldermen on May 10, 2017 at the Town Hall in Pearl River. Mayor McQueen called the meeting to order at 5:04p.m.

ROLL CALL:

Aldermen Walsh, Cutrer and Bennett, Attorney Mathison, Attorney Daigle, Carla Benelli (Town Clerk), Chief Jennings and Mayor McQueen were present. Alderman Phillips and McGregor were not present.

Mayor McQueen asked for a motion to waive all introductions, so moved by Alderman Walsh, seconded by Alderman Bennett.

All in Favor, So Moved.

DISCUSSION:

Attorney Daigle started out with the 2016 budget. He stated that there was a surplus in every department. He went over each department and explained the variances and actuals. Alderman Cutrer asked questions about the surplus on the 2016 budget. Attorney Daigle explained that we try to budget the expenditures but it doesn't mean you have to spend it since it can be brought forward to the next year's budget in the General Fund.

Alderman Walsh asked the mayor about the repairs to sidewalks and streets. The mayor said that he was working on the sidewalks for this year. Attorney Daigle continued to talk about the 2016 budget and how transfers into the 2017 budget were slated. The discussion went on for several more minutes between the council, the mayor and the attorneys, for details listen to CD available at Town Hall.

Attorney Daigle explained that all surpluses from each year are to automatically transfer into the General Fund and then be distributed from there to the other funds. He also added line items and made changes to some line item names and amounts on the General, Police, Street and S & W Budgets and explained the reasons for the changes. More details on this discussion can be found on CD available at Town Hall.

Alderman Cutrer opened the discussion on Ordinance #03-22-17 "Forming Keep Pearl River Beautiful Commission". She suggested and made some additional changes to the ordinance to help the other aldermen be more comfortable with the ordinance. She discussed some of the changes with Attorney Mathison. Alderman Bennett said that she does not agree with this ordinance; the town does not need this ordinance or another law. Alderman Bennett said that she does not and would not support this ordinance; she feels that the town crew and the citizens do a wonderful job keeping the town clean. Alderman Cutrer feels that it would be a plus for the town to have this ordinance in place and it would also help to educate the school students. Alderman Bennett stated that this is just another stacked committee; she said that "stacked" means to put people on certain committee's illegally as done in the past.

Alderman Phillips talked about the other municipalities that stood up during the LMA meeting last month who were proud to announce awards that had been submitted to them by Keep St. Tammany Beautiful and Keep Louisiana Beautiful Foundations. He also said that he is all for adjusting the ordinance if necessary; he said that he does not think that they should ever take the power from the mayor for anything. He stated that he wants that on the record.

Mayor McQueen stated that he is not against having a beautification committee but asked why this had to be done in an ordinance that cost money when we could appoint our own beautification committee. He said that the town had won district three years in a row. This was all done by the town; no one came out to show the town how to clean-up. The mayor said that we already belong to KAB whether this ordinance passes or not. He asked why the town would pay one-thousand dollars to join KAB and fifty dollars a year if KAB is not going to send us information to help educate kids, etc. Alderman Cutrer and Walsh said that KAB would be helping us since we are affiliated with them now and the mayor asked again, "why do we need this ordinance"? The mayor continued by saying he had spoken to other towns that belong to KAB and that they do not have an ordinance such as this. Alderman Cutrer stated that this ordinance would give the mayor all of the power to control the board, without the ordinance a committee could do whatever it wanted. Alderman Walsh said that the town could get grants from KAB and they would help to streamline the beautification process. The mayor said that he would like to get people from outside involved with the cleanup but he just can't understand why we need an ordinance. Alderman Cutrer said that the one-thousand dollars that we paid KAB was not to join but to get training to be affiliated with KAB. Mayor McQueen said that he would be contacting Ms. Russel with KAB to get more information.

Alderman Bennett said that our town has always been kept clean; even the last mayor made sure the town was clean and this mayor has topped that and put the icing on the cake. People have always complemented us on how clean the town is. Alderman Walsh said that some people like the competition. Attorney Daigle asked if there's a requirement that we have a commission formed by ordinance to participate or can we have a committee appointed by the mayor. Alderman Cutrer said that there are different avenues that you have to take and KAB suggested the ordinance. Attorney Daigle suggested some ways to help the mayor decide if this ordinance is necessary. The mayor stated that he is not against this ordinance but by passing this ordinance it would be law and the town will be stuck with it, right or wrong. He stated that he would like to understand it more before supporting it.

Alderman Cutrer said that she had never done anything to try and take power from the mayor and she never would. She said that everything she's done is to lift the mayor up and to support the town. Alderman McGregor stated that he didn't want to see a committee take flowers up just to put something else down. Alderman Cutrer said that the chairman could only do what the mayor directs them to do. They can bring up ideas but without the mayor's approval they can't do anything. Attorney Daigle suggested that they may want to add that if the chairman does not stay within a certain perimeter, the mayor can remove the chairman.

Mayor McQueen adjourned at 7:33pm

MEETING ADJOURNED

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED THIS 10th DAY OF MAY 2017.

Carla Benelli, Town Clerk

Honorable David McQueen, Mayor