

GENERAL MEETING
TOWN OF MAURICE MINUTES
Wednesday, December 20, 2023

The general meeting of the officials of the Town of Maurice was opened by Mayor Neil Arsement at 6:00 p.m.
at the Maurice Municipal Building, 405 Lastie Ave., Maurice, Louisiana

Mayor Arsement led the assembly in Prayer and Alderman Matthew Trahan led the Pledge of Allegiance

Roll call of officers

Present: Mayor Neil Arsement; Alderwoman Megan Landry- Lalande; Alderman Troy Catalon; Alderman Jonathan Schlicher; Alderman Matthew Trahan, Alderman Scott Trahan

Absent: None

Also present: Melanie Denais; Nichole Bonin; Claire Meche; Shakyla Brailey; Nick Sonnier, Sellers & Associates; Richard Meche, Maintenance Supervisor; Chief Guy Nerren; Wayne Theriot; Shaun Hearen, Abbeville Meridional; Timothy Denais; Kim Touchet, PTA; Warren Rost; Michael Roy, John S. Dowling & Co; Kayla Link, Vermilion Economic Development; Ben Rivera; Jeremy Hidalgo; Sindy Meche; Mickey Comboy; Sonia Comboy; Chuck Landry

Approval General Meeting Minutes of November 15, 2023

Motion: Landry-Lalande/Schlicher moved, seconded and carried to dispense with the reading and accept the November 15, 2023 General Meeting Minutes as presented. Yay-All Present

Public comment period on agenda items listed: Add Item 3-b. LPR Cameras and Increased Cost

Motion: Landry-Lalande/Catalon moved, seconded, and carried to amend the agenda to add Item 3-b. LPR Cameras and Increased Cost. Yay- Schlicher, M. Trahan, S. Trahan, Landry-Lalande, Catalon; Nay- None

Motion: Catalon/M. Trahan moved, seconded and carried to accept the agenda as amended. Yay- All Present

Kayla Link- Vermilion Economic Development- Kayla Link introduced herself as the liaison of Vermilion Economic Development Alliance and stated she wants to collaborate and work along side Maurice Officials to create a long-term strategic plan to accommodate all of the growth the Town is experiencing. The main job of Vermilion Economic Development Alliance is to promote the growth and economic stability of Vermilion Parish as a whole. She asked the Mayor and Council to contact her with any questions.

Nick Sonnier, Sellers & Associates- Mr. Sonnier had nothing to present and Council members had no questions to ask.

Chief Nerren--LPR Cameras and Increased Costs- Nerren advised the owner of Crime Fighters of Louisiana, Maurice's current camera system provider is having trouble keeping the company going and advised the owner is raising Maurice's monthly fee from \$250 to \$600 per month. The increased cost is based off of the number of cameras currently placed within the Town of Maurice corporate limits. Nerren asked Council members to consider adjusting the department's budget to add the \$350 per month increase to continue the use of Crime Fighter's camera system beginning with the January 2024 billing. The owner is presenting individual increases to each department using the camera service in the surrounding communities. Nerren has scheduled a meeting with the newly elected Vermilion Parish Sheriff who plans to work on getting a camera system in place for the parish after he takes office in July 2024. He advised it will be a lengthy process to get started. Nerren is on board with switching over to another camera system in the future but feels the Town should continue to utilize the current system in place until another option becomes available stating the cameras provide community protection and have helped in solving several police department cases. Nerren advised Council members he should have more information about the option of a new camera system once he meets with the newly elected Vermilion Sheriff. Mayor Arsement agreed the current camera system benefits the Town and would like to see them stay in place for now. He feels including the increased amount of \$350 per month in the budget is necessary. Discussion was held

Motion: Catalon/M. Trahan moved, seconded and carried to adjust the police department's budget to include an additional \$350 per month for the current camera system on a month-by-month basis. Yay- M. Trahan, S. Trahan, Landry-Lalande, Catalon, Schlicher; Nay- None

Richard Meche, Maintenance Supervisor- November 2023- 8,711,000 gallons of water produced; 7,384,492 gallons of water sold; 1,326,500 gallons of water unmetered; 11%. Meche advised Council members most of the water leaks have been repaired. The Town received the dump bed trailer and the maintenance workers will begin cleaning up ditches in January 2024. Arsement advised he and Mr. Meche have looked into getting a larger excavator for the maintenance department. The excavator will have a longer reach which would allow for clean up across the ditches. Arsement advised the Town should have about \$10,000 in leftover LGAP funding to help with the cost of the larger excavator which is around \$50,000. Catalon asked if the excavator could be leased. Arsement advised yes but he'd prefer purchasing since this type of machine usually lasts for years. Landry-Lalande inquired about storing the equipment and was advised the Town has plenty of room to store current and new equipment. Discussion was held

Mayor Neil Arsement- Sales Tax Report- October 2023 sales tax is \$90,839.50 which is down 13.7% from last year. Arsement advised sales tax collections are still good and local businesses doing well. He encouraged residents to shop local or buy online and have it shipped into Maurice.

Updates- Arsement advised he received the legal paperwork to begin the demolition of the white house located near the city limits on the north side of Town. The property next to St. Joseph's Church will also be cleared and the property next to Daiquiri Divas has been cleared but debris is still stacked into piles to be hauled away. The top soil at Maurice Park should be laid down soon and Arsement met with an architect for the bathroom facility. Arsement also advised he was appointed to the transition team for the Local & Municipal Affairs Committee by Governor Landry.

Council Concerns: Landry-Lalande stated the properties being cleaned up around Town look very nice. Catalon asked if Entergy has begun the LED street light upgrades and was advised LED installs are only being done on the 16 lights at the Town's request.

Citizen Concerns: Wayne Theriot requested Town Officials ask DOTD to reconsider placing a No Left Turn sign at the end of Rita Street where it connects to Us Hwy 167/Maurice Avenue. Nick Sonnier will begin conversations with DOTD regarding installation of a No Left Turn sign. Discussion was held.

Landry-Lalande wished everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year, thanked everyone for their hard work over the last year, and expressed excitement about the upcoming year. Mayor Arsement stated he had a great first year, thanked everyone for their hard work, and expressed his appreciation for the current Council and all of the Town's employees.

Motion: Schlicher/Landry-Lalande moved, seconded and carried to adjourn at 6:34pm. Yay- All Present; Nay- None

Nichole G Bonin, Assistant Clerk

Neil Arsement, Mayor