

**MINUTES
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
CITY OF BAKER, LOUISIANA
PARISH OF EAST BATON ROUGE
STATE OF LOUISIANA
TELEPHONE CONFERENCE CALL**

Dial In: 774-220-4000

PIN: 22537

January 12, 2021

6:00 P.M.

The City Council of the City of Baker, Louisiana, met in regular session on January 12, 2021, with the following members in attendance at the meeting:

MAYOR

Darnell Waites

COUNCIL MEMBERS

Glenda Bryant

Rochelle Dunn

Brenda G. Jackson

Dr. Charles Vincent

Robert Young

CALL TO ORDER – Mayor Waites presided.

The invocation was given by Mayor Waites.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by City Attorney Fabre.

DISPOSITION OF THE MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The motion was made by Council Member Vincent, seconded by Council Member Young to approve the minutes of the meeting held on December 15, 2020.

YEAS: Bryant, Dunn, Jackson, Vincent, Young

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

The motion passed with a vote of 5-0.

RECOGNITIONS

PLANNING AND ZONING MATTERS

NEW BUSINESS

1. Introduce Ordinance 2021-1, sales & use tax (Mayor)

The motion was made by Council Member Vincent, seconded by Council Member Young to introduce Ordinance 2021-1.

YEAS: Bryant, Dunn, Jackson, Vincent, Young

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

The motion passed with a vote of 5-0.

2. Introduce Ordinance 2021-2, insurance license tax (Mayor)

The motion was made by Council Member Vincent, seconded by Council Member Young to introduce Ordinance 2021-2.

YEAS: Bryant, Dunn, Jackson, Vincent, Young

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

The motion passed with a vote of 5-0.

3. Introduce Ordinance 2021-3, occupational license tax (Mayor)

The motion was made by Council Member Young, seconded by Council Member

Vincent to introduce Ordinance 2021-3.

YEAS: Bryant, Dunn, Jackson, Vincent, Young

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

The motion passed with a vote of 5-0.

4. Introduce Ordinance 2021-4, chain store license tax (Mayor)

The motion was made by Council Member Young, seconded by Council Member

Vincent to introduce Ordinance 2021-4.

YEAS: Bryant, Dunn, Jackson, Vincent, Young

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

The motion passed with a vote of 5-0.

5. Introduce Ordinance 2021-5, alcoholic beverage tax (Mayor)

The motion was made by Council Member Young, seconded by Council Member Dunn to introduce Ordinance 2021-5.

YEAS: Bryant, Dunn, Jackson, Vincent, Young

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

The motion passed with a vote of 5-0.

6. Introduce Ordinance 2021-6, property tax 5.760 mills (Mayor)

The motion was made by Council Member Young, seconded by Council Member Vincent to introduce Ordinance 2021-6.

YEAS: Bryant, Dunn, Jackson, Vincent, Young

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

The motion passed with a vote of 5-0.

7. Schedule a work session to discuss Food Trucks and Rolling Vendors ordinance (Mayor)

The motion was made by Council Member Bryant, seconded by Council Member Vincent to schedule a work session to discuss Food Trucks and Rolling Vendors ordinance on Thursday, January 21, 2021 at 9:00 a.m.

YEAS: Bryant, Dunn, Jackson, Vincent, Young

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

The motion passed with a vote of 5-0.

8. Schedule a work session to discuss Task Force on Community Safety (Mayor)

The motion was made by Council Member Dunn, seconded by Council Member Vincent to schedule a work session to discuss Task Force on Community Safety on Friday, January 15, 2021 at 10:00 a.m.

YEAS: Bryant, Dunn, Jackson, Vincent, Young

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

The motion passed with a vote of 5-0.

9. Continue discussion on housing in the City of Baker – landlords and tenants and adding homeowners (Bryant)

Council Member Bryant announced the No Eviction Order has been extended until January 31, 2021. She wanted everyone to be aware that evictions are happening despite the extension.

10. Discuss residents blowing leaves in Groom Road resulting in blocked drainage (Dunn)

Council Member Dunn initiated discussion regarding leaves and debris being blown into Groom Road resulting in blocked drainage, saying she would like to find a solution to the problem. Council Member Bryant stated there is an ordinance that prohibits this. The Mayor stated the City will get the ordinance out there, so residents are aware this is not allowed. He said enforcement is key and asked that the community help with enforcement by saying something if they see something. The Mayor said citizens can contact the Code Enforcement Officer, as well as law enforcement, for assistance.

11. Progress report on Azalea Trailer Park (Dunn)

Council Member Dunn reported there are several trailers in the park that do not appear to meet code. She also reported that remodel work is being done in the park and asked if these individuals had been to the City prior to beginning the work. Code Enforcement Officer David Georgetown stated he has sent out the initial letters and taken pictures at various addresses in the park. He said progress has been made. Mr. Georgetown said the owners asked for and have been given additional time. He stated the next step is to send certified letters and have the Building Official inspect the properties. Mr. Georgetown said he plans to return later in the month. The Mayor told Council Member Dunn that the City could provide her with a weekly update.

12. Discuss how the City of Baker can play a part in getting Baker High School rebuilt (Dunn)

Council Member Dunn stated having the high school rebuilt is extremely important for the City of Baker. It is her belief that a better school system benefits everyone and improved schools act as an incentive for people to make their homes in the City of Baker. The Mayor said the City can continue to bring business here, which helps create sales tax, thus helping the schools to grow. He also suggested increased community and parental involvement through the PTO, as well as communication with school board members.

13. Update on speed bumps (Dunn)

The Mayor stated after speaking with Chief of Police Carl Dunn, they realized speed bumps are not going to solve all the problems the City has with people speeding. He said speed bumps are extremely expensive to install and maintain, and the City needs to explore other alternatives at this point. He said this is a conversation he will continue to have with the Chief of Police.

14. Discuss City of Baker employees being put on vaccine list (Dunn)

The Mayor said getting the COVID-19 vaccine is the employee's decision/responsibility. He said if there is an opportunity to offer City employees the vaccine it will certainly be done.

15. Discuss the resurfacing of the walking path at City Park (Dunn)

The Mayor stated the estimate they received totaled \$200,000.00 to complete the project. He reported that a total of 107 walkers participated in the survey regarding resurfacing the walking track – 69 respondents voted for a rubber surface, 34 respondents voted for a concrete surface and 4 respondents voted for a gravel surface. The Mayor said the City plans to get other estimates and to look for funding for the resurfacing project.

16. Discuss a neighborhood watch program as proposed by Susan Lee – an expansion of Councilman Vincent's Friendly Neighbor Keeper Initiative (Vincent)

Council Member Vincent expressed his desire to get neighborhoods more involved in bringing a stop to the turbulence and violence in the City of Baker. He said embracing the Friendly Neighbor Keeper Initiative would help embed the principles Jesus taught regarding being concerned for your neighbor in the minds of all our citizens. Council Member Vincent stated he wants to continue discussions about neighborhood watch programs, homeowner's associations, crime prevention districts, and the task force – elements aimed at keeping the City of Baker safe. He wanted everyone to know the Council is very concerned, and they are watching in their neighborhoods. Council Member Vincent said we want friendly, safe neighborhoods where residents can thrive. He encouraged everyone to participate in the work session scheduled for Friday, January 15, 2021 and the Town Hall Meeting scheduled for Tuesday, January 19, 2021. Council

Member Vincent said he looks forward to input from all citizens at the upcoming events.

Council Member Bryant said she has established neighborhood captains in District 3. She explained captains are responsible for speaking with neighbors about what is going on in the neighborhood and reporting relevant information to law enforcement. By looking out for neighbors and their homes, neighborhood captains serve as a deterrent to certain individuals who may not want to move into an area if they see a strong neighborhood watch program. Council Member Bryant said every resident has a responsibility to report what they see. She said failure to do so results in a bad situation becoming worse.

PUBLIC MEETING

RESOLUTIONS AND PROCLAMATIONS

1. Proclamation honoring Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. (Bryant)
City Attorney Fabre read the proclamation.

The motion was made by Council Member Bryant, seconded by Council Member Vincent to accept the proclamation.

YEAS: Bryant, Dunn, Jackson, Vincent, Young
NAYS: None
ABSENT: None
ABSTAIN: None

The motion passed with a vote of 5-0.

2. Proclamation declaring January 2021 Glaucoma Awareness Month in the City of Baker (Vincent)
City Attorney Fabre read the proclamation.

The motion was made by Council Member Vincent, seconded by Council Member Jackson to accept the proclamation.

YEAS: Bryant, Dunn, Jackson, Vincent, Young
NAYS: None
ABSENT: None
ABSTAIN: None

The motion passed with a vote of 5-0.

3. Proclamation declaring January 2021 Poverty in America Awareness Month in the City of Baker (Vincent)
City Attorney Fabre read the proclamation.

The motion was made by Council Member Vincent, seconded by Council Member Young to accept the proclamation.

YEAS: Bryant, Dunn, Jackson, Vincent, Young
NAYS: None
ABSENT: None
ABSTAIN: None

The motion passed with a vote of 5-0.

BIDS AND PROPOSALS

APPOINTMENTS TO BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

CONDEMNATIONS

1. 4742 Groom Road (Mayor)

The motion was made by Council Member Vincent, seconded by Council Members Dunn/Young to demolish the structures at 4742 Groom Road.

YEAS: Bryant, Dunn, Jackson, Vincent, Young
NAYS: None
ABSENT: None
ABSTAIN: None

The motion passed with a vote of 5-0.

2. 1556 Alabama (Mayor)
No action was taken on this agenda item.

3. 1832 Florida (Mayor)
No action was taken on this agenda item.

4. 3215 Monroe (Mayor)
No action was taken on this agenda item.

5. 1916 Florida (Mayor)
No action was taken on this agenda item.

6. 5803 Biscayne (Bryant)
China Toussaint, owner of 5803 Biscayne, stated she plans to have the property renovated within the next two to three months. She assured the Council that all necessary repairs would be made, and the yard will be kept up as well.

Discussion followed.

The motion was made by Council Member Bryant, seconded by Council Member Young to give Ms. Toussaint 6 months to complete the renovation work at 5803 Biscayne.

YEAS: Bryant, Dunn, Jackson, Vincent, Young

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

The motion passed with a vote of 5-0.

7. 5901 Biscayne (Bryant)
No action was taken on this agenda item.

8. 5904 Biscayne (Bryant)
The Mayor stated this house is good and is currently occupied. He asked that this address be removed from the agenda.

9. 6003 Biscayne (Bryant)
No action was taken on this agenda item.

ANNEXATIONS

REPORTS ON BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

1. Planning and Zoning Commission
2. Annexation Review Committee
3. Economic Development Team
4. Heritage Museum/Related Committees
5. ABC Board
6. Other Special Committees
 - a. Buffalo Festival
 - b. Prayer Breakfast
 - c. Strategic Planning Committee
 - d. Citizens Advisory Board to Law Enforcement

NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Ramona Garror, 4805 Sprucewood Court, expressed her concerns regarding her neighbor's dogs. She stated the dogs are not being properly cared for and are often running loose. Ms. Garror also stated the yard has trash all over and a foul odor as well. She is pleading for help to rectify the situation. The Mayor said the Code Enforcement Officer will come out and assess the situation so that any/all appropriate letters can be sent to the homeowner. He also advised Ms. Garror to contact Animal Control. Council Member Vincent stated this is the first he has heard of this situation, but assured Ms. Garror that the issue would be addressed.

Trandra Scott, 1025 Barrington #B, asked if the City has considered putting up surveillance cameras, along with signs to let the public know the area is under surveillance, in Heritage Court. She suggested the City work with the various owners to have cameras installed. She also asked the City to enforce its trash can ordinance. The Mayor said Heritage Court is a priority and the City continues to address issues there on a regular basis. Council Member Young stated he has spoken with Ms. Scott several times and plans to meet with her very soon. He asked that she participate in the Town Hall Meeting on January 19, 2021 in order to further discuss the needs in that area.

Yolanda Ellis, 13802 Morvant, asked about the sign and temporary building that has been placed on Lavey Lane where the new subdivision is to be developed. She wants to confirm that the property will not be used as a car lot. The Mayor stated it will not be used as a car lot. Ms. Ellis stated developments typically use a model home to conduct business out of. She said the trailer is unsightly. Ms. Ellis expressed her concerns regarding drainage and the pipe installation on this property. She said thus far the work is not in keeping with what neighbors were told when the property was purchased. Ms. Ellis stated residents in the area were told the pipe would be run all the way to the canal and covered, this has not been done. She wants verification that the developers intend to complete the drainage work prior to beginning construction of the subdivision. She also feels the newly created ditches are too steep and unsafe. Council Member Vincent said after speaking with Ms. Ellis he contacted Kevin Gravois with PEC. Mr. Gravois indicated that the ditch is so steep because there may not be a pipe placed there at this time. Council Member Vincent said he is working with Ms. Ellis and doing all he can to address her concerns.

Michael Willis, 1002 Shilo, thanked Chief of Police Carl Dunn, Mayor Waites, Council Member Brenda G. Jackson, and Council Member Robert Young for their actions. He said he appreciates the City Council and he thanked the Baker Police Department for their presence in Heritage Court.

Council Member Vincent assured Ms. Scott that Council Member Young will take care of her, as he always takes care of his constituents. He announced January 17, 2021 is the third Saturday of the month and asked that everyone participate in clean-up efforts in their neighborhood. Council Member Vincent wished everyone a Happy New Year and reminded them to be safe.

Council Member Dunn reminded everyone to wear your mask, practice social distancing and wash your hands.

Council Member Bryant asked if the City has received the final report from the LSU Coastal Sustainability Studio. The Mayor stated he has not received the report. She also inquired about funds for the Community Garden. The Mayor asked that she call him so they can discuss funding the project. Council Member Bryant asked if any progress has been made on finding a location for an office to handle veteran affairs. The Mayor said nothing further has been done due to the pandemic. She also asked about the feasibility of loaner computers for council members. The Mayor said the City provides cell phones and internet service to council members and reiterated council members receive a monthly expense account to be used for such items.

The motion was made by Council Member Vincent, seconded by Council Member Jackson to extend the council meeting for 15 minutes.

YEAS: Bryant, Dunn, Jackson, Vincent, Young

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

The motion passed with a vote of 5-0.

Council Member Bryant asked that the City of Baker School Board choose a superintendent who promotes teacher certification. She said she has flashbacks about passing on the opportunity to have RaceTrac come to the City of Baker. Council Member Bryant said the RaceTrac would have improved our economic development, contributed to the school system, and provided jobs for residents. She asked if RaceTrac

opening here was still on the table. The Mayor said he was unsure, that the City is currently in conversation with them. In closing, Council Member Bryant said when she thinks of the RaceTrac, she thinks of the song lyric by James Brown – “You sold me out for chicken change.”

Council Member Young thanked Sam Boatner, Sailor Jackson, Michael Willis, Ms. Scott, and others in Heritage Court for their cooperation and willingness to work to improve the neighborhood. He also thanked Council Member Brenda G. Jackson and Chief of Police Carl Dunn for all their dedication and hard work. Council Member Young stated he feels all these individuals would be valuable additions to the Task Force on Community Safety.

Council Member Jackson concurred with statements made by Michael Willis and Council Member Young. She said it is a pleasure to work with everyone. Council Member Jackson said her motto is – Teamwork Makes the Dream Work.

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

The Mayor suggested everyone sign up for the City’s delivery system by texting LA Baker Update to 468311.

ADJOURN

The motion was made by Council Member Vincent, seconded by Council Member Jackson to adjourn.

YEAS: Bryant, Dunn, Jackson, Vincent, Young

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

The motion passed with a vote of 5-0.

CITY OF BAKER

PARISH OF EAST BATON ROUGE

STATE OF LOUISIANA

I, Angela Canady Wall, certify that I am Clerk of the Council for the City of Baker, Louisiana, and that the above and foregoing is a copy of the minutes of a regular meeting of the Council for the City of Baker, Louisiana held on January 12, 2021.

Angela Canady Wall, LCMC
Clerk of Council

**MINUTES
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
HILLCREST MEMORIAL GARDENS
CITY OF BAKER
PARISH OF EAST BATON ROUGE
STATE OF LOUISIANA
TELEPHONE CONFERENCE CALL
Dial In: 774-220-4000
PIN: 22537
January 12, 2021**

The City Council of the City of Baker, Louisiana, sitting as the Board of Commissioners for Hillcrest Memorial Gardens, met in regular session on January 12, 2021, with the following members in attendance at the meeting:

COMMISSIONERS

Glenda Bryant
Rochelle Dunn
Brenda G. Jackson
Dr. Charles Vincent
Darnell Waites
Robert Young

CALL TO ORDER – Commissioner Waites presided.

DISPOSITION OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The meeting was called to order and the motion was made by Commissioner Waites, seconded by Commissioner Vincent to approve the minutes of the meeting held on December 15, 2020.

YEAS: Bryant, Dunn, Jackson, Vincent, Waites, Young

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

The motion passed by a vote of 6-0.

PUBLIC NOTICE

NEW BUSINESS

OTHER NECESSARY BUSINESS

1. Monthly Business Report

Niketa King submitted a monthly sales report for December 2020.

The motion was made by Commissioner Bryant, seconded by Commissioner Vincent to accept the sales report submitted for December 2020.

YEAS: Bryant, Dunn, Jackson, Vincent, Waites, Young

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

The motion passed by a vote of 6-0.

2. Other Reports

3. Items Requiring Action

ADJOURN

There was no other business to come before the commission. The motion was made by Commissioner Bryant, seconded by Commissioner Vincent to adjourn.

YEAS: Bryant, Dunn, Jackson, Vincent, Waites, Young

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

The motion passed by a vote of 6-0.

**CITY OF BAKER
PARISH OF EAST BATON ROUGE
STATE OF LOUISIANA**

I, Angela Canady Wall, certify that I am Clerk of the Council for the City of Baker, Louisiana, and that the above and foregoing is a copy of the minutes of a regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners for the Hillcrest Memorial Gardens held on January 12, 2021.

Angela Canady Wall, LCMC
Clerk of Council

**MINUTES
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
BAKER CONSOLIDATED UTILITIES SYSTEM
CITY OF BAKER
PARISH OF EAST BATON ROUGE
STATE OF LOUISIANA
TELEPHONE CONFERENCE CALL
Dial In: 774-220-4000
PIN: 22537
January 12, 2021**

The City Council of the City of Baker, Louisiana, sitting as the Board of Commissioners for the Baker Consolidated Utilities System, met in regular session on January 12, 2021, with the following members attending:

COMMISSIONERS

Glenda Bryant
Rochelle Dunn
Brenda G. Jackson
Dr. Charles Vincent
Darnell Waites
Robert Young

CALL TO ORDER – Commissioner Waites presided.

DISPOSITION OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The meeting was called to order and the motion was made by Commissioner Waites seconded by Commissioner Jackson to approve the minutes of the meeting held on December 15, 2020.

YEAS: Bryant, Dunn, Jackson, Vincent, Waites, Young

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

The motion passed by a vote of 6-0.

PUBLIC NOTICE

NEW BUSINESS

OTHER NECESSARY BUSINESS

1. Monthly Business Report
2. Other Reports
3. Items Requiring Action

ADJOURN

There was no other business to come before the commission. The motion was made by Commissioners Bryant/Vincent, seconded by Commissioner Dunn to adjourn.

YEAS: Bryant, Dunn, Jackson, Vincent, Waites, Young

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

The motion passed by a vote of 6-0.

**CITY OF BAKER
PARISH OF EAST BATON ROUGE
STATE OF LOUISIANA**

I, Angela Canady Wall, certify that I am Clerk of the Council for the City of Baker, Louisiana, and that the above and foregoing is a copy of the minutes of a regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the Baker Consolidated Utility System held on January 12, 2021.

Angela Canady Wall, LCMC
Clerk of Council