

**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

June 22, 2021

6:00 P.M.

The City Council of the City of Baker, Louisiana, met in regular session on June 22, 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 Council Member Young.

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 Jackson to approve the minutes of the meeting held on June 8, 2021.

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. Approve travel for Officer Conrad to attend the NASRO Conference and the LACP Conference (Mayor)

Police Chief Carl Dunn stated Officer Conrad will be attending the NASRO Conference in Orlando, Florida, July 11, 2021 to July 16, 2021 and he will be attending the LACP Conference in Alexandria, Louisiana, July 19, 2021 to July 22, 2021.

The motion was made by Council Member Vincent, seconded by Council Members Bryant/Young to correct the agenda item to state Officer Conrad will be attending the NASRO Conference in Orlando, Florida, July 11, 2021 to July 16, 2021 and Chief Dunn will be attending the LACP Conference in Alexandria, Louisiana, July 19, 2021 to July 22, 2021 and to approve travel for both Officer Conrad and Chief Dunn.

YEAS: Bryant, Dunn, Jackson, Vincent, Young

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

The motion passed with a vote of 5-0.

2. Update on quality and fair housing in the City of Baker for all tenants, landlords and homeowners (Bryant)
Mission Statement

- A. To provide a healthy lifestyle through community gardens and exercise availability.
- B. To provide a safe environment through communication with each other & law enforcement.
- C. To provide all neighborhoods with a sense of pride & integrity.

Council Member Bryant read the mission statement. She asked landlords to change their leases to include a statement of compliance with city ordinances, such as the noise ordinance, ATV ordinance and grass cutting ordinance. She said doing so would help prevent problems with neighbors, as well as helping to prevent problems between landlords and tenants.

3. Update on community garden (Bryant)

Council Member Bryant stated she received an email from the administration that read as follows: Mayor Waites would like for you to let Councilwoman Bryant know that we have someone who will till and plant the vegetables in the garden and maintain it through the end of the month. She said progress at the site has been affected by weather and other issues. Council Member Bryant said they are currently waiting for the garden to be planted.

4. Discuss food trucks in the City of Baker (Dunn)

Council Member Dunn said she has asked City Attorney Fabre to prepare an ordinance regarding food trucks. The ordinance will be presented at the next council meeting.

Council Member Dunn asked that this agenda item be tabled.

5. Schedule a work session to discuss food trucks in the City of Baker and trees located in canals and/or on servitudes throughout the City of Baker (Dunn)

Council Member Dunn asked that this agenda item be tabled.

RESOLUTIONS AND PROCLAMATIONS

1. Proclamation declaring June 23, 2021, National Hydration Day in the City of Baker (Bryant)

Council Member Bryant stressed the importance of hydration, especially during the summer months.

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 July 2021 Healthy Vision 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 Bryant 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.

PUBLIC MEETING

1. Adopt Ordinance 2021-9, an ordinance to adopt the operating budget of General Fund Revenues and Expenditures City of Baker, Louisiana fiscal year ending June 30, 2022 (Mayor) (Introduced 6/8/2021)

Public meeting was held.

Council Member Jackson stated she has a concern regarding the request to increase the Mayor's salary by \$15,000.00 next year and another \$10,000.00 the year after that. She asked the Mayor for clarification.

Finance Director Mary Sue Stages explained it is not necessarily the Mayor's request to give himself a raise, it's a request to bring all the salaries up to comparable salaries for surrounding municipalities and other municipalities that are of like size, specifically those that are part of LMA, mostly mid-size cities. This proposal is to bring, over the next two years, the position of the mayor to a salary that is comparable to those in similar cities, in both size and locality both.

Council Member Jackson said she appreciated the explanation, but her understanding of the City's charter is that the salary of the mayor and city council cannot be increased unless the Council introduces an ordinance and it is approved by the Council, and it must be done and passed six months prior to the next mayoral election which would be 2024. She stated she would like to see the requested increase removed from the budget.

City Attorney Fabre addressed Council Member Jackson's concerns regarding the City's charter, saying the section she is referencing includes exceptions and these exceptions have been met, thus the six-month time requirement is not applicable. He also stated the budget is, by law, an ordinance. He said this is in no way a violation of the City's charter.

Council Member Jackson said while she appreciates and respects the City Attorney's comments, she is still not comfortable and is thinking about the legality of this matter. She maintains that in order for the Mayor to receive an increase in salary, it is the Council who would introduce and adopt an ordinance specifically for that purpose. She said she would rather see the requested increases removed from the budget. Council Member Jackson said she is not comfortable voting on this.

Council Member Bryant asked City Attorney Fabre if he is saying it is legal for the Mayor to give himself a raise.

City Attorney Fabre said he did not subscribe to that, that's never been expressed to him. He wants to reiterate, the Mayor is not giving himself a raise. The requested increase is part of a balanced budget and that position needs to be brought up to par. He said he appreciates council member's concerns, but the charter is clear.

City Attorney Fabre stated for the record that there are no legitimate concerns about legality.

Council Member Bryant said in her experience as a council member she has never heard of anything like this before. She said this, for her, is new.

City Attorney Fabre said all he can do is give legal analysis and point the council towards what the charter says and the charter is what rules in the City of Baker. He said the charter is clear.

Council Member Jackson said it is the Council that would introduce the proposed salary and who would then adopt the ordinance. Council Member Jackson said she is really concerned with manner in which this is done. She urged her colleagues to carefully consider their decisions regarding this matter. Council Member Jackson said this portion of the budget can be removed and the issue can be revisited at a later date.

Council Member Bryant asked if this has ever been one before.

City Attorney Fabre said again, the budget is an ordinance. In response to Council Member Bryant, he said yes, every time there is a salary increase, be it whoever, it's done by ordinance.

Council Member Bryant asked specifically about the Mayor's salary, she asked if it has ever been done in the past with the Mayor's salary.

Finance Director Mary Sue Stages said every single mayor, since Bobby Simpson when he became full-time, has received an increase in their salary.

The motion was made by Council Member Dunn, seconded by Council Member Vincent to accept the budget as is including the Mayor's salary increase due to the ordinance.

Council Member Vincent agreed with Finance Director Mary Sue Stages, saying in the past the Mayor's salary increase was included in these ordinances. He said this is just a continuation of how we do it. Council Member Vincent said he understands the Vice President's concerns, as he had similar concerns after initially reading that section of the City's charter. However, he realized this has been done through ordinances like this and it has been an ongoing process to try to keep our mayor's salary in line with other mayors of cities of similar sizes. Council Member Vincent said if our attorney says we are on legal grounds, then he is for seconding the motion.

Council Member Jackson stated again – for the Mayor to receive an increase in salary, it is the Council who would introduce and adopt an ordinance specifically for that purpose. She said this is why she is making the substitute motion.

A substitute motion was made by Council Member Jackson, seconded by Council Member Bryant to remove the request to increase the Mayor's salary and to remove the request for the Council's salary increase from Ordinance 2021-9.

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

The motion failed with a vote of 2-3.

The motion was made by Council Member Dunn, seconded by Council Member Vincent to accept the budget as is including the Mayor's salary increase due to the ordinance.

Council Member Vincent voted Yes.

Council Member Dunn voted Yes.

Council Member Bryant said she would abstain from voting, as she has questions regarding the legality of this matter.

The motion was made by Council Member Bryant, seconded by Council Member Jackson to allow Council Member Bryant to abstain from voting.

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

The motion passed with a vote of 5-0.

Council Member Young voted Yes.

Council Member Jackson voted No.

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

The motion passed with a vote of 3-1.

2. Adopt Ordinance 2021-10, an ordinance to adopt the operating budget of Special Revenue Funds Revenues and Expenditures City of Baker, Louisiana fiscal year ending June 30, 2022 (Mayor) (Introduced 6/8/2021)

Public meeting was held.

The motion was made by Council Member Vincent, seconded by Council Member Dunn to adopt Ordinance 2021-10.

YEAS: Bryant, Dunn, Jackson, Vincent, Young

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

The motion passed with a vote of 5-0.

3. Adopt Ordinance 2021-11, an ordinance to adopt the Capital Budget and Capital Program of Governmental Funds City of Baker, Louisiana fiscal year ending June 30, 2022 (Mayor) (Introduced 6/8/2021)

Public meeting was held.

The motion was made by Council Member Vincent, seconded by Council Member Young to adopt Ordinance 2021-11.

YEAS: Bryant, Dunn, Vincent, Young

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

The motion passed with a vote of 4-0.

Council Member Jackson did not vote, as she was momentarily disconnected from the call.

4. Adopt Ordinance 2021-12, an ordinance to adopt the budget of Utility Fund Revenues, Expenditures and Capital Improvements City of Baker, Louisiana fiscal year ending June 30, 2022 (Mayor) (Introduced 6/8/2021)

Public meeting was held.

The motion was made by Council Member Dunn, seconded by Council Member Vincent to adopt Ordinance 2021-12.

YEAS: Bryant, Dunn, Jackson, Vincent, Young

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

The motion passed with a vote of 5-0.

5. Adopt Ordinance 2021-13, an ordinance to adopt the budget of Cemetery Fund Revenues, Expenditures and Capital Improvements City of Baker, Louisiana fiscal year ending June 30, 2022 (Mayor) (Introduced 6/8/2021)

Public meeting was held.

The motion was made by Council Member Vincent, seconded by Council Member Young to adopt Ordinance 2021-13.

YEAS: Bryant, Dunn, Jackson, Vincent, Young

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

The motion passed with a vote of 5-0.

6. Adopt Ordinance 2021-14, an ordinance to adopt the budget of Sewer Revenue Fund Revenues, Expenditures and Capital Improvements City of Baker, Louisiana fiscal year ending June 30, 2022 (Mayor) (Introduced 6/8/2021)

Public meeting was held.

The motion was made by Council Member Vincent, seconded by Council Member Jackson to adopt Ordinance 2021-14.

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. 1556 Alabama (Mayor)
2. 1832 Florida (Mayor)
3. 1916 Florida (Mayor)
4. 3226 Polk (Mayor)
5. 5803 Biscayne (Bryant)

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

Monique Butler, Sherron Avenue, expressed her concerns and initiated discussion regarding the condition of the Baker Canal and asked who is responsible for its maintenance and upkeep. The Mayor stated East Baton Rouge Parish is responsible for the canal.

Council Member Vincent stated a decade ago the City Council submitted a portfolio to then Senator David Vitter detailing the deplorable condition of the canal and asking for assistance so that necessary repairs could be made. He said the issue was brought to former Senator Mary Landrieu as well. However, the City received nothing in response to these requests.

The Mayor said once the Comite Diversion Canal is completed attention can be given to the Baker Canal.

Patt Roberson, 2801 Allen Court, said she is thrilled to be allowed to listen to the council meetings and looks forward to the day when the City opens back up and she can come inside.

Isabelle Collins, 4304 Heath, expressed her concerns regarding the number of notices she has received for parking in her yard and questioned the amount of taxpayer money being spent to send out the notices. She stated the total spent on the certified letter she received was \$8.71.

The Mayor asked Ms. Collins to contact him tomorrow.

Monica Lee, 3613 Charry Drive, stated she is experiencing similar problems with receiving notices for parking in her yard and pictures being taken of her property.

The Mayor asked Ms. Lee to contact him to discuss the situation.

Ms. Collins said again that she is concerned with the amount of money being spent to send out notices. She also stated she has reviewed the City's ordinances, and she does not feel she is in violation.

The Mayor assured Ms. Collins that he will speak with her and address her concerns.

Victoria Boudreaux, 3515 Charry Drive, stated her concern is the City has someone going around sending letters out and taking pictures of people's vehicles that are parked on their property, behind their houses, while blatant code violations are not being addressed. She said it appears to be a pick and choose thing.

The Mayor asked Ms. Boudreaux to contact him to discuss this issue.

Ms. Boudreaux asked about the status of cleaning the canal behind the houses on Charry Drive and stated erosion continues to be a problem in the area. The Mayor said they are trying to find contractors to come in and clear the canal. He said they are working to find a solution to the erosion issue as well. Rebecca Bond asked that anyone with concerns regarding erosion contact her at rbond@cityofbakerla.com.

Council Member Vincent suggested that everyone get a 2021 hurricane preparedness guide. He also asked that everyone continue to be safe, as it is his understanding the new Delta variant of the coronavirus is deadly. Council Member Vincent encouraged everyone to continue to wear their masks, wash their hands and practice social distancing.

Council Member Dunn thanked everyone for coming to the fishing tournament and thanked Finance Director Mary Sue Stages and her staff for doing a great job with the event. She thanked Public Works Director Timmie Sept for his assistance at 942 Florida Avenue. She asked that those who have not gotten the vaccine consider doing so. Council Member Dunn suggested those who feel it necessary continue to wear their masks, and everyone continue to wash their hands, and practice social distancing. She also suggested anyone 60 and over who has had chicken pox consider getting a shingles shot.

Council Member Bryant again reported there is a beaver's dam on the right-hand side of the bridge on Bentley Drive that is adversely affecting water flow in the area. An email with a picture of the dam was sent to the Mayor and Council. Council Member Bryant said no matter whose responsibility the drainage ditch is, it is the City of Baker that is flooding as a result of the blockage.

Council Member Young said he appreciates Ms. Collins researching the ordinance the way she has. He said he was on the council when the ordinance was passed and the ordinance was designed to address parking issues with buses and 18-wheelers, to ensure these vehicles were being parked on permanent dust-free pavement. Council Member Young stated no one should receive a notice for parking their vehicle in their yard. He said he hopes the issue can be resolved, as quite a few people are extremely upset about the situation.

Council Member Jackson thanked the residents of District 5 for their support and words of encouragement and said she looks forward to listening to their concerns. To the residents of Parc Chaleur she said she has been in contact with Melissa Caldwell, cofounder of the subdivision, regarding the upkeep of her lots. Ms. Caldwell intends to cut the lots and keep them maintained. She announced that Southern University's flag is bound for space at the end of July 2021. Council Member Jackson stated for the record – I, Councilwoman Brenda G. Jackson, do not wish or desire to receive the council expense increase. Council Member Jackson went on to say she voted no for the ordinance and reiterated she does not want the council expense increase.

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

The Mayor announced Family Fun Day is being held Saturday, June 26, 2021 from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at City Park. COVID-19 vaccinations will be available.

The Mayor announced Advantage Charter is holding its Juneteenth celebration Saturday, June 26, 2021 from Noon to 6:00 p.m.

A shuttle bus will run between the two events.

The Mayor said Code Enforcement has been effective in cleaning up the City.

Lauren Mayberry, Active Messenger Presents, LLC, said she attended the Planning and Zoning meeting held on June 10, 2021, and was told to be at this council meeting in order to get her occupational license.

The Mayor stated the Planning and Zoning Commission secretary has been out sick and neither he nor the Council received any information regarding the Planning and Zoning Commission meeting held June 10, 2021. He asked that Ms. Mayberry contact him tomorrow.

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 June 22, 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

June 22, 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 June 22, 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 Jackson to approve the minutes of the meeting held on June 8, 2021.

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 May 2021.

The motion was made by Commissioner Waites, seconded by Commissioner Vincent to accept the sales report submitted for May 2021.

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 Waites, seconded by Commissioner Jackson 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 June 22, 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
June 22, 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 June 22, 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 June 8, 2021.

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

The motion was made by Commissioner Waites, seconded by Commissioner Vincent to accept the Utility Fund report.

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 Jackson, 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 of the Baker Consolidated Utility System held on June 22, 2021.

Angela Canady Wall, LCMC
Clerk of Council