

**MINUTES
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
CITY OF BAKER
PARISH OF EAST BATON ROUGE
STATE OF LOUISIANA
COUNCIL CHAMBERS
3325 GROOM ROAD, BAKER, LOUISIANA 70714
ZOOM**

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April 12, 2022 - 6:00 p.m.

The City Council of the City of Baker, Louisiana, met in regular session on April 12, 2022, 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 Council Member Young.

DISPOSITION OF THE MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The motion was made by Council Member Young, seconded by Council Member Jackson to approve the minutes of the meeting held on March 22, 2022.

YEAS: Bryant, Dunn, Jackson, Young

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Vincent

ABSTAIN: None

The motion passed with a vote of 4-0.

RECOGNITIONS

1. Dr. Paulette Grey Riveria – Capital Region Medical Director/Administrator with the Louisiana Department of Health (Vincent)

The Mayor asked that this item be tabled, as several parties were experiencing technical difficulties.

PLANNING AND ZONING MATTERS

NEW BUSINESS

1. Overview of audit – Bruno & Tervalon, LLP (Mayor)

Mr. Joseph Akanji, Bruno & Tervalon, LLP, provided an overview of the audit.

2. Schedule work session to discuss annexation of unincorporated 70714 addresses (Mayor)

The motion was made by Council Member Bryant, seconded by Council Member Vincent to schedule a work session to discuss annexation of unincorporated 70714 addresses on Thursday, April 28, 2022, at 9:30 a.m.

YEAS: Bryant, Dunn, Jackson, Vincent, Young

NAYS: None
ABSENT: None
ABSTAIN: None

The motion passed with a vote of 5-0.

3. 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 – Police and Fire Departments.
- C. To provide all neighborhoods with a sense of pride & integrity.

Council Member Bryant read the mission statement. She announced LaTonya Rounds, Holistic Fitness, holds Zumba classes at the gym on Alabama Street. Classes begin at 6:00 p.m. Council Member Bryant said anyone in need of assistance with their garden should contact her at (225) 773-7135. She encouraged everyone to continue calling the Police Department – if you see something, say something. She apologized for missing Ginger Vann’s golf tournament and pledged to have a team participate in next year's event. She thanked Tessie Ogden for her cooperation in having low hanging branches removed from her property and reported that there is one remaining branch that needs to be removed. She stated the hole near the sidewalk across the street from 2350 McHugh Road is still there, despite having been reported in January. She asked for an update on the status of the streetlights at Groom Road and McHugh Road.

4. Discuss fully opening City Hall (Bryant)

Council Member Bryant initiated discussion regarding fully opening City Hall, saying it is about individuals in the community being able to participate in the process. She said she has submitted layouts/plans for holding council meetings in the auditorium, which would allow for more citizen participation. Council Member Bryant questioned the current services and said they do not allow citizens to participate in the meetings.

The Mayor stated council meetings have been open since November 2021, and no one has been stopped from coming in. The Mayor said council meetings will continue to be held in-person and virtually. He also said the city will continue to implement the COVID mitigation methods currently being employed.

Council Member Bryant said COVID is not going anywhere, it is something we will have to learn to live with and adjust to. She agrees that meetings should continue to be held both in-person and virtually, as this allows more people to participate. However, she contends the city’s measures must continue to evolve as everyone moves forward.

Council Member Vincent recognized and introduced Dr. Paulette Grey Riveria the Region II Medical Director in the Office of Public Health under the Louisiana Department of Health. He thanked Dr. Riveria’s assistant, Ms. Keisha Lacour, for everything she has done to facilitate Dr. Riveria being at tonight’s meeting.

Dr. Riveria gave a presentation on the Louisiana Department of Health’s suicide prevention campaign – I AM STAVED. The campaign’s launch is scheduled for May 1, 2022, at the Main Library on Goodwood Boulevard from 2:00-4:00 p.m. The event is free, and everyone is invited to attend.

Council Member Jackson stated she looks forward to meeting with the Mayor regarding the opening of City Hall and asked her colleagues to share their thoughts and concerns with her. Council Member Jackson said she is a firm believer it is time to fully open City Hall and do what is necessary for the citizens of Baker.

NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Wanda Horton, 1032 Sunshine, expressed her concerns regarding the Baker Utility Department and issues with meter reading at her address. Administrative Officer Angela Machen provided a detailed explanation of how the situation is being addressed.

Discussion regarding the city’s meter reading procedures followed.

Terrica Stevenson, 2350 McHugh Road, asked if the city has a standard procedure in place for inspecting sidewalks. She said she reported the hole near the sidewalk across the street from her house in September of last year and asked if there is a plan in place to resolve this issue. Ms. Stevenson stated the abandoned, blighted property across the street from her house has also been reported, and the situation there still exists.

Public Works Director Timmie Sept said City Parish is responsible for repairing the sidewalks on McHugh Road, and they have been contacted numerous times regarding this issue.

Council Member Vincent reported that the sidewalk in between 13310 London and 13312 London is in need of repair. He thanked them for taking care of Mr. Jones at Brantley and Alba. He commended the Mayor and Building and Grounds Department for the outstanding appearance of the City Hall grounds and the Reverend Charles Heine Memorial Park along Highway 19. Council Member Vincent expressed his extreme displeasure with the way the city looks, saying it is very disheartening. He said we must do better. Council Member Vincent stated the number one complaint he receives from constituents is about how the city looks, he implored everyone to do more. Council Member Vincent referenced downed fences, parking lots not being maintained, signage in ill repair and tires at service stations as examples of issues that need to be addressed by the city's Code Enforcement Officer. He believes local businesses and residents must be held accountable and the city's ordinances must be enforced if the look of the city is to be improved.

Council Member Dunn wished everyone a happy Easter. She asked that everyone stay safe and said God bless.

Council Member Bryant reported that the Debra Street well still has debris surrounding the site. She also reported that the owner of Lot 204 on Wimbish is still not in compliance with city ordinances, despite having received all of the requisite notices and paperwork regarding cleaning up the property.

Council Member Young commended Desiree and Gerald Collins and the Recreation Commission for the tremendous job they did with the Running of the Buffaloes 5K run on Saturday. He said he is chairing the bicycle event being held Saturday, April 16, 2022. Line up for the event is at 7:00 a.m., judging will begin at 8:00 a.m., with the ride to follow. The ride is being hosted by City to City Bike Club.

Council Member Jackson asked the Mayor what is being done at 5414 Lavey Lane, the property there has recently been cleared. The Mayor said he would find out and let her know. She thanked the Baker Rotary Club for continuing to acknowledge her and allowing her to serve as an honorary volunteer. Council Member Jackson said the Ginger Vann Memorial Golf Tournament was a success and she truly enjoyed everyone there. She said she is looking forward to meeting with the Mayor regarding Groom Road and reopening City Hall.

RESOLUTIONS AND PROCLAMATIONS

1. Proclamation declaring April 2022 Parliamentary Law Month in the City of Baker (Mayor)

City Attorney Fabre read the proclamation.

The motion was made by Council Member Dunn, 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. Resolution – Community Development (Mayor)

City Attorney Fabre read the resolution.

The motion was made by Council Member Vincent, seconded by Council Member Dunn to adopt the resolution.

Council Member Vincent voted yes.

Council Member Dunn voted yes.

Council Member Bryant voted yes.

Council Member Young voted yes.

Council Member Jackson made a motion to abstain from voting on this agenda item.

Council Member Vincent voted yes to allow Council Member Jackson to abstain.

Council Member Dunn asked what reason Council Member Jackson had for abstaining from the vote.

Council Member Jackson stated she believes in rules and procedures, and she stands by what she has stated in previous meetings regarding her abstentions.

Discussion regarding abstentions and the proposed community development resolution followed.

Council Member Dunn voted no on allowing Council Member Jackson to abstain, saying the Mayor's name being associated with the agenda item is no reason to not vote.

Council Member Bryant voted yes to allow Council Member Jackson to abstain.

Council Member Young voted no on allowing Council Member Jackson to abstain.

The motion to allow Council Member Jackson to abstain passed with a vote of 3-2.

Council Member Jackson abstained from voting on the community development resolution.

The motion to adopt the resolution passed with a vote of 4-0.

3. Proclamation declaring April 2022 Sexual Assault Awareness Month in the City of Baker (Bryant)

City Attorney Fabre read the proclamation.

The motion was made by Council Member Bryant, 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.

PUBLIC MEETING

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. 2235 Chamberlain (Mayor)
6. 1984 Chamberlain (Mayor)
7. White house next door to 1984 Chamberlain (Mayor)
8. 5803 Biscayne (Bryant)
9. 4451 Baker Boulevard (Bryant)
10. 4509 Baker Boulevard (Bryant)
11. 2116 E. Azalea (Dunn)
12. 5804 Biscayne (Mayor)

ANNEXATIONS

REPORTS ON BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

1. Planning and Zoning
2. Annexation Review Committee
3. Economic Development Team

Council Member Bryant stated the City of Baker looks forward to welcoming new businesses to the community. However, she feels the city has an adequate number of certain types of businesses and said the administration should focus on bringing in restaurants, places that have activities for the children, and grocery stores.

Council Member Young asked if Council Member Bryant was saying the city should turn down revenue.

Council Member Bryant said we have the right as citizens to say yes or no to what type of businesses we have in the city.

Discussion regarding economic development in the City of Baker followed.

4. Heritage Museum/Related Committees
5. ABC Board
6. Other Special Committees
 - a. Buffalo Festival – April 14 – 16, 2022. For more information go to www.cityofbakerla.com or contact Dianne Clay at (225) 778-0300.
 - b. Prayer Breakfast
 - c. Strategic Planning Committee
 - d. Citizens Advisory Board to Law
 - e. Main Street District Committee

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

The Mayor thanked everyone who was involved with the Running of the Buffaloes 5K run.

ADJOURN

The motion was made by Council Member Dunn, 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 April 12, 2022.

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
3325 GROOM ROAD
BAKER, LA 70714
April 12, 2022**

The City Council of the City of Baker, Louisiana, sitting as the Board of Commissioners for Hillcrest Memorial Gardens, met in regular session on April 12, 2022, 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 Commissioners Dunn/Vincent to approve the minutes of the meeting held on March 22, 2022.

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 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 April 12, 2022.

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
3325 GROOM ROAD
BAKER, LA 70714
April 12, 2022**

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 April 12, 2022, 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 Vincent to approve the minutes of the meeting held on March 22, 2022.

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 Commissioner Waites, 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 April 12, 2022.

Angela Canady Wall, LCMC
Clerk of Council