

**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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**February 14, 2023 - 6:00 p.m.**

The City Council of the City of Baker, Louisiana, met in regular session on February 14, 2023, 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 Pastor Jeffery Haynes.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Council Member Vincent.

**DISPOSITION OF THE MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The motion was made by Council Member Vincent, seconded by Council Member Bryant to approve the minutes of the meeting held on January 24, 2023, with the following “corrections”: Council Member Vincent stated the increase in stamp prices he mentioned at the last meeting is not due to the Ernest Gaines African American 46 stamp being issued. Council Member Vincent stated that when he thanked everyone for the overlay work that has been done, he also said there is clean-up work to be completed following the project.

YEAS: Bryant, Dunn, Jackson, Vincent, Young

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

The motion passed with a vote of 5-0.

The motion was made by Council Member Young, seconded by Council Member Dunn to add item “2. Recognize Pastor Jeffery Haynes and Mrs. Vermonica Haynes of United Family Worship Center for outstanding community service (Young)” under Recognitions to the agenda.

YEAS: Bryant, Dunn, Jackson, Vincent, Young

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

The motion passed with a vote of 5-0.

**RECOGNITIONS**

1. Recognize Council Member Vincent in honor of African American History Month for being the only African American council member to serve six

consecutive terms on the Baker City Council (Jackson)  
Council Member Jackson recognized Council Member Vincent in honor of African American History Month for being the only African American council member to serve six consecutive terms on the Baker City Council.

2. *Recognize Pastor Jeffery Haynes and Mrs. Vermonica Haynes of United Family Worship Center for outstanding community service (Young)*

Council Member Young recognized Pastor Jeffery Haynes and Mrs. Vermonica Haynes of United Family Worship Center for their outstanding community service.

## PLANNING AND ZONING MATTERS

### NEW BUSINESS

1. Approve travel to the annual Louisiana Chiefs of Police conference in Lake Charles, March 7-9, 2023 for Chief Carl Dunn (Mayor)

The motion was made by Council Member Bryant, seconded by Council Member Vincent to approve travel to the annual Louisiana Chiefs of Police conference in Lake Charles, March 7-9, 2023 for Chief Carl 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 – Police and Fire Departments.

C. To provide all neighborhoods with a sense of pride & integrity.

Council Member Bryant read the mission statement. She reminded residents, if you see something – say something, as this will help to deter crime from coming to the City of Baker. Council Member Bryant said improvements must be made to the city's infrastructure and drainage systems. She said there are sewer issues all over the city and this situation must be addressed. Council Member Bryant discussed the importance of prayer and stated she is reaching out to an individual who would like to become the chaplain for the Baker City Council. She feels having a chaplain would be beneficial for residents as well as elected officials.

3. Discuss food trucks (Dunn)

The Mayor stated the discussion would be controlled and if not conducted properly, the meeting would move on to the next agenda item. Council Member Jackson stated decorum can be maintained, but everyone who wishes to speak must be heard.

Council Member Dunn asked her colleagues to act as children of a higher power. She said council members may not feel they are discriminating against the city's entrepreneurs, but sometimes they are. Council Member Dunn asked to have a peaceful discussion regarding food trucks. She asked that her colleagues treat everyone the same, show compassion, and be consistently courteous and compassionated. Council Member Dunn said at the last council meeting Council Member Bryant stated she was not against food trucks, but the location of the present food truck is a sore eye to the entrance of the city, and if the food truck was in a different location, she would not have any problems with a food truck in the city. Given this statement, Council Member Dunn suggested moving the food truck to a designated area such as the empty lot across the street from the fire station or to the Civic Club on N. Magnolia. She asked that the council schedule a work session to discuss how to legislate food trucks in the City of Baker.

The motion was made by Council Member Dunn to schedule a work session to discuss location and legislation of food trucks in the City of Baker.

Council Member Bryant stated the council is currently waiting for an opinion from the Attorney General regarding the city's current ordinance as it relates to food trucks. She

said this ordinance has been used before to shut down food trucks and to limit how they participate in our city. Council Member Bryant recommended waiting for the Attorney General's opinion before taking any action.

Council Member Young stated the Attorney General's opinion is not going to change anything, it's not worth the ink it's written on.

Council Member Dunn said Council Member Bryant is contradicting herself from one meeting to the next.

Council Member Jackson said we are seeking an Attorney General's opinion. She explained that in order to do so, a resolution is required. Council Member Jackson urged her colleagues to wait until they receive the opinion before taking further action. She reiterated that the current ordinance has been used to prohibit food trucks in the past, and yet one is being allowed to operate. Council Member Jackson stated she only became aware of activity at the property on Main Street after concerned citizens contacted her, and her first mention of the situation was at the council meeting held May 25, 2021.

Council Member Dunn's motion to schedule a work session to discuss location and legislation of food trucks in the City of Baker was seconded by Council Member Young.

Vote was called for.

YEAS: Dunn, Young

NAYS: Bryant, Jackson, Vincent

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

The motion failed with a vote of 2-3.

Council Member Young asked what was the purpose of the resolution that was sent to the Attorney General.

City Attorney Fabre explained that a resolution is required when requesting an Attorney General's opinion.

4. Update on the removal of the mobile home from Ewell Boulevard (Jackson)  
Council Member Jackson asked for an update on mobile home on Ewell Boulevard. The Mayor stated the mobile home has been sold and will be removed.

5. Update on the removal of the temporary building next door to the Foot Doctor on Plank Road (Jackson)  
Council Member Jackson asked for an update on the temporary building next door to the Foot Doctor on Plank Road.

The Mayor stated there is a process to be followed and asked the City Attorney to explain. City Attorney Fabre stated he was asked to send a letter to the owner requesting/demanding that they remove the building. He said the building is on private property and it's not been declared to have a code violation at this point, and there is no business being conducted there at this time. City Attorney Fabre said unless there is some type of nuisance Code Enforcement can cite it for, the city cannot order it moved or have it demolished because it's on private property.

The Mayor stated the inspector has been sent out and he did not condemn the building. He said the inspector will be sent out again.

Council Member Jackson said she cannot understand how the owner placed the building there prior to coming before the City Council for final approval of her business license.

The Mayor said the owner assumed they could put the building there because it is on private property.

Council Member Bryant said the process being used to address this situation is almost identical to the condemnation process and asked why the condemnation process has not

been used to address this issue.

The Mayor said again that the inspector inspected the building but did not find that it was condemnable. The Mayor emphasized that the city will continue to work on this issue.

6. Discuss 18-wheelers/trucks beings parked in residential areas (Jackson)  
Council Member Jackson initiated discussion regarding 18-wheelers/trucks being parked in residential areas and cited City of Baker Code of Ordinances Sec. 24-205. She said she has received phone calls from constituents who want the matter addressed.

The Mayor stated this issue too deals with private property. He explained the city's process of sending letters to ask that the truck be moved and to notify residents of the prohibition, as they may not be aware of the ordinance. If the vehicle is not moved the police department can go out and issue a summons or ticket to the owner, and this normally results in the vehicle being moved.

Council Member Jackson agreed that residents do need to be notified and made aware of the city's ordinance. She recommended the information be sent out via the city's text alert system.

#### **ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS**

The Mayor announced the street rehabilitation program is almost complete. He said there is still clean-up work that needs to be done and asked council members to report areas in their districts that need to be cleaned.

The Mayor reported that a gas line has been run from across the tracks to Greenwood Park and the zoo, and that both are now customers of Baker Utilities. He said the city plans to run the gas line all the way up Lavey Lane and to a portion of Sunshine Road as well.

The Mayor said surplus city vehicles are being sold via online auction.

The Mayor reported the LYNX program is a huge success and is being utilized throughout the city. He stated it is becoming what the city needs to add to its transportation plan.

The Mayor provided an update on six projects currently going on in the city as well as several future projects and said he would have a list of said projects available at the next council meeting.

#### **NON-AGENDA ITEMS**

David Gautreaux, 6650 Comite Drive, asked if it was possible for the council to bring the food truck issue back to the constituents in an attempt to resolve the issue.

Council Member Vincent reminded everyone about the African American history program featuring Scotlandville, Louisiana, on Saturday, February 25, 2023, from 10:00 a.m. to Noon at the Baker Branch Library. The presentation will feature a discussion of the book, *Images of America: Scotlandville*, followed by a book signing by the authors. He said this Saturday is the third Saturday of the month and asked that everyone take part in Council Member Vincent's Friendly Neighbor Keeper initiative. He asked that people remain vigilant and continue to pick up trash whenever and wherever they are able. Council Member Vincent announced the City of Baker will take part in a state-wide cleanup effort in mid-April. Council Member Vincent asked the Mayor and Public Works Director Timmie Sept to check the sidewalks near 13312 London Drive. He also said he worked to clear limbs and debris from ditches near Lavey Lane, Longvue, Morvant and Sprucewood Court. Council Member Vincent stated he is working with the Mayor and city engineers on having a ditch dug which would alleviate some of the water issues being experienced by residents on Sprucewood Court after it rains. He thanked the Mayor for providing him with the list of projects, the very positive things, going on in the city at this time.

Council Member Dunn congratulated Council Member Vincent for serving six consecutive terms on the city council and his work dealing with Black history. She spoke about Black history, reiterating the importance of remembering where you came from

and helping those in your community. She referenced Council Member Vincent's parents and the struggles they faced and how those struggles and sacrifices helped him achieve all he has. Council Member Dunn said she cannot understand how members of the council can see a young person trying to make a living for herself and not help her achieve her goals. She said that the council should help people, not keep them suppressed, doing so only negates all the sacrifices made by others in the past. Council Member Dunn said a summer camp is being planned for this year for children ages 5 to 12. The plan is to work in conjunction with BREC and have sponsors from the community help pay fees for camp attendees.

Council Member Bryant stated everyone has the First Amendment right of freedom of speech, whether they agree or disagree. She thanked the Public Works Department for picking up the trash on Bodo and Heath, and said she hopes this is something that will continue. She offered her condolences to Ms. Betty Nixon and her family on the death of her daughter and asked everyone to keep them in their prayers. Council Member Bryant stated again that she feels all of the city's boards should have representation from each council district. She spoke about bringing business to the city, saying the city needs businesses that can give the city a tax base to support the school system. She said other cities are reaching for those goals and obtaining them. Council Member Bryant said the tree at the corner of Jefferson and Alabama looks as if it might fall at any moment, and poses a hazard to residents. She spoke about the recovery plan prepared by LSU following the 2016 flood. She spoke again about the titanium chips for electric cars and the need for facilities to produce the chips, and how Baker would be an ideal location for such an endeavor. Council Member Bryant stated she wants to see the city move forward and that it can move forward, she said we must raise our level of expectations.

Council Member Young apologized to the Fire Department for failing to acknowledge what they did over the Christmas holidays. He said there were a lot of excited, happy kids seeing Santa on the fire truck. Council Member Young said this situation with the food truck is totally embarrassing and he never thought he would be involved with anything like this. He said council members say one thing and do another, they talk about respect, but don't show respect, he said he doesn't understand. Council Member Young said he spoke with the owner of Golden Corral and the owner said he doesn't want to come to Baker because the city council fights. Council Member Young said that's why businesses don't want to come here, because we fight too much, and we block businesses. He reiterated he has never been a part of anything like this and the entire situation is totally embarrassing. He said the council has done nothing from a legislative standpoint, they have only put themselves in the middle of the administration's business. Council Member Young said change has got to happen. He congratulated Council Member Vincent again for his accomplishments. He said as leaders we have to figure out a way to come together and help the community. He stated he went to every school in Baker during Teacher Appreciation Week and brought donuts to the teachers. Council Member Young said council meetings are a time and place to get work done, and that is what council members should be focused on.

Council Member Jackson announced the Baker Branch Library is hosting the Dinosaur Experience on Wednesday, February 22, 2023 from 3:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. The event is for ages three and up and you must call (225) 778-5960 to register early. She also announced the library has Wi-Fi 2 Geaux, free portable wi-fi hotspots, available for check out. For technical support please call 1-844-341-4834. Council Member Jackson stated she attended the LMA conference February 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> and while there attended the work session on public records and open meetings law. She requested information from the speaker and hopes to have said information at the next meeting so that she can share it with everyone. Council Member Jackson asked for clarification on "private property" as it was discussed at length at tonight's meeting. She asked if the city is allowed to go on a person's private property. City Attorney Fabre stated the city can go on private property under certain circumstances. Council Member Jackson said she values the three "R"s – rules, respect, and responsibility. She said no one is above the law, and no one is above rules. How can you be wrong when you're doing right? And how can you right when you're doing wrong?

## **RESOLUTIONS AND PROCLAMATIONS**

Council Member Vincent took a point of privilege. He said comments have been made about him and Black history, but also about his parents. He said he is very proud of his parents, and to say he is not for Black people and Black history is totally, absolutely wrong. He said he has been writing about Black people since the 1960s, he has helped desegregate facilities, put his life on the line, attended marches with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. before Black people had the right to vote. He said he has not ceased learning, helping, and trying to help improve Black people's lives ever since God has given him breath in his body. And to say they don't do anything, that they don't love this city is erroneous. He said he was a major factor in bringing Walgreens, Walmart, and Wendy's to the city. Council Member Vincent stated before he was a council member, his institute put thousands of dollars' worth of supplies into the Baker school system. He pointed out noise free zones and being a bike friendly city as examples of legislation he spearheaded and had enacted. He cited his work on the Little Free Libraries located throughout the city. Council Member Vincent said he is committed to Black progress and Black economic development, and he goes above and beyond to serve the citizens of Baker.

1. Proclamation declaring February 2023 National Kidney 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.

2. A resolution and letter to the Walmart Super Center – 14507 Plank Road, Baker, Louisiana (Vincent)  
City Attorney Fabre read the resolution.

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

Council Member Vincent voted yes.

Council Member Dunn clarified her earlier statements regarding Council Member Vincent. She said she was not saying he hadn't done anything. She was saying they appreciate that he knows so much about Black history, but she doesn't understand how he can be against someone who is trying to have a food truck and is trying to make it in society. Council Member Dunn said she respects and looks up to Council Member Vincent and will always do that because she knows what he has done. She said she knows that the struggle and sacrifices he made are what have allowed her to be where she is today, and she appreciates that.

Council Member Dunn voted yes.

Council Member Bryant asked her colleagues to make sure they speak for themselves with their comments, more especially when discussing accomplishments. She said there are veteran council members who are seated, and they were not reelected because they didn't do anything and are not productive in their communities.

Council Member Bryant voted yes.

Council Member Young voted yes.

Council Member Jackson voted yes.

The motion passed with a vote of 5-0.

## **PUBLIC MEETING**

**BIDS AND PROPOSALS**

**APPOINTMENTS TO BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS**

**CONDEMNATIONS**

1. 1916 Florida (Mayor)
2. 2235 Chamberlain (Mayor)
3. 1984 Chamberlain (Mayor)
4. White house next door to 1984 Chamberlain (Mayor)
5. 2845 Groom Road (Mayor)
6. 1637 Robinson Street (Mayor)
7. 12979 Wedgewood (Mayor)
8. 2165 Chamberlain (Mayor)
9. 1752 Clark (Mayor)
10. 1905 Alabama Street (Mayor)

Council Member Bryant asked that 4341 Burgess be added to the condemnation list.

The Mayor said once the condemnation report is received it will be added to the list.

**ANNEXATIONS**

**REPORTS ON BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS**

1. Planning and Zoning
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
  - e. Main Street District Committee

**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 February 14, 2023.

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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  
February 14, 2023**

The City Council of the City of Baker, Louisiana, sitting as the Board of Commissioners for Hillcrest Memorial Gardens, met in regular session on February 14, 2023, 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 January 24, 2023.

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 January 2023.

The motion was made by Commissioner Waites, seconded by Commissioner Bryant to accept the sales report submitted for January 2023.

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 February 14, 2023.

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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  
February 14, 2023**

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 February 14, 2023, 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 January 24, 2023.

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 of the Baker Consolidated Utility System held on February 14, 2023.

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Angela Canady Wall, LCMC  
Clerk of Council