

**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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May 23, 2023 - 6:00 p.m.

The City Council of the City of Baker, Louisiana, met in regular session on May 23, 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 Council Member Vincent.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Council Member Dunn.

The motion was made by Council Member Vincent, seconded by Council Member Jackson to add recognize Dianne Pullen for her contributions to the City of Baker community to the agenda.

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 Bryant, seconded by Council Member Jackson to add recognition of Nakia Nelson, Zebedee Cockerham, Jr., and Mary Robertson to the agenda.

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 recognition of Shannon Holliday and Zahniyah Tate to the agenda.

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 Jackson, seconded by Council Member Bryant to move item “8. OJJ update on the new Jetson facility (Jackson)” up on the agenda, so that it follows the disposition of the minutes of the previous meeting.

YEAS: Bryant, Dunn, Jackson, Vincent, Young

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

The motion passed with a vote of 5-0.

DISPOSITION OF THE MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The motion was made by Council Member Dunn, seconded by Council Member Vincent to approve the minutes of the meeting held on May 9, 2023.

YEAS: Bryant, Dunn, Jackson, Vincent, Young

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

The motion passed with a vote of 5-0.

OJJ update on the new Jetson facility (Jackson)

Curtis Nelson, Deputy Secretary – Office of Juvenile Justice, and Deron Patin, Deputy Assistant Secretary, provided an overview of the purpose of their office and an in-depth explanation of the OJJ’s plan for the new Jetson facility, saying the Office of Juvenile Justice’s goal is rehabilitation.

An extensive discussion regarding the site, its proposed use, safety measures and the facility’s impact on the City of Baker and surrounding area was held.

RECOGNITIONS

1. Recognize Keshunda Jason for her donations to two 2023 Baker High School graduates (Bryant)

Council Member Bryant recognized Keshunda Jason for her donation of graduation items to two Baker High School students.

Recognize Nakia Nelson for her dedication to the students of Baker High School (Bryant)

Council Member Bryant recognized Nakia Nelson for her dedication to the students of Baker High School.

Recognize Zebedee Cockerham, Jr. for being Baker Senior Citizens Center 2023 Prom King (Bryant)

Council Member Bryant recognized Zebedee Cockerham, Jr. for being Baker Senior Citizens Center 2023 Prom King.

Recognize Mary Robertson for being Baker Senior Citizens Center 2023 Prom Queen (Bryant)

Council Member Bryant recognized Mary Robertson for being Baker Senior Citizens Center 2023 Prom Queen.

Recognize Shannon Holliday for receiving the Baker High School Principal’s Award (Young)

Council Member Young recognized Shannon Holliday for receiving the Baker High School Principal’s Award.

Recognize Zahniyah Tate for receiving the Baker High School Principal’s Award (Young)

Council Member Young recognized Zahniyah Tate for receiving the Baker High School Principal’s Award.

Recognize Dianne Pullen for her contributions to the City of Baker community (Vincent)

Council Member Vincent asked that this item be held over to the next meeting, as no representative from the Pullen family was present.

PLANNING AND ZONING MATTERS

1. Accept 2023-2024 Capital Outlay Budget (Mayor)
Discussion regarding the 2023-2024 Capital Outlay Budget was held.

Council Member Jackson asked if a work session was going to be scheduled in order to discuss the budget, saying she feels it is the professional thing to do.

The motion was made by Council Member Jackson, seconded by Council Member Bryant to schedule a work session to discuss the budget on Tuesday, May 30, 2023, 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.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Introduce Ordinance 2023-7, an ordinance to adopt the operating budget of general fund revenues and expenditures City of Baker, Louisiana, fiscal year ending June 30, 2024 (Mayor)

The motion was made by Council Member Vincent, seconded by Council Member Dunn to introduce Ordinance 2023-7.

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

The motion passed with a vote of 3-1.

Council Member Jackson did not vote.

2. Introduce Ordinance 2023-8, an ordinance to adopt the operating budget of special revenue funds revenues and expenditures City of Baker, Louisiana, fiscal year ending June 30, 2024 (Mayor)

The motion was made by Council Member Dunn, seconded by Council Member Vincent to introduce Ordinance 2023-8.

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.

3. Introduce Ordinance 2023-9, an ordinance to adopt the capital budget and capital program of governmental funds City of Baker, Louisiana, fiscal year ending June 30, 2024 (Mayor)

The motion was made by Council Member Vincent, seconded by Council Member Dunn to introduce Ordinance 2023-9.

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

The motion passed with a vote of 5-0.

4. Introduce Ordinance 2023-10, an ordinance to adopt the budget of utility fund revenues, expenditures and capital improvements City of Baker, Louisiana, fiscal year ending June 30, 2024 (Mayor)

The motion was made by Council Member Young, seconded by Council Member Dunn to introduce Ordinance 2023-10.

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

ABSTAIN: None

The motion passed with a vote of 5-0.

5. Introduce Ordinance 2023-11, an ordinance to adopt the budget of cemetery fund revenues, expenditures and capital improvements City of Baker, Louisiana, fiscal year ending June 30, 2024 (Mayor)

The motion was made by Council Member Vincent, seconded by Council Member Young to introduce Ordinance 2023-11.

YEAS: Bryant, Dunn, Jackson, Vincent, Young

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

The motion passed with a vote of 5-0.

6. Introduce Ordinance 2023-12, an ordinance to adopt the budget of sewer revenue fund revenues, expenditures and capital improvements City of Baker, Louisiana, fiscal year ending June 30, 2024 (Mayor)

The motion was made by Council Member Young, seconded by Council Member Dunn to introduce Ordinance 2023-12.

YEAS: Bryant, Dunn, Jackson, Vincent, Young

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

The motion passed with a vote of 5-0.

7. 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 there will be a community garden in about a month's time at the United Methodist Church. She stated she was happy to see that the Fire Department had a defibrillator placed in City Hall. Council Member Bryant said the city needs to apply for a grant so that the citizens of Baker can take CPR classes. She said the quicker the response to a medical emergency the better the chance that you save someone's life. She said constituents have complained about the noise ordinance not being enforced and asked that the situation be addressed. Council Member Bryant said crime is on the rise and the community must work together to keep residents safe. She said the Citizen of the Year, Mr. Leonard Benjamin, was honored at Shady Grove Baptist Church on Sunday. She said the city must make an investment in the community's children. She cited educational and training programs that will not only produce individuals ready for gainful employment but drive economic development throughout the city. She said economic development is what is going to move the city forward.

8. OJJ update on the new Jetson facility (Jackson)

This agenda item was addressed earlier in the meeting.

RESOLUTIONS AND PROCLAMATIONS

1. Proclamation declaring May 2023 Mental Health Awareness Month in the City of Baker (Bryant) (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.

2. Proclamation declaring May 2023 Skin Cancer 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 2023-6, an ordinance to designate and declare certain City of Baker assets to be surplus and scrap and for related matters (Mayor) (Introduced 5/9/2023)

Public meeting was held.

Discussion regarding the proposed ordinance and items to be declared surplus was held.

The vote was called for.

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.

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Gretchen Wiltz asked why a work session regarding the budget would be scheduled at this point. She said a work session should be held before the council meeting so that the budget and any budgetary concerns/issues could be discussed and resolved prior to the meeting being held. Ms. Wiltz expressed her concerns regarding the pothole on Baker Boulevard and implored the city to have the roadway repaired.

Sheila Anderson, 4504 Fausse, expressed her concerns regarding off-road vehicles being ridden all over the city. She asked that all possibilities be explored in an effort to find a solution to this ongoing and worsening problem. She also asked for information regarding the canal that runs behind her property in Meadows of Chaleur subdivision.

Torin Horton initiated discussion by asking for an update and clarification on the situation with his neighbor on Baker Boulevard.

The motion was made by Council Member Bryant, seconded by Council Member Vincent to extend the council meeting to 8:15 p.m.

YEAS: Bryant, Dunn, Jackson, Vincent, Young

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

The motion passed with a vote of 5-0.

Bill Johnson stated he met with Chief Dunn, and he came tonight to speak on behalf of law enforcement. He said there are serious problems in the city and the Mayor and Council have got to provide the police department with the resources they need to do their job.

Chief Dunn explained that the Mayor and Council do provide his department with the resources they need. He said the police department being short of officers can be attributed to a lack of quality applicants. Chief Dunn stated he will not keep any

employee who does not reflect what a good police officer is and does not meet the Baker Police Department's standards.

Council Member Young said he was offended by the insinuation that the council does not provide for, or hinders in any way, the city's police force. He reiterated that he supports Chief Dunn and the Baker Police Department.

Mr. Wackett, 14305 Felicity, said he was impressed with the work done on Sherron Avenue and would like to have speed bumps installed on Felicity as well.

William King, Bentley Drive, said the time for games is over. He said the council has to do a better job helping the people, the police and fire departments, and the Mayor. He said it's time for everyone to come together, to pray together and solve the problems of the city.

Pastor Barry Sterling encouraged everyone to come together and work for the good of the City of Baker and its residents.

The motion was made by Council Member Vincent, seconded by Council Member Bryant to extend the council meeting to 8:30 p.m.

YEAS: Bryant, Dunn, Jackson, Vincent, Young

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

The motion passed with a vote of 5-0.

Council Member Vincent said that he has consistently helped anyone in the City of Baker who has asked. He has made it his mission to assist those in need in any way possible, to go above and beyond for citizens, that is just who he is. He said he is a fan of humanity, of education, of doing all you can to help others, because we are all in this together. Council Member Vincent asked that everyone talk to one another and remember we are all without perfection and by the grace of God we are here. He said it is important to learn to disagree without being disagreeable, and to do more work and less complaining. He said we will pray for one another, assist one another, because the city can only be as good as its citizens, and we all have work to do.

Council Member Dunn thanked the reverend for his comments and said until everyone can get on one accord, things are not going to get better. She reiterated to her colleagues that she is always willing to work with anyone. She said they must come together and think about what is best for the city. Council Member Dunn thanked Chief Dunn for his work and all he does in the community. She stated she will not quit working to get a new community center built for the children of Baker. She said it's about our community and what we can do for our people. She stressed the importance of supporting the elderly in our community as well.

Council Member Bryant asked that her work speak for itself. She said everyone has a purpose and council members must learn to respect one another's purpose and work together. Council Member Bryant asked the City Attorney about blight court and her questions were answered. She also asked him for the status of the lawsuit filed against the city. He stated he did not have a status to report at this time. Council Member Bryant reported that City-Parish repaired the gate at Bodo and Burgess, but there needs to be a "No Dumping" sign posted. She also asked that the city cut the grass on its servitudes in District 3.

Council Member Jackson asked for prayers for the family of Bishop Ameal Brown who recently passed away. She stated everyone has a right to be heard, you may not like what a person is saying, but you have to respect them. Council Member Jackson said everyone has a right to their point of view.

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)
11. 4341 Burgess (Bryant)
12. Chamberlain Avenue at John Marks (Mayor)

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
 - e. Main Street District Committee

ADJOURN

The motion was made by Council Member Jackson, seconded by Council Member Vincent 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 May 23, 2023.

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
May 23, 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 May 23, 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 Dunn to approve the minutes of the meeting held on May 9, 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 Dunn, seconded by Commissioner Waites 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 May 23, 2023.

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
May 23, 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 May 23, 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 May 9, 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 May 23, 2023.

Angela Canady Wall, LCMC
Clerk of Council