

**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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September 12, 2023 - 6:00 p.m.

The City Council of the City of Baker, Louisiana, met in regular session on September 12, 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 Minister Gretha Alexander.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Riley Douglas.

Council Member Jackson stated she is tabling item number four under New Business.

The motion was made by Council Member Vincent, seconded by Council Member Young to move item “3. Resolution to adopt the East Baton Rouge Parish Hazard Mitigation Plan (Mayor)” up on the agenda, so that it follows recognitions.

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 Vincent, seconded by Council Member Jackson to approve the minutes of the meeting held on August 22, 2023.

YEAS: Bryant, Dunn, Jackson, Vincent, Young

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

The motion passed with a vote of 5-0.

RECOGNITIONS

1. Recognize Admon McCastle for his outstanding service to the City of Baker (Mayor)

The Mayor recognized Admon McCastle for his outstanding service to the City of Baker.

2. Recognize Riley Douglas for her outstanding leadership (Young)
Council Member Young recognized Riley Douglas for her outstanding leadership.

The motion was made by Council Member Dunn, seconded by Council Member Jackson to move item “2. Proclamation celebrating the 50th wedding anniversary of James and Kay Thomas (Mayor)” up on the agenda, so that it follows recognitions.

YEAS: Bryant, Dunn, Jackson, Vincent, Young

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

The motion passed with a vote of 5-0.

2. *Proclamation celebrating the 50th wedding anniversary of James and Kay Thomas (Mayor)*

The Mayor and City Council recognized James and Kay Thomas for celebrating their 50th wedding anniversary.

3. *Resolution to adopt the East Baton Rouge Parish Hazard Mitigation Plan (Mayor)*

Harry St. Pierre, Mayor’s Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness, the Hazard Mitigation Specialist for East Baton Rouge Parish provided an overview of the hazard mitigation plan and explained the importance of its adoption.

City Attorney Fabre read the resolution.

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

YEAS: Bryant, Dunn, Vincent, Young

NAYS: Jackson

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

The motion passed with a vote of 4-1.

PLANNING AND ZONING MATTERS

1. Approve Business License Request – 2023-11
Burden’s Lawn Care
Location – 4038 Groom Road, Baker, Louisiana

Discussion regarding the agenda item was held.

The motion was made by Council Member Bryant, seconded by Council Member Vincent to accept the recommendation from the Planning and Zoning Commission and approve the business license request for Burden’s Lawn Care.

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 2023-20, an ordinance to fix the rate of taxation and levy a tax to defray expense or operation of city government for all general purposes for the year 2023 on all taxable property within the corporate limits of the City of Baker, Louisiana (Mayor)

The Mayor provided an explanation of the proposed ordinance.

The motion was made by Council Member Vincent, seconded by Council Members Dunn/Young to introduce Ordinance 2023-20.

YEAS: Bryant, Dunn, Vincent, Young

NAYS: Jackson

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

The motion passed with a vote of 4-1.

2. Discuss work session regarding Airbnb (Bryant)

Council Member Bryant provided an overview of the work session held on August 31, 2023, to discuss Airbnb in the City of Baker. She stated she hopes this will be something the city will profit from and that it will increase our economic value.

Discussion regarding Airbnb in the City of Baker was held.

Council Member Bryant reiterated that the city's goal should be to regulate Airbnb in the city, licensing those engaged in the enterprise and thereby facilitating the collection of taxes as a result.

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. Council Member Bryant thanked the fire and police departments for all they do in the community, as yesterday was 9/11. She stated she hopes to bring back the 9/11 luncheon in the future. Council Member Bryant reported that the event she held Saturday at New Beginnings Fellowship Baptist Church was a huge success. She said they gave out dental kits and other personal hygiene products to the community. Sponsors were Autoworks of Baker, Miracle Place Church, NailCare, LLC, Rd's Kwick & Clean Cleaning Service and Rabel Family Dentistry.

4. Discuss the Purple Box Project (Jackson)

Council Member Jackson asked that this agenda item be tabled until the next regularly scheduled council meeting to be held on Tuesday, September 26, 2023.

5. ANNOUNCEMENT: Councilman Charles Vincent's Mwalimu Institute project – "Help us find your house with visible municipal numbers" (Vincent)

Council Member Vincent reminded everyone that his Mwalimu Institute, in conjunction with Entergy, is implementing a city-wide program to provide visible municipal house numbers for Baker residents. He thanked the fire and police departments for their continued assistance with and support of this project. Residents can contact City Hall, their city council representative, the fire department, or police department to participate in this program. Council Member Vincent encouraged all who are in need of visible house numbers, especially the disabled and elderly, to take advantage of this program.

RESOLUTIONS AND PROCLAMATIONS

1. Proclamation declaring September 2023 Suicide Awareness Month in the City of Baker (Mayor)

City Attorney Fabre read the proclamation.

The motion was made by Council Member Vincent, seconded by Council Member Dunn 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 celebrating the 50th wedding anniversary of James and Kay Thomas (Mayor)

This agenda item was addressed earlier in the meeting.

3. Resolution to adopt the East Baton Rouge Parish Hazard Mitigation Plan (Mayor)

This agenda item was addressed earlier in the meeting.

4. Proclamation declaring October 2023 Domestic Violence Awareness Month in the City of Baker (Jackson)

City Attorney Fabre read the proclamation.

The motion was made by Council Member Jackson, 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.

5. Proclamation declaring September 2023 Blood 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 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.

6. Proclamation declaring September 2023 Childhood 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 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

1. Adopt Ordinance 2023-19, an ordinance to designate and declare certain City of Baker assets to be surplus and scrap and for related matters (Mayor) (Introduced 8/22/2023)

Public meeting was held.

Council Member Bryant asked that council members receive a report detailing the profits realized from surplus items that are sold. She stated the council has not received a financial report in six months, and as the council is responsible for overseeing the finances of the city, this is unacceptable.

The motion was made by Council Member Vincent, seconded by Council Member Dunn to adopt Ordinance 2023-19.

YEAS: Bryant, Dunn, Vincent, Young

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Jackson

ABSTAIN: None

The motion passed with a vote of 4-0.

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

Miranda Georgetown-Riley presented a video and spoke about the Magnolia Rose Foundation for Autism Acceptance. The foundation's mission is to be an advocate for acceptance of autism in the community and to provide resources to families and caregivers as well. She announced the second annual Magnolia Masquerade "Sneaker Ball" Charity Event and Fundraiser is being held Saturday, October 21, 2023, from 8:00 p.m. to Midnight in the Municipal Auditorium. She invited everyone to attend and support this worthwhile cause.

NON-AGENDA ITEMS

The Mayor addressed Non-Agenda Items, saying this portion of the agenda has become

increasingly long. He said going forward comments from the floor would be limited to two or three minutes and asked that everyone, council members included, be conscientious and considerate of other people and their time.

Sheila Anderson stated her opinion regarding the representation of District 5 on the Baker City Council.

Council Member Vincent provided an overview of the health fair held on September 8, 2023, at the Baker Branch Library. He said it was a tremendous success and thanked everyone who participated in the event. He thanked the Mayor for removing the bench at the corner of Epperson Street and Groom Road. He asked that everyone participate in the study being done by CATS. He recognized Dr. Leroy Davis and Mrs. Elaine G. Davis for celebrating their 55th wedding anniversary. Council Member Vincent stated he is grateful for the work being done by Walmart to enhance the store inside and out. He announced a city-wide cleanup will be held in November as part of the Keep Baker Beautiful and Council Member Vincent's Friendly Neighbor Keeper initiatives. These initiatives encourage residents to realize this is your city, your neighborhood, your street, your house, to please help to keep it litter free and assist beautification efforts. He said it is imperative to get the city's youth involved in these efforts as well. Council Member Vincent reiterated that he consistently does all he can, whether it be picking up trash himself or encouraging businesses to maintain their property, to keep Baker beautiful.

Council Member Dunn reminded everyone that servitude maintenance is the responsibility of the homeowner. She stated part of the problem with property maintenance in the city is often young people don't have the initiative of older people. She said the younger generations do not have the same sense of pride in or responsibility for their property that older generations exhibited. Council Member Dunn said council members have got to learn to work together, they must come together in unity to move the City of Baker forward.

Council Member Bryant stated she can, and will, work with anyone, but she will not be disrespected. She said she helps residents throughout the city, no matter what district they live in. She said LMA conferences are networking events, and she uses them as such. She stated an individual on Greenwood Lane has been waiting for assistance with a sewer issue for nine months. She also said the situation at 311 Ray Weiland Drive has been reported to Code Enforcement, but no action has been taken. Council Member Bryant addressed City Attorney Fabre but received no response. She asked for the name of the city's economic development person. The Mayor said Cedric Grant. She asked that council members be given a report on what Mr. Grant is working on in the city and be provided with any updates as needed. She also asked that the council be given a monthly financial report. She asked the Mayor if proper protocol was followed with regards to drug screening after his accident in the city vehicle. The Mayor said it was and that the tox screen was good.

Council Member Young congratulated Council Member Dunn and Council Member Jackson for their participation in the back-to-school event. He asked Council Member Vincent if he would like to go with him to Walmart in order to discuss having Baker Buffalo merchandise available in the store. Council Member Young said other area Walmart stores carry merchandise featuring their local high school. He said it is important to have Buffalo Pride represented in our local store. He commended Buffalo Food Mart on Groom Road for cleaning up their property. He reported that the swimming pool at Azalea Gardens has been covered. For clarification purposes, Council Member Young verified that the current Vice-President of the Baker City Council is Council Member Dunn.

Council Member Jackson, on behalf of the Baker Lions Club and Pilot Club, invited everyone to meet the candidates on Wednesday, September 20, 2023, at 6:00 p.m. in the Municipal Auditorium. She stated she believes in the power of speech and that everyone has the right to be heard. She said she listens, and she will not demean anyone by being disrespectful. Council Member Jackson said she believes in following rules, procedures, and protocols, she said she grew up with that and she is living by it.

BIDS AND PROPOSALS

APPOINTMENTS TO BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

CONDEMNATIONS

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 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 September 12, 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
September 12, 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 September 12, 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 Jackson to approve the minutes of the meeting held on August 22, 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

Kierra Winfield submitted a monthly sales report for August 2023.

The motion was made by Commissioner Dunn, seconded by Commissioner Vincent to accept the sales report submitted for August 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 Jackson, 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 for the Hillcrest Memorial Gardens held on September 12, 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
September 12, 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 September 12, 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 Dunn to approve the minutes of the meeting held on August 22, 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 Jackson, 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 September 12, 2023.

Angela Canady Wall, LCMC
Clerk of Council