

**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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October 24, 2023 - 6:00 p.m.

The City Council of the City of Baker, Louisiana, met in regular session on October 24, 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 City Attorney Fabre.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Council President Robert Young.

The motion was made by Council Member Bryant, seconded by Council Member Dunn to amend item number five under New Business from Trunka Treat to Street Treat.

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 Bryant, seconded by Council Member Vincent to approve the minutes of the meeting held on October 10, 2023.

YEAS: Bryant, Dunn, Jackson, Vincent, Young

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

The motion passed with a vote of 5-0.

RECOGNITIONS

1. Community Partner Twahna P. Harris, The Butterfly Society, to speak about her organization and Domestic Violence Awareness Month (Mayor)
Twahna P. Harris, The Butterfly Society, presented data on domestic violence in Baton Rouge and the surrounding areas. Ms. Harris stated domestic violence is a crisis, a serious crisis, and it is imperative that the community take a stand. She reminded everyone that while October is recognized as Domestic Violence Month, domestic violence is a problem all the time. Ms. Harris explained a number of the resources and services provided by The Butterfly Society and reiterated the importance of being involved and offering support to domestic violence survivors and their families. She

reminded everyone domestic violence is a community concern and that it takes each and every one of us to do something in order to make a difference.

PLANNING AND ZONING MATTERS

1. Approve final plat for Sunshine Gardens subdivision
Discussion regarding the agenda item was held.

The motion was made by Council Member Vincent, seconded by Council Member Young to approve the final plat for Sunshine Gardens subdivision.

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

The motion passed with a vote of 4-1.

NEW BUSINESS

1. City of Baker Gas System Public Awareness Notice (Mayor)
Misty Anderson, Public Works Department, provided an overview of the City of Baker Gas System Public Awareness Notice. The notice will be distributed to residents via their monthly utility bill.

The motion was made by Council Member Vincent, seconded by Council Member Young to accept the City of Baker Gas System Public Awareness Notice.

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

The motion passed with a vote of 5-0.

2. Stormwater presentation – Public Works Department (Mayor)
Misty Anderson, Public Works Department, gave a presentation regarding storm water and flooding. Ms. Anderson also provided tips on things that can be done to alleviate issues arising from storm water.

The motion was made by Council Member Vincent, seconded by Council Member Young to concur with the information included in the stormwater presentation.

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 the Browns on Groom Road are in the process of growing their winter crops and are happy to share with those who are interested. She thanked the fire department for the job they do in the city and reminded everyone of the statewide burn ban. She suggested that her colleagues come together and sponsor lunch for those firemen fighting the wildfires in Louisiana. Council Member Bryant thanked SALT, Seniors and Law Enforcement Together, for hosting a fabulous event, stating a wonderful time was had by all. She said that dumping has become a problem again at the corner of Bodo and Burgess and suggested that a monitoring system be put in place in an effort to stop this activity.

4. Schedule work session to discuss ordinance for Airbnb in the City of Baker (Bryant)
The motion was made by Council Member Bryant, seconded by Council Member Jackson to schedule a work session on Thursday, November 9, 2023, at 6:30 p.m. to

discuss ordinance for Airbnb in the City of Baker.

Council Member Vincent voted yes.

Council Member Dunn asked to abstain from voting on this agenda item.

The motion was made by Council Member Dunn, seconded by Council Member Jackson to allow Council Member Dunn to abstain from voting on this agenda item.

YEAS: Bryant, Dunn, Jackson, Vincent, Young

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

The motion passed with a vote of 5-0.

Council Member Dunn abstained from voting on this agenda item.

Council Member Bryant voted yes.

Council Member Young voted yes.

Council Member Jackson voted yes.

The motion passed with a vote of 4-0.

5. ANNOUNCEMENT: Street Treat in the Park – October 31, 2023 (Bryant)
Council Member Bryant announced that Street Treat in the Park is being held on Tuesday, October 31, 2023, from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Council Member Bryant said the event is sponsored by the Baker Police Department and is a safe alternative to traditional door to door trick-or-treating.

6. Discuss gun safety, training, and education (Jackson)
Council Member Jackson introduced Artary Peairs and asked that she come forward to discuss gun safety, training, and education.

Artary Peairs, FRC, gave a presentation that focused on the importance of gun safety, training, and education for people of all ages. Ms. Peairs said gun violence has become an epidemic, and stressed the importance of proper education and training for anyone who owns or may come into contact with a firearm. Ms. Peairs stated it is imperative that children be properly educated as well. She demonstrated several of her key points and invited all who are interested to avail themselves of the opportunities and resources available at Firearms Range & Clothing.

7. Discuss strategies and educate the community on current fraud and scam tactics (Jackson)

Council Member Jackson introduced Dr. Toni Jackson and asked that she come forward to discuss tips and strategies for dealing with current fraud and scam tactics. Council Member Jackson stated she partners with individuals who can help to educate and enlighten the community.

Dr. Toni Jackson gave a presentation and distributed information regarding current fraud and scam tactics. She stated cyber thugs are leveraging technology and using Artificial Intelligence in their schemes and by doing so manage to steal billions of dollars each year. She said the elderly are regularly targeted because they are often perceived as easy targets. Ms. Jackson gave an overview of several scams currently being perpetrated and provided tips on how to recognize these tactics and strategies to use to avoid falling victim to them.

8. 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, has implemented a city-wide program to provide visible municipal house numbers for Baker residents. One of countless programs implemented by the Mwalimu

Institute over the years to help the citizens of Baker. 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. Resolution to hire engineering services for the City of Baker relative to the Community Development Block Grant Program (Mayor)
City Attorney Fabre read the resolution.

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

Council Member Vincent voted yes.

Council Member Dunn voted yes.

Council Member Bryant voted no.

Council Member Young voted yes.

Council Member Jackson asked to abstain from voting on this agenda item.

The motion was made by Council Member Jackson, seconded by Council Member Bryant to allow Council Member Jackson to abstain from voting on items one through three under Resolutions and Proclamations.

YEAS: Bryant, Dunn, Jackson, Vincent, Young

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

The motion passed with a vote of 5-0.

Council Member Jackson abstained from voting on this agenda item.

The motion passed with a vote of 3-1.

2. Resolution to hire administrative services for the City of Baker relative to the Community Development Block Grant Program (Mayor)
City Attorney Fabre read the resolution.

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

YEAS: Dunn, Vincent, Young

NAYS: Bryant

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: Jackson

The motion passed with a vote of 3-1.

3. Resolution to readopt Citizen Participation Plan relative to the Community Development Block Grant Program (Mayor)
City Attorney Fabre read the resolution.

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

YEAS: Bryant, Dunn, Vincent, Young

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: Jackson

The motion passed with a vote of 4-0.

4. Proclamation declaring November 2023 Diabetes 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 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.

5. Proclamation declaring November 2023 Pancreatic 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. Attorney Veronica Howard Sizer to discuss the Elvin Howard Pancreatic Cancer Foundation (Vincent)

Council Member Vincent introduced and welcomed Elvin Howard, Sr. Pancreatic Cancer Advocacy Foundation (PCAF) representative Veronica Howard Sizer.

Veronica Howard Sizer, Elvin Howard, Sr.'s daughter, provided an overview of the foundation and its work. Ms. Sizer invited everyone to join the Elvin Howard, Sr., Pancreatic Cancer Advocacy Foundation for its seventh annual fundraiser on Friday, November 10, 2023, at 7:00 p.m. at Drusilla Place Catering. She announced the foundation is partnering with the City of Baker and together they will host a 5K run/1 mile walk on Saturday, November 4, 2023, at 8:00 a.m. at City Hall.

The Elvin Howard, Sr. PCAF can be found on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube and at www.elvinhowardsrpcf.org. Ms. Sizer asked for everyone's support as they continue to raise awareness and help pancreatic cancer patients and their families as they go through this horrible disease.

PUBLIC HEARING

1. Public hearing for the fiscal year 2024-2025 Louisiana Community Development Block Grant Program (Mayor)

Public hearing was held.

Kevin Gravois, PEC, stated if awarded this grant would be used for the city's sewer system.

Discussion regarding the 2024-2025 Louisiana Community Development Block Grant Program was held.

2. Public hearing to close-out the fiscal year 2020 Louisiana Community Development Block Grant water system improvements project (Mayor)

Public hearing was held.

Kevin Gravois, PEC, said the city is required to close-out the fiscal year 2020 Louisiana Community Development Block Grant water system improvement project in order to be eligible for the 2024-2025 grant.

Discussion followed.

The motion was made by Council Member Vincent, seconded by Council Member Dunn to apply for the 2024-2025 Louisiana Community Development Block Grant Program and to close-out the fiscal year 2020 Louisiana Community Development Block Grant water system improvements project.

YEAS: Bryant, Dunn, Jackson, Vincent, Young

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

The motion passed with a vote of 5-0.

PUBLIC MEETING

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Council Member Vincent stated Ms. Johnson, who lives on Ector Drive, would like the stop sign removed from in front of her house. The Mayor said the stop sign at the corner of Ector and Azie would be removed in the morning. He thanked the Mayor for cutting shrubbery off the road in Harding Terrace subdivision. Council Member Vincent said the city is looking into the implementation of a system to cut tree limbs that hang over the street, as he has received numerous complaints from constituents. He distributed pictures he received from constituents of the shrubbery at Greenwood Shopping Center and asked that the situation be addressed. He also asked that the situation behind Plank Road Crossing shopping center be addressed as well. Council Member Vincent said he attended the state's Keep Louisiana Beautiful conference. The theme at this year's conference was litter is hurting our sportsman's paradise – stop littering. He asked that everyone join the Council Member Vincent's Friendly Neighbor Keeper initiative and pick up trash in and around their neighborhoods every third Saturday, or more often if possible.

Council Member Dunn wished everyone a safe Halloween and reminded parents to check their children's candy before giving it to them.

Council Member Bryant reported a water leak at Wimbish and Trotter, she said there is water in the ditch at that location, and we've not had any rain. She also reported that the ditch on McHugh that crosses Jefferson is overgrown to the point of no longer looking like a ditch and blocked with no room for any water to drain. Council Member Bryant asked the City Attorney for an update on any current lawsuits involving the city. He stated the food truck lawsuit was assigned to a different attorney, and meetings are to be scheduled in the near future.

Council Member Jackson announced a new twist to her annual Thanksgiving giveaway, saying this year residents aged 18 and older must register to be entered into the drawings for door prizes and turkeys. She said registration will be held November 10 through November 17, 2023, on her website and is open only to Baker residents.

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 Jackson, seconded by Council Member Bryant 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 October 24, 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
October 24, 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 October 24, 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 October 10, 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

Finance Director Mary Sue Stages submitted a cemetery fund report.

The motion was made by Commissioner Waites, seconded by Commissioner Dunn to accept the cemetery 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 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 for the Hillcrest Memorial Gardens held on October 24, 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
October 24, 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 October 24, 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 October 10, 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

Finance Director Mary Sue Stages submitted a utility fund report.

The motion was made by Commissioner Waites, seconded by Commissioners Dunn/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 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 October 24, 2023.

Angela Canady Wall, LCMC
Clerk of Council