

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

The City Council of the City of Baker, Louisiana, met in regular session on December 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 Council Member Dunn.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mayor Waites.

The motion was made by Council Member Vincent, seconded by Council Member Bryant to add resolution recognizing Jayden Daniels for being the recipient of the 2023 Heisman Trophy to the agenda.

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 Dunn to approve the minutes of the meeting held on November 28, 2023.

YEAS: Bryant, Dunn, Jackson, Vincent, Young

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

The motion passed with a vote of 5-0.

RECOGNITIONS

PLANNING AND ZONING MATTERS

NEW BUSINESS

1. Discuss changing time of council meeting scheduled for 6:00 p.m. Tuesday, December 19, 2023 (Mayor)

The motion was made by Council Member Dunn, seconded by Council Member Vincent to change the time of the December 19, 2023, council meeting from 6:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

YEAS: Bryant, Dunn, Vincent, Young

NAYS: Jackson

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

The motion passed with a vote of 4-1.

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 stated they are going to work on getting smoke detectors for Baker residents and asked Chief Pease about the possibility of getting a grant to fund this endeavor. Chief Pease said he is currently working with the Mayor's office to procure smoke detectors. Council Member Bryant said she is excited to see how everyone is getting into the holiday spirit and decorating their homes. She feels this fosters a sense of pride in the community and suggested a citywide contest with an award going to the most decorated house. She said such an event would encourage others to participate next year.

3. 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 said he placed this item on the agenda to keep the effort in front of citizens and reported that the program is going exceptionally well. 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

Resolution recognizing Jayden Daniels for being the recipient of the 2023 Heisman Trophy (Vincent)

The motion was made by Council Member Vincent, seconded by Council Member Bryant to accept the resolution recognizing Jayden Daniels for being the recipient of the 2023 Heisman Trophy.

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 announced a program honoring Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. will be held on Saturday, January 6, 2024, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at the Baker Branch Library. Special guest Ms. Evelyn Johnson, friend and playmate of the four girls killed at the bombing of the Sixteenth Baptist Church in Birmingham, Alabama, September 15, 1963, is slated to attend the program. He wished everyone a Merry Christmas and reminded them to be mindful of toy safety and to avoid impaired driving during this holiday season. Council Member Vincent said the city looks nice, especially the Christmas lights, and thanked everyone for getting into the spirit.

Council Member Dunn said the lights on Main Street look really, really nice. She thanked the Mayor for the well on Groom Road, saying she is excited about the project, as are the residents of District 2. She reminded residents about the District 2 Town Hall Meeting being held Thursday, December 14, 2023, at 6:00 p.m. in the council chambers at city hall. She encouraged all interested parties to attend. Council Member Dunn wished everyone a Merry Christmas.

Council Member Bryant asked for the date that the city's contract with Republic Services ends. She feels the matter should be discussed and other options considered before renewing with Republic Services, as issues with waste management have persisted. She asked when residents can expect a food giveaway in 2024. The Mayor stated that when food becomes available the city will host an event. Council Member Bryant stated the report recently given by the City of Baker School System regarding the grades of Baker schools is the same as the information given in 2016. She said schools moving from "F" to "D" is not acceptable, as it does not meet a standard of truly educating the children in our community or preparing them for the future. Council Member Bryant again recommended that background checks be done on anyone volunteering to work with children, whether it be in the school system, athletic programs, or after school activities. She said ensuring the safety of our community's children is a vital role for city leaders. Council Member Bryant expressed her concerns regarding Jetson Correctional and the safety issues it poses to the community and asked that Council Member Dunn address this at the upcoming District 2 meeting. Council Member Bryant advocated for hiring more police officers and funding to properly train our police force to deal with juvenile offenders. She addressed the issue of the trailers being stored on Groom Road, saying there are other areas in the state that could be used for storage. She asked that Council Member Dunn address this at the District 2 meeting and remind residents that they have a voice. Council Member Bryant asked about the status of the capital outlay project. The Mayor asked that she contact him tomorrow to get an update. Council Member Bryant asked the city attorney for an update on the Airbnb ordinance and ongoing lawsuit. He stated he would have information regarding the Airbnb ordinance at the next council meeting and he is waiting to hear from RMI for an update on the lawsuit.

Council Member Jackson said she has had constituents express concerns regarding recently erected political signs. She read the following from Municode – Political signs shall not be erected more than 90 days prior to an election and shall be removed within 10 days following the election. Upon the failure to timely remove such signs the city may therefore remove and dispose of any remaining signs. No political signs shall be erected or displayed in any public right of way. Council Member Jackson said according to the Code of Ordinances political signs for the March 23, 2024, election can be erected beginning December 24, 2023.

Dr. Toni Jackson thanked everyone who came out and supported the second annual ASHA #1132 Circle of Excellence Winter Gala held Saturday, December 9, 2023. She expressed a special thank you to Mayor Waites, Council Member Jackson, and Sherri Collins for their efforts and support of the event.

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 Dunn 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 December 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
December 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 December 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 November 28, 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 November 2023.

The motion was made by Commissioner Waites, seconded by Commissioner Dunn to accept the monthly sales report for November 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 December 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
December 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 December 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 Commissioners Dunn/Vincent to approve the minutes of the meeting held on November 28, 2023.

Commissioner Bryant stated the board receives reports on a regular basis from the utility company and cemetery, however, she feels commissioners should be given the bank records she has repeatedly requested in order to establish a system of checks and balances. She reiterated that as council members they are responsible for the finances of the city and should be active participants in the city's budgeting process.

Vote was called for.

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 December 12, 2023.

Angela Canady Wall, LCMC
Clerk of Council