

**MINUTES
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
CITY OF BAKER
PARISH OF EAST BATON ROUGE
STATE OF LOUISIANA
COUNCIL CHAMBERS
3325 GROOM ROAD, BAKER, LOUISIANA 70714
ZOOM**

Please click the link below to join the webinar:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86032330393?pwd=R1d4OHVTL1JPajFZOVMRlpmckhrZz09>

Passcode: 217106

Telephone Conference Call

Dial In: 646-558-8656

Webinar ID: 860 3233 0393

Passcode: 217106

January 23, 2024 - 6:00 p.m.

The City Council of the City of Baker, Louisiana, met in regular session on January 23, 2024, 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 Council Member Young.

DISPOSITION OF THE MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The motion was made by Council Member Vincent to approve the minutes of the meeting held on January 9, 2024, with any necessary corrections.

The motion was made by Council Member Bryant to make an addition to the minutes of the previous meeting.

She asked that the record reflect that Chris Davezac stated he was a part of the ditch repair process/ditch projects in the City of Baker.

The Mayor said a motion was unnecessary as Council Member Vincent's motion to approve the minutes of the previous meeting included making any necessary corrections.

Council Member Jackson seconded Council Member Vincent's motion to approve the minutes of the meeting held on January 9, 2024, with any necessary corrections.

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

1. Approve Business License Request – 2024-1
Carl's Plumbing Repair, LLC
Location – 12709 Teakwood Drive, Baker, Louisiana

Discussion regarding the agenda item was held.

The motion was made by Council Member Vincent, seconded by Council Member Dunn to accept the recommendation from the Planning and Zoning Commission and approve the business license request for Carl's Plumbing Repair, LLC.

YEAS: Bryant, Dunn, Jackson, Vincent, Young

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

The motion passed with a vote of 5-0.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Annexation goals (Mayor)

Reatha Wright outlined and provided a handout detailing the annexation goals for the City of Baker. Ms. Wright said annexation for the City of Baker means there is an opportunity to add unincorporated areas into the city limits of Baker thereby increasing the existing 8.4 square miles. She stated many of these areas are already served by the city's utility company, fire, and police departments. She said annexation means increased economic impact and growth, as well as increased tax and utility revenue for the city. Ms. Wright said an annexation team has been established and they are working with the parish tax assessor in an effort to achieve the city's annexation goals.

Discussion regarding the city's annexation goals followed.

2. Provide current status of home rehab program (Mayor)

Carl Dillon, President/CEO of Urban Restoration Enhancement Corporation, stated the non-profit organization has partnered with the City of Baker to provide a home rehab program for Baker residents, and have worked with the city to identify eligible homeowners in the community. He stated residents must meet certain criteria in order to qualify for participation. Mr. Dillon said they currently have enough funds to complete critical repairs on ten homes in the city and renovation work on the first home will begin tomorrow.

Discussion regarding the home rehab program was held.

3. Introduce Ordinance 2024-1, an ordinance to amend, supplement and reenact Chapter 22 Section 22-6 of City of Baker Code of Ordinances and to provide for other related matters (Mayor) (Young)

Council Member Young and the Mayor provided an explanation of the proposed ordinance.

Council Member Vincent asked to abstain from voting on this agenda item saying the attachment provided with the proposed ordinance was not only difficult to read, as a vast majority of the information was highlighted in dark green, but seemingly contained no discernable changes. He stated he would love to see a work session on this so that the information can be broken down in a different way.

Council Member Dunn initiated discussion regarding the attachment that accompanied the ordinance by asking for clarification on what the yellow highlighted areas represented and what the green highlighted areas represented. The consensus was that a work session would provide the needed clarification as well as the opportunity for in depth discussion regarding the proposed ordinance.

The motion was made by Council Member Dunn, seconded by Council Member Vincent to schedule a work session to discuss Ordinance 2024-1 on Tuesday, February 6, 2024, at 9:00 a.m.

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 Vincent, seconded by Council Member

Jackson to table the introduction of Ordinance 2024-1.

YEAS: Bryant, Dunn, Jackson, Vincent, Young

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

The motion passed with a vote of 5-0.

4. 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 said there are mustard greens withering and going to waste at the Brown's home on Groom Road and recommended that anyone interested in getting some greens stop by. Council Member Bryant reminded everyone that we are a village, and it is our responsibility to keep the community safe. She reiterated – if you see something, say something. Council Member Bryant asked about CO2 monitors and smoke detectors for residents. Chief Pease stated the Fire Marshal has received a grant and are currently working to obtain and distribute these items. Council Member Bryant stated she doesn't feel the school currently under construction is the same quality as what other school systems in the area received. She said the number of schools is irrelevant, the bottom line is if you cannot read, you can't learn.

5. Brief discussion and schedule work session for Airbnb ordinance (Bryant)

Council Member Bryant said there are two main projects in our area that could benefit from Airbnb. She stated these projects will be discussed at the work session.

The motion was made by Council Member Bryant, seconded by Council Member Vincent to schedule a work session to discuss ordinance for Airbnb in the City of Baker on Thursday, February 8, 2024, at 4:00 p.m.

YEAS: Bryant, Dunn, Jackson, Vincent, Young

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

The motion passed with a vote of 5-0.

6. Council Member Bryant's Scripture for the Year – 2024 (Bryant)

Council Member Bryant said her Scripture for the Year comes from the book of Isaiah 60:22. A little one shall become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation: I the Lord will hasten it in his time. She feels it is appropriate for the city at this time. She said she will say this prayer before every council meeting, that it is all about timing, and God's timing is perfect timing. Council Member Bryant said belief and this prayer will be helpful as the city strives to move forward in a progressive and innovative manner and do the things that will positively impact economic development in our community.

RESOLUTIONS AND PROCLAMATIONS

1. Proclamation declaring February 2024 African American History 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.

Council Member Vincent invited everyone to attend the Black History Month program he is hosting Saturday, February 24, 2024, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at the Baker

Branch Library. The program will feature a discussion about Frederick Douglass, school supplies will be distributed, and snacks will be provided for the children. Council Member Vincent said Ashley's Optical is assisting him with this event.

2. Proclamation declaring February 2024 American Heart 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

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Desiree Collins, 4715 Groom Road, invited everyone to attend the Baker Area Sports Association's Sneaker Ball on Saturday, February 3, 2024, in the Municipal Auditorium. The event is a fundraiser to support area youth. Tickets are \$30.00 and donations are accepted.

Council Member Vincent expressed his concerns regarding the appearance of the city. He encouraged business owners and homeowners to maintain their property, saying when you know better, you do better. He announced he will host a Black History Month program Saturday, February 24, 2024, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at the Baker Branch Library. The program will feature a discussion about Frederick Douglass, school supplies will be distributed, and snacks will be provided for the children.

Council Member Dunn asked about 1984 Chamberlain, an address they've previously discussed. She also asked about the status of 2845 Groom Road. The Mayor said both properties are on the condemnation list. Council Member Dunn expressed her concerns regarding the house across the street from 3345 Chamberlain Avenue, saying it is about to fall down. She asked that the city address the situation.

Council Member Bryant asked how many grant writers the city has, and the Mayor said there are three. She said she sent pictures of the ditch on Wimbish and Trotter showing the water backed up at the end of December to the Mayor's office, administrative officer, and the council clerk. She stated she is still waiting for a resolution. Council Member Bryant suggested that all new subdivisions include some type of economic development, a business plan, when coming into the city. She feels the city should encourage them to have amenities to service the people who move here. She advised anyone moving into Sunshine Gardens subdivision to obtain flood insurance, as the area is a flood zone. Council Member Bryant addressed rumors she has heard about herself and said the Mayor needs to put them to rest. She said she does not pick up trash, and there is nothing anyone can say to discredit her as a decent and respectful woman.

Council Member Young commended and thanked Public Works Director Anthony Douglas and the Public Works Department for assisting two residents of District 4, completing the work orders, and addressing their situations in a timely fashion.

Council Member Jackson acknowledged the payroll department and thanked them for her W-2 and payroll stub. She also thanked them for keeping her salary the same since 2016. Council Member Jackson asked that the council be given an update regarding the sidewalk improvement grants at the next council meeting. She also asked for a list of the annexation committee members. Council Member Jackson stated water meters throughout the city need to be checked for leaks.

BIDS AND PROPOSALS

APPOINTMENTS TO BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

CONDEMNATIONS

The Mayor asked that the City Council vote to demolish 13829 Alba Drive.

The motion was made by Council Member Vincent, seconded by Council Member Jackson to demolish the structure at 13829 Alba Drive.

YEAS: Bryant, Dunn, Jackson, Vincent, Young

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

The motion passed with a vote of 5-0.

The Mayor said the City Council voted to demolish 4341 Burgess on July 11, 2023. He asked that the City Council vote to demolish the structure at this address again.

Council Member Bryant stated the structure at 4341 Burgess has already been demolished.

The Mayor asked that the City Council vote to demolish 12979 Wedgewood Drive.

The motion was made by Council Member Vincent, seconded by Council Member Dunn to demolish the structure at 12979 Wedgewood Drive.

YEAS: Bryant, Dunn, Jackson, Vincent, Young

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

The motion passed with a vote of 5-0.

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 January 23, 2024.

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
January 23, 2024**

The City Council of the City of Baker, Louisiana, sitting as the Board of Commissioners for Hillcrest Memorial Gardens, met in regular session on January 23, 2024, 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 Commissioners Jackson/Vincent to approve the minutes of the meeting held on January 9, 2024.

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 Dunn to adjourn.

The meeting was adjourned.

**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 January 23, 2024.

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
January 23, 2024**

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 January 23, 2024, 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 January 9, 2024.

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

Commissioner Vincent asked what a monthly business report might look like. Commissioner Waites said it would look like the ones they have received in the past.

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 January 23, 2024.

Angela Canady Wall, LCMC
Clerk of Council