

**REGULAR MEETING OF THE MAYOR AND BOARD OF ALDERMEN
OF THE VILLAGE OF FRENCH SETTLEMENT, January 9, 2019**

The Mayor and Board of Aldermen of the Village of French Settlement met at 16015 Hwy. 16, French Settlement, Louisiana on the 9th day of January, 2019 at 6 p.m. in regular session convened. The meeting was called to order by Mayor Toni Guitrau with the following members present:

Alderman Teresa Miller, Alderman Rhonda Lobell

Absent: Alderman Danette Carrier

Also present: Chief of Police William "Bill" Bliss, Assistant Chief of Police/EM Callender

A prayer was offered by Alderman Teresa Miller. Jacob Roberts, with Jr. Beta, led the reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comments on Agenda Items: The mayor opened the floor to public comments on agenda items. There were no comments.

Guest Speaker(s): Mark Harrell, Director of Livingston Parish Office of Homeland Security. Summary as follows:

- Mr. Harrell congratulated Lawrence Callender on his efforts and assistance over the past 2 years in getting the municipal building restored.
- MHU Update: Anyone living in a FEMA trailer will have to vacate by April 30, 2019. The people still living in these FEMA mobile home units have been notified multiple times of this deadline. He thanked Tony Robinson, Regional Administrator for FEMA Region 6, for fighting for the people in Ascension, East Baton Rouge and Livingston Parishes to extend the deadline to April 30, 2019. People will be given the option to purchase the FEMA MHU or look for alternate housing.
- Funding received from USDA, NRCS, with the help of Congressman Garrett Graves, for clearing flood-related waterway debris. \$3.5 Million NRCS funding is complete. With this funding they cleaned Natalbany from Hwy. 22 to up past the interstate with an agreement for Tangipahoa to take it on up. That is complete all the way to through the north part of Tangipahoa Parish on Hwy. 22. They cleaned the Tickfaw River from the St. Helena line all the way down south from the state park. Only 50% of the debris was eligible for removal due to it being a scenic waterway. He thanked Senator White, Senator Lambert, Representative Schexnayder and a couple others for passing a Bill that allowed us to clear out flood-related debris. They cleaned West Colyell from Buddy Ellis Rd. to middle Colyell/east Colyell, where it meets. Just issued an amended contract to their engineer to do a large retention pond project from Buddy Ellis up to 190.
- \$50-55 Million: They turned in everything in as small groups. Should be getting a contract from NRCS to do 3 or 4 more Colyells. Each one requires different types of permits. It has been tough jobs due to the rain.
- Laurel Ridge Levee: There is still a law suit in place. It has been discussed that Ascension can continue with engineering and land acquisitions for the project but they will not begin actual construction of the project until other projects are in place to offset the effects the levee would have on Livingston Parish. They are discussing entering into an CEA that states they will not begin any construction until they have proven that alternate projects will work and are funded. They will be approaching the governor as a group, Ascension, Livingston and EBR Parishes, to get part of the \$1.2 billion to do the projects that would help with flooding and offset the effects of the levee. We are all part of the Amite River Watershed. All 3 parish presidents do not want to do projects that would have adverse effects on their neighboring parishes. This money will be spent throughout the whole state. Senator Lambert has been pushing for doing the cuts under Hwy. 22 to allow water to flow through. This alone would reduce the additional 4.5" of water caused by the levee down to approximately 2". Engineers have looked at dredging the Amite River from the Lake to the Interstate and all of the Amite River Diversion Canal. With another group of funding, they are looking at doing Blind River. He confirmed that the projects would be done simultaneously, as this would be the only way it would work.
- The Corps verbally agreed not to do any projects in East Baton Rouge Parish that would adversely affect Livingston Parish. They will have monthly meetings as designs are being done. Then Livingston Parish residents will have opportunities to attend public meetings in regard to the projects.
- Amite River Weir: This project has been submitted to FEMA. As a Hazard mitigation project, a Hazard Mitigation representative has requested more information regarding the effects it has on the homes it will affect. There will be a 25% cost share.
- Inundated roads: The inundated roads PW is in appeal.

Reading of Minutes and Statement of Finances

The motion to adopt the minutes and statement of finances for the month of December 2018, as presented, was made by Alderman Miller and seconded by Alderman Lobell. A yeas and a nays vote was called for and resulted as follows:

Yeas: Miller, Lobell

Nays: None

Absent: Carrier

Reading of Communications:

- Mayor Guitrau proclaimed January 9, 2019 as National Law Enforcement Appreciation Day in French Settlement and called upon its citizens to take the time out today, and for the remainder of January 2019 to show their support of law enforcement officers.
- The mayor reported that the Livingston Parish Chamber of Commerce called for a meeting of the Mayors of Livingston Parish. This meeting was called to primarily discuss the new program initiated by the Chamber regarding litter. Program link: <https://www.livingstonparishchamber.org/litter-initiative/> You may sign on to pledge to LOVE It by making it litter free. When you sign you agree to dispose of litter only in receptacles intended for litter. You agree to secure litter in your vehicle and pick-up bed to keep from blowing into roadways. Pick up ten pieces of litter on the tenth of each month around your home, business, recreation area, etc. You can sign up for this voluntary program online on the LP Chamber of Commerce's website. The mayor stated that the majority of French Settlement residents pick up the trash thrown into their front yards and ditches by people passing on the highways. She believes this is a good program for the whole parish.

Emergency Manager Report: Lawrence Callender reported that he and the mayor are continuing to work with HUDD for additional funding. He thanked Mark Harrell, LP OHS Director, for all the assistance he has given to French Settlement in the past years each time we had a natural disaster. Through him, we were able to request and receive via the Emergency Management System, 10-ton trucks with soldiers, ice, pods, a mobile station for cell phones, salt with coverings for the bridges when they iced-over, and so much more. From there, they call our local representatives, Congressman Cassidy, Representative Clay Schexnayder, the governor, LaDOTD, etc.

Police Department Report: Chief Bliss reported the following for the month of December: One serious one-vehicle accident involving a motorcycle. In conjunction with LPSO, they are investigating the following crimes: theft of a 4-wheeler, a burglary at the French Settlement carwash, and a theft of a water pump and miscellaneous tools. All of this has been reported into UCR, a national database. He encouraged all residents to lock their homes, vehicles, shops, 4-wheelers, lawn mowers and tools. It is good practice to do this to keep everything secure.

Old Business

- **Grounds Report:** Mayor Guitrau said all is in good condition on the municipal grounds.
Road Report: Mayor Guitrau reported directly to LaDOTD the dangers facing motorists at the intersection of La. Hwy 16/La. Hwy. 42 near Moonlight Inn, and at the intersection of La. Hwy. 16/La. Hwy. 444 located near the schools. She requested more reflectors, lighting, striping, signage, and/or even traffic or warning lights be installed. At the intersection at La. Hwy. 16/La. Hwy. 42, people are turning head-on into the wrong lane. At the intersection at La. Hwy. 16 and La. Hwy. 444, people are literally not stopping and are running off the road into private property.
LGAP GRANT – Mayor Guitrau said she received a letter awarding the village with \$6530 of the \$25,000 requested toward the purchase of two natural-gas generators. This LGAP grant was submitted in September 2018.

New Business

The Board of Aldermen discussed the replacement of the last of two police units lost in the flood of August 2016, which will be funded through FEMA and insurance money. The FEMA funds were already received and need to be expended so that the FEMA PW on vehicles can be closed. The mayor said that there is remaining FEMA money in the amount of \$23,251.61 and insurance money in the amount of \$29,267 for a total amount of \$52,518.61. A motion was offered by Alderman Miller seconded by Alderman Lobell to purchase from Gerry Lane, through state contract, a 2019 Chevrolet Tahoe PPV, TWD with 5.3L EcoTec3, V8 Engine in the amount of \$35,408.66. Equipment

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to be installed includes a camera, radios, cage, console, lights, siren, radar, etc., for approximately \$18,354.67. Out of pocket expenses will total approximately \$1,200.00.

Local Events: Upcoming Krewe of Mardi Gras Parade on the Amite River scheduled for February 23, 2019.

Adjourn: A motion to adjourn was made by Alderman Miller and seconded by Alderman Lobell. A yeas and a nays vote was called for and resulted as follows:

Yeas: Miller, Lobell

Nays: None

Absent: Carrier

/S/Toni Guitrau, Mayor

/S/Pam Melancon, Municipal Clerk