

Minutes
Regular Meeting
115 N. Thomson, Iowa, LA 70647
City Hall Meeting Room
July 8, 2024 7:00 p.m.

Mayor Watkins and Town Council met in regular session this date in compliance with all requirements as to notice.

Mayor Watkins called the meeting to order at 7:02pm.

Present: Mayor Douglas Watkins; Council Members: Joe Becnel, Gerald Guidry, Daniel Hennigan, Julie Fontenot, and Vernessa Guillory; Town Clerk Cynthia Mallett; Town Attorney Eugene Bouquet; Chief of Police Keith Vincent.

Mayor Watkins established a quorum was present.

Invocation by Council Member Joe Becnel, followed by Pledge.

It was **moved by Joe Becnel, seconded by Daniel Hennigan** to amend agenda to add:

1. Motion to approve Resolution 2024-16, A resolution requesting assistance and making application to the Calcasieu Parish Police Jury Road and Drainage Trust Fund for participation in the cost to inspect and remediate drainage culverts in Garden Terrace and Southland Estates Subdivisions and to authorize Mayor Watkins to execute application. The motion passed unanimously.
2. Motion to approve Resolution 2024-15, A resolution adopting/recertifying the following policies, Plans, and procedures: Residential Anti displacement and Relocation Assistance Plan, Section 504 Grievance Procedures, Section 504 Policy, Written Communication Policy, Section 3 Plan, Citizen Participation Plan, Fair Housing Policy, Procurement Policy, and Language Access Plan. The motion passed unanimously.
3. Introduction of Ordinance No. 2024-10, An Ordinance rescinding Ordinance No. 2024-04, An Ordinance creating "The Old Spanish Trail Economic Development District, State of Louisiana"; defining the boundaries thereof from which area local and state sales tax increments will be determined and used to finance economic development projects in accordance with and as authorized by part II of Chapter 27 of Title 33 of the Louisiana revised Statutes of 1950, as amended; and providing for other matters in connection with the foregoing. The motion passed unanimously.
4. Introduction of Ordinance No. 2024-11, An Ordinance rescinding Ordinance No. 2024-08, An Ordinance levying an additional sales tax of two percent (2%) in the "The Old Spanish Trail Economic Development District, State of Louisiana"(The District); designating the full amount of such sales tax as the sales tax increments in the district from which the local and state sales tax will be determined and used to finance economic development projects in the district in accordance with and as authorized by part II, Chapter 27, Title 33 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes of 1950, as amended; designating the initial annual baseline collection rate and establishing a monthly baseline collection rate for the District; pledging and dedicating such tax increments to reimburse economic development costs and providing for other matters in connection with the foregoing. The motion passed unanimously.

It was **moved by Daniel Hennigan, seconded by Joe Becnel** to adopt amended agenda. The motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Watkins read the next item on the agenda. He asked if there were any questions. Ms. Belinda Dugas asked if this concerned the Lawrason Act that was read at a previous meeting. Mayor Watkins told her no, it was for our audit with McElroy, Quirk, and Burch. Ms. Johnson asked if the audit of 2022-2023 recommendations have been completed and addressed. Town Clerk, Cynthia Mallett affirmed that the recommendations were adhered to immediately. Ms. Cassandra Bankens asked what is the amount of time to complete the findings/recommendations. Cynthia Mallett said she was not sure how much time is given to answer the findings. Cynthia explained the process and said it is answered immediately. Cynthia stated that the Town of Iowa did not have any findings for last year. It was **moved by Daniel Hennigan, seconded by Vernessa Guillory** to hire McElroy, Quirk & Burch to perform the financial audit for FY 2023-2024 and perform the Statewide Agreed-Upon Procedures; and to authorize Mayor Watkins to execute agreements. The motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Watkins read Item four of the agenda and explained this is a procurement policy for federal grants only, also to recertify other policies. It was **moved by Daniel Hennigan, seconded by Joe Becnel** to approve Resolution 2024-15, a resolution adopting/recertifying the following policies, Plans, and procedures: Residential Anti-displacement and Relocation Assistance Plan, Section 504 Grievance Procedures, Section 504 Policy, Written Communication Policy, Section 3 Plan, Citizen Participation Plan, Fair Housing Policy, Procurement Policy, and Language Access Plan. The motion passed unanimously.

RESOLUTION 2024-15

WHEREAS, the Town of Iowa has received approval of a FY 2023 Louisiana Community Development Block Grant Program (LCDBG) for Clearance/Demolition on Blighted Properties

WHEREAS, the LCDBG Program requires that all grant recipients adopt by resolution a:

- Residential Anti-displacement and Relocation Assistance Plan
- Section 504 Grievance Procedures
- Section 504 Policy
- Written Communication Policy
- Section 3 Plan
- Citizen Participation Plan
- Fair Housing Policy
- Procurement Policy
- Language Access Plan

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the previously updated and adopted Residential Anti-Displacement and Relocation Plan and Certification, adopted on the 12th day of June 2017 is still in effect and will be used for the FY 2023 program and the attached Plan shall remain in effect for future Community Development Block Grant Programs until amended by the Mayor and Council. The Mayor will be appointed as the Residential/Antidisplacement and Relocation officer.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the previously adopted Section 504 Policy/Grievance Procedure, adopted on the 13th day of July, 2009 and recertified June 12, 2017 is still in effect and will be recertified for the FY 2023 program and the attached plan shall remain in effect for future Community Development Block Grant Programs until amended by the Mayor and Council. The Mayor will be appointed as the 504 Compliance Officer to comply with Section 504 and its implementing regulation, 24 CFR Part 8.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the previously adopted Communication Policy and Section 3 Plan updated and adopted on the 13th day of July, 2009 and recertified on June 12, 2017 is still in effect and will be used for the FY 2023 Program.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the previously adopted Citizen Participation Plan adopted on June 12, 2017, has been reviewed and is still in effect and will be used for the FY 2023 program and shall remain in effect for future Community Development Block Grant Programs until amended by the Mayor and Council.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the attached Fair Housing Policy adopted and codified in 1983 and recertified on November 8, 1999, was reviewed and is still in effect and will be used for the FY 2023 *program and shall remain in effect for future Community Development Block Grant Programs until* amended by the Mayor and Council. Cynthia Mallett will be named as the Fair Housing Coordinator.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the previously adopted Procurement Policy, adopted on June 12th, 2017, has been reviewed and updated on July 8, 2024 and is still in effect and will be used for the FY 2023 program

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the attached Language Access Plan previously adopted on June 12, 2017, was reviewed/updated on May 2, 2018 and is still in effect and will be used for the FY 2023 program and shall remain in effect for future Community Development Block Grant Programs until amended by the Mayor and Council.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the previously adopted plans are still in effect and will be used for the FY 2023 LCDBG Program.

The resolution having been submitted to a vote, the vote thereon was as follows:

YEAS: Daniel Hennigan, Joe Becnel, Vernessa Guillory, Julie Fontenot, and Gerald Guidry

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

THUS DONE AND PASSED at a regular meeting of the Mayor and Board of Council Members held

Douglas N Watkins, Mayor

ATTEST:

Cynthia Mallett, Town Clerk

It was **moved** by Daniel Hennigan, **seconded** by Joe Becnel to introduce Ordinance No. 2024-10, An Ordinance rescinding Ordinance No. 2024-04, An Ordinance creating “The Old Spanish Trail Economic Development District, State of Louisiana”; defining the boundaries thereof from which area local and state

sales tax increments will be determined and used to finance economic development projects in accordance with and as authorized by part II of Chapter 27 of Title 33 of the Louisiana revised Statutes of 1950, as amended; and providing for other matters in connection with the foregoing. The motion passed unanimously. Mayor Watkins asked if there were any questions. No questions were asked.

Ms. Linda Leonard stood and started speaking. She asked for clarification on the purchase of the concession trailer versus replacing the baseball concession trailer. Mayor Watkins told her he would not mind answering her questions if she would come visit with him, but at this time this item is not on the agenda.

It was **moved by Joe Becnel, seconded by Daniel Hennigan** to introduce Ordinance No. 2024-11, An Ordinance rescinding Ordinance No. 2024-08, An Ordinance levying an additional sales tax of two percent (2%) in the “The Old Spanish Trail Economic Development District, State of Louisiana”(The District): designating the full amount of such sales tax as the sales tax increments in the district from which the local and state sales tax will be determined and used to finance economic development projects in the district in accordance with and as authorized by part II, Chapter 27, Title 33 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes of 1950, as amended; designating the initial annual baseline collection rate and establishing a monthly baseline collection rate for the District; pledging and dedicating such tax increments to reimburse economic development costs and providing for other matters in connection with the foregoing. The motion passed unanimously. Mr. Joshua Macer asked why the ordinances were being amended. Mayor Watkins explained that they are not being amended. He said they are being rescinded. Mayor Watkins explained the reason for rescinding and explained the process.

Town Clerk Cynthia Mallett reported the financials for the month of June and year to date totals. Mayor asked if there were any questions. Joey Mathis and Joshua Macer asked questions about the city water works fund, revenues, and expenditures. Cynthia Mallett answered the questions.

Ms. Johnson stated it was good to hear about the finances getting better. She asked about the sheriff deputies being present at the meeting and the cost of the town paying for this service. She asked who decided that they be here. Mr. Bouquet answered that it is permissible to have the deputies present. Cynthia Mallett reported that Ms. Allison of the Louisiana Legislative Auditor’s Office recommended having police presence at the Council Meetings. Mayor Watkins announced that we need to stay on topic and looked forward to a meeting with Chief Vincent. Mayor asked if there were any more questions on the finances. Mr. Macer and other citizens made comments about certain concerns. Mayor Watkins announced that we have an agenda before us and if the Council wishes to continue then that is up to them.

It was **moved by Daniel Hennigan, seconded by Julie Fontenot** to amend agenda to add: Discussion on the concession stand and ballfields. The motion passed unanimously. Council Member Daniel Hennigan gave the explanation for the idea of purchasing the concession food trailer and why and how the decision was made. Ms. Leonard voiced her disagreement with the purchase of the food trailer. Mayor Watkins said that there were funds spent that were going out of town. Ms. Pam Adams asked about the money spent that was going out of the town. Mayor explained that the town was paying for port-a-lets and hand washing stations. There was further discussion about the pony league and the relationship with the Town of Iowa.

It was **moved by Daniel Hennigan, seconded by Vernessa Guillory** to amend agenda to add: Joshua Macer to Discuss grant. The motion passed unanimously. Mr. Macer asked if anyone had any questions for him about the grant he submitted on behalf of the town. Mr. Bouquet said not at this time, but that he would

It was **moved by Daniel Hennigan, seconded by Joe Becnel** to approve minutes of Special Meeting June 25, 2024. The motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Watkins announced that they would not do the first item of the agenda; Guest Speaker Grant Strenth on Recall because Grant Strenth decided not to appear this evening.

Mayor Watkins read item two of the agenda. He said this is one of the items amended. The application will be for the drainage only and not the feasibility study. He asked if there were any questions. Council Member Daniel Hennigan asked if the location was the subdivision behind Stine's for this drainage project. Mayor Watkins confirmed that it was and that it was Joshua and Alexis Streets. Ms. Belinda Dugas asked if bids will be made for this project and if the bids will be public. Mayor Watkins affirmed that the bids will be made public. He explained a summary of the process. It was **moved by Daniel Hennigan, seconded by Julie Fontenot** to approve Resolution 2024-16, A resolution requesting assistance and making application to the Calcasieu Parish Police Jury Road and Drainage Trust Fund for participation in the cost to inspect and remediate drainage culverts in Garden Terrace and Southland Estates Subdivisions and to authorize Mayor Watkins to execute application. The motion passed unanimously.

Resolution 2024-16

A Resolution requesting assistance and making application to the Calcasieu Parish Police Jury Road and Drainage Trust Fund for participation in the cost to inspect and remediate drainage culverts in Garden Terrace and Southland Estates Subdivisions

WHEREAS, funding is needed to complete this project; and

WHEREAS, funding of a portion of the cost needed improvement in this phase has been committed by the Town of Iowa (20% Town/80% Parish); and

WHEREAS, drainage improvements in these areas will help in the decrease of flooding to the residents.

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF IOWA, LOUISIANA, in regular session convened, that:

SECTION 1: All of the above and foregoing is hereby made a part of this resolution.

SECTION 2: The Town Council of the Town of Iowa, Louisiana, does hereby request funding assistance and authorizes the Mayor of the Town of Iowa to make an application to the Calcasieu Parish Police Jury Road and Drainage Trust Fund for participation in the cost of inspection and remediation of drainage culverts in Garden Terrace and Southland Estates Subdivisions.

PASSED AND ADOPTED at Iowa, Louisiana, on this 8th day of July, 2024.

Douglas N. Watkins, Mayor

ATTEST:

Cynthia Mallett, Clerk

like to meet with him to discuss it. Mr. Macer said that he will look forward to meeting with him to answer all his questions.

With no further business to discuss, it was **moved by Daniel Hennigan, seconded by Julie Fontenot**, to adjourn meeting. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 8:08pm.

Douglas N Watkins, Mayor

Cynthia Mallett, MMC