**A blue and yellow seal with a pelican

Description automatically generated**

**MAYOR & CITY COUNCIL MEETING**

**St. Gabriel Council Chambers**

**5035 Iberville St., St. Gabriel LA 70776**

**THURSDAY, AUGUST 17, 2023 MINUTES 6:00 P.M.**

1. **CALL TO ORDER – ROLL CALL – PRAYER – PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting of the Mayor and City Council was called to order at approximately 6:05 p.m.

**ROLL CALL**

Present: Councilman Melvin Hasten, Sr.

Councilman Jeffery Hayes, Sr.

Councilman Hoza Redditt, Sr.

Councilman William Cushenberry, Jr.

4 of 4 Council Members were in attendance for a quorum.

Presiding: Lionel Johnson, Jr., Mayor

Recording: Constance Barbin, City Clerk

**PRAYER & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Mayor Johnson led with a prayer, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

1. **PUBLIC FORUM** – **Please register with the City Clerk prior to the beginning of the meeting indicating your topic of discussion. Topics should be on agenda items.**

* Ms. Laura Marchand – Topic: Agenda amendment to revisit Purple Dove Preschool issue.
* Effie Toliver – Topic: Seeking nomination for vacant council seat.
* Yolanda Andrews – Topics: How to get an item on the agenda to be discussed if it is not already on the agenda; redistricting.
* Susan Landry – Topics: How will open seat be handled – appointment or election; redistricting.
* Desiree Lemoine – Topic: Introducing a $53,000,000 investment project by Syngenta to make efficiencies and environmental improvements to their plant.

1. **EXECUTIVE SESSION/LEGAL MATTERS**

On a motion by Councilman Hayes and a second by Councilman Hasten, motion to go into executive session was approved.

**ROLL CALL**: 4 YEAS [Councilman Hayes, Councilman Hasten, Councilman Cushenberry, Councilman Redditt]

On a motion by Councilman Hayes and a second by Councilman Hasten, motion to end executive session and return to regular session was approved.

Attorney Bush stated the Council, Mayor and Police Chief discussed pending, as well as threatened, litigation. Council discussed resolution of pending litigation with a nominal settlement amount.

On a motion by Councilman Cushenberry and a second by Councilman Hayes, motion to approve legal resolution for legal matters pertaining to the Police Department was approved.

**ROLL CALL**: 4 YEAS [Councilman Hayes, Councilman Redditt, Councilman Cushenberry, Councilman Hasten]

1. **NON-ACTION ITEMS**
   * 1. **PRESENTATION** – Louisiana Municipal Association Service Awards

Mayor Johnson requested personal privilege to move IV - A to the top of the agenda.

On a motion by Councilman Hasten and a second by Councilman Hayes, motion was approved.

Penny Ambeau stated that, at the last convention, Councilman Hasten and Mayor Johnson received their 8th Term Service Awards and congratulated them on behalf of the LMA execute board and staff for dedication and commitment to service.

* + 1. **PRESENTATION -** Redistricting - the process of drawing boundaries for electoral and political districts

Dr. William Blair gave a redistricting overview. City of St. Gabriel is currently a 5-member at-large council. There are limitations on what can be done, because census data must be used. Hypothetically, council could become 3 single member districts with 2 at-large or 4 single member districts with 1 at-large. Not enough pieces for 5 districts. Council must drawn up and adopt a redistricting ordinance at least 1 year before an election can be held.

1. **ACTION ITEMS**
   * 1. **MOTION** **CONSIDERATION** - To Approve and Adopt Minutes for Regular Meeting dated July 20, 2023

On a motion by Councilman Hasten, and second by Councilman Hayes, minutes were approved and adopted.

* + 1. **INTRODUCTION –** Ordinance to assess costs associated with St. Gabriel Mayor’s Court and set a Public Hearing for Thursday, September 21, 2023

On a motion by Councilman Hasten, and seconded by Councilman Cushenberry, a Public Hearing for Thursday, September 21, 2023 was approved.

* + 1. **MOTION CONSIDERATION –**  To declare a vacancy for the office of the City Council and set by Proclamation, March 23, 2024 (Primary) and April 27, 2024 (General) for special election to fill vacancy

On a motion by Councilman Hayes, and second by Councilman Redditt, the motion was approved.

**ROLL CALL**: 4 YEAS [Councilman Hayes, Councilman Redditt, Councilman Cushenberry, Councilman Hasten]

* + 1. **MOTION CONSIDERATION** – To nominate/appoint a replacement to fill City Council vacancy

On a motion by Councilman Hasten, and second by Councilman Hayes, the nomination to appoint O’Kedria Smith was approved.

**ROLL CALL**: 3 YEAS [Councilman Redditt, Councilman Hayes, Councilman Hasten]

1 ABSTAIN [Councilman Cushenberry]

* + 1. **MOTION CONSIDERATION** – To declare certain City property as no longer needed or useful for purposes of the City or its people, thus determining such property as surplus

On a motion by Councilman Hasten, and second by Councilman Hayes, the motion was approved.

1. **MAYOR’S REPORT**

**Action Items:**

* **Pay App #3 payable to J Reed Constructors** (Municipal Building) **– $87,872.24**
* **Pay App #7 payable to KTB Properties** (Bayou Paul Pavilion) **– $19,875.16**
* **Pay App #7 payable to J Reed Constructors** (Municipal Building) **– $454,800.63**
* **Pay App #8 payable to J Reed Constructors** (Municipal Building) **– $556,061.43**

On a motion by Councilman Hasten, and a second by Councilman Cushenberry, the pay apps, as a group, were approved.

**Announcements:**

* City presented with the opportunity to sponsor an expungement event for non-violent offenders
* Walmart will be featuring a Wellness Day on Saturday, September 19th
* Great meeting last week with Post 583 and Gillis Long Center – looking at making a new post for Post 583
* Bayou Breaux Bridge – State informed Mayor that contractor has been fired; should know in next 2 weeks who has been selected to complete the job.
* Significant progress made on Besson Lane
* Very good meeting on Tuesday, September 15th with DOC and LCIW affiliates to ensure that they are following the drainage plan required by the City.
* Two pending meetings with name brand grocers – council is invited to attend.
* Premier Soccer will sell their building – giving City first choice.
* Will be getting a survey of property behind University Club Center and discussed possibility of building a grocery store, pharmacy, medical center, or hotel there.
* Will be going to council next month with a plan for filling vacancy in Planning and Zoning.
* AT&T working on identifying other parcels of properties in the St. Gabriel/Carville area to place a cell phone tower

1. **ADJOURNMENT**

On a unanimous motion, meeting was adjoined.