

MINUTES OF THE
BLANCHARD MAYOR AND TOWN COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING – MARCH 8, 2016
7:00 O’CLOCK

Present: Mayor Pro Tem Lee, Alderpersons Fuller, Guin, Umling, and Whittington, Atty. Tom Arceneaux, Perry Fuller, David Yeates, Debra Smith-Town Clerk, and various guests.

Absent: Mayor Digilormo and Chief Presswood.

Meeting called to order by Mayor Pro Tem Lee.

Pledge of Allegiance led by Umling.

Invocation given by Arceneaux.

Questions and Statements of Citizens:

Jayne Tappe asked if Blanchard Utilities (BU) will be taking over Miller’s Crossing for the sewerage. Since it still belongs to Mr. Miller and his plans are unknown by the Council, at this time BU would not take it over.

Motion by Whittington to approve minutes of the Regular Meeting February 9, 2016. Second by Fuller. All voted yea.

Old Business

Public Hearing Ordinance 2 of 2016 - LaMats Debt Recovery Collection for Unpaid Utility Bills – Ordinance by the Town of Blanchard, Louisiana to Assess a Collection Fee on Debts Referred to Collection Agency.

Public Hearing opened 7:04 p.m. Jeff Akes asked what percentage would be charged. Lee stated not to exceed twenty-five percent (25%) which will be charged to the customer with the outstanding debt. There being no other comments the hearing closed at 7:06 p.m.

Vote on Ordinance 2 of 2016 - LaMats Debt Recovery Collection for Unpaid Utility Bills - Ordinance by the Town of Blanchard, Louisiana to Assess a Collection Fee on Debts Referred to Collection Agency.

Ordinance 2 of 2016

An Ordinance by the Town of Blanchard, Louisiana to Assess a Collection Fee on Debts Referred to Collection Agency, and otherwise providing with respect thereto.

An ordinance establishing that the Town of Blanchard, Louisiana authorizes the assessment of a collection fee on debts, accounts receivable, costs, fines and fees turned over to a collection agency.

WHEREAS, the Board of Alderpersons recognizes that there are certain debts and accounts on which the Town of Blanchard has been unable to collect funds due;

WHEREAS, the Board of Alderpersons recognizes that as the governing authority for the Town of Blanchard, there exists a duty to exercise due diligence in collecting public funds;

WHEREAS, the Board of Alderpersons recognizes that the Town of Blanchard is authorized by state law to contract with a collection agency for the collection of:

Debts and accounts receivable including, but not limited to, unpaid utility fees, penalties, interest and other sums due the Town of Blanchard, as applicable;

WHEREAS, the Board of Alderpersons recognizes that a collection fee will be required to obtain the services of a collection agency to collect these sums, and desires to assess such a fee;

WHEREAS in case any one or more of the provisions of this ordinance shall for any reason be held to be illegal or invalid, such illegality or invalidity shall not affect any other provisions of said ordinance, but the same shall be construed and enforced as if such illegal or invalid provisions had not been contained therein. Any constitutional or statutory provisions enacted after the date of this ordinance which validate or make legal any provisions thereof shall be deemed to apply hereto.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the Board of Alderpersons of the Town of Blanchard, State of Louisiana, in legal and regular and/or special session, acting as the "Governing Authority" of said Town, adopt the following ordinance to the Code of Ordinances of the Town of Blanchard.

BE IT ORDAINED by the Counsel of the Town of Blanchard, Louisiana:

SECTION I. The Town of Blanchard hereby assesses a collection fee in an amount not to exceed twenty-five percent (25%) of the delinquent municipal debt when the Town of Blanchard has entered into a contract with the Louisiana Municipal Advisory and Technical Services Bureau ("LaMATS") for collection of the above listed items. This fee will be added to all sums submitted to the collection agency regardless of age.

SECTION II. BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED that if any provision or item of this Ordinance or the application thereof is held invalid, such invalidity shall not affect other provisions, items, or applications of this Ordinance which can be given affect without the invalid provisions, items or applications and to this end the provisions of this Ordinance are hereby declared severable.

SECTION III. BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED that all Ordinances or parts thereof in conflict herewith are hereby repealed.

The final adoption of the foregoing ordinance having been duly moved by Alderperson Whittington and seconded by Alderperson Fuller, the roll was called and the following vote was taken and recorded:

Roll Call:

YEAS: Fuller, Guin, Umling, Whittington.

NAYS: None.

ABSENT: Alderperson Lee served as Mayor Pro Tem.

ABSTAIN: None.

And Ordinance 2 of 2016 was adopted on this 8th day of March, 2016.

New Business

Proclamation for Hazel Bernard's 90th Birthday.

Lee stated she will present the Proclamation "Hazel Mae Bernard Day" to Mrs. Bernard. No other action needed.

Review of fire hydrant fee.

Fuller stated he would like to postpone any action at this time until he gets more cost factors for the next workshop and next Council meeting. No other action taken at this time.

Review of Town Hall property deed.

No action taken at this time.

Discussion regarding Meter Deposits.

After much discussion, the Council decided to invite Mr. Travis Morehart, Auditor, to attend the workshop scheduled for March 22, 2016 at 6:30 p.m. No further action taken at this time.

Proclamation to call for Special Election to fill the vacancy in the office of Mayor.

Resolution and Proclamation

A Proclamation (Resolution) Ordering and Calling a Special Election to be Held to Fill the Vacancy in the Office of Mayor, Town of Blanchard, for the Unexpired Term thereof; to Set the Date therefore and other Pertinent Matters, and to otherwise provide with respect thereto.

WHEREAS, a vacancy exists in the office of Mayor of the Town of Blanchard ("Town"), due to the resignation of the Honorable Johnny Digilormo, effective as of March 1, 2016; and WHEREAS, the unexpired term of said office exceeds one year; and WHEREAS, the Board of Aldermen of the Town, as the governing authority of the Town, is therefore required and given the responsibility to call an election to fill the unexpired term of said office by La. R.S. 18:602.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Aldermen of the Town of Blanchard, in due, regular and legal session convened, as follows:

Section 1. That, as required by and pursuant to law, an election shall be and the same is hereby called to elect a successor to the office of Mayor, Town of Blanchard, to serve the unexpired term of the office vacated as set forth above.

Section 2. That, in accordance with La. R.S. 18:602 and 18:402, the primary election to elect a successor to the unexpired term shall be held on November 8, 2016, and the general election, should it be necessary, shall be held on December 10, 2016; both elections to be held within the boundaries of the Town of Blanchard, State of Louisiana, between the hours set forth in the Louisiana Election Code and other applicable law.

Section 3. That the Town Clerk of the Town shall publish this resolution immediately in the official journal of the Town and the official journal of the Parish of Caddo.

Section 4. That the polling places for this election shall be the same as those designated and approved as polling places within the Town of Blanchard in accordance with the provisions of the Louisiana Election Code.

Section 5. That the qualifying period for the primary election shall open on July 20, 2016, and shall close on July 22, 2016, and qualifying shall be within the hours set forth in the Louisiana Elections Code.

Section 6. That the Town Clerk of the Town of Blanchard be and she is hereby empowered, authorized and directed to execute and furnish any certification, form, proclamation, or ancillary requirement for the proper holding of said election.

Section 7. That the Town Clerk of the Town of Blanchard shall forward certified copies of this Proclamation (Resolution) by certified mail within twenty-four (24) hours to the Louisiana Secretary of State and the Caddo Parish Clerk of Court, in accordance with La. R.S. 18:602.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that if any provision or item of this resolution or the application thereof is held invalid, such invalidity shall not affect other provisions, items or applications which can be given effect without the invalid provisions, items or applications, and to this end, the provisions of this resolution are hereby declared severable.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this resolution shall take effect immediately upon its adoption.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that all resolutions or parts thereof in conflict herewith are hereby repealed.

By motion of Alderperson Whittington, duly seconded by Alderperson Umling the above resolution was adopted by the following vote on this 8th day of March, 2016.

Roll call vote:
YEAS: Fuller, Guin, Umling, Whittington
NAYS: None
ABSENT: Lee served as Mayor Pro Tempore
ABSTAIN: None

Motion to appointment an interim Mayor to fill the vacancy in the office of Mayor. (Roll Call vote required).

After much discussion, Umling made motion to postpone the appointment of Mayor until Friday, March 18, 2016 at a Special Meeting when more people have had a chance to express interest in the position. No second was made. Motion to postpone the appointment died. Motion by Whittington to appointment Jim Galambos as Mayor, second by Fuller. Roll call vote:

YEAS: Fuller, Guin, Whittington
NAYS: Umling.
ABSENT: Alderperson Lee served as Mayor Pro Tem
ABSTAIN: None

Motion passed to appoint Galambos as Mayor. He was immediately sworn in at 7:50 p.m. by Attorney Tom Arceneaux.

Mayor Galambos will be added to all bank accounts for the Town of Blanchard at Barksdale Federal Credit Union, Capital One Bank, and Citizens Bank & Trust Company of Vivian. At that same time the following will be dropped from all bank accounts for the Town of Blanchard at Barksdale Federal Credit Union, Capital One Bank, and Citizens Bank & Trust Company of Vivian: Johnny Digilormo and Nathan Ashby.

Mayor Galambos took his seat as Mayor and Lee returned to her seat as Alderperson. The meeting continued with Mayor Galambos officiating.

Resolution 2 of 2016 – Municipal Water Pollution Prevention (MWPP)

Resolution 2 of 2016

A Resolution Acknowledging that the Town Council has Reviewed an Internal “Municipal Water Pollution Prevention Report” concerning the Town of Blanchard’s Waste Water Treatment Facility

WHEREAS, the state permits under which the Town of Blanchard’s Wastewater Treatment Plant operates require an internal survey form to be completed annually and submitted to the Town Council for review; and

WHEREAS, forms for the past year have been completed by Town administrative personnel after consultation with engineering and operational personnel, and are attached hereto;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Town Council of the Town of Blanchard in due, legal and regular session convened, as follows:

That the Town Council acknowledges that it has reviewed the attached survey forms for the year 2015, as that the following actions have been set forth to maintain permit requirements contained in the Louisiana Pollution Discharge Elimination System (LPDES) permit, number **LA0038903**,

- a. Continue to carry out the comprehensive plan for phased implementation of major equipment rehab/replacement as required by the amended compliance order. (Enforcement Tracking No. WE-C-11-00144A, A1 No. 40806)
- b. Continue to be proactive with reporting and preventative maintenance programs.
- c. Continue to modify and improve the collection system to reduce inflow and infiltration.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that if any provision or items of this resolution or the application hereof is held invalid, such invalidity shall not affect other provisions, items or applications of this resolution which can be given effect without the invalid provisions, items or applications, and to this end, the provisions of this resolution are hereby declared severable.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that all resolutions or parts hereof in conflict herewith are hereby repealed.

Motion to accept Resolution 2 of 2016 made by Alderperson Fuller, second by Alderperson Umling. All voted yea.

And Resolution 2 of 2016 was adopted on this 8th day of March, 2016.

Report of Departments

Buildings and Grounds

Umling- an architect came to look at the office and what is needed to get the drive thru open again. Also looking at replacing ceiling tile, carpet/flooring. Umling stated he had money in his budget to cover the remodeling project.

Streets and Rights of Way

Whittington- a list is being gathered for road treatment program. He anticipates there will be lots of roads in the Blanchard area. If anyone has a particular road, please notify Whittington.

Water Department

Fuller-still working on discharge line back to lake and working on evaluation of water plant to make areas more efficient and cost effective.

Sewer Department

Guin-nothing to report.

Police Department

Chief Presswood out of town.

Treasurer Report

Lee-will get with Umling to show him how much is left in the budget for the remodeling.

Comments by the Mayor

Mayor Galambos thanked everyone for their support and looking forward to new adventure. He will provide an update each month to the Council. Workshop scheduled for March 22, 2016, at 6:30 p.m. Motion by Whittington to adjourn, second by Guin. All voted yea. Meeting adjourned 8:05 p.m.

Patsy Lee, Mayor Pro Tem

Debra Smith, Town Clerk