

MINUTES OF THE
BLANCHARD MAYOR AND TOWN COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING – APRIL 14, 2015
7:00 O'CLOCK

Present: Mayor Digilormo, Alderpersons Fuller, Guin, Lee, Umling, and Whittington, Chief Presswood, Atty. Tom Arceneaux, Lonnie Smith, Perry Fuller, David Yeates, Debra Smith-Town Clerk, Ken Lawler, Jake Lawler, and various guests.

Absent: None.

Meeting called to order by Mayor.

Pledge of Allegiance led by Lee.

Invocation given by Arceneaux.

Questions and Statements of Citizens:

Fire Chief Dan Cotton asked for support for the 1 cent sales tax that will be on the May 2nd ballot. Since the fire department now receives an average of 2500 calls per year compared to 500 calls 15 years ago, the money will help provide another medic unit, additional personnel, and necessary upgraded life packs for the area.

Motion by Lee to approve minutes of the Regular Meeting March 10, 2015. Second by Whittington. All voted yea.

OLD BUSINESS

Ordinance 1 of 2015-Public Hearing and Vote re: Refinance of 2005 and 2011 Bonds has been postponed indefinitely.

No action required at this time.

Ordinance 2 of 2015-Building permits (Title yet to be determined).

Lee introduced the following Ordinance 2 of 2015 by title only to be considered for adoption at the council meeting to be held Tuesday, May 12, 2015.

Ordinance 2 of 2015

An Ordinance Amending Fees for the Issuance of Building Permits, Particularly for Construction of Multi-Family Developments, within the Town of Blanchard and otherwise providing with respect thereto.

After much discussion, Lee asked that the ordinance include the following language:

“The cost of the building permit for a multi-family construction, which is defined for this Section 19.23 as a development of at least two buildings each comprised of two or more residential units, shall be Five Hundred & NO/100 Dollars (\$500.00) for the first building and One hundred & No/100 Dollars (\$100.00) for each building thereafter.”

NEW BUSINESS

Recognition of the girls' basketball team from Donnie Bickham Middle School.

Mayor congratulated the Donnie Bickham Middle School girls' basketball team on their win at the City Championship this year.

Public Hearing for the Louisiana Community Development Block Grant for the 2016-2017 year. Applying for up to \$ 800,000 to replace water lines and meters for the former East Cove system.

Public Hearing opened at 7:17 p.m., there being no comments the hearing closed at 7:18 p.m. The following were submitted for consideration in regards to the FY 2016 - FY 2017 Louisiana Community Development Block Grant (LCDBG) program.

A motion was made by Lee and seconded by Whittington that a Citizen Participation Plan/Citizen Complaint Procedure be adopted and Debra Smith be appointed as Citizen Complaint Officer for compliance with the LCDBG program. The vote was recorded as follows:
Yeas: Fuller, Guin, Lee, Umling, and Whittington.

Nays: None

Absent: None

Abstain: None

The motion passed.

A motion was made by Lee and seconded by Whittington authorizing the Chief Elected Official to proceed with the development of the LCDBG application taking into consideration views and proposals submitted by citizens that attended the public hearing as well as those that were unable to attend and views of the governing body. The application will be submitted for Potable Water up to \$800,000.00 to repair, replace, and upgrade lines and meters in the area formerly known as East Cove Water System, which is now part of the Blanchard Utilities Water System. The vote was recorded as follows:

Yeas: Fuller, Guin, Lee, Umling, and Whittington.

Nays: None

Absent: None

Abstain: None

The motion passed.

A motion was made by Lee and seconded by Whittington that a Procurement Policy be adopted for compliance with the LCDBG program. The vote was recorded as follows:

Yeas: Fuller, Guin, Lee, Umling, and Whittington.

Nays: None

Absent: None

Abstain: None

The motion passed.

A motion was made by Lee and seconded by Whittington authorizing the Chief Elected Official to proceed with the procurement and selection of professional services for the purpose of assisting in the development of the LCDBG application and implementation of the project. The vote was recorded as follows:

Yeas: Fuller, Guin, Lee, Umling, and Whittington.

Nays: None

Absent: None

Abstain: None

The motion passed.

Discussion and decision regarding additional conditions proposed by USDA for release of East Mooringsport Water System lien.

After much discussion, motion was made by Lee to stay with the offer of the \$27,500.00 and NOT go through with the additional conditions presented by USDA. Second by Whittington. All voted yea.

Fair Housing Proclamation.

Motion by Lee to proclaim April 2015 Fair Housing Month. Second by Umling. All voted yea.

Discussion regarding upcoming property tax millage for the 2015 tax year.

The Council has asked Debra to provide a comparison of the current property tax millage, mid-range of the maximum property tax millage, and maximum property tax millage allowed for the next workshop scheduled for April 28, 2015.

Report of Departments

Buildings and Grounds

Umling stated there is now a copy of the paperwork re: the agreement between Caddo Parish and Town of Blanchard for the tennis courts.

Streets and Rights of Way

Whittington stated the cost estimate to rebuild the road into the new water plant consisting of 4 inches of asphalt would be approximately \$36,000.

Water Department

Fuller stated he would provide more information at the workshop re: building permits as well as ongoing issues with the water plant after he has had time to get more estimates for other locations.

Sewer Department

Guin said he wants to find a way to help the ballpark. Whittington suggested a cooperative endeavor. Lee said she wants to have a meeting with the Blanchard Athletic Club, Mayor stated he would contact the president, Beau Cline.

Police Department

Chief reported that both the central air and water heater quit working at the police station but now both in working order.

Treasurer Report

Lee asked that Umling, Buildings and Grounds Commissioner, meet with Chief to review the leaky roof at the police station. She also asked Debra to check the building for more water damage.

Whittington reported that he had spoken with the Registrar of Voters Office about the confusion re: the last election where some people who live outside the town limits were able to vote for the Council, Mayor, and Chief of Police while some people that live in the town limits were not able to vote for the Town Officials. He was informed that it was a glitch in Baton Rouge. Umling then stated that brings up the lady at the last meeting who asked for a variance. After discussion, the Council agreed that they were not the people unable to vote but the variance that had been requested was discussed further. This item was on the March 10, 2015, agenda. "Mr. and Mrs. Saulsbury to ask for variance on their Hwy. 1 property." At Ken Lawler's request, Lee directed Debra to send a letter to the Saulsburys stating they were in violation of the town's ordinance.

Guin, at that time, also asked Ken Lawler to send an email to make a formal complaint regarding the same.

Comments by the Mayor

Mayor welcomed Steve Riall, Caddo Parish School Board, to the meeting. Mr. Riall stated the school board is looking at building a new school in Blanchard. The location has yet to be determined until after the bond election. Mayor stated a workshop is scheduled for April 28, 2015, at 6:30 p.m. Motion by Whittington to adjourn, second by Lee. All voted yea. Meeting adjourned 8:10 p.m.

Johnny Digilormo, Mayor

Debra Smith, Town Clerk