

TOWN OF SIMMESPORT

MAYOR LESLIE DRAPER III

DISTRICT I
TED TURNER



DISTRICT II
KENNETH MARSH

DISTRICT III
MYRON K. BROWN

DISTRICT IV
SHERMAN BELL

ALDERMAN AT LARGE
JACOB COCO

December 21, 2018 Special Town Meeting Minutes

Minutes of the regular meeting of the Mayor and Board of Aldermen of the Town of Simmesport held at the Simmesport Town Hall on Monday December 21, 2018, at 7:00 a.m.

Presiding: Mayor Leslie Draper

Members Present: Ted Turner, Myron Brown, Kenneth Marsh, Sherman Bell

Members Absent: Jacob Coco

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Draper and was opened with a prayer given by Alderman Myron Brown followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

A motion was made by Alderman Bell and seconded by Alderman Marsh that the agenda be approved. All present voted as follows:

	FOR	AGAINST	ABSENT
Alderman Bell	X	_____	_____
Alderman Brown	X	_____	_____
Alderman Coco	_____	_____	X
Alderman Marsh	X	_____	_____
Alderman Turner	X	_____	_____

The motion was carried.

A motion was made by Alderman Marsh and seconded by Alderman Coco to pay the bills. All present voted as follows:

	FOR	AGAINST	ABSENT
Alderman Bell	X	_____	_____
Alderman Brown	X	_____	_____
Alderman Coco	_____	_____	X
Alderman Marsh	X	_____	_____
Alderman Turner	X	_____	_____

The motion was carried.

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A motion was made by Alderman Turner and seconded by Alderman Marsh to grant Jacob Coco a permit to move a house into Simmesport. All present voted as follows:

	FOR	AGAINST	ABSENT	ABSTAIN
Alderman Bell	<u> X </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Alderman Brown	<u> X </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Alderman Coco	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> X </u>	<u> </u>
Alderman Marsh	<u> X </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Alderman Turner	<u> X </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

The motion was carried.

Mayor Draper informed the board that he was still in discussions about obtaining the trailers from the Avoyelles Parish Port Commission. However, since the Port Commission publicly stated that they wanted the trailers moved off port property, Mayor Draper wants to get some clarity on the Port Commission's plans. Mayor Draper was going to attempt to set up a phone conference with the Port Commission president and their attorney to discuss the matter.

Mayor Draper gave an update on the proposed health clinic to be opened at the Simmesport Community Complex (formerly Dunbar High School). The alderman present agreed that this would be an excellent use of the facility. Mayor draper also discussed the possibly of the town purchasing the old Bordelon's store on Laurel St. and/or the washeteria across the street from it for a possible youth center. Town attorney Mary Helen Johnson commented that a youth center could be something everyone could say "yes" to.

Mayor Draper led a discussion on the possibility of opening Main St. under the train trestle. Alderman Marsh commented that the entire town is cut in half when a long train passes preventing fire and first responder services from getting to the northern half of Simmesport without going to (in cases of a very long train) Hamburg. Mayor Draper said he would contact Kansas City Southern and/or DOTD to see if there was a possibility of removing the dirt placed there to block the road.

Mayor Draper also informed the Aldermen that the 2016-2017 audit was nearing completion and should be ready by the end of January 2019. After discussions with the auditors, Mayor Draper also informed the board that the 2017-2018 audit will begin immediately after the 2016-2017 is finished is done and should go much faster. One of the things found in the 2016-2017 audit was the fact that state payroll taxes for 2015 were not paid. These payments are being made so that the Town can move forward.

Mayor Draper asked the town attorney, Mary Helen Johnson, to draft a letter of demand that the two accounts for SAYA (Simmesport Athletic Youth Association) and Simmesport Sports Club be closed, and the money turned over to the Town of Simmesport. It was discovered during the audit that these two organizations had been using the Town of Simmesport tax-free identification number to purchase goods. Further, it was discovered that the

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Simmesport Volunteer Fire Department was also using the Town of Simmesport tax-free identification number for purchases. The Volunteer Fire Department is no longer using this number and is in the process of getting their own tax-free identification number.

The Mayor also reported another account discovered by the audit; the Crisis Response Account. According to Councilman Sherman Bell, this account was formed when the Simmesport Police Department solicited donations from local businesses for the purpose of purchasing equipment for the Simmesport Police Department. However, this account existed outside the normal Town of Simmesport accounts and was only accessible by Councilman Bell, former mayor Eric Rusk and for Simmesport Town Chief Brandon Spillman. Since this account was not under the regular Town of Simmesport accounts, and therefore not subject to oversight by the Town Council, the auditors recommended it be closed. Clerk Dacia Adams also informed the council that because this account was just like a private account, the Town of Simmesport could not close it and only those listed on the account (Sherman Bell, Eric Rusk, and Brandon Spillman) could close the account. Two of the three must sign to close the account. Councilman Bell also stated that much of the equipment bought through that account was now missing and unaccounted for. The Mayor informed the council that this account needs to be closed and the money transferred in to the Town of Simmesport general fund. Council Bell said he would try to get either Eric Rusk or Brandon Spillman to go with him to close the account.

Mayor Draper also informed the Council that overtime for employees who worked it in the past years would be paid at the end of the year this time. Alderman Marsh suggested that overtime pay be paid at the end of each pay period instead of annually. Alderman Turner asked why the Town was paying so much overtime and asked to see the time sheets for each police officer at the next meeting. Alderman Turner asked if the Chief of Police was clocking in, even though he was on salary. Mayor Draper assured Councilman Turner that the Chief was turning in time sheets for every pay period. The Mayor informed the Council that he would work to curb overtime in the Police Department, but it was difficult because the department had so few full-time officers. This means that officers are working more than the 3-on-2-off-2-on-3-off schedule for a normal bi-weekly pay period in order to cover shifts.

Mary Helen Johnson, representing Johnson Law Firm, informed the Council and Mayor that she was nearly complete on the agreement between the Town of Simmesport and the Simmesport Volunteer Fire Department for their building which resides on Town of Simmesport property. Currently, no written agreement can be found for the use of the land.

The Mayor also updated the council on the Simmesport Community Complex. Not only is there a health unit coming to the building, but the town workers have begun painting the hallways and repairing some of the ceiling tile. The plans are to renovate one room at a time beginning with the large room on the north end of the building. This was the kindergarten room when the building was a school. The Mayor also said that the razor wire surrounding the school was also being removed and that the process of removal was proceeding faster than expected.

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There being no further business, a motion was made by Alderman Marsh and seconded by Alderman Turner to adjourn. All present voted as follows:

	FOR	AGAINST	ABSENT
Alderman Bell	X	_____	_____
Alderman Brown	X	_____	_____
Alderman Coco	_____	_____	X
Alderman Marsh	X	_____	_____
Alderman Turner	X	_____	_____

The motion was carried and the meeting adjourned.



Leslie Draper III, Mayor



Dacia Adams, Town Clerk