

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

August 12, 2019 Regular 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, August 12, 2019, at 6:00 p.m.

Presiding: Mayor Leslie Draper

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

Members Absent: None

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

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

	YES	NO	ABSENT/ABSTAIN
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 Bell and seconded by Alderman Marsh to accept the minutes from the previous meeting. All present voted as follows:

	YES	NO	ABSENT/ABSTAIN
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 Turner to delay paying of the bills because a computer network error did not allow for the printing of the bills. All present voted as follows:

	YES	NO	ABSENT/ABSTAIN
Alderman Bell	X		
Alderman Brown			X
Alderman Coco	X		
Alderman Marsh	X		
Alderman Turner	X		

The motion was carried.

DELEGATION TIME:

Resident Marsha Strong asked the Mayor and City Council about the status of a disaster declaration for the Town of Simmesport. Mayor Draper said the issue would be discussed later in the meeting when he would give a storm update. Ms. Strong also asked when the cleaning out of Wilson Bayou would be completed. She informed the council that the beginning of the bayou from Mission Dr. to the back of the Shenandoah Apartments was cleaned as was the section across Riverside near Coco’s Fish market, but nothing in between. Mayor Draper stated that the Town of Simmesport was asking for help from the Avoyelles Parish Police Jury who had larger equipment. Mayor Draper said that one of the main impediments is an illegal driveway that build across the bayou blocking the flow of water.

Resident Cathy Greeson aske the Mayor and Council the reason for a 700% increase in salaries in the 2019-2020 budget for streets and drainage over the 2016-2017 budget. Ms. Greeson asked why was so little drainage work being done when salaries in that department went up drastically since 2016. Mayor Draper stated that he was not elected when the 2016-17 budget was drafted so he could not answer how salaries were being distributed over different departments in that budget, especially since he did not have a copy in front of him. Ms. Greeson then asked when the Town of Simmesport audits would be back in compliance with state regulations so that the Town could apply for grants it is now locked out of because of noncompliance. Mayor Draper answered that the 2017-2018 audit would be completed very soon, and that would, once approved by the Legislative Auditor’s office put us back in compliance. Mayor Draper also informed those assembled that the accounting firm of Faulk & Winkler has trained our town clerks so that they can do all of the necessary accounting tasks themselves.

Candidate for Clerk of Court Alissia Piazza-Tassin introduced herself as a candidate for the office in the upcoming election.

Mr. David Dazat also addressed the assembled audience and the council and introduced himself as a candidate for Sheriff of Avoyelles Parish in the 2019 election.

Ms. Taylor Lemoine addressed the Mayor and Town Council to ask permission to use the Yellow Bayou Park on November 22, 2019 to host a benefit concert for the Helping Hands Youth Center. Ms. Lemoine informed the Mayor and Council that Helping Hands was a legitimate 501(3) C organization and charity. Councilman Coco made a motion, seconded by Councilman Bell to allow Ms. Tara Lemoine to use the Yellow Bayou Park for the concert on the above-mentioned date on condition no one else had booked it on that date. All present voted as follows:

	YES	NO	ABSENT/ABSTAIN
Alderman Bell	<u> X </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Alderman Brown	<u> X </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Alderman Coco	<u> X </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Alderman Marsh	<u> X </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Alderman Turner	<u> X </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

The motion was carried.

Mayor Draper then gave a report on the storm cleanup from Hurricane Barry. The mayor related that the State Office of Emergency Preparedness sent two representatives to view the damage personally. Paperwork would then have to be completed at the state level to be turned over to FEMA. As of this meeting, FEMA still had not declared Simmesport a disaster area. As soon as this happens, the Mayor assured everyone that the Town of Simmesport would inform the citizens. The Mayor also reported to the Council that the track hoe/excavator had been at the dealership for repairs since July 2. The track hoe is the primary way the town workers pick up debris and it was not repaired until August. Town crews are now going around picking up debris such as carpet and old furniture, along with limbs. This process will take some time.

Mayor Draper also announced that the Town of Simmesport won a first place Community Achievement Award from the Louisiana Municipal Association for Outstanding Community Improvement in Economic Development. Last year the Town of Simmesport won a runner-up award at the LMA convention. This year was the first time ever we won the top prize. Mayor Draper thanked the council and Town Employees for all their help and dedication.

Mayor Draper also informed the council that the proposed ordinance for the increase in utility rates had been drafted and was presented to the Council. A motion was made by Alderman Turner and seconded by Alderman Brown that the proposed ordinance be introduced. All present voted as follows:

	YES	NO	ABSENT/ABSTAIN
Alderman Bell	<u> X </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Alderman Brown	<u> X </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Alderman Coco	<u> </u>	<u> X </u>	<u> </u>
Alderman Marsh	<u> X </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Alderman Turner	<u> X </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

The motion was carried.

A motion was made by Alderman Turner and seconded by Alderman Bell that a public hearing be set for comment on the proposed rate increase ordinance on Monday, September 16, 2019 at 5:30 PM in the Town of Simmesport Council Room. All present voted as follows:

	YES	NO	ABSENT/ABSTAIN
Alderman Bell	<u> X </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Alderman Brown	<u> X </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Alderman Coco	<u> X </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Alderman Marsh	<u> X </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Alderman Turner	<u> X </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

The motion was carried.

A motion was made by Alderman Turner and seconded by Alderman Bell that the regularly scheduled Town meeting for September be moved from the second Monday of the month to September 16, 2019 with the time of the meeting to remain 6 PM. All present voted as follows:

	YES	NO	ABSENT/ABSTAIN
Alderman Bell	X		
Alderman Brown	X		
Alderman Coco	X		
Alderman Marsh	X		
Alderman Turner	X		

The motion was carried.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Chief Damion Jacobs gave a report on the calls for service and arrests made for the month of April. The Simmesport Police Department had 15 calls for medical service and made 25 arrests in the month of June. Chief Jacobs also reported that fine collections for June were more than expected.

Town Clerk Dacia reported that bank reconciliation was up to date. She also told the council that she and the other clerks now know the reconciliation procedures. Mrs. Adams also reported that the accounting firm of Faulk & Winkler had completed their portion of the 2017-2018 audit was now being prepared by Kolder & Slaven and should be completed soon.

Maintenance Supervisor Charles Carter reported that the water main on Lincoln St. had been successfully repair and the boil advisory was lifted after successful water tests by DEQ. Mr. Carter also explained that water boil advisories are issued whenever the water system loses pressure and doesn't mean that the water is contaminated, only that there is a chance the water could get contaminated. He also reported there were more small leaks on Lincoln St. and they were considering replacing the entire service line in that area.

Streets Supervisor Dana Smith told the Mayor and Council that they had gotten a large part of the debris picked up on Saturday. He also said that some of the potholes mentioned in the last meeting had been filled. Unfortunately, he stated that the Town now had no functioning lawn mowers. They only had the shredder for the John Deere and the finishing mower for the Mahindra tractor.

District 1 Report

Alderman Ted Turner reported that he was concerned about the lack of mowers for the town. He also stated there were some spots where low-hanging branches over the roads needed to be cut for the school buses.

District 2 Report

Alderman Kenneth Marsh said he spoke with Sheriff Anderson and they will be sending 2 to 3 more inmates to help with the cleanup of the town. He reported the Sheriff's Office had cut up the large tree that fell in Yellow Bayou Park and hauled the wood away, but that we would be responsible for disposing of the smaller branches.

District 3 Report

Alderman Myron Brown was still concerned about some large potholes, although he congratulated the town workers for filling in some of the larger ones. He also said there was some grass that badly needed cutting on Cooper and Brown street.

District 4 Report

Alderman Sherman Bell reported additional water leaks on Lincoln street.

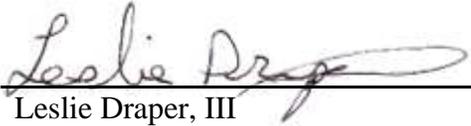
At Large

Alderman Jacob Coco reported that the tennis net was in and just needed to be installed. He consulted with Councilman Marsh to find a template so that the tennis court lines could be repainted. Alderman Coco also expressed concern that thick vines had begun to grow back on the fences surrounding the tennis courts. Alderman Coco also reported that the flag for the Yellow Bayou Park was ready to be picked up from the manufacturer in Bunkie.

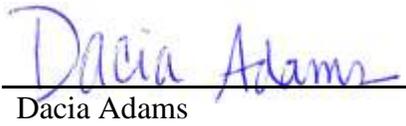
There being no further business, a motion was made by Alderman Marsh and seconded by Alderman Bell to adjourn. All present voted as follows:

	YES	NO	ABSENT/ABSTAIN
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