

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
PRESLEY BORDELON

372 Mission Dr
P.O. Box 145

www.simmesportla.com
townofsimmesport@simmesportla.com

Simmesport, LA 71369
(318) 941 - 2493

July 13, 2020 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, July 13, 2020, at 6:00 p.m. **This meeting was live-streamed via the Town of Simmesport's Facebook because of COVID-19 meeting restrictions. The meeting can be seen on Facebook, the Town of Simmesport's website (www.simmesportla.com) and on YouTube.*

Presiding: Mayor Leslie Draper

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

Members Absent:

Town Attorney: Present (Kirk LaCour)

Town Clerk: Dacia Adams

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.

AGENDA ITEM 4: ACCEPYANCE OF THE AGENDA

A motion was made by Alderman Marsh and seconded by Alderman Brown to amend and accept the agenda by adding Avoyelles Parish School Board member Ricky Adams for an update on the school situation. All present voted as follows:

	YES	NO	ABSENT/ABSTAIN
Alderman Bell	X	_____	_____
Alderman Brown	X	_____	_____
Alderman Bordelon	X	_____	_____
Alderman Marsh	X	_____	_____
Alderman Turner	X	_____	_____

The motion was carried.

AGENDA ITEM 5: MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

A motion was made by Alderman Bell and seconded by Alderman Brown to accept the minutes from the previous meeting. All present voted as follows:

	YES	NO	ABSENT/ABSTAIN
Alderman Bell	X	_____	_____
Alderman Brown	X	_____	_____
Alderman Bordelon	X	_____	_____
Alderman Marsh	X	_____	_____
Alderman Turner	X	_____	_____

The motion was carried.

AGENDA ITEM 6: PAYMENT OF TOWN BILLS

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

	YES	NO	ABSENT/ABSTAIN
Alderman Bell	X	_____	_____
Alderman Brown	X	_____	_____
Alderman Bordelon	X	_____	_____
Alderman Marsh	X	_____	_____
Alderman Turner	X	_____	_____

The motion was carried.

AGENDA ITEM 7: ATTORNEY BARRY LAICHE

Mr. Laiche was not in attendance at this meeting.

AGENDA ITEM 8: APPOINTMENT OF NEW POLICE CHIEF

Mayor Draper recommended the appointment of current Assistant Chief Glenn Hall as Chief of Police.

A motion was made by Alderman Bell and seconded by Alderman Bordelon to appoint Glenn Hall as the new Police Chief of Simmesport. All present voted as follows:

	YES	NO	ABSENT/ABSTAIN
Alderman Bell	X	_____	_____
Alderman Brown	X	_____	_____
Alderman Bordelon	X	_____	_____
Alderman Marsh	X	_____	_____
Alderman Turner	X	_____	_____

The motion was carried.

AGENDA ITEM 9: OATH OF OFFICE FOR NEW POLICE CHIEF

Newly appointed Chief Glenn Hall asked if his family could be present during the swearing in ceremony. Due to social distancing concerns, they did not come into the Town Hall at the beginning of the meeting. It was decided to perform the swearing in ceremony after the meeting so that Chief Hall’s family could attend. Chief Hall thanked the Council and the Mayor and pledged do everything he can to keep the citizens of Simmesport safe. Chief Hall

also introduced two new officers, Alexis Pearson and Sam Milligan. Mayor Draper introduced the two new officers to the Council.

AGENDA ITEM 10: INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT FOR ROADS & DRAINAGE

Mayor Draper informed the council that an intergovernmental agreement had been signed with the Avoyelles Parish Police Jury to use their hot-patch road repairing equipment. The Jury actually did some work on Main St. but rain suspended operations. Mayor Draper also noted the difference between this agreement and Road District 2. Lincoln St and Union Street will be completely resurfaced using Road District 2 funds. With the intergovernmental agreement, the Town of Simmesport will help with drainage issues on Green Acres.

AGENDA ITEM 11: SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER RICKEY ADAMS

District 7 School Board member Rickey Adams informed the board that if nothing changes, the start date of school would be August 5, 2020. He said there have been discussions and plans to push the start of school back 2 to 3 weeks. A delay would be to practical considerations such as availability of computers and sanitizing agents for the schools. Mr. Adams said that much of these supplies and equipment had been ordered since April or earlier, but some of it has still not arrived. He said plans are to have those students who do not choose the complete virtual option is to half of them go to school for two days then do virtual school for two days and then the second half would come for two days then do their virtual two days. Parents can choose to have their child do a fully virtual schedule, but they cannot change this option until after the first 9 weeks has passed. All students who register with the Avoyelles Parish School System will receive a laptop on which they do virtual schooling. The size of the classes will be no larger than 25 and those students will only interact with one teacher during the day. Mr. Adams said that bussing will be problematic, but a final bussing schedule will not be known until after the registration process. Mr. Adams did say that dual enrollment will go on as normal pending the decisions by the universities.

AGENDA ITEM 12: MAYOR'S FINANCIAL RECOVERY PLAN

Mayor Draper informed the Council that a budget should have been presented by now, but Louisiana State Law does not allow a town to present a deficit budget. With substantial outstanding debts to the IRS (\$136,067), DEQ (\$160,609.32), and DOTD (\$77,000), Simmesport could not present a budget that was in the black until those obligations were taken care of. Now that the Town has obtained the means to pay off these obligations the budget process can go forward. The Mayor also reiterated that the money obtained from Sustainability Partners, the company that financed the meters, is for sewer upgrades and debt relief based on future sewer revenues. The total debts paid off amounted to \$591,281.89. **This would put the Town of Simmesport out of debt.** Mayor Draper also reminded those assembled that this eliminated many monthly bills and there is going to be a second round of funding once the exact upgrades to the sewer plant are confirmed. Alderman Marsh asked about the budget for the fiscal year 2020-2021. Mayor Draper informed him that the accountants were going to be on site Wednesday to begin closing out the books for FY 2019-2020 and begin work on the next year's budget. The Mayor also told those assembled that the overall payroll has declined nearly 39% with the cutbacks in hours and a reduced workforce. Combined with the elimination of prior debt, the outlook for the next budget is positive. Attorney LaCour did note that the budget is late and that the Town of Simmesport was applying for an exemption because of recent events, but there is a chance that the town may be cited for the delay. Mayor Draper also announced that Alderman Marsh was instrumental in obtaining \$3,000 for playground equipment in Ehrhardt Park. Alderman Bordelon asked the Mayor about a plan for the sewer treatment plant. Alderman Bordelon and Mayor Draper commended Mr. Charles Carter for keeping the 30+ year-old treatment plant running and avoiding fines from DEQ and the department of health. Mayor Draper also said that Mr. Carter was hired to run the sewer plant full time but accepted the maintenance supervisor job.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS **Because of the meeting size restrictions, all department reports were given by Mayor Draper from written reports by the Town of Simmesport department heads. The only department head present was Town Clerk Dacia Adams.*

Engineer – Jeremy Hebron

Mr. Hebron was not present. However, he did send a report on the sewer discharge line. Mr. Hebron said the emergency permit to dig had been granted by the Corps of Engineers. The Red River Levee Board asked that a representative be present when the digging begins. The permit allows for exploratory digging. However, Mr. Hebron said that the permit would probably not be valid past December 31, 2020.

Utility Department- Charles Carter

Mr. Carter was not present at the meeting. The controls to the water tower are still out. The tower has to be manually filled. We are in the process of getting quotes to replace the controls.

Sewer Plant- Charles Carter

Mr. Carter was not present at the meeting. Plans were being drawn up for upgrades.

Street Department- Dana Smith

Most all of the grass-cutting equipment was broken.

Fire Department – Dana Smith

Alderman Marsh said there was a problem with the landing zone at Piggley Wiggley. There was a complaint that the Prime Events Center was using the landing zone for parking. Mayor Draper asked if Acadian Ambulance had an agreement with the land owners for the landing zone. He also said that the Town of Simmesport had no agreement with Acadian or the owners of Piggley Wiggley, therefore the Town had no say so in this matter. Mayor Draper put forth that perhaps the Town has some land they could use for a landing site.

Police Department – Damion Jacobs

Assistant Chief Glenn Hall reported that the new ticket books were in. Alderman Bordelon asked if the Town police were required to enforce the governor's mask mandate. Attorney LaCour said that the governor issued a proclamation. If a business asked someone to wear a mask and the person refuses, then the police department can be called for remaining after forbidden.

Town Attorney/Magistrate – Kirk LaCour

Court was held the last Monday of the month. Magistrate LaCour scheduled all the backlogged cases. Because of the COVID-19 restrictions, no warrants were issued for the last court session. Court is planned for July 27, 2020 unless the governor imposes further restrictions. Mr. LaCour also reported that there were only two workers compensation claims outstanding, but no tort claims outstanding. Mayor Draper also said that the Town received a \$2,900 refund check.

Town Clerk – Dacia Adams

Mrs. Adams reported that we are still working with a smaller than normal staff. The lobby is still closed until further notice. Mrs. Adams said that other towns she has been in contact with have their lobbies closed. She reported that Simmesport received the beer tax from the State, which had not come in a while. Payroll had been doewn

ITEM 9: PUBLIC COMMENT

A citizen asked about the laws regarding dirt bikes on public streets. Attorney LaCour addressed the issue but said that the laws are very situation specific. Mr. LaCour did say that the Town of Simmesport adopted the State motor vehicle laws, so all state motor vehicle laws are Simmesport ordinances. A citizen on North Live Oak and Pecan reported a fire hydrant that was covered in weeds. Also, there was a stop sign that is blocked by a tree and a drainage ditch connecting Live Oak and Pecan St. is overgrown.

District 1 Report

Alderman Ted Turner had no problems to report.

District 2 Report

Alderman Kenneth Marsh asked about repairing Hillside Dr. Before school begins. Mayor Draper said it is on the list for Road District 2.

District 3 Report Alderman Myron Brown had no problems to bring forward.

District 4 Report

Alderman Sherman Bell asked for a time frame for the repair of Clark St. Mayor Draper said it was on the list for road district 2 and should begin any day.

At Large

Alderman Presley Bordelon stated that some all the issues had been covered.

Swearing-In of Glenn Hall as Chief of Police

Assistant chief Glenn Hall was sworn in as Chief of Police for the Town of Simmesport by Magistrate Kirk LaCour.

There being no further business, a motion was made by Alderman Marsh and seconded by Alderman Brown to adjourn. 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 Bordelon	<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 and the meeting adjourned.



Leslie Draper, III
Mayor



Dacia Adams
Town Clerk