

TOWN OF SIMMESPORT

MAYOR LESLIE DRAPER III

DISTRICT I
GLENN GAUTREAUX



DISTRICT II
TIESHA KENNEDY

DISTRICT III
PATRICK WRIGHT

ALDERMAN AT LARGE
ROMARO TURNER

DISTRICT IV
SHERMAN BELL

372 Mission Dr
P.O. Box 145

www.simmesportla.com
townofsimmesport@simmesportla.com

Simmesport, LA 71369
(318) 941 - 2493

March 13, 2023 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, March 13, 2023, at 6:00 p.m.

Presiding: Mayor Leslie Draper, III
Members Present: Sherman Bell, Glenn Gautreaux, Tiesha Kennedy, Patrick Wright
Members Absent: Romaro Turner
Town Attorney: Present
Town Clerk: Absent

AGENDA ITEM 1,2,3: CALL TO ORDER, PRAYER, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Leslie Draper, III called the meeting to order and Alderman Sherman Bell gave the opening prayer followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

AGENDA ITEM 4: APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion was made by Councilwoman Kennedy and seconded by Councilman Wright to accept the agenda as presented. All present voted as follows:

	YES	NO	ABSENT/ABSTAIN
Alderman Bell	X		
Alderman Gautreaux	X		
Alderwoman Kennedy	X		
Alderman Turner			X
Alderman Wright	X		

The motion was carried.

AGENDA ITEM 5: APPROVAL OF JANUARY 2023 MINUTES

A motion was made by Alderman Bell and seconded by Alderwoman Kennedy that the minutes from the January 2023 meeting be accepted. All present voted as follows:

	YES	NO	ABSENT/ABSTAIN
Alderman Bell	X		
Alderman Gautreaux	X		
Alderwoman Kennedy	X		
Alderman Turner			X
Alderman Wright	X		

The motion was carried.

AGENDA ITEM 6: PAYMENT OF BILLS FOR JANUARY

A motion was made by Councilman Bell and seconded by Councilman Wright to pay the bills for February. All present voted as follows:

	YES	NO	ABSENT/ABSTAIN
Alderman Bell	X		
Alderman Gautreaux	X		
Alderwoman Kennedy	X		
Alderman Turner			X
Alderman Wright	X		

The motion was carried.

AGENDA ITEM 7: PUBLIC COMMENT TIME

- The Riverside Elementary Beta Club requested a roadblock for April 1 ,2023 from 8:30 AM to 12:30 PM.

AGENDA ITEM 8: MUNICIPAL WATER POLLUTION PREVENTION RESOLUTION

Every year the Town of Simmesport must pass a resolution to abide by the Municipal Water Pollution Prevention Act so that the sewer system may safely discharge treated water from the sewer system.

A motion was made by Alderman Gautreaux and seconded by Alderman Bell to pass the Municipal Water Prevention Act resolution. All Present voted as follows:

	YES	NO	ABSENT/ABSTAIN
Alderman Bell	X	_____	_____
Alderman Gautreaux	X	_____	_____
Alderwoman Kennedy	X	_____	_____
Alderman Turner	_____	_____	X
Alderman Wright	X	_____	_____

The motion was carried.

AGENDA ITEM 9: R.I.S.E. ROADBLOCK FUNDRAISER

R.I.S.E. President Carol Lyndsey-Dupar asked the council for permission to have a roadblock fundraiser on June 3, 2023 from 8AM to 12 PM. Mayor Draper thanked Mrs. Lyndsay-Dupar and the entire R.I.S.E. for the Black History Month Program held in Erhardt Park.

A motion was made by Alderman Bell and seconded by Alderwoman Kennedy to allow R.I.S.E. to hold a roadblock fundraiser on June 3, 2023 from 8 AM to 12 PM. All present voted as follows:

	YES	NO	ABSENT/ABSTAIN
Alderman Bell	X	_____	_____
Alderman Gautreaux	X	_____	_____
Alderwoman Kennedy	X	_____	_____
Alderman Turner	_____	_____	X
Alderman Wright	X	_____	_____

The motion carried.

AGENDA ITEM 10: JACOB COCO, AVOYELLES PARISH POLICE JURY

Police Juror Jacob Coco gave the Council an update of complete projects including Main St, Carver St, and Green Acres road resurfacing. He also talked about future projects including road and drainage projects.

AGENDA ITEM 11: UPDATE ON SPLASHPAD

After approval from the Louisiana Department of Health, a permit was issued to begin construction of the splash pad. However, to get DHH approval, the size of the pad had to be increased from 20ft x 20ft to 30ft x 30ft. This increased costs by \$10,900 for a total cost of \$54,900. Mayor Draper brought the changes before the Town Council to ask if they wished to proceed with the amended size of the slash pad.

Am motion was made by Alderman Bell and seconded by Alderwoman Kennedy to proceed with the project with the size of splash pad increased to 30ft x 30ft. All present voted as follows:

	YES	NO	ABSENT/ABSTAIN
Alderman Bell	X	_____	_____
Alderman Gautreaux	X	_____	_____
Alderwoman Kennedy	X	_____	_____
Alderman Turner	_____	_____	X
Alderman Wright	X	_____	_____

The motion carried

AGENDA ITEM 12: INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCE 03-2023-01, AMENDMENT OF THE APPROVED BUDGET FOR FY 2022-2003.

State law gives all municipalities the right to amend their approved budgets once a year. Any new revenues or expenses need to be added to the budget via this amendment. The Town of Simmesport received its second round of COVID relief funds from the Federal Government in the amount of \$380,000. If this money is not added into the existing budget by amending it, then during our yearly audit it will appear as if we spent \$380,000 we did not have, thus placing us in a deficit, which is illegal under state law. The amendment to the budget must be accomplished by ordinance. Thus, Ordinance 03-2023-01 was introduced this meeting so that a public hearing may be held in the time allotted. A public hearing will be held on the proposed ordinance on April 17, 2023 at 5:30 PM.

A motion was made by Alderman Bell and seconded by Alderman Wright to introduce the ordinance (03-2023-01). All present voted as follows:

	YES	NO	ABSENT/ABSTAIN
Alderman Bell	X		
Alderman Gautreaux	X		
Alderwoman Kennedy	X		
Alderman Turner			X
Alderman Wright	X		

The motion was carried.

A motion was made by Alderman Bell and seconded by Alderman Wright to hold a public hearing on Monday, April 17, 2023 at 5:30 PM and move the regularly scheduled meeting to Monday, April 17, 2023 at 6:00 PM. All present voted as follows:

	YES	NO	ABSENT/ABSTAIN
Alderman Bell	X		
Alderman Gautreaux	X		
Alderwoman Kennedy	X		
Alderman Turner			X
Alderman Wright	X		

The motion was carried.

AGENDA ITEM 13: PROPOSED DATE FOR SPECIAL MEETING IB OPERATRON UPDATES AND UPGRADE PROPOSALS

Mayor Draper informed the Council that he wanted to schedule a special meeting this month to discuss items such as Police vehicles Police pay, regulations for road blocks and the VFW remodel. Attorney Kirk LaCour told the Council that an agreement had been presented to the VFW whereby the organization would pay \$1 per month on a 99-year lease with the stipulation that the VFW pay for the utilities and insurance on building, and upkeep. The offer was rejected. The council requested to see a hard copy of the agreement.

A motion was made by Alderman Bell and seconded by Alderwoman Kennedy that a special meeting be set for March 20, 2023, at 6 PM. All Present voted as follows:

	YES	NO	ABSENT/ABSTAIN
Alderman Bell	X		
Alderman Gautreaux	X		
Alderwoman Kennedy	X		
Alderman Turner			X
Alderman Wright	X		

The motion carried.

AGENDA ITEM 14: DEPARTMENT REPORTS

ENGINEER

A representative from Meyer, Meyer, Lacroix & Hixson was not present.

UTILITY DEPARTMENT

Mr. Charles carter gave an update on the large water leak at the intersection of College Dr. and Martin Luther King Dr. The leak was expansive and there was no shut-off valve on that section of line to isolate it. Mr. Carter explained he had to cut water to the entire system thereby triggering a water boil advisory. Cenla Environmental Services is currently processing water samples so that the boil advisory can be lifted.

SEWER PLANT

Mr. Carter said that the plant is functioning normally. Mr. Carter also informed the board that the upgrade to the sewer plant has formally begun and a concrete pad will soon be poured for the new grit chamber.

STREET DEPARTMENT

Dana Smith said that the crew has begun cutting grass across the town to get ahead of the spring growth. Mayor Draper also told Mr. Smith to order more speed limit signs and street signs. Officer Lee also said that more city limit signs are needed especially on HWY 105 near Canadaville.

FIRE DEPARTMENT

Fire Chief Dana Smith told those assembled that the spring fundraiser dinner will be happening soon. Plates will be \$12 each and Bingo will take place later that afternoon.

POLICE DEPARTMENT

Police Chief Daniel Firmin gave an arrest and ticket report. Chief Firmin said 37 tickets were written and 5 arrests in February. Chief Firmin also said that the new radar systems have not yet come in. There is a water leak in Unit 4 and the valves are bent in Unit 5.

TOWN CLERK

Town Clerk Dacia Adams told those assembled that the final processes for the 2020-2021 audit had begun. The latest word from the auditors is that that the 2020-2021 audit will be turned in approximately April 2023.

TOWN ATTORNEY/MAGISTRATE

Town Attorney Kirk LaCour informed the council that there are currently two active lawsuits against the Town of Simmesport. One is scheduled for a settlement conference in June to resolve the lawsuit.

AGENDA ITEM 15: MOVE INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION (LEGAL MATTERS)

A motion was made by Alderwoman Kennedy and seconded by Alderman Bell to move into executive session. Those present voted as follows:

All Present voted as follows:

	YES	NO	ABSENT/ABSTAIN
Alderman Bell	X		
Alderman Gautreaux	X		
Alderwoman Kennedy	X		
Alderman Turner			X
Alderman Wright	X		

The motion carried.

A motion was made by Alderman Bell and seconded by Alderman Gautreaux to come out of executive session. Those present voted a follows:

All Present voted as follows:

	YES	NO	ABSENT/ABSTAIN
Alderman Bell	X		
Alderman Gautreaux	X		
Alderwoman Kennedy	X		
Alderman Turner			X
Alderman Wright	X		

The motion carried.

A motion was made by Alderman Gautreaux and seconded by Alderman Wright to secure the law firm of **Nuner & Pate** to represent the Town of Simmesport in the suit brought by the Louisiana Municipal Employee’s Retirement System. All present voted as follows:

All Present voted as follows:

	YES	NO	ABSENT/ABSTAIN
Alderman Bell	X		
Alderman Gautreaux	X		
Alderwoman Kennedy	X		
Alderman Turner			X

Alderman Wright	X		
The motion carried.			

ITEM 16: ADJOURNMENT

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

	YES	NO	ABSENT/ABSTAIN
Alderman Bell	X		
Alderman Gautreaux	X		
Alderwoman Kennedy	X		
Alderman Turner			X
Alderman Wright	X		

The motion was carried, and the meeting was adjourned.

Leslie Draper, III
Mayor

Dacia Adams
Town Clerk