

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE POLICE JURY OF THE PARISH OF NATCHITOCHEs,
STATE OF LOUISIANA, TAKEN A REGULAR MEETING HELD, MONDAY,**

February 22, 2010

5:00 P. M.

The Police Jury of the Parish of Natchitoches, State of Louisiana, met in regular and legal session in the Police Jury Board Room of the Natchitoches Parish Courthouse, on Monday, February 22, 2010 at five o'clock (5:00) p.m.

The Invocation was given by Juror Coach J. D. Garrett, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by Juror Mimi Stoker.

There were present: The Honorable Fred Jacobs, President, Police Jurors: Gerald Longlois, Chris Paige, J. D. Garrett, David Dollar, William Hymes, Charles Huggins, Johnny Martin, Tom Collier, Jessie Hoffpauir and Mimi Stoker.

There were absent: None.

The Police Jury of the Parish of Natchitoches was then convened as the governing authority of said parish by the President who stated that the Police Jury was ready for the transaction of business.

President Jacobs then recognized Senator Gerald Long who thanked the Jury for allowing him to speak. Senator Long stated that he wanted to give the Jury a picture of the State Budget as it begins to unfold. He then told the Jury that he was very involved with the budget because he set on the Senate Finance Committee and that they have been meeting for months looking at the budget that the Governor is proposing. Senator Long also stated that this year's budget appears to be about 18.3% smaller than last year. He then told the Jury that Louisiana is not broke but was only going back to pre-Katrina dollars. Senator Long told the Jury that the good news is Louisiana unemployment rate was doing much better at 7% compared to the 10% national unemployed rate. He went on to say that by constitution statue the State of Louisiana must operate at a balanced budget and when they finish their session they will pass a balance budget. Senator Long stated that 70% of all expenditures in the State of Louisiana are constitution protected. He then told the Jury that higher education and health Care was the biggest demand and the governor has released the budget for them. There are no budget cuts this year for higher Education and will remain as it has been, Senator Long stated. He then stated that health care is the big issue this year because of the decline of the federal dollars and this was a problem that was not going to go away. In conclusion, Senator Long told the Jury that they was going to see two things at the state level, more privatizing of projects and programs that can be managed much better with private dollars. The other thing is you are going to see a great deal of, is the merging of various departments within because, currently, the State of Louisiana have 104,000 state employees.

Mr. Paige then told Senator Long that about five years ago, the Jury sent a resolution to have a bridge constructed over by the Hampton Road. He stated that this problem was not going away with the Grand Ecore Bridge and that for many years when the bridge iced up people had to drive all the way to Coushatta to come to work in Natchitoches. Mr. Paige then stated that some

how and some way we have to think outside the box and get another bridge in this community. He then stated that he thought it was a good time to bring the resolution up to try and get some dollars.

Senator Long then stated that he would get on the phone and ask if the new bridge is in the budget. He stated that the bridge that was built on Black Lake was mostly federal dollars. He then stated that we would have to engage Senator Landrieu and the Congressional Delegation to help with funding because the State of Louisiana do not have the money at this time.

President Jacobs then recognized Mr. Michael DeSelle of the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (LADOTD) Who told the Jury he was going to give a basic run down of the Grand Ecore Bridge project. He stated that the bridge was being reconstructed with them taking off the existing 6 inches decking and replacing it with 7½ inch thick deck. Mr. DeSelle stated that in doing this the bridge will remain the same two lane with two feet shoulders with the overall bridge becoming more narrow. He stated that the walkway will be gone and there will be concrete barriers for the guardrails. Mr. DeSelle then stated that the contractor has narrowed the bridge down to one lane and will be one lane for most of the project. He also told the Jury that the project is supposed to be completed in July of 2011 because there is 525 contract days to complete the job. If it is not completed in 525 contract days, the Contractor would have to pay for every day they are past the deadline. He went on to say that the Contractor was going to cut the bridge in half while traffic is on one lane and the other lane would have the concrete replaced. Mr. DeSelle then stated that the important thing to know about right now is that travelers would only have twelve feet of clear roadway to use when they are traveling from Natchitoches and coming from Clarence, the lane will be marked for ten feet. In his final remarks, Mr. DeSelle told the Jury there will be restrictions for oversized loads and that they will close the bridge on Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday from 11:30 p.m. to 4:30 a.m. and they were working to minimize the number of closures.

President Jacobs then recognized Ms. Jerre Perry, Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals, Public Health Regional Director, who told the Jury she was present on the behalf of the Natchitoches Parish Health Unit and wanted to thank the Jury for the support they had given the Health Unit. Mrs. Perry told the Jury that the State would not be hiring any additional people because of the budget shortage. She stated that she wanted to give the Jury a run down on what they have seen as far as patients go; from July 2008, they saw 10,805 patients at the health unit and so far this year beginning July 1, 2009 thru January, 2010, they have seen 7,568 patients. Mrs. Perry then told the Jury that these are patients that do not have anywhere else to go. She went on to tell the Jury that she did not know what they would do without our health unit or the staff that work and provide services to the residence of the parish. She

then told the Jury that she was here to ask the Jury to consider the possibility of hiring a nurse's aide at the Natchitoches Health Unit. She said that currently they have three nurses on staff at the health unit and if they had a nurse's aide to assist they could probably increase the number of patients they see. She also stated that they could also use a nurse. Mrs. Perry was then asked to work up a proposal and bring it back to the Jury for consideration.

President Jacobs then recognized Mr. Tony Leone who told the Jury he was present to ask them for their consideration in appointing him to the Natchitoches Parish Fire Protection District #10 Board of Directors.

President Jacobs then recognized District Attorney Van Kyzar, who was present to discuss the animal ordinance. District Attorney Kyzar told the Jury that he was going to give them a copy of what the Committee have come up with. He stated that a lot of changes have been made and he viewed this as teamwork for the future. District Attorney Kyzar then told the Jury that since the last draft a lot of changes were made and it was actually simpler, in fact, it makes more references to vicious animals. He stated that they tried to make the ordinance to incorporate a more reinforcement of existing state law but still give the Police Jury the option of designating working with other agencies on animal control and animal shelters. District Attorney Kyzar then stated that he see this as giving the Jury the ability to actually enter into a cooperative agreement to work with different organizations as well as the Sheriff and the City if it comes to that point. He then went on to say that the definition for the animal at large has been changed and narrowed down and the purpose of enforcement has been narrowed somewhat. District Attorney Kyzar then stated that he knew that some people in the Parish lived on farms and have more than one dog that run at large and not every dog running at large should be picked up. The animal that is vicious has to meet the definition of a vicious animal. He then concluded by saying that he thought this ordinance will go a long way for what the Jury wants to do on animal control. It is actually a much simpler document than the first one and is a good ordinance structure for the jury. President Jacobs then recognized Mr. Dollar who said he thought Van and his staff and some of the other folks in the room have done a good job by going back to state law again and still allow folks in the country to be country. Mr. Dollar then stated if there is a dog that is vicious near a school, a dumpster site or something like that this ordinance will allow the sheriff office to do what they need to do.

President Jacobs then recognized Mr. Hoffpauir who stated that he wanted to tell everyone that served on the committee they have done a good job. He stated that when the ordinance was first presented they had a lot of good concerns about it, especially locking up all the dogs. Mr. Hoffpauir then stated that he thought the people were trying to protect the animals that may be a hazard to someone else and on the other hand the people that live out in Bellwood, Provencal, and Robeline area that have a dog think this helps everyone.

District Attorney Kyzar stated that the City has a true law in Natchitoches that your dog has to be on leach and can not be roaming at large. He told the Jury that this is not going to be the case within the parish and you can let your dogs run at large as long as they do not brother anyone.

Mr. Dollar then told the Jury that he knew everyone mind goes back to money and we are broke but they were able to locate an Attorney General's opinions on the Health Unit for rabies prevention. He stated that the Attorney General's opinion authorized it as an expenditure of health care. Mr. Dollar also told the Jury that State law states animals should be held a minimal of 7 to 10 days, not counting weekends, before they should even be considered put to sleep. He stated that every attempt should be made to contact the owner and recorded. If an animal is picked up and it takes some time to find the owner there is no cost to the owner if he has rabies' tag or whatever. Mr. Dollar went on to say that he wanted to read a letter he received from the Sheriff when he was in the President's seat. One of the paragraphs basically talked about the problem in the Parish that they have been getting phone calls and the Sheriff said in quote, "until the Natchitoches Parish Police Jury acts at all to provide a legal dispersion for all animals, dogs, cats, etc. we will refer those calls to the Police Jury. He stated that the Sheriff tells them to call the Police Jury and they tell them to call the Sheriff back and they then tell them to call the Humane Society.

President Jacobs then recognized Mrs. Sue Hatley who also stated that the Sheriff tells them to call the Humane Society. Mrs. Hatley also stated that it has been hard on both groups who were trying to help. She went to say that she hope the Jury would consider the animal ordinance.

On motion by Mrs. Stoker, duly seconded by Mr. Garrett, that the Natchitoches Parish Police Jury, in regular and legal session convened, does hereby adopt the minutes of the Work Session/Regular meeting held Tuesday, January 19, 2010.

Motion Carried

On motion by Mr. Hoffpauir, duly seconded by Mr. Longlois, that the Natchitoches Parish Police Jury, in regular and legal session convened, does hereby appoint Mr. Tony Leone to the Fire Protection District #10 Board due to one of their members resigning.

Motion Carried

On motion by Mr. Dollar, duly seconded by Mr. Hoffpauir, that the Natchitoches Parish Police Jury, in regular and legal session convened, does hereby set Monday, March 15, 2010 as the day for a public hearing to hear any and all comments or objections relative to adopting an Animal Ordinance for the Parish of Natchitoches.

Motion Carried

President Jacobs then recognized the Parish Administrator who told the Jury Mrs. Harris was at a conference but sent her report. She then stated that Mrs. Barnum was present to report Head Start Program.

Motion Carried

President Jacobs then recognized Mrs. Judy Barnum who told the Jury that the Review Team was here February 8th through the 12th and did a review at the Head Start Center for 3 days. On the fourth day they had to leave early due to the snowstorm that came. She also stated that she did take sick during the time they were here. Mrs. Barnum also told the Jury that they did not get an official report on the third morning but was told there were many concerns that would be written in the report. She also stated that she was told my T&TA specialist, the report could take anywhere from 30 to 90 days before they would hear something. Mrs. Barnum also stated that she had just left office and got to the meeting late because she left Ms. Washington and Mrs. Pat Telsee trying to submit the requested items to them. So hopefully when she gets to work in the morning the items will have been submitted. She then stated that they had talked with Debra Ogwo on the phone and they had went through the application and checked off everything she said that was needed. Hopefully everything is in place and it has been submitted as of 4:30 today (2-22-10). Mrs. Barnum then told the Jury there is something that I would like to say tonight, if Head Start is going to be a successful program, we are going to have to revamp it. She stated that we would have to start all over again from the very beginning because there are many concerns about the program. Mrs. Barnum then stated that she has many concerns about the Program and had spoken with the Policy Council about one of her concerns it was tabled at their January meeting. She stated that the centers are not going to be kept up because we have no one in place to maintain the center anymore. She also stated that their maintenance person is delivering food item to the center. Mrs. Barnum concluded her remarks by saying there are some things that she really needed to discuss with the Jury if Head Start was going to be successful and told the Jury that she would like to do that as soon as possible.

President Jacobs then recognized Mr. Hymes who stated that he looked forward to Mrs. Judy sitting down with him, the Parish Administrator, Mrs. Hamilton and Coach Garrett who served on the Policy Council because he was very interested in the service of the Head Start Program being continued for the children coming out of this Parish.

President Jacobs then recognized Mr. Hoffpauir who stated that he knew Mrs. Judy does well with what she has to work with. He then stated that the only thing that they hear is a lot of rumors, a lot of tales and half the time they are true and half the time they are not. Mr. Hoffpauir went on to say he have heard that some of the people in the program talk bad about the children, down grade them, when those children should be boosted up. He stated that the children should not be treated like that

and whatever supports Mrs. Judy need, if it is to get rid of some people who do not do what they are suppose to do we should help. The children are people and a lot of the children do not get it too good at home.

President Jacobs then recognized Mrs. Stoker who stated that some of the Jurors were interviewed by the Review Team and also the Policy Council members at their meeting. Mrs. Stoker told the Jury there was a lot of paperwork in the process and she wanted to say thank you to Mrs. Judy for having her review ready. She also stated that there was one thing the Review Team requested that the Jury needs to look at as well as the Policy Council. Mrs. Stoker went on to say that she have not had exposure to a vendor list for the two years she had been on the Jury and they had asked them questions about vendors that they did not know the answer too. She then told the Jury she had spoken with Debbie who could supply them with a list and have Mrs. Judy and Ms. Washington highlight the vendors that are only for Head Start. Mrs. Stoker then told the jury that they are to be aware of the vendors they use as well as the Policy Council. President Jacobs then stated that the next item on the agenda was the report of the Treasurer. He then recognized Ms. Debbie Miley who told the Jury that this report is on the cash balances as of January 31st. General fund has \$505,000 and the Payroll Fund had a negative \$58,000, Criminal Court had a negative \$167,000 while weatherization and rural transportation are still carrying a deficit that has left the Jury a balance of \$253,000. Ms. Miley also stated that the Jury was still carrying the Head Start deficit from the previous year of \$240,000 along with the others and is in the hole \$175,736.46. She stated that the Head Start \$240,000 deficit is not going anywhere as well as the criminal court \$167,000 deficit. Ms. Miley also stated that the other restricted funds, which is highway, health unit, and all the other funds have 5.4 million to almost 5.5 million in the bank. She then stated that the Sale Tax Fund have a million and more that helps with both solid waste and highway funds and the Jury is doing well with the library having \$1.4 million as of January 31st. Ms. Miley told the Jury that the prisoners' headcount was up and year to date the Jury has paid \$45,282 dollar for inmates. The youth bill is \$4,200 and the Coroner cost as of January was \$21,974 and so far has paid \$40,000.00 but it does not include February. As far as Head Start, she stated that their current budget looks pretty good but we have a couple more weeks and the grant will be over and she was not sure as to what bills Ms. Washington has outstanding.

Relative to this, the following action was taken:

On motion by Mr. Paige, duly seconded by Mr. Longlois, that the Natchitoches Parish Police Jury, in regular and legal session convened, does hereby accept the report of the Treasurer.

Motion Carried

President Jacobs then recognized Mrs. Stoker who told the Jury they had discussed the form at the last meeting. She stated that this was an invitation to the various water districts to come and make annual reports to the Jury. Mrs. Stoker stated that she had received some information that other Parish Juries have help form a group from the water districts in their parish in case of any emergencies. She also stated if they have parts, labor or things they could share among themselves, just for good will to keep the water flowing to the citizens. Mrs. Stoker told the Jury, if you do approve the form, Catherine has a list of the water districts in the parish and could get the form mailed out. Relative to this, the following action was taken:

On motion by Mr. Dollar, duly seconded by Mr. Longlois, that the Natchitoches Parish Police Jury, in regular and legal session convened, does hereby approve a form submitted by Mrs. Mimi Stoker to send out to all the Water Districts.

Motion Carried

Relative to the children board, the following action was taken:

On motion by Mr. Dollar, duly seconded by Mr. Hymes, that the Natchitoches Parish Police Jury, in regular and legal session convened, does hereby table appointing new members to the Natchitoches Parish Children Youth Board.

Motion Carried

President Jacobs then recognized the Parish Administrator Mrs. Hamilton who discussed the Title III projects. She stated that this is something the Jury has been doing for several years and it is now time to start the new program. Mrs. Hamilton then told the Jury that the fund had about \$190,000.00 left from last year. She also stated approximately \$20,000 was spent on the youth program last year and was told we could continue spending the funds until they are gone. Relative to this, the following action was taken:

On motion by Mr. Garrett, duly seconded by Mr. Dollar, that the Natchitoches Parish Police Jury, in regular and legal session convened, does hereby authorize the Parish Administrator to advertise for the solicitation of applications for the 2010 Title III projects and start the process for the summer youth work program and the search, rescue and emergency services.

Motion Carried

On motion by Mr. Dollar, duly seconded by Mr. Garrett, that the Natchitoches Parish Police Jury, in regular and legal session convened, does hereby approve Tuesday, February 16, 2010 as a paid holiday for Police Jury employees.

Motion Carried

President Jacobs then recognized Mr. Earl Townsend who told the Jury he had shown the premises to Brown Security System and A & G Communications. He stated that he had a copy of the bid from Brown Security but did not have the one from A & G Communication until now. Mr. Townsend stated that he would like to get a quote from another company before purchasing the system. After a brief discussion, the following action was taken:

On motion by Mr. Paige, duly seconded by Mrs. Stoker, that the Natchitoches Parish Police Jury, in regular and legal session convened, does hereby authorize the Director of Public Works to purchase the security system for the Parish Highway Department not to exceed \$8,000.00.

Motion Carried

On motion by Mr. Paige, duly seconded by Mr. Longlois, that the Natchitoches Parish Police Jury, in regular and legal session convened, does hereby approve hiring an engineer firm to assist in repairing the Old River Bridge.

Motion Carried

On motion by Mr. Longlois, duly seconded by Mr. Paige, that the Natchitoches Parish Police Jury, in regular and legal session convened, does hereby accept the Report of the Director of Public Works for emergency expenditures for the period of January 19, 2010 through February 16, 2010 in the amount of **\$306.82**.

Motion Carried

On motion by Mr. Longlois, duly seconded by Mr. Paige, that the Natchitoches Parish Police Jury, in regular and legal session convened, does hereby approve expenditures for the period of January 19, 2010 through February 22, 2010 in the amount of **\$952,085.83**.

Motion Carried

President Jacobs then went around the table and recognized Mr. Chris Paige who stated that the Jury needed to look at the resolution we had out there for a second bridge. He stated that people are lined up at the Grand Ecore Bridge like crazy. Mr. Paige stated that the resolution was sent to Grant Parish in order to get the federal people on board. He then stated if we could get a bridge on Hampton Road it would be good impact for Natchitoches a lot. If we could the bridge Natchitoches would have lots of people coming to the Natchitoches Area to shop.

Mr. Paige then discussed the situation concerning the 911 Commission purchasing signs for the Parish. He stated that Mr. Jack was against buying the sign through 911 but in the meeting they decided to continue to buy the signs. This has been in place for 5 or 6 years and within those years they bought \$7,000 dollar worth of signs. However, they made it look like the Jury spent \$7,000 dollar worth of signs for a year. He then stated the Jury was spending around \$2,500 a year on parish signs and after they figured it they went ahead and said they need to purchase the signs. Mr. Paige told the Jury he understood that this body, the 911 Commission, we have in place is going to make a recommendation to this body to only have two Jurors on the 911 Commission because there are too many on the Board. He stated that the Jury has three jurors on the Board and he was the one they probably do not want on there but he was not going to be quiet. It is not right when the Natchitoches Parish Police Jury appoints the 911 commission neither the Senator nor the house of representative. In conclusion, Mr. Paige stated that he did not want to see someone on the Board that is going to do everything that the Police Jury wants nor does he want to see someone that do what another agency wants. I want someone on there that is going to be fair. This garbage of people coming up here getting what the City Police, fireman or the Sheriff wants is not right. The sheriff has an employee the 911 coordinator, how do you think she is going to vote.

Relative to this discussion, the following action was taken:

On motion by Mr. Paige, duly seconded by Mr. Dollar, that the Natchitoches Parish Police Jury, in regular and legal session convened, does hereby add to the agenda adopting a resolution requesting a feasibility study be prepared for the construction of a second bridge across Red River in Natchitoches Parish.

Motion Carried

On motion by Mr. Paige, duly seconded by Mr. Longlois, that the Natchitoches Parish Police Jury, in regular and legal session convened, does hereby adopt a resolution requesting a feasibility study be prepared for the construction of a second bridge across Red River in Natchitoches Parish.

Motion Carried

Since there was no other business, the following action was taken:

On motion by Mrs. Stoker, duly seconded by Mr. Longlois, that the Natchitoches Parish Police Jury, in regular and legal session convened, does hereby adjourn until the next regular or called meeting of the Natchitoches Parish Police Jury.

Motion Carried

Attest:

Fred Jacobs, President

Catherine Hamilton,
Parish Administrator