

PROCEEDINGS OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL
OF THE TOWN OF BERWICK, STATE OF LOUISIANA
TAKEN AT A REGULAR MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY

March 11, 2003

The Mayor and Council of the Town of Berwick, State of Louisiana, met in regular session at their regular meeting place, the Town Hall, Berwick, Louisiana, Tuesday, March 11th, 2003 at seven (7:00) o'clock p.m.

There were present: Mayor Emmett Hardaway, and Councilmen, Louis Ratcliff, Bill Johnson, Ray Rasberry, Edgar Thomas, Jr. and Elaine Cantrell.

Absent: None

Also present were representatives of the Daily Review, KQKI and Channel 39.

Louis Ratcliff led the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Mayor and Council of the Town of Berwick, State of Louisiana were duly convened as the governing authority of said Town, by Hon. Emmett Hardaway, Mayor, who then stated that, the Mayor and Council were ready for the transaction of business.

The minutes of the previous meeting, having been reviewed, were approved on motion by Mr. Rasberry and seconded by Mr. Ratcliff.

The Treasurer's report, having been reviewed, was approved without reading upon motion by Ms. Cantrell and seconded by Mr. Thomas.

Chief Duval Arthur presented the police report, a copy of which was included in each of the Councilmen's packets, for the month of February 2003. There was an increase in fines and a decrease in arrests from last year. The Police Dept. hired Bridgette Exnicious as the Animal Warden, and feels she is doing a fine job. The State Fire Marshall inspected the jail on March 10th and everything was up to code. The officers have been patrolling the areas on Hwy. 90 and Thorguson for uncovered trash. One ticket has been issued so far.

Fire Chief Ray Rasberry stated that there was one fire call for the month of February 2003, which was a vehicle fire on the Hwy. 90 East Bridge. The Fire Dept. using one apparatus and nine firemen extinguished it. Mr. Rasberry informed the Mayor and Council that four of our firemen had attended a municipal fire school in Baton Rouge and they were well pleased with the instruction they received. Mr. Thomas asked if the public buildings in the area are up to code on the number of occupants allowed in these buildings at one time. Mr. Rasberry stated that he was working with the Fire Marshall's office to ensure that everyone is informed of the maximum amount of occupants and that they are abiding by the law.

The Public Works report was presented by Mr. Allen Benoit, a copy of which was included in the packet each Councilman received prior to the meeting. Mr. Ratcliff asked Mr. Benoit if we had worked on the new practice fields to level them out. Mr. Benoit stated that due to the rainy winter work has been delayed. Matt and his crew at the Civic Center will work on the fields as soon as the rains allow.

Gulf South Engineers' monthly report was included in the packet, which each Councilman received prior to the meeting. There were five items as follows: (1) On the North LA 182 Pathway Extension project: Gray Brothers has installed the bridge and are awaiting dry weather for the paving work. (2) South LA 182 Pathway Extension: final plans have been submitted to LDOTD for bidding. (3) The police department building addition was included in the 2002 State Capital Outlay Bill, the Cooperative Endeavor Agreement was received and GSE is preparing plans. (4) State Capital Outlay 2003: applications were made on three projects: (a) Public Works storage building, (b) Reroofing Town

Hall (in case not funded in 2002) and (c) Pattie Drive Extension. (5) Assisting Leesa Foreman with Downtown Redevelopment Master Plan. Regular monthly public meetings have been held at Town Hall.

Item #1 on the agenda was a liquor license application for Antbm, Inc. for the Berwick Mini Mart. The application was approved upon motion by Mr. Johnson, second by Mr. Ratcliff and unanimous approval.

Item #2 on the agenda was the presentation of a \$20,000.00 Rural Development Grant for the replacement of waterlines on Utah and Oregon St. by Representative Jack Smith. Rep. Smith is in the process of filing legislation to lower the speed limit on Hwy. 182 to 45MPH, which would then lower the school zone to 35MPH, because the Town and Rep. Smith have not received any answers to the letter sent to Mr. William Fontenot, District Administrator of DOTD on January 31, 2003 concerning these problems. Legislative session to adopt new budget to begin March 31st. Rep. Smith said this was going to be a tough year for appropriations and lots of programs and funding would be cut. He asked that the Mayor and Council send a Resolution supporting the Rural Development Grant Program to their delegation. Rep. Smith offered his condolences to the Rev. George Harden's family.

Item #3 on the agenda - the Mayor called a finance committee meeting for March 25th at 7:00 PM to review and adjust if needed utility rates (water/gas/sewer/garbage).

Item #4 on the agenda was to discuss and take action on matters involving Ronald Duhon, United Marine Contractors, (U.M.C., Inc.), and/or businesses being operated at 4136 River Road or 1440 River Road. Allen McElroy, Jr., town attorney, said that this could be taken off the agenda as an agreement had been reached between Mr. Duhon, his lawyer and the Town of Berwick and an agreement has been signed. A copy of the agreement is attached to these minutes.

Item #5 on the agenda - Water Storage Tanks - Maintenance Contract Amendment. A Resolution was approved giving the Mayor the authority to enter into an amendment to Water Storage Tanks Maintenance Contract with Utility Service Co., Inc. to reflect new payment schedule for services performed by Utility Service Co., Inc. upon motion by Mr. Rasberry, second by Mr. Johnson and unanimous approval.

Item #6 on the agenda was a Resolution of Respect for Pastor George Harden approved by the Mayor and Council.

There being no further business to come before the Council, upon motion duly made and seconded, meeting adjourned.

Emmett Hardaway, Mayor

ATTEST:

Cathy T. Guidry, Town Clerk