

The Police Jury met in regular session assembled with the following members present: Bryan Vidrine, Sidney Fontenot, Kevin Veillon, Ryan Ardoin, Darion Arvie, Tim Causey, Brent Guillory and Keith Saucier. Absent and excused was Daniel Arvie. A quorum was present.

There were no comments from the public regarding the agenda items.

Motion was made by Ryan Ardoin and seconded by Kevin Veillon to approve the January 9, 2024 regular meeting minutes. Motion carried.

Motion was made by Keith Saucier and seconded by Darion Arvie to approve the January 22, 2024 special meeting minutes. Motion carried.

An update was given on Colt Avenue. A lawsuit on Colt Avenue has been filed for damages done to the road. The Construction company has switched attorneys and states that their inspector claims damages were from the normal wear and tear and not caused by the company trucks.

President Bryan Vidrine addressed the public in attendance regarding the Solar project coming to Evangeline Parish. Mr. Vidrine stated that the Jury has been knowing about these projects for over a year. In October of 2022 a Solar Ordinance process was started and after several months of advertising, public hearings, radio and newspaper advertisements, articles shared on social media, not one person showed up at the public hearings. In April of 2023 a final Solar Ordinance was approved. The Jury does have a responsibility to follow the law and the constitution on allowing enterprise within our Parish. There is no zoning in Evangeline Parish, therefore the Jury does not have authority to restrict land owners from doing what they want with their property, as long as it meets the legal obligations.

Property owners from District 5 of Evangeline Parish addressed the Jury stating their concerns regarding the Solar Farms and Solar Ordinance in place. Some of the concerns mentioned from constituents were heating elements from the solar panels creating heat, health hazards, lacking the knowledge required to feel comfortable about the environmental impact on this project decision.

Dr. Terry Chambers with University of Louisiana addressed the Jury and public. Mr. Chambers is the director of the Louisiana Solar Energy Lab and has been doing solar energy research for over 14 years. Mr. Chambers stated that in his studies on the safety and health impact on solar farms, there are no temperature effect and are safe for the safety of health and welfare for the public. Also, it was specified there is not going to be a noticeable temperature increase, nor smell, detect any chemicals or radiation, no run off into the water, nor sterilize the ground. These solar panels are able to be removed at the end of the project to be returned to its original use. Like every other structure that is build, solar farms have to be designed for the applicable wind speed in that region therefore will meet all those design wind speeds. When subjected to hurricane force winds, the solar panels survive very well due to being mounted on a very strong steel structure.

Motion was made by Darion Arvie and seconded by Tim Causey approving to enter into a Cooperative Endeavor Agreement with Freedom Center in exchange for its delivery of one outdoor court for basketball or similar activities and related services, insurance and utility expenses for no less than one year, and to contribute (and not to exceed) \$6,000 toward this undertaking, on a one-time basis to support Freedom Family Center's proposed work. Motion carried.

Motion was made by Kevin Veillon and seconded by Keith Saucier to approve the hiring of Bryan Richmond as Park Manager for Crooked Creek Recreational Park at \$20/hr. and an auto allowance for the use of personal vehicle. Motion carried.

Motion was made by Sidney Fontenot and seconded by Kevin Veillon to approve the hiring of Cemetery Caretakers for 2024. Motion carried.

Motion was made by Kevin Veillon and seconded by Kevin Veillon to approve the reappointment of Mr. Wilbur Thompson as Commissioner on the Te Mamou Water District Board. Motion carried.

Motion was made by Sidney Fontenot and seconded by Kevin Veillon to approve the 6th annual Duralde Children's Mardi Gras run on February 10, 2024. Motion carried.

Motion was made by Sidney Fontenot and seconded by Ryan Ardoin to approve appointing Jason Fontenot and Michael Anderson as members to the Economic Development Board. Motion carried.

Motion carried.

Motion was made by Kevin Veillon and seconded by Tim Causey to approve calling a public hearing on Monday, March 4, 2024 at 4:45 p.m. to hear public comments regarding a mandated spay/neutering ordinance. Motion carried.

Motion was made by Ryan Ardoin and seconded by Keith Saucier to approve entering into a Cooperative Endeavor Agreement with Heroes Everywhere Animal Rescue, Inc. to provide funding in the amount of \$1,000 per month for veterinary bills to be paid out of the Health Unit Fund. Motion carried.

Mr. James Bertrand addressed the Jury in questioning why his letter has not been answered. Legal Advisor stated that Mr. Bertrand was replied back to as required by the statute in stating that the Police Jury's record of custodians is making a diligent effort in searching for the documents requested, however the documents are not in possession of the Police Jury. A copy of the letter will be submitted to the Secretary-Treasurer.

Motion was made by Kevin Veillon and seconded by Keith Saucier that the following resolution be adopted:

WHEREAS, in accordance with a Public Hearing held on February 5, 2024 the Police Jury published its intention to abandon a portion of the following property to wit:

The Parish Road identified as Cousins Road on the Parish E-911 maps. The portion of road to be abandoned is located in Section 37, Township 5 South, Range 1 East of Evangeline Parish, Louisiana and more specifically described between .7 miles between 1771 and 2169 Cousins Road.

WHEREAS, there were objections received to this proposed abandonment from adjacent property owners.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Evangeline Parish Police Jury hereby does not declare the above-named road as abandoned.

The above and foregoing, having been submitted to a vote, was unanimously adopted this 5th day of February 2024.

The Jury then discussed projects for the upcoming 2024 LGAP and CWFEP applications. The Jury proposes to utilize funds from the CWFEP grant for repairs to a water leak at the base of its elevated tank located in the Industrial Park. The Jury also proposes to use LGAP funding for renovations, repairs and improvements to its Economic Development Building.

Motion was made by Keith Saucier and seconded by Kevin Veillon approving to adopt the following resolution:

BE IT RESOLVED that we, the President and Jury Members of the Evangeline Parish Police Jury, Parish of Evangeline, State of Louisiana, acting as governing body of said Parish do hereby enact the following resolution on this day the 5th of February 2024;

WHEREAS: The Evangeline Parish Police Jury is applying for funding through the Local Government Assistance Program, a grant program that has been made available by the Louisiana Office of Community Development; and,

WHEREAS: The Parish proposes to make renovations, repairs and improvements to its Economic Development Building which is located next to the Parish courthouse; and,

WHEREAS: The Evangeline Parish Police Jury has no funds available at this time to complete this project, this application would provide \$100,000 for these project costs; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the governing body of the Evangeline Parish Police Jury by way of this resolution does hereby approve to submit an application to the Office of Community Development for grant funding in the amount of \$100,000 for proposed renovations and improvements.

The above and foregoing having been submitted to a vote was unanimously adopted this 5th day of February 2024.

Motion was made by Keith Saucier and seconded by Kevin Veillon approving to adopt the following resolution:

BE IT RESOLVED that we, the Jury Members of the Evangeline Parish Police Jury, Parish of Evangeline, State of Louisiana, acting as governing body of said Parish do hereby enact the following resolution on this day the 5th of February 2024;

WHEREAS: The Evangeline Parish Police Jury is applying for funding through the Community Water Enrichment Fund, a grant program that has been made available by the Louisiana Office of Community Development; and,

WHEREAS: The Parish proposes to make repairs to a water leak at the base of its elevated tank located in the Industrial Park, including but not limited to camera study, painting, well inspection, testing and other related activities; and,

WHEREAS: The Evangeline Parish Police Jury has no funds available at this time to complete this project, this application would provide \$100,000 for these project costs; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the governing body of the Evangeline Parish Police Jury by way of this resolution does hereby approve to submit an application to the Office of Community Development for water enrichment grant funding in the amount of \$100,000 for the proposed repairs.

The above and foregoing, having been submitted to a vote was unanimously adopted this 5th day of February 2024.

Motion was made by Kevin Veillon, seconded by Keith Saucier and unanimously approved to amend the agenda to add the following item:

1. Discuss providing funds to Ward One City Marshal Office.

Motion was made by Kevin Veillon and seconded by Ryan Ardoin to approve providing up to \$3,000 to the Ward One City Marshal's Office for dispatching. These funds will be dispersed for two years then brought back up for discussion after that time. Motion carried.

Motion was made by Sidney Fontenot and seconded by Ryan Ardoin authorizing the payment of bills on file in the Office. Motion carried.

Motion was made by Sidney Fontenot and seconded by Brent Guillory to approve the jail supply list as submitted. Motion carried.

Public Works Director gave the following report:

- Approve hire for Drainage Crew.

Motion was made by Kevin Veillon and seconded by Darion Arvie to approve the hiring of David Fontenot for Parish Wide Drainage Crew at \$17/hour. Motion carried.

Motion was made by Brent Guillory and seconded by Tim Causey to approve Robert Coker as Parish Wide Drainage Supervisor at \$18/hr. with a cell phone allowance included with pay. Motion carried.

Parish Engineer, gave the following report:

- Adopt resolution authorizing President to execute CEA for Economic Development Bldg.

Motion was made by Sidney Fontenot and seconded by Kevin Veillon to approve adopting a resolution authorizing the President of the Police Jury to execute and sign Cooperative Endeavor Agreement related to the funds received for the Courthouse repairs. Motion carried.

Secretary-Treasurer gave the following report:

- Acadian Ambulance monthly report is in compliance with the Ordinance.
- Sales tax collections for December 2023, \$630,159.45.

Motion was made by Sidney Fontenot and seconded by Ryan Ardoin approving to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried.

Bryan Vidrine, President

Chester Granger, Secretary-Treasurer