

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR PUBLIC MEETING OF THE
MAYOR AND BOARD OF ALDERMEN
OF THE TOWN OF VIDALIA, LOUISIANA,
HELD ON TUESDAY, AUGUST 13, 2024 AT 6:00 P.M.
IN THE TOWN HALL MEETING ROOM, 200 VERNON STEVENS BLVD., VIDALIA,
LOUISIANA**

The Mayor and Board of Aldermen of the Town of Vidalia, Louisiana, met, in regular session, in the Town Hall Meeting Room on Tuesday, August 13, 2024, at 6:00 p.m.

There were present: Mayor Buz Craft, Aldermen Jon Betts, Brent Smith, Robert Gardner, Tommy Probst, and Tron McCoy.

There were also present: Piara Wilson, Municipal Clerk; Debra Moak, Municipal Accountant; Brad Burget representative of Smith, Taliaferro & Purvis Law Firm, Municipal Attorney; and members of the press.

There were absent, Jay LaSyone, Municipal Manager.

The meeting was opened by the Mayor and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited by those present, followed by the invocation given by Alderman Betts.

A quorum being present, the Mayor declared the Board of Aldermen of the Town of Vidalia, Louisiana, to be duly convened, in regular session, as the governing authority of said municipality, and opened the meeting for the conduct of business.

After being reviewed, the typed minutes of the regular town meeting of July 9, 2024, were approved with no changes. The motion for the approval of the minutes was made by Alderman Probst, seconded by Alderman Betts, and unanimously carried.

The Mayor then asked if anyone had comments on current agenda items. Comments were made on Agenda Item #5 pertaining to the Slough Pump Station Project. Mrs. Youngsway questioned property ownership and where the pump would be placed in regards to property lines. She stated the property is split between several different families. Alderman Probst stated that the Clayton family also had the same concern regarding placement of the pump. Noting that there were no other questions or comments, he advised that he would continue with the formal agenda.

Agenda Item No. 1 was the presentation of the financial statement for June, 2024. The Mayor then called on the Municipal Accountant, Debra Moak, CPA, who presented the financial statement. As customary, she began by explaining the various fund balances, which summaries included a comparison of actual expenses to budget expenses. Then, the summary sheets, previously given to the Aldermen, were reviewed in detail, including a report on the positive and negative fund balances and indicated the net changes in the various funds. After reporting on which revenues are under budget and which are over budget at this time, she brought the Aldermen up to date on several items of interest. Those items included: cash in the bank; investments; total assets and liabilities; combined revenues and expenses. The Mayor then asked if anyone had any questions for Mrs. Moak. There were no questions and he thanked Mrs. Moak for her presentation.

Agenda Item No. 2 was Board discussion and vote on approval of sign applications. The first application was Miss Lou Carts 1814 Carter Street, Vidalia, La. 71373. There being no questions or comments, a motion to grant the application was made by Alderman Gardner,

seconded by Alderman Betts, and unanimously carried. The second application being Raceway, 4025 HWY 84 W, Vidalia, La. 71373. There being no questions or comments, a motion to grant the application was made by Alderman Gardner, seconded by Alderman Smith, and unanimously carried.

Agenda Item No. 3 was Board discussion and vote of approval on a resolution to approve bids to Meyer Utility Structures, LLC for the City of Vidalia for the Procurement of Steel Transmission Line Poles and Caissons. With Meyer being the lowest bidder against Valmont Utility, the bid was awarded with a motion to accept by Alderman Gardner, seconded by Alderman Probst, and unanimously carried.

(A COPY OF THE RESOLUTION IS ATTACHED HERETO AND MADE A PART HEREOF).

Agenda Item No. 4 was Board discussion and vote of approval on a resolution authorizing and approving execution of an equipment lease purchase agreement with Cadence Equipment Finance. The Mayor explained that this was a formality that needed to take place and reminded the Board that they had already approved this in the last meeting. Being no other discussion or comments, motion to approve the resolution was made by Alderman Betts, seconded by Alderman Probst, and unanimously carried.

(A COPY OF THE RESOLUTION IS ATTACHED HERETO AND MADE A PART HEREOF).

Agenda Item No. 5 was Board discussion and vote of approval on a resolution requesting authority to advertise for competitive bids for the award of a contract in the name of Town of Vidalia Slough Pump Station. There being no questions or comments, motion to approve the resolution was made by Alderman Gardner, seconded by Alderman Probst, and unanimously carried.

Agenda Item No. 6 was Board discussion and vote to award bid for new bucket truck for the Town of Vidalia Utility Department. There being no bids to open, Alderman McCoy made the motion to table this Agenda Item until next month's meeting. The motion was seconded by Alderman Probst and unanimously carried.

Agenda Item No. 7 was Board discussion and vote to award bid for new excavator for the Town of Vidalia. There being three bids, Emery Equipment \$114,974.84, State Machinery \$116,041.15, DC AG, LLC BIG B SALES \$89,000.00; motion was made by Alderman Gardner to accept the lowest bid subject to meeting specifications. The motion was seconded by Alderman Smith and unanimously carried.

Agenda Item No. 8 was Board discussion and vote on approval for Vidalia Police Department.

Gretchen McMillon, Full-time dispatcher
Dartavious Bethley, Full-time patrol officer;
Paul Allred, Full-time patrol officer.

After a short discussion, a motion was made to approve the foregoing hires, in globo. That motion was made by Alderman McCoy, seconded by Alderman Smith, and unanimously carried.

Agenda Item No. 9 was presentation on current millage issues for Town of Vidalia by Jeannie Archer, Concordia Parish Tax Assessor. Jeannie Archer was present and explained that with it being an assessment year, the millage should be adopted at the lower rate of 3.2 mills without rolling forward. The lower rate is one of the lowest in the State, but we will continue to generate revenue as 3.37 mills.

Agenda Item No. 10 was Board discussion to set millage being levied for the 2024 tax roll on all property subject to taxation by the Town of Vidalia, Louisiana. There being no discussion by the Board, the Mayor moved to the next Agenda item.

Agenda Item No. 11 was Board adoption of millage rate for 2024. There be no further discussion, the Mayor asked for a motion to adopt the Resolution, as presented at the meeting, to adopt 3.2 mills as the millage rate for 2024. The motion was made by Alderman Betts, seconded by Alderman McCoy, and unanimously carried.

(A COPY OF THE RESOLUTION IS ATTACHED HERETO AND MADE A PART HEREOF).

Agenda Item No. 12 was Board discussion and approval to enter into an Intergovernmental Agreement with the Town of Ferriday to Utilize two (2) of the Town of Vidalia Knuckle Boom Trucks on weekends. The Mayor advised the Board that the use of the vehicles and employees would only be for one Saturday. After discussion a motion was made by Alderman Gardner to enter into an Intergovernmental Agreement with the Town of Ferriday. The motion was seconded by Alderman McCoy and unanimously carried. A roll call vote was called and the roll call vote was as follows: FOR: Aldermen Betts, Smith, McCoy, Gardner and Probst. The motion carried.

Agenda Item No. 13 was Board discussion and approval to enter into an Intergovernmental Agreement with the Village of Ridgecrest to transfer surplus equipment of a mosquito sprayer from the Town of Vidalia to the Village of Ridgecrest. After discussion by the Mayor, a motion to enter into the Intergovernmental Agreement with the Village of Ridgecrest was made by Alderman Smith, seconded by Alderman Probst and unanimously carried.

Agenda Item No. 14 was Board discussion and vote to approve the Mayor's appointments to Commissions. The Mayor appointed Tance Hughes and Joan Ames Herring to the Planning Commission; Austin Lipsey and Ryan Frye to the Port Commission; Scott McLemore and Larry Chauvin to the Riverfront Authority. A motion was made to approve the Mayor's appointments by Alderman Betts, seconded by Alderman Probst and unanimously carried.

Agenda Item No. 15 was Board discussion and preliminary vote of approval to allow the Delta Agriculture Research & Sustainability District to utilize offices in the Vidalia Convention Center. After discussion, the motion was made by Alderman McCoy that the charge of \$200 would be the fee for the utilization of the small offices in the Vidalia Convention Center for the Delta Agriculture Research & Sustainability District. The motion was seconded by Alderman Gardner and unanimously carried.

Agenda Item No. 16 was Board discussion on upcoming adjustments to the Utility Rate Ordinance. The Mayor informed the Board that the Louisiana Rural Water Association evaluated the Town's water system. The State requires that water systems require a profit to be shown. He also stated that the Town may have to increase the cost of water. The Mayor also stated that the Town will be working on language for an Ordinance pertaining to Solar Metering throughout the Town.

Agenda Item No. 17 was Board discussion and vote to set a date for a Special Meeting to discuss Dog Pound Procedures. After discussion, it was so moved that office staff would get with the Aldermen to schedule a date as soon as possible for the Special Meeting.

Agenda Item No. 18 was introduction of an ordinance to amend Ordinance No. 692 to fix the compensation of the Municipal Clerk. There being no discussion, the Mayor moved on to the next Agenda Item.

(A COPY OF THE ORDINANCE IS ATTACHED HERETO AND MADE A PART HEREOF).

Agenda Item No. 19 was introduction of an ordinance to amend Ordinance No. 692 to fix the compensation for the Board of Aldermen. There being no discussion, the Mayor moved on to the next Agenda Item.

(A COPY OF THE ORDINANCE IS ATTACHED HERETO AND MADE A PART HEREOF).

Agenda Item No. 20 was introduction of an ordinance to amend Ordinance No. 569 to include the use of Generators. There being no discussion, the Mayor moved on to the next Agenda Item.

(A COPY OF THE ORDINANCE IS ATTACHED HERETO AND MADE A PART HEREOF).

Agenda Item No. 21 was Mayor's updates and reports. The Mayor recognized the General Manager of Syrah and informed the public about some changes for the company. The Mayor discussed that the Town is advertising bids for Polk Park. The Port is in full operation and can dump a grain trailer in 2 minutes and 30 seconds. The Mayor discussed the process of the Slack Water Project; Safe Sidewalk Project is still underway and the Town is waiting on the State to assign a Program Consultant; D A Biglane Rd. is still in the works for being repaired; the Water Plant will begin at any time; the Slough was discussed at tonight's meeting, the Canal was cleaned by the Police Jury and is draining the Slough area well; Town roads are being engineered; the Town should get more information this month regarding the raising of the Water Wells with BRIC Funding; engineering has begun for the turnarounds at Laurel St., Walnut St., and Magnolia St.;

Agenda Item No. 22 was adjournment. The Mayor noting that there was no further agenda items, asked for a motion to adjourn. The motion to adjourn was made by Alderman Probst, seconded by Alderman Gardner, and unanimously carried.

/s/Piara Wilson
PIARA WILSON, MUNICIPAL CLERK

/s/ Buz Craft
BUZ CRAFT, MAYOR

ON A MOTION BY ALDERMAN GARDNER DULY SECONDED BY

ALDERMAN PROBST, THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTION WAS OFFERED TO WIT:

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, bids were received and read aloud on July 2, 2024, for the procurement of steel transmission line poles and caissons. The bids received were as follows:

Meyer Utility Structures, LLC	\$2,316,921.84
Valmont Utility	\$3,102,357.00

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the City of Vidalia award the project to Meyer Utility Structures, LLC, in the amount of \$2,316,921.84.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Mayor is authorized to execute any and all documents including contracts, estimates and change orders between the City of Vidalia and Meyer Utility Structures, LLC.

This Resolution adopted this 13TH day of AUGUST with the vote recorded as follows:

Yeas:5 Nays: NONE Absent: NONE

/s/ Buz Craft

MAYOR

/s/ Piara Wilson

SECRETARY

**RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING AND APPROVING EXECUTION OF AN
EQUIPMENT - LEASE PURCHASE AGREEMENT WITH CADENCE EQUIPMENT
FINANCE, A DIVISION OF CADENCE BANK**

WHEREAS, Mayor and Board of Aldermen (the "Governing Body") of Town of Vidalia, Louisiana (the "Lessee"), acting for and on the behalf of the Lessee hereby finds, determines and adjudicates as follows:

1. The Lessee desires to enter into an Equipment Lease - Purchase Agreement with the Lease Schedule and Exhibits attached thereto in substantially the same form as attached hereto as Exhibit "A" (collectively, the "Agreement") with Cadence Equipment Finance, a division of Cadence Bank (the "Lessor"), for the purpose of leasing with an option to purchase the equipment as described therein for the total cost specified therein (the "Equipment").
2. It is in the best interest of the public purposes of the Lessee that the Lessee lease with an option to purchase the Equipment pursuant to and in accordance with the terms of the Agreement; and
3. It is necessary for the Lessee to approve and authorize the Agreement.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by this Governing Body for and on behalf of the Lessee as follows:

Section 1. The Agreement and Exhibits attached thereto in substantially the same form as attached hereto as Exhibit "A" by and between the Lessor and the Lessee is hereby approved and Buz Craft (the "Authorized Officer") is hereby authorized and directed to execute said Agreement on behalf of the Lessee.

Section 2. The Agreement is being issued in calendar year 2024

Section 3. Neither any portion of the gross proceeds of the Agreement nor the Equipment identified to the Agreement shall be used (directly or indirectly) in a trade or business carried on by any person other than a governmental unit, except for such use as a member of the general public.

Section 4. No portion of the rental payments identified in the Agreement (a) is secured, directly or indirectly, by property used or to be used in a trade or business carried on by a person other than a governmental unit, except for such use as a member of the general public, or by payments in respect of such property; or (b) is to be derived from payments (whether or not to the Lessee) in respect of property or borrowed money used or to be used for a trade or business carried on by any person other than a governmental unit.

Section 5. No portion of the gross proceeds of the Agreement are used (directly or indirectly) to make or finance loans to persons other than governmental units.

Section 6. The Authorized Officer is further authorized for and on behalf of the Governing Body and the Lessee to do all things necessary in furtherance of the obligations of the Lessee pursuant to the Agreement, including execution and delivery of all other documents necessary or appropriate to carry out the transactions contemplated thereby in accordance with the terms and provisions thereof.

Section 7. The Lessee desires to designate the Agreement as a "qualified tax-exempt obligation" of the Lessee, as defined in Section 265(b)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (the "Code"). The aggregate face amount of all tax-exempt obligations (excluding private activity bonds other than qualified 501(c)(3) bonds) issued or to be issued by the Lessee and all subordinate entities thereof during the current calendar year is not reasonably expected to exceed \$10,000,000. The Lessee and all subordinate entities thereof will not issue or enter into in excess of \$10,000,000 of tax-exempt obligations (including the Agreement, but excluding private

activity bonds other than qualified 501(c)(3) bonds) during the current calendar year, without first obtaining an opinion of nationally recognized counsel in the area of tax-exempt municipal obligations acceptable to the Lessor that the designation of the Agreement as a "qualified tax-exempt obligation" will not be adversely affected.

Following the reading of the foregoing resolution, Alderman Betts moved that the foregoing resolution be adopted. Alderman Probst seconded the motion for its adoption.

The Mayor put the question to a roll call vote and the result was as follows:

<u>Alderman Betts</u>	Voted: <u>Yes</u>
<u>Alderman Gardner</u>	Voted: <u>Yes</u>
<u>Alderman McCoy</u>	Voted: <u>Yes</u>
<u>Alderman Probst</u>	Voted: <u>Yes</u>
<u>Alderman Smith</u>	Voted: <u>Yes</u>

The motion having received the affirmative vote of all members present, the declared the motion carried and the resolution adopted, this the 13th day of August 2024.

/s/ Buz Craft
(Signature)

ATTEST:

/s/ Piara Wilson

(SEAL)

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ORDINANCE NO. _____

**AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ORDINANCE NO. 692 TO FIX THE
COMPENSATION OF THE CLERK OF THE TOWN OF VIDALIA, LOUISIANA**

BE IT ORDAINED, BY THE MAYOR AND BOARD OF ALDERMEN OF THE TOWN OF VIDALIA, LOUISIANA, in regular session, duly convened as the governing authority of said municipality, that:

Section 1. This proposed Ordinance was previously introduced at the regular meeting of August 13, 2024; and

Section 2. After due notice of advertising of this proposed ordinance in the official journal on the 4th day of September, 2024, and public hearing held at the Mayor and Board's regular meeting on the 10th day of September, 2024, it is hereby ordained and adopted as an Ordinance of the Town of Vidalia, Louisiana, that:

WHEREAS, LSA-R.S. 33:404.1 provides that the Board of Aldermen shall, by Ordinance, fix the compensation of the Mayor, Aldermen, Clerk and Chief of Police; and

WHEREAS, the compensation needs to be fixed for the Clerk, effective July 1, 2024;

THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED, by the Mayor and Board of Aldermen of the Town of Vidalia, Louisiana, that the compensation for the Clerk is hereby fixed at \$62,500.00 per year, to be effective July 1, 2024.

The foregoing Ordinance was read and considered, section by section, and as a whole, and the vote thereon was as follows:

YEAS:

NAYS:

ABSTAINING:

ABSENT:

WHEREUPON, the foregoing ordinance was declared to be duly adopted this 10th day of September, 2024, to be effective immediately.

/s/ Piara Wilson
PIARA WILSON, TOWN CLERK

/s/ Buz Craft
BUZ CRAFT, MAYOR

ORDINANCE NO. _____
AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND ORDINANCE NO. 692 TO FIX THE COMPENSATION
OF THE BOARD OF ALDERMEN OF THE TOWN OF VIDALIA, LOUISIANA

BE IT ORDAINED, BY THE MAYOR AND BOARD OF ALDERMAN OF THE TOWN OF VIDALIA, LOUISIANA, in regular session, duly convened as the governing authority of said municipality, that:

Section 1. This proposed Ordinance was previously introduced at the regular meeting of August 13, 2024; and

Section 2. After due notice of advertising of this proposed ordinance in the official journal on the 4th day of September 2024, and public hearing held at the Mayor and Board's regular meeting on the 10th day of September 2024, it is hereby ordained and adopted as an Ordinance of the Town of Vidalia, that:

WHEREAS, LSA-R.S. 33:404.1 provides that the Board of Alderman shall, by Ordinance, fix the compensation of the Mayor, Alderman, Clerk and Chief of Police; and

WHEREAS, the compensation needs to be fixed for the Aldermen and Alderwomen, effective July 1, 2024;

THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED, by the Mayor and Board of Alderman of the Town of Vidalia, Louisiana, that for the term of office commencing July 1, 2024, the compensation of the aforementioned municipal officers is fixed as follows:

- (1) The compensation for the Aldermen and Alderwomen is fixed at \$12,000 per year or \$1,000 per month; and
- (2) The previous compensation prior to July 1, 2024; for the Aldermen and Alderwomen was fixed at \$9,756.28 per year or \$813.02 per month; and
- (3) The newly fixed compensation in paragraph (1), of \$1,000 per month is contingent upon attendance of all regular monthly meetings of the Mayor and Board of Alderman; and
- (4) Failure of an Alderman or Alderwoman to attended a regular monthly meeting in a given month shall reduce the Alderman or Alderwoman fixed monthly salary to the amount in paragraph (2), or \$813.02 per month.

The foregoing Ordinance was read and considered, section by section, and as a whole, and the vote thereon was as follows:

YEAS:

NAYS:

ABSTAINING:

ABSENT:

WHEREUPON, the foregoing ordinance was declared to be duly adopted this 10th day of September 2024, to be effective immediately.

/s/ Piara Wilson
PIARA WILSON, TOWN CLERK

/s/ Buz Craft
BUZ CRAFT, MAYOR

ORDINANCE #

BY: ALDERMAN T. MCCOY

VIOLATION: Amends Chapter 26; Article II Nuisances; Sec. 26-57;
Sec. 26-58, relative to provisions of law regarding noise ordinance

AN ORDINANCE:

To enact Sec. 26-57(b)(6) and Sec. 26-58 (10), relative to the noise violation regarding the use of generators and exceptions for the use of a generator.

Sec. 26-57(b)(6)

(6) Generators. The use of any portable, stand alone, inverter or whole house generators that disturb the peace and quiet of person in the vicinity thereof.

Sec. 26-58(10) Exemptions

(10) Noises created from the use of any portable, stand alone, inverter or whole house generator during a severe weather event or during the aftermath thereof; or during a power outage of the Town of Vidalia electrical power grid in whole or in part.

The foregoing Ordinance was read and considered, section by section, and as a whole, and the vote thereon was as follows:

YEAS:

NAYS:

ABSTAINING:

ABSENT:

WHEREUPON, the foregoing ordinance was declared to be duly adopted this 10th day of September 2024, to be effective immediately.

/s/ Piara Wilson
PIARA WILSON, TOWN CLERK

/s/ Buz Craft
BUZ CRAFT, MAYOR