

**Washington Parish Council
Public Hearing
December 14, 2015
4:45 pm
Regular Meeting
Washington Parish Courthouse
Council Chambers
December 14, 2015
Monday – 5:00 PM**

Public Hearing on Proposed WP Ordinance No.15-604- An ordinance to adopt the 2016 annual operating budget and the capital outlay budget for the Washington Parish Government.

Chairman Fussell asked if anyone would like to come forward to speak on Ordinance No. 15-604.

No one came forward.

Councilman Posey offered a motion, seconded by Councilman Johnson to close public hearing on Ordinance No. 15-604.

Roll call of vote as follows:

YEAS: (7) Nassauer, Johnson, Thomas, Route, Posey, Wheat and Fussell

NAYS: (0)

ABSENT: (0)

ABSTAIN: (0)

Regular Meeting:

Item No. 1 - Call to order – Chairman Fussell called the meeting to order.

Item No. 2 - Invocation – Reverend Brent King gave the invocation.

Item No. 3 - Pledge of Allegiance – Councilman Thomas led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Item No. 4 - Roll Call – Council Clerk Sarah Cook called the roll. Present were Michael Fussell, Andre' Johnson, Charles Nassauer, Greg Route, Pete Thomas, Ken Wheat and Aubrey Posey.

Item No. 5 - Approval of Minutes – Approval of Minutes dated November 23, 2015.

Councilman Posey offered a motion, seconded by Councilman Johnson to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of November 23, 2015.

Roll call of vote as follows:

YEAS: (7) Nassauer, Johnson, Thomas, Route, Posey, Wheat and Fussell

NAYS: (0)

ABSENT: (0)

ABSTAIN: (0)

Item No. 6 Adopt Ordinance No. 15-604 – An ordinance to adopt the 2016 annual operating budget and the capital outlay budget for the Washington Parish Government.

Chairman Fussell: "We had a public hearing a few minutes ago with no one coming forward, what is the favor of the council?"

Councilman Johnson offered a motion, seconded by Councilman Thomas to adopt ordinance No. 15-604. An ordinance to adopt the 2016 annual operating budget and the capital outlay budget for the Washington Parish Government.

Roll call of vote as follows:

YEAS: (7) Nassauer, Johnson, Thomas, Route, Posey, Wheat and Fussell

NAYS: (0)

ABSENT: (0)

ABSTAIN: (0)

Item No. 7. – Introduction of Ordinance No. 15-605– An Ordinance to levy an occupational license tax on the pursuit of business in Washington Parish, as authorized by LA R.S. 47:341 et seq., and to provide for related matters.

Chairman Fussell: "This is just an introduction of Ordinance No. 15-605. We will be having 3 public hearings, December 17, 2015 at 5:30 pm, December 21, 2015 at 5:30 pm and December 28, 2015 at 5:30 pm. The public hearings will all be in the council chambers. There is an occupational license ordinance on the books. We are considering changing, upgrading, modifying and if anyone wants a copy we have some here on the table."

Item No. 8. – Adopt Resolution 15-704- A resolution approving the holding of an election in Washington Parish Fire Protection District Number 2, State of Louisiana, on Saturday, April 9, 2016, to authorize the incurring of debt and issuance of bonds therein.

Chairman Fussell: "We had a Finance Committee meeting on Resolution 15-704 on December 7, 2015. District 2 came before us and explained their situation with the need of this resolution to go forward."

Councilman Posey offered a motion, seconded by Councilman Johnson to adopt Resolution No. 15-704. A resolution approving the holding of an election in Washington Parish Fire Protection District Number 2, State of Louisiana, on Saturday, April 9, 2016, to authorize the incurring of debt and issuance of bonds therein.

Roll call of vote as follows:

YEAS: (7) Nassauer, Johnson, Thomas, Route, Posey, Wheat and Fussell

NAYS: (0)

ABSENT: (0)

ABSTAIN: (0)

Item No. 9 – Adopt Resolution No. 15-705- A resolution approving the holding of an election in Washington Parish Fire Protection District No. 1, State of Louisiana, on Saturday, April 9, 2016, to authorize the levy of special taxes therein.

Chairman Fussell: "We had a Finance Committee meeting on Resolution 15-705 on December 7, 2015. This is a renewal for Fire District No. 1. They came to our finance committee meeting, explained their situation, questions were asked and they satisfied all our concerns."

Councilman Johnson offered a motion, seconded by Councilman Posey to adopt Resolution No. 15-705. A resolution approving the holding of an election in Washington Parish Fire Protection District No. 1, State of Louisiana, on Saturday, April 9, 2016, to authorize the levy of special taxes therein.

Roll call of vote as follows:

YEAS: (7) Nassauer, Johnson, Thomas, Route, Posey, Wheat and Fussell

NAYS: (0)

ABSENT: (0)

ABSTAIN: (0)

Item No. 10. - Adopt Resolution No. 15-706- A resolution by the Washington Parish Council to engage Kushner Lagraize, L.L.C. to perform audit services for the Washington Parish Government.

Chairman Fussell: "This is an annual audit and up for renewal."

Councilman Posey offered a motion, seconded by Councilman Johnson to adopt Resolution No. 15-706. A resolution by the Washington Parish Council to engage Kushner Lagraize, L.L.C. to perform audit services for the Washington Parish Government.

Roll call of vote as follows:

YEAS: (7) Nassauer, Johnson, Thomas, Route, Posey, Wheat and Fussell

NAYS: (0)

ABSENT: (0)

ABSTAIN: (0)

Item No. 11.- Adopt Resolution No. 15-707- A Resolution by the Washington Parish Council to engage Kushner Lagraize, L.L.C. to perform audit services for the Choctaw Road Landfill.

Chairman Fussell: "This is an annual audit, a public entity and must have separate audit services."

Councilman Thomas offered a motion, seconded by Councilman Johnson to adopt Resolution No. 15-707. A resolution by the Washington Parish Council to engage Kushner Lagraize, L.L.C. to perform audit services for the Choctaw Road Landfill.

Roll call of vote as follows:

YEAS: (7) Nassauer, Johnson, Thomas, Route, Posey, Wheat and Fussell

NAYS: (0)

ABSENT: (0)

ABSTAIN: (0)

Item No. 12. - Adopt Resolution No. 15-708- A resolution to adopt the 2016 annual operating budget and adopt the amended 2015 annual operating budget of the Washington Parish Tourism Commission.

Chairman Fussell: "This is presented to us on an annual basis."

Councilman Johnson offered a motion, seconded by Councilman Wheat to adopt Resolution No. 15-708. A resolution to adopt the 2016 annual operating budget and adopt the amended 2015 annual operating budget of the Washington Parish Tourism Commission.

Roll call of vote as follows:

YEAS: (7) Nassauer, Johnson, Thomas, Route, Posey, Wheat and Fussell

NAYS: (0)

ABSENT: (0)

ABSTAIN: (0)

Item No. 13. – Adopt Resolution No. 15-709- A resolution approving the issuance, sale and delivery of \$1,000,000 of Certificates of Indebtedness of Washington Parish Hospital Service District No. 1, State of Louisiana.

Chairman Fussell: “Do I hear any comments from the public.”

Phillipp Bedwell: “I reside in Bogalusa, La. The main thing I was wondering is what exactly is this line of indebtedness going to be for? What are the stipulations that they can borrow this money to use?”

Mike Magee- Chief Financial Officer- Representing Riverside Medical Center-1900 Main St. Franklinton, La. “This is essentially used as a line of credit because we are a parish home body we can’t get a traditional line of credit. This is a short term investment and will not be used for acquisitions or capital purchases; it is only good for one year. This will solely be used for operations of the hospital. What it is, it will serve as a line of credit and a safety net for the hospital to support our operations to make sure that we can meet our entire financial obligations. This is just a good business practice to be proactive to give the hospital funds just in case they need it. Just because we are approved \$1,000,000 doesn’t mean we will use that amount. If we were to use it this year the reason we chose a \$1,000,000 is because the hospital does receive property tax each year. We will receive property tax funds in January about 1.3 or 1.35 million, if we use some of the line of credit this year we will have the funds to pay it off by March. The reason any business would have a line of credit isn’t because of having a revenue problem; it is for a timing issue. The expenses come in that are due now and you may not necessarily have the revenue at the moment. This will not create a burden on any tax payer or affect them at all. I have been here since 2013 and the hospital has made a profit each year and we are projecting to have a net income for 2016. This line of credit is to be proactive in case we do need the money we have access to it.”

Chairman Fussell: “These questions were asked at the finance meeting we had on Resolution 15-709 on December 7, 2015. This meeting is open to the public, was posted on the council doors, Government doors and the Washington Parish Government website. I was against this until we had several hours of getting a good understanding from Mr. Magee in the Finance Meeting. We hold these meetings for this purpose, to ask questions and get an understanding, when it does come before the council we are already aware of the issue on hand and we can vote.”

Chairman Fussell: “One thing I would like to comment on is the rumor out in the parish that this money is going to be used to pay for the Thomas Clinic. Riverside is using a grant for Thomas Clinic.”

Councilman Thomas offered a motion, seconded by Councilman Johnson to adopt Resolution No. 15-709. A resolution approving the issuance, sale and delivery of \$1,000,000 of Certificates of Indebtedness of Washington Parish Hospital Service District No. 1, State of Louisiana.

Councilman Posey: “I wasn’t in favor of this to start with when it was brought up several months ago. After talking with the board members that represent district 7, I’m going to vote yes. We need to try to save the hospital and if they need the money then they need to borrow it.”

Roll call of vote as follows:

YEAS: (7) Nassauer, Johnson, Thomas, Route, Posey, Wheat and Fussell

NAYS: (0)

ABSENT: (0)

ABSTAIN: (0)

Item No. 14. - Public Participation - Chairman Fussell asked if anyone from the public would like to speak.

Danny Stogner: resides at 222033 Foggy Bottom, Angie La. "I just wanted to come and address the council; I will not be able to make your last meeting. I had a chance to work with all of you a lot when I was Councilman of Bogalusa. You really worked together, very intelligent and very helpful. Councilman Wheat, Councilman Nassauer, Parish President Taylor would come down every two weeks and stopped all the landings that were getting shut down on the river. We all got together and kept it open. You have done a tremendous job, Parish President Thomas down there, it really looks beautiful. I just want to tell all of you guys it was nice working with you and a very pleasant experience. I will miss you, and you can't have a better leader than Parish President Thomas, that man can get the most out of any dollar I have ever seen in my life. Thank you."

Chairman Fussell asked if anyone else would like to address the council.

No one came forward.

Councilman Johnson offered a motion, seconded by Councilman Posey to close public participation.

Roll call of vote as follows:

YEAS: (7) Nassauer, Johnson, Thomas, Route, Posey, Wheat and Fussell

NAYS: (0)

ABSENT: (0)

ABSTAIN: (0)

President's Report -

Donna Graham-Financial Director: "I presented to you tonight the concluded copy of the 2016 budget. Please review it and let me know if you have any questions. I have a recap copy for the public on the table. I will at a later date have it posted on our website."

Leo Lucchesi-Director of Public Works:

- **DOTD Road Transfer Program**- a favorable bid was submitted to DOTD with the apparent low bidder, Diamond B Construction, coming in at 14% under the credit of \$1,473,766.00. DOTD will make a determination on excess credits available, if any, being applied towards the Parish's share of funding under a program.
- **WPG Government Building Expansion**- Site preparation work has been ongoing at the new building addition for the WPG administrative offices. Currently the concrete foundation work is progressing; installation of new waste water and fresh water services are in place; concrete foundation to be constructed this week.
- **Choctaw Landfill new cell #6 Plans & Construction**- Eagle Environmental has been contracted to prepare bids documents for the construction of cell #6. Bid documents are scheduled for completion and received by Parish on December 18, 2015 for review and comments by Parish Administration. Design of the new cell has been coordinated with DEQ permit requirements; Eagle Environmental is the lead engineer for the design project.
- **LCDBG Public Facility Application Packages**- The public review and comment process for two proposed projects is complete and was submitted on 11/21/15 by PEC Engineering, Baton Rouge.
The two projects are:
 1. Street Improvements - Hackley Area
 2. New Water Well for the Bogue Lusa Water Works District

The qualifications and funding requests are reviewed by Jefferson Tessier, Director of LCDBG. He reviews the sites for approval prior to submittals to the Legislature. It appears that funding will be determined May or June of this year.

Mr. Lucchesi addressed the Council with the acceptance of a new road:

Acceptance of new road into the DPW Maintenance Inventory Proposed Inventory # 8-150

Choctaw Hills Dr., Franklinton, La. approximately 0.32 miles long (approximately 1,700 Linear Feet) intersects with and runs north of Frank Dillon Rd, Franklinton (Council District # 5) and terminates at a dead end / cul-de-sac.

Currently no measure of this road is on the Parish DPW inventory list for maintenance. Recently it was surveyed to have 7 occupied residential structures. With the remaining lots (approximately 18) owned or controlled by Rogers Land Holdings, LLC, Managing Member.

The residents and Managing Member have signed a consent agreement / request for this acceptance by the Parish Government.

The residents requested an inspection for the purpose of placing this road on the DPW maintenance inventory.

It is hereby requested that this road be considered for study to be placed onto the DPW maintenance list.

Chairman Fussell: "We will need to bring this to the Road Committee and set up a meeting with them."

Donnell Merritt- Transportation Supervisor- Update for the month of November:

- Replace 36 new signs.
- 15 stop and speed limit sign.
- 232 signs were straightened and cleaned.
- Drainage on 24 roads (12 miles).
- Cold mix on 21 roads (60 miles).
- 112 tons of hot mix on 14 rods (60 miles)
- Installed 9 driveway culverts.
- Bush hogged 153 roads (340 miles)
- Graveled 44 roads (80 miles)
- 324 yards of gravel on 10 roads (25 miles)
- Completed black top for the year.

President Thomas: Received a letter from Washington Parish Communications district to reappoint Mr. Orlander Smith and Mr. Gary Fenner to four year terms beginning January 1, 2016.

Councilman Route offered a motion, seconded by Councilman Johnson to reappoint Mr. Orlander Smith to the Washington Parish Communications Board beginning January 1, 2016 for a four year term.

Roll call of vote as follows:

YEAS: (7) Nassauer, Johnson, Thomas, Route, Posey, Wheat and Fussell

NAYS: (0)

ABSENT: (0)

ABSTAIN: (0)

Councilman Posey offered a motion, seconded by Councilman Route to reappoint Mr. Gary Fenner to the Washington Parish Communications board beginning January 1, 2016 for a four year term.

Roll call of vote as follows:

YEAS: (7) Nassauer, Johnson, Thomas, Route, Posey, Wheat and Fussell
NAYS: (0)

ABSENT: (0)

ABSTAIN: (0)

President Thomas: received a letter from Washington Parish Fire District No. 9 to appoint Raymond Fisher to replace Walter Smith for a 5 year term.

Councilman Posey offered a motion, seconded by Councilman Johnson to reappoint Mr. Raymond Fisher to the Washington Parish Fire District No. 9 replacing Mr. Walter Smith for a 5 year term.

Roll call of vote as follows:

YEAS: (7) Nassauer, Johnson, Thomas, Route, Posey, Wheat and Fussell

NAYS: (0)

ABSENT: (0)

ABSTAIN: (0)

President Thomas: Received a resignation letter from Mr. Levi Lewis resigning the Tourism Commission. Mr. Lewis recently was elected Washington Parish Council and his term begins January 2016.

Councilman Thomas offered a motion, seconded by Councilman Route to accept Mr. Levi Lewis's resignation from the Tourism Commission.

Roll call of vote as follows:

YEAS: (7) Nassauer, Johnson, Thomas, Route, Posey, Wheat and Fussell

NAYS: (0)

ABSENT: (0)

ABSTAIN: (0)

President Thomas: "Washington Parish Office's will be closed Wednesday, December 23 – Friday, December 25th Christmas. The Landfill will be closed Christmas and New Years Day. I would like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Council Discussion –

Councilman Route – "I would like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas."

Councilman Nassauer- "Merry Christmas and please be safe if traveling."

Councilman Thomas – "Merry Christmas to all and be safe if traveling. I would also like to share information about a Building in Thomas, Community Center, and a basketball gym. Some Person decided they wanted to burn it down. Well there are kids that use this building everyday of the week with the exception of Sundays. They play ball in there on Saturdays. This building is over 100 years old and it is an important building to the community in Thomas and Pine. If anyone can come up with any information on who may know something about this, please report it. We have received a little information on who might have done it; it will be taken to the Sherriff's Office tomorrow. We are just still looking for any kind of information. Someone decided to try and break in again last night, they kicked the door in. There is nothing in the

building, just ball goals and a place for these kids to go. It takes a special kind of person to do something like that but their day is coming.”

Chairman Johnson- “Wish everyone Happy Holiday.”

Councilman Posey- “Merry Christmas to all.”

Councilman Wheat – “Merry Christmas, let’s be safe and we live in a wonderful community.”

Chairman Fussell: “Mr. Al Barron just walked in; do you have anything you would like to share with the council?”

Mr. Al Barron: “I would like sum up some of the library’s activities over the last year, this device you see here is one of two \$1400.00 3D Critters which was purchased with grant money. Some of what it can do; print devices like crescent wrenches. Mrs. Marion at the Enon Library won a \$5000.00 grant for children services. We had two donations to cover some replacement and add materials. We have been blessed with part of the Russ Williams Collection, It covers the history of the area, and mostly the Bogalusa area, and it is something we are proud of. I would like to introduce Melanie Charrier.”

Melanie Charrier- Outreach Specialist-Franklinton Library: Mrs. Charrier handed out brochures on the outreach service. “All of our Washington Parish Libraries have started the outreach services; Franklinton, Bogalusa, Enon and Thomas. St. Tammany Parish does not provide this service. We provide library services to residents in the community who are unable to access services at our branch locations. They include the elderly and disabled, residents who are unable to drive, residents of senior living centers, residents who are homebound, and children enrolled in day-care centers. Services include delivery of requested materials, set-up of small collections of books, and providing information to the community in general. Outreach patrons can request:

- Books and Books on CD (audio books)
- Movies on DVD
- Assistance in obtaining materials located out of our parish
- Assistance in using our online catalog and accessing online e-services. The library’s website, www.washington.lib.la.us, offers many services that are available to patrons of the Washington Parish Library. These sites are available to outreach patrons as well. Among the e-services are:
- Free download of e-books for PC’s and reading devices

If you know of anyone that can use this service, please give them the information. I want to thank you for allowing me to share our outreach information. I wish everyone a Merry Christmas.”

Chairman Fussell – “Merry Christmas and Happy New Year, please be safe if you plan on traveling. I am part of Open Road Cruisers; it’s a car club in Bogalusa. We just had our December meeting; we have raised \$40,000 since it started in contribute to different residents in the parish. One thing I would like to say about the public meetings, Mr. Bedwell, those meetings are publicized and we encourage the public to come up here and get involved. That is one way you learn and be aware of what is going on with the Parish Government and all the other entities. I do encourage it, we post those meetings and they are there for the public.”

Adjourn – No further business to come before the council, meeting was adjourned on motion by Councilman Johnson, seconded by Councilman Thomas.

Roll call of vote as follows:

YEAS: (7) Nassauer, Johnson, Thomas, Route, Posey, Wheat and Fussell

NAYS: (0)

ABSENT: (0)

ABSTAIN: (0)

Order of Voting:

Pete Thomas Michael Fussell
Greg Route Charles Nassauer
Aubrey Posey Andre' Johnson
Kenneth Wheat

Next meeting will be held on Monday, December 28, 2015

In accordance with the Americans Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance, please contact Sarah Cook, Clerk to the Council at 985-839-0105 describing the assistance that is necessary. (All Ordinances, Resolutions and Attachments in its entirety are available at the office of Clerk of the Council at 909 Pearl Street, Franklinton, Louisiana or at (985)839-0105 or wpgov.org.)

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