

The Mayor and Council of the City of Franklin met in Regular Session on Tuesday, May 18, 2021, at 6:00 PM at City Hall, 300 Iberia Street, Franklin, Louisiana. Mayor Eugene P. Foulcard called the meeting to order. Also present were Councilmembers Chuck Autin, Larry Guilbeau, Joseph Garrison, Lester Levine, Jaime Robison. Absent were City Attorney Russell J. Cremaldi and City Clerk Karen LeBlanc. Attorney James Supple was present in temporary replacement of Mr. Cremaldi; Trina Jenkins sat in as clerk.

The invocation was offered by Mayor Foulcard and Councilman Joseph Garrison led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance.

GUESTS: None.

MAYOR'S EXECUTIVE REPORT:

Mayor Foulcard discussed the storm water pumps throughout the city in light of recent heavy rain events. He stated that all pumps operate automatically. Public Works staff checks these pumps during rain events to make sure things are operational throughout the duration of the event. Catch basins are cleaned and issues are addressed as quickly as possible. Any after-hours issues should be directed to the Police Department or 911 if there is a major emergency.

PUBLIC COMMENT (for items on the agenda): No comment heard.

MINUTES:

A motion was made by Councilman Garrison to accept the March 16, 2021 Public Hearing Meeting Minutes. Second by Councilman Autin and carried. Roll call is as follows:
YEAS: Councilmembers Autin, Guilbeau, Garrison, Levine, and Robison
NAYS: None.
ABSENT: None.

A motion was made by Councilman Autin to accept the April 20, 2021 Regular Meeting Minutes. Second by Councilman Garrison and carried. Roll call is as follows:
YEAS: Councilmembers Autin, Guilbeau, Garrison, Levine, and Robison
NAYS: None.
ABSENT: None.

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS:

Chief Chuck Bourgeois discussed the 2020 Fire Rating. The Franklin Fire Department was rated this past year on a number of areas within the fire department. We are rated every 5 years. Since I have been working for the fire department which has been 37 years we have been rated as a class 5 out of 10. For the first time we have retrograded to a 6. The three areas in the rating that we were hit the hardest were man power, water supply and 911 communications. .

The Franklin Fire Department has 9 full time employees (3 Administration- 6 Shift) and 19 volunteers of whom 4 are trained firefighters and the rest are support and EMR personnel. We do not get credit for support or EMR personnel, only fully trained volunteers. Our full time staff has increased under this administration by 3 personnel which has helped some but not enough. The issue we have is that volunteers are becoming a dying breed. They are hard to recruit, retain, and train to national standard. PIAL holds Volunteers to same training requirements as career fire fighters. Without multiple certified volunteers firefighters on our roster we get penalized in the rating. Volunteers as a whole are decreasing nationwide.

I have been working with the past administrations and the present to make the necessary changes we need to make so that we can maintain a high score in this area. The problem that we are having with the water distribution system is that it is old and in need of major repairs/upgrades that will be very expensive.

When I started here we were operating at 72-75 PSI leaving the water plant, today we are operating with 52 PSI which is a negative of 23 PSI on the distribution system. That drastic decrease throughout the years is due to the ageing water distribution system such as water lines, valves, water towers and hydrants. Since the hydrant flows have decreased by 23 PSI, this has caused the GPM's at the hydrants to be much lower than the required fire flow needed. This problem will continue to get us less points on the rating. On the last rating which was in 2015 we were retrograded to a 6 also because of the water system, but we were able make some improvements to get us back to a 5. This time it will be more difficult because there is a lot more upgrades needed to turn this around.

Some of the needed changes are as follows: Change out 64 - 2 way hydrants and replace them with new 3 way hydrants at a cost of \$215,000.00. We have been changing out hydrants as the funds become available but not nearly enough. The cost to change out one hydrant is estimated at \$3500 which includes a hydrant, new valve and installation.

Locate and replace all broken valves throughout the city. Upgrade the water mains in numerous areas of the city where the piping is old and failing which causes the water flow to be decreased dramatically. Replace all water lines less than 6". When installing new hydrants, all hydrants need to be 3 way hydrants installed on 6" mains or larger to acquire the maximum points allowed. Hydrants whether the 3 way or 2 way hydrant on 4" mains do not receive any credit due to inadequate water supply.

With all this said this administration has been working hard to make the necessary changes to the water system with the funds they have available. We are in the process of acquiring federal funds from the American Rescue Plan that will be used to make some of the necessary changes that can be made. The American Rescue Plan is a Federal fund that shall be used to fund water, sewer and broad band upgrades throughout the municipality.

The 911 center is not CAD capable at this time. CAD is Computer Aided Dispatch system that is used when dispatching fire calls. It has all the information that is needed such as hydrant locations, preplans, emergency shut offs etc. We will be working with the 911 center to hopefully make this available to all the departments that they dispatch for in the parish.

In closing, I have contacted some local insurance companies to see how much will a home owner's insurance increase with the change in the fire rating. Example - A one family dwelling with an estimated cost of \$145K will not see an increase; if there is an increase it should be minimal at the least. In fact what I was told is that a rating from a 4-6 will not see any changes to their fire insurance.

Please know that the Franklin Fire Department and the City of Franklin has and will do everything in our power to correct the deficiencies as the funds allow us to do so. The drop in rating should not negatively reflect on the fire fighters of the Franklin Fire Department. They constantly go above and beyond the call of duty for the citizens of Franklin and will continue to do so.

Asst. Chief Justin Martin discussed KnoxBoxes. He stated that the Fire Department is looking for ways to improve services. A local business approached the Fire Department about a box they want to install on the outside of their building that holds keys to the building. The Fire Department would have a key to the box. In the event that there is an emergency and the business is closed, the Fire Department would be able to access the building without breaking glass or doors; therefore, saving money, possible unnecessary damage to buildings and saving valuable time. The cost is incurred by the business.

NEW BUSINESS:

A motion was made by Councilman Garrison to approve the FY 2020-2021 Louisiana Compliance Questionnaire. Second by Councilman Autin and carried. Roll call is as follows:

YEAS: Councilmembers Autin, Guilbeau, Garrison, Levine, and Robison

NAYS: None.

ABSENT: None.

A motion was made by Councilman Autin to approve the appointment of Christopher C. Martin to the Civil Service Board as Fire Department Board Member filling the unexpired term ending July 29, 2023. Second by Councilman Garrison and carried. Roll call is as follows:

YEAS: Councilmembers Autin, Guilbeau, Garrison, Levine, and Robison

NAYS: None.

ABSENT: None.

CONDEMNATION HEARINGS:

Condemnation Hearings were held pursuant to Louisiana Revised Statute Sections 33:3761-4763, relative to the following properties located in the City of Franklin.

Mr. Kevin Perro was present to speak on behalf of 1907 Pine Street. He stated that he is a tax sale purchaser and that there is another party that holds a 7% interest in the property. The

other party had expressed interest in buying his interest but has since stopped communication. He would like a chance to make repairs.

A motion was made by Councilman Garrison to make an order to condemn the property and for the demolition of the structure within 90 days at 1907 Pine Street. Second by Councilman Levine and carried. Roll call is as follows:
YEAS: Councilmembers Autin, Guilbeau, Garrison, Levine, and Robison
NAYS: None.
ABSENT: None.

A motion was made by Councilman Garrison to make an order to condemn the property and for the demolition of the structure without any delay at 1305 Percy Street. Second by Councilman Levine and carried. Roll call is as follows:
YEAS: Councilmembers Autin, Guilbeau, Garrison, Levine, and Robison
NAYS: None.
ABSENT: None.

A motion was made by Councilman Garrison to make an order to condemn the property and for the demolition of the structure within 90 days at 207 Pecan. Second by Councilman Autin and carried. Roll call is as follows:
YEAS: Councilmembers Autin, Guilbeau, Garrison, Levine, and Robison
NAYS: None.
ABSENT: None.

Myra Brown and James Brown, owners of the land located at 1047 Cayce Street, were present. They stated that they do not know who the owner of the mobile home is as the original owner sold it to another person. Mrs. Brown stated that they do not know if they should tear it down or not.
Mayor Foulcard mentioned that the structure is harboring illicit activity and that it would be in the best interest of the neighborhood if it is torn down.

A motion was made by Councilman Autin to make an order to condemn the property and for the demolition of the structure without any delay at 1047 Cayce Street Lot #5. Second by Councilman Garrison and carried. Roll call is as follows:
YEAS: Councilmembers Autin, Guilbeau, Garrison, Levine, and Robison
NAYS: None.
ABSENT: None.

A motion was made by Councilman Levine to make an order to condemn the property and for the demolition of the structure within 90 days at 1005 W Third Street. Second by Councilman Garrison and carried. Roll call is as follows:
YEAS: Councilmembers Autin, Guilbeau, Garrison, Levine, and Robison
NAYS: None.
ABSENT: None.

A motion was made by Councilman Garrison to make an order to condemn the property and for the demolition of the structure within 90 days at 504 Augustine Maze Street. Second by Councilman Levine and carried. Roll call is as follows:
YEAS: Councilmembers Autin, Guilbeau, Garrison, Levine, and Robison
NAYS: None.
ABSENT: None.

A motion was made by Councilman Autin to make an order to condemn the property and for the demolition of the structure without any delay at 1207 Fort Street. Second by Councilman Garrison and carried. Roll call is as follows:
YEAS: Councilmembers Autin, Guilbeau, Garrison, Levine, and Robison
NAYS: None.
ABSENT: None.

A motion was made by Councilman Autin to make an order to condemn the property and for the demolition of the structure without any delay at 306 Cypress Street. Second by Councilman Garrison and carried. Roll call is as follows:

YEAS: Councilmembers Autin, Guilbeau, Garrison, Levine, and Robison

NAYS: None.

ABSENT: None.

A motion was made by Councilman Garrison to make an order to condemn the property and for the demolition of the structure within 60 days at 426 Sixth Street. Second by Councilman Levine and carried. Roll call is as follows:

YEAS: Councilmembers Autin, Garrison, Levine, and Robison

NAYS: Councilman Guilbeau

ABSENT: None.

A motion was made by Councilman Garrison to make an order to condemn the property and for the demolition of the structure without any delay at 607 Hamm. Second by Councilman Levine and carried. Roll call is as follows:

YEAS: Councilmembers Autin, Guilbeau, Garrison, Levine, and Robison

NAYS: None.

ABSENT: None.

ORDER APPOINTING ATTORNEY:

Pursuant to La. R. S. 33:4762, and finding the owner of the building(s) to be absent from the state of Louisiana and/or unrepresented therein, the appointment of Joseph Tabb, attorney at law to represent the owner(s) in connection with all actions and proceedings conducted to demolish the building(s) situated at the relative address in Franklin, Louisiana, pursuant to La. R. S. 33:4761, et seq.

A motion was made by Councilman Garrison to appoint Joseph Tabb, Attorney at Law, to represent the owner(s) in connection with all actions and proceedings conducted to demolish the building(s) situated at 1204 Willow Street. Second by Councilman Autin and carried. Roll call is as follows:

YEAS: Councilmembers Autin, Guilbeau, Garrison, Levine, and Robison

NAYS: None.

ABSENT: None.

A motion was made by Councilman Garrison to appoint Joseph Tabb, Attorney at Law, to represent the owner(s) in connection with all actions and proceedings conducted to demolish the building(s) situated at 1025 Oakdale Street. Second by Councilman Autin and carried. Roll call is as follows:

YEAS: Councilmembers Autin, Guilbeau, Garrison, Autin, and Robison

NAYS: None.

ABSENT: None.

A motion was made by Councilman Garrison to appoint Joseph Tabb, Attorney at Law, to represent the owner(s) in connection with all actions and proceedings conducted to demolish the building(s) situated at 1012 Oakdale Street. Second by Councilman Autin and carried. Roll call is as follows:

YEAS: Councilmembers Autin, Guilbeau, Garrison, Autin, and Robison

NAYS: None.

ABSENT: None.

A motion was made by Councilman Garrison to appoint Joseph Tabb, Attorney at Law, to represent the owner(s) in connection with all actions and proceedings conducted to demolish the building(s) situated at 424 Sixth Street. Second by Councilman Autin and carried. Roll call is as follows:

YEAS: Councilmembers Autin, Guilbeau, Garrison, Autin, and Robison

NAYS: None.

ABSENT: None.

A motion was made by Councilman Garrison to appoint Joseph Tabb, Attorney at Law, to represent the owner(s) in connection with all actions and proceedings conducted to demolish the building(s) situated at 604 Morris Street. Second by Councilman Autin and carried. Roll call is as follows:

YEAS: Councilmembers Autin, Guilbeau, Garrison, Autin, and Robison
NAYS: None.
ABSENT: None.

A motion was made by Councilman Garrison to appoint Joseph Tabb, Attorney at Law, to represent the owner(s) in connection with all actions and proceedings conducted to demolish the building(s) situated at 514 Augustine Maze Street. Second by Councilman Autin and carried. Roll call is as follows:

YEAS: Councilmembers Autin, Guilbeau, Garrison, Autin, and Robison
NAYS: None.
ABSENT: None.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Ed Verdin, City Public Relations Director, announced upcoming events including the Robert Jenkins, Sr. Pavilion Dedication, Soul Food Festival, City to City Riders Glow Bike-Ride, and Freedom Riders Wreath Laying Ceremony.

A motion to adjourn was made by Councilman Levine. Second by Councilman Garrison and carried.

ATTEST:
/s/Karen LeBlanc
Clerk of the Council
Director of Administration

CITY OF FRANKLIN, LOUISIANA
/s/EUGENE P. FOULCARD, MAYOR