

**Village of Folsom
General Meeting
October 8, 2012**

Present: Mayor Phillip Bickham
Alderman Jill Mathies
Alderman Lance Willie
Absent: Alderman Donald Burris
Attorney Delbert Talley

The meeting was called to order and a quorum established. The invocation and pledge were led by Mr. Mark Beard. The Agenda was amended by Alderman Willie by adding discussion street lights-improvements/roadway/ditch-way improvements and also adding Town financial discussion to agenda which was second by Alderman Mathies. (2 Yeas, 0 Nays) The motion carried.

Item No. I – Resolution: Community Water and Enrichment Fund

Mayor brought to the board's attention that this is a Grant that is submitted each year with grant writer for water enhancements. Mayor stated that since he hasn't had a chance to meet with the engineer to put in any water projects it would be in the best interest to submit for more water meters. Motion Alderman Willie approved to submit a resolution to except this grant for more utility water meters in Folsom, second by Alderman Mathies.

Item No. II – Building Official - CBO

Mayor informed board members that he spoke to the State last week in reference to a CBO. Mayor stated that there are many municipalities that are having the same issue trying to get a building official or trying to get one certified. Mayor stated that the person we had taking the test didn't pass it, so Mayor did speak to the 3rd party Official from Covington Ray Treadaway, but his rates are higher than what we are charging. He is asking \$75 per inspection and were paying \$50 and charging \$60. Alderman Mathies asked Mayor how are we handling building inspections now & issuing building permits. Mayor stated, that the state is allowing us and other places to use a 3rd party, I can use an electrician to do the electrical part and a plumber to do the inspection of plumbing as long as there's a licensed contractor until we get an inspector. Both Board members Alderman Willie and Alderman Mathies showed concern about where are we going with a building inspector we can't just put our reliability into one person. Alderman Mathies also stated that we just changed fees about a year ago. A concern resident stated that we need to advertise and put the position into the paper. Mayor stated that we have put it in the paper and our website, but there just is a limited number of building officials in the state of Louisiana. Mayor stated what we are needing is the board to increase the fees for inspections from \$60 to \$75. Alderman Willie stated that he doesn't want to pass up any improvements or new businesses coming to Folsom so by common consent I think we need to raise the building fees for now, until we can get an inspector for Folsom. Alderman Mathies stated that she would like to table the matter; we just changed fees about a year ago. After research I did myself on different Municipalities and what's being charged, it was presented to the board and we made the changes on all our fees significantly. Alderman Mathies also stated here we are a year again and were changing the fees again even though it is only \$15, we are looking at citizens and that is per inspections, which is a total of 9 inspections. Mayor stated that when he spoke to Mr. Treadaway maybe we would lower the numbers of inspections. Alderman Willie then stated that Alderman Mathies does have a point and would like to motion to table this so that I can take a look if we can come down on the fee's and sit down and see what we are working with since I

wasn't aware of this until now. Mayor stated so were are going to pass on Mr. Treadaway till we get an inspector.

Item No. III – Discuss Street Light/Roadway/Ditch-way – Improvements:

Alderman Willie opened up topic about several residents bringing to his attention streetlights, roadways, ditch-ways needing improvements. I would like to sit down and go over some of these issues with Mr. Burris and yourself Mayor, to discuss which ditches need to be cleaned out. Mayor stated that he is very aware Mr. Burris does clean out the culverts and cleans out ditches when they are aware of issues. Mayor stated that he hopes if a citizen has a complaint with ditch drainage problems that they bring it to the Town Hall so it can be properly handled, because all complaint calls that we get about ditches are properly addressed. Alderman Willie then spoke about many street lights that are out in Folsom. A few of our local businesses have been robbed like Gene's Tire and Scoops Restaurant, we also have a lot of residents that like to walk and jog at night and our streets are dark. I think we need to look into putting some new street lights throughout dark areas of Folsom. Mayor then stated that we do have many lights in Folsom that we pay for, we received a list from WST of all of these lights we are paying for so that we could check to see if they are working and found some are not working because some poles have been changed out and some of the lights were not put back on the poles. Alderwoman Mathies then asked, how many lights are we paying for approximately. Mayor couldn't reply, so then Alderwoman Mathies asked, how about the average of working vs not working? Mayor stated the farthest we got on this project was a list from WST of how many lights we are paying for and where these lights are located. Alderman Willie stated, so we're paying for lights no matter if there working or not, Mayor replied, "yes". Alderman Willie stated, we need to get with WST and get them to make sure these lights are working, because if we are paying them, then they need to be working. This is citizen's tax money that's paying for these lights and I feel they need to be working. Alderwoman Mathies then asked, on the ditches and roadways are they on a scheduled kind of plan? Maybe we can leave this whole discussion for next month so we can get some more information: a list from WST lights we're paying for, what's working, what's non-working, where are we going to go from there on getting the ones back to working order. Meanwhile, we need to let our community know if we are on a scheduled cleaning plan with ditches and roadways so that if there is a problem area, we can see where that is on the maintenance schedule. Just like we do with grass cutting, so we can have a plan. Mayor stated usually when we get a complaint, Wesley handles it right away, we just need residents to bring their problems to the Town Hall so that they can continue to be addressed. Alderwoman Mathies stated well I still would like to see this re-discussed at next month's meeting so we are aware of what's working, non-working on the lights and what is our maintenance schedule in reference to those ditches. Mayor said ok.

Item No. IV – Town Financial Discussion:

Alderman Willie informed Mayor that Mr. Talley isn't here tonight to help us discuss a few matters but I did contact him about our town crossing guard Mr. John McDonald, he works part-time for the town and during the week of the storm only worked three days (Thursday-23, Friday-24, and Monday-27 of August, 2012) but still got paid for 18 hours. Mayor stated all employees of the Village got paid during the storm. Alderman Willie said full time employees and I did ask Mr. Talley and he stated that part time employees do not get paid. Mr. McDonald only works 15 hours a week how did he end up with 18 hours. Mayor stated that he had Mr. McDonald come out on a Saturday-25 of August, 2012 to work a function as a crossing guard. Alderman Willie said I spoke to Mr. Talley and he stated that part-time employees do not have the benefits of full time employees.

Mayor stated, "well I looked at the ordinance also, but Mr. Talley is not here to discuss this, so we need to get with Mr. Talley." Alderwoman Mathies stated, "I'm confused, what function did we have here?" Mayor stated we had a 5K Marathon that was put on in the Village and Mr. McDonald came out to be the crossing guard. I could only get one officer to come out to work that morning and due to safety reasons I asked Mr. McDonald. We had one officer that went up to Spencer's, one at a funeral and no other officers to bring out for that Saturday.

Alderman Willie stated "this brings me to another point, town employee raises, every time I ask in a meeting here or a meeting in the back you keep bringing the point that the town has no money." Mayor stated, "that's not the point I've brought to you, and again I've discussed with you and I gave you a letter from the State Attorney General that the raises is a discretionary of the Mayor. " Mayor then went into how he isn't going to get into about discussing raises in a public meeting with you. Alderman Willie said, "well then obviously we don't have the money to do it." Mayor stated "no, I never said we never had the money to do it," then Alderwoman Mathies said, "then if we have the money then why haven't we done it?" Mayor stated, "again we are not going to discuss raises."

Alderman Willie stated, "this bring me to another point, credit card expenses." Alderman Willie presented to the Board and Mayor each a folder with copies of fuel credit card statements and reimbursement request sheets on the Mayor. Alderman Willie questioned Mayor about his whereabouts in Alexandria, Breaux Bridge, Baton Rouge, Opelousas, Denhan Springs and Hammond. He also brought to attention that the Mayor was in Opelousas at 4:45 p.m. on Christmas Eve fueled Village car \$53.90, night before New Years at 5:29 p.m. fueled Village car \$39.81 and several other dates and wanted to know what Town business did the Mayor have at those times and at those locations. Mayor stated, "he wasn't sure he would have to take a look at it and can give him exactly where he was at because I have a notation and notebook on everything." Alderman Willie stated, "I would appreciate it because this goes on for months and it's like a time table same days, same weekends, Saturdays, same times." Mayor stated, "I attend workshops in these areas and in Hammond I meet with Engineers." Alderman Willie then stated "Mayor I notice also that you use the Town car a lot." Mayor stated, "not everywhere I go as a matter of fact I use my car more then I use the Town car." Many citizens then stated we didn't know the Town had a car, Mayor stated, "yes two years ago, the Causeway donated a car." Both board members stated to the Police Department. Mayor stated, "no it wasn't donated to the Police department, Me and Chief Killingsworth have discussed that." Alderman Willie then read the Personnel Ordinance page 22 Section 6.19 Travel; expense reimbursement. Mayor stated, "that at times there was problems with the Town car he would take his car to conferences." Alderman Willie brought to attention that on August 1st – 4th Mayor took personal car to LMA Convention in Lake Charles to the Casino Resort 402.26 miles paid at .505 cents and was paid \$203.15. Then on August 16th you used 144.88 miles at .505 cents and paid \$73.16 to attend a Bond Hearing in Baton Rouge. Alderman Willie showed Mayor from Fuelman gas statement that you used Town credit card to put gas in your personal vehicle. Mayor stated, and I did pay and reimbursed the Village for the gas, "is that right Susan". Municipal Clerk stated "one time yes sir, one time." Alderman Willie stated "one time but you filled up for the Bond Commission trip and never reimbursed the Town back." Mayor stated, "no I only

reimbursed the Town for the Lake Charles trip \$56.32.” Alderman Willie stated, “that you used the card on August 2nd for \$34.66 and then on August 16th \$60.20 and when you got back you still didn’t reimburse the Town and still received the .505 cent reimbursement per mile.” Mayor commented “yes and reimburse only what she gave me to reimburse back.” Alderwoman Mathies then stated “that’s not fair are you really trying to point the finger at Susan that she only asked you to give her that amount.” Mayor said “no, I am not pointing the finger at Susan when I got gas receipts I told Susan I need to reimburse the gas.” Alderman Willie then stated “ok, then what happen to the reimbursement for the \$34.66 and the \$60.20?” Mayor stated “I’m not sure I’m just looking at this.” Mayor said “wait, I filled the Town car then had Mr. Callahan work on the Town car that day and I went in my car.” Alderwoman Mathies commented we can go on this all night, let’s just move on. Alderman Willie stated Mayor I’m just trying to get clarification on what the Town is paying on these credit card expenses. Mayor stated “I have people that I meet with on the weekends about Town business.” Alderman Willie stated “Mayor, I just want you to be honest, I’m just trying to get the fact straight.” Mayor stated again “I will show you.” Alderman Willie questioned how the Mayor could claim at a previous meeting that the village does not have the money to give employees raises but can continue to use the Village’s credit card for I don’t know what, it adds up. Alderwoman Mathies asked the Mayor so what your saying is that we are in a financial drain; and the question is if we don’t have any money then what is this frivolous spending.” Mayor then stated “the majority of the business I do for the Town I go to meet with Parish President, Senator, State Representative and I go in my own vehicle.” Resident Samuel Prevost stood up in the meeting and asked “Mayor how many times have you taken the Town vehicle to Baton Rouge for church?” Mayor stated, “I have taken the Town vehicle up to Baton Rouge to meet with someone and then went on to church on numerous occasions.” Mr. Prevost told the mayor that he does not believe the Mayor is being truthful and that he has already contacted the State Attorney General’s Office and the State Ethics Board on the matter of the Mayor using the Village vehicle to travel to and from his church in Baton Rouge. Mayor stated “I stop in Hammond on Wednesday evening and get my car in Hammond and go to Baton Rouge for church.” Resident Prevost states but Mayor your using the Town’s car to go to Hammond for personal business. Resident Richard Atkins then brought up the point about the Town cars not having decals. Mayor stated we don’t have any Town Cars that have decals. Mr. Prevost stated that we are then in the violation of State Law. Mayor stated “so what is the problem with not having a decal.” Mr. Atkins showed concern about then how will someone know if it’s a town vehicle or employee. Mayor stated I’m sure everyone knows our employees. Mr. Atkins stated but what about our new residents. Mayor stated, “again we just don’t have decals.” Resident Prevost then brought up a brief discussion asking Mayor about sewer credits not waters credits. Mayor stated, “What I told you was if someone has a water leak in the Village and we know it’s at normal we will adjust their sewer bill not their water bill. Mr. Prevost stated I want that publically noted because your Attorney stated it was a direct violation of the law. Mayor stated not for the sewer bill, I’ve had this discussion with the Attorney and the Attorney General Office. Mr. Talley is not here so we can’t ask the Attorney. Alderwoman Mathies said “we are not aware of things that go thru this office, it is don’t ask it, I’m never told situation.” Mayor said “we have a great maintenance crew and we are addressing all leaks and water

issues.” Mayor also stated that “the Council do make the rules and the law, they can in act any ordinance any legislation they want to in act and all I can do is operate according to what is in acted. I can only do what is in these books to do.” In closing Alderman Willie said “Mayor I do want you to be aware that the State Legislative Auditor will be coming to conduct an audit of the Village’s finances and there is an investigation thru the STPSO.” Mayor stated “ok”

The meeting was adjourned on motion of Alderman Willie, seconded by Alderwoman Mathies. (2 Yeas, 0 Nays) The motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Phillip Bickham, Mayor

I attest that the above is a true and correct copy of the minutes taken at the General Meeting held October 8, 2012.

Attest:

Susan Willie
Municipal Clerk