

TOWN OF MADISONVILLE  
REGULAR MEETING  
September 12, 2012

On roll call the following answered present: Mayor Gitz, Councilmen Badeaux, Ostendorf, Bouey, Bounds and Pelloat.

Mayor Gitz asked for the approval of the Minutes of the August 8, 2012 Council Meeting. On motion by Councilman Bouey and seconded by Councilman Ostendorf, the approval passed unanimously.

The Mayor inquired if there were any questions concerning the Financial Statements of July 2012. No questions were submitted and a motion to accept the Financial Statements was made by Councilman Bounds and seconded by Councilman Pelloat. All were in favor.

The Mayor wanted to extend his thanks to the office and maintenance staffs, police officers, Steve Benton, Roland Morris, Debbie Morris, Bonnie Fruge, Father Frank Giroir and Tammany Morris for their work before and after Hurricane Isaac. He stated that there were 116 single-family homes, 24 businesses and two churches damaged from the storm. Many volunteers arrived in Town from Pennsylvania, Minnesota, North Carolina and Texas to help with the cleanup effort. Other organizations that were instrumental to the hurricane recovery were the Second Harvest, Red Cross, the Madisonville Chamber of Commerce and churches of all denominations.

Mayor Gitz stated that at the present time, we have spent approximately \$250,000 on restoring the Town. The Community Center, Fire/Police Department and Library sustained water damage. Temporary office trailers will be used for the office workers and police officers until these buildings can be repaired. It is our hope to have everything ready for the Wooden Boat Festival.

The Mayor asked those in attendance if they would like to express their comments to the Council. Ms. Winnie Goodwin expressed her thanks for the debris cleanup and for the temporary housing of the police officers in the old library. She questioned whether the officers will return to the library on a permanent basis and if the building was being used. Councilman Pelloat stated he intended to bring the issue to Council.

As stated by the Mayor, the police will have decent office facilities but the town hall repairs will be completed first. Mr. Mel Lamp questioned whether the plan for recovery will take 1 month, 6 months or five years. He then suggested the Council develop a long-term plan and put it in writing.

Ms. Samantha Goodwin reported there will be a "Beach Sweep" Saturday morning beginning at the Maritime Museum at 10 a.m. Additional information can be found on the "Keep Madisonville Beautiful" website. For volunteers participating in the workday, Chick-fil-A will provide lunch.

Mr. Joey Mahon inquired about the replacement of the high bridge on Lake Rd. The Mayor stated it was the State's responsibility to perform the repairs.

Mr. Gordon Mellencamp questioned whether the town or FEMA would have a role in the repairs and raising of houses. Mr. Benton stated there are different grant programs to raise houses. If the homeowner had flood insurance, \$30,000 will be deducted from the claim. This would not be extra money but part of the insurance claim payment. As of this date, there is no indication of grant money from the State. Mayor Gitz

stated there is much red tape and it is difficult to get answers. He asked Mr. Benton if he could get some answers and possibly have a special meeting. Mr. Benton stated that FEMA representative will be in Town to review houses that have substantial damage.

Councilman Pelloat wanted to address the question of the action of the Corps of Engineers in the millions of dollars spent on the protection of New Orleans at the detriment of the Northshore. Mayor Gitz stated that resolutions given to the right people might help. He then added that we should stand with the Parish Government in this endeavor.

It was suggested by Ms. S. Goodwin that funds from the BP oil spill could be used for hurricane and storm surge protection.

After much discussion, the meeting direction turned to Kate Fath of PEC. Ms. Fath reported on the progress of moving the Town's natural gas line to make way for the turn around. PEC will be doing the cost estimate. Also, the Town and PEC will be requesting Capital Outlay funds for the rehabilitation of Morgan and Water Streets. Mr. Joe Harmon reported on the Bulkhead project. He stated an obstacle to the start the project is the damage to the bridge on Lake Rd. caused by the storm.

Mayor Gitz added that Kyle Matthews and PEC are working together for moving of the gas line for the turn around. The Mayor interjected that since the gas line was installed in 1946, the State would be obligated to assist in the project financially. If we choose to upgrade the gas line, we would be responsible for the difference.

Ms. Goodwin reported on the progress of the "Reveille" newsletter. Since the newsletter will increase its circulation to include all of the 70447 zip codes, the cost to produce and mail would be more costly. To supplement the cost, they have reached out to sponsors. Also stated was the availability of sponsorship ads. Victoria Leyva or Ms. S. Goodwin could be contacted for information. Special thanks was given to Ms. Tammany Morris for her expertise in the design of the first published newsletter. Ms. Leyva will be the new editor, and with the Council approval, the newsletter will be mailed October 1. As the newsletter had not been approved by the Council before the meeting due to the storm, Councilman Bounds made a motion to receive the newsletter by e-mail by Monday and will respond by Wednesday. A motion was then seconded by Councilman Ostendorf. All were in favor.

The new owners of T-Rivers requested approval to rebuild their business after the near destruction due to Hurricane Isaac. Mr. King stated that T-Rivers is in an unsafe condition and by ordinance has the right to rebuild. He further stipulated the plans need to be approved by the Council. Mr. Benton said the owner must have a foundation engineer, be designed by an architect, and submitted to the State Fire Marshal for approval. Mr. King questioned the need for a permit to demolish the building. Mr. Benton can give him a permit. Mr. Benjamin also requested the use of a gate to block off premises. During the hurricane's aftermath, he was a victim of looters. The Mayor will suggest to the State a gauge on a swing gate over the small canal be installed.

Mr. King, the Town's attorney, notified the Council that there were some home occupation owners using their yards for part of their businesses causing unsightly neighborhoods. He suggested the Council request the Planning and Zoning committee add language to the ordinance to restrict the use of home occupations to the actual building. The wording he suggested for the proposed resolution is as follows:

***“Only that portion of the home itself, which is used as a home occupation, shall be utilized for the conduct of such business. No other part of the premises shall be so utilized, including but not limited to, the placement or storage of material, equipment, or products related to the home occupation.”***

A motion by Councilman Bouey and seconded by Councilman Ostendorf to approve the resolution to refer this ordinance change to the Planning and Zoning Committee was made. All were in favor.

Those in the audience were asked if they had any objections. None was given. However, Mr. Mahon needed verification that this added language to the ordinance only applies to residential home occupations.

On motion by Councilman Pelloat and seconded by Councilman Ostendorf, with the approval by all, the agenda was amended to discuss a location for the Police Department.

Councilman Pelloat stated there has been much conversation concerning the Police Department’s new location. He feels that the library is an ideal location and possesses the look of professionalism. Councilman Bounds interjected that the library is not being used and likes the idea of having the police department occupy the building. Citing lack of space, Councilman Ostendorf agreed the library would be an excellent location.

Chief Smith added the officers had to evacuate quickly from the floodwaters. Documents and evidence need to be in a secure, climate-controlled environment with strict guidelines on storage. As the Fire Department is not expected to build the new station for a few more years, the Police Department has no way to expand their offices.

After much discussion, Councilman Bounds made a motion to continue with what the Mayor had started in supplying temporary facilities so that the renovations to the library can be completed as soon as possible with the idea of moving the police into the facilities they need. The motion was seconded by Councilman Pelloat. All were in favor.

Mr. Lamp asked for updates of the minutes of the Town meetings on the website. It was reported that the current minutes are now posted. Ms. Victoria Leyva, a website designer, suggested more information be placed on the site. There is nothing that says, “Come to Madisonville”.

During the Old Business portion of the meeting, Councilman Pelloat questioned the status of the reopening of the Post Office. The Mayor stated there are no answers at the present time.

Councilman Pelloat also wanted to have a meeting to discuss a plot plan for the park that was presented by Councilman Badeaux six years ago. He suggested a meeting to solicit public input. By redesigning the ballpark, he believes many people could benefit from its use. Ms. Goodwin stated that “Keep Madisonville Beautiful” could get grant money and sponsor the meeting. Mr. Mel Lamp suggested seeking the advice of professional planners for the project.

As many children use the ballpark for practice and games, Mayor Gitz suggested that a park be built by the new library. This park could also include an amphitheater.

Mr. Edward Dillard suggested that the ideas being shared are needed but we need to focus on recovery at this time, and Councilman Badeaux agreed stating the community needs to get back to normal first.

In New Business, Councilman Bounds suggested a meeting be arranged within the next few weeks to update our residents on FEMA reimbursements for properties damaged by Hurricane Isaac. Mr. Benton discussed the perils of declaring property “substantially damaged.” If this designation is applied to a home, you would be required to raise the house whether you receive funding or not.

Mr. Lamp expressed his thanks to the Madisonville Chamber and all the volunteers that helped with the hurricane recovery.

Tammy Morris stated that Fr. Frank of St. Anselm Church wanted to thank the Mayor for what was accomplished during the aftermath from Hurricane Isaac. Councilman Bouey also stated his thanks for the help received by the Town from volunteers.

Councilman Pelloat suggested the Town speak to our Parish President concerning building a barrier to prevent floodwaters from damaging the Town. Mayor Gitz stated that we should get a copy of the Parishes’ Resolution. Councilman Pelloat also suggested that a council member be placed on the board. Mr. Bourg added that representation is necessary as most of the attention was given to Slidell.

Motion to pay all bills was made by Councilman Bounds and seconded by Councilman Bouey. All were in favor.

A motion to adjourn was made by Councilman Badeaux and seconded by Councilman Bounds. Motion carried unanimously.

Jeanie A. Morlier  
Secretary/Treasurer