

## ADVISORY BUDGET/FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

NOVEMBER 10, 2021  
FRANKLIN, LOUISIANA

The Advisory Budget/Finance Committee met on this date with Rev. Craig Mathews, Chairman presiding and the following members present: Rodney Olander, Scott Ramsey Leslie "Les" Rulf, Jr., James W. Bennett, Jr, Mark A. Duhon, Kristi Prejeant Rink, M.D., Gwendolyn L. Hidalgo, and Dean S. Adams. Absent were J Ina and Patrick J. Hebert.

Also present were Chief Administrative Officer, Henry LaGrange, Director of Finance, Paul Governale, and Parish President, David Hanagriff.

The Invocation was pronounced by Rev. Mathews and the Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mrs. Hidalgo.

Referred from the Regular August 11, 2021 Advisory Budget/Finance Committee - The Teche Project has submitted their Pre-Application requesting funds for Year 2021. Funding Request is \$2,000.00.

In response to Mr. Bennett's inquiry, Clerk of the Council, Lisa C. Morgan stated that this item was referred to the 2022 Budget at the August 11, 2021 Advisory Budget/Finance Committee Meeting.

In response to Mr. Adams' inquiry, Mr. Governale stated that this request is not included in the budget.

Per President Hanagriff's inquiry relative to the General Fund's fund balance, Mr. LaGrange advised that the fund balance in the General Fund for the proposed 2022 budget is \$15,728. Mr. LaGrange stated that he did not have a conversation with the Tourist Commission relative to providing funding support for this request.

In response to Mr. Olander's inquiry, Mr. LaGrange stated that this allocation request may not qualify as an allowable use of funds from the Wards 1, 2, 3, 4, 7 & 10 3/10's % Sales Tax Fund. After discussion, Mr. Olander moved to recommend to the Parish Council to approve an allocation request in the amount of \$2,000.00 to The Teche Project from Wards 1, 2, 3, 4, 7 & 10 3/10's % Sales Tax Fund. Dr. Rink seconded the motion which carried.

After discussion, Mr. Olander moved to recommend to the Parish Council to approve The Teche Project Funding Request of \$2,000.00 from Wards 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, & 10 3/10% Sales Tax Fund. Dr. Rink seconded the motion, which carried.

### **NEW BUSINESS:**

#### A. Review proposed 2022 Budget and Five-Year Capital Outlay.

Per Mr. Adam's inquiry relative to increasing garbage collection fees and landfill tipping fees, Mr. LaGrange state that a survey was conducted of the five (5) municipalities relative to their respective garbage collection fees. He informed that the Town of Baldwin's fee is \$21.10 per month, the City of Morgan City's fee is \$18.60 per month, the City of Patterson's fee is \$15.00 per month and the City of Franklin's fee is \$14.50 per month. He noted that the City of Franklin and Town of Berwick advised that their fees may increase in the near future.

Mr. LaGrange explained that Pelican Waste currently charges the Parish \$18.10 per month per household for garbage collection. The Parish charges \$15.00 per month to its residents in the unincorporated areas for garbage collection and since the Water & Sewer Commission's collect this fee on behalf of the Parish; they retain \$0.65 per month per household as compensation. He expounded on the CPI calculation and stated that the maximum CPI adjustment as per the contract is four (4%) percent annually. He also stated that every \$1.00 per month increase in the garbage collection fee will provide approximately \$93,000 per year.

He also informed the Council that it has been fifteen (15) years since that has been an increase in the garbage collection fee.

Mr. Olander stated that his concern is that a \$4.00 increase will affect citizens on a fixed income.

After discussion, Mr. Adams moved to recommend to the Parish Council to approve increasing the garbage fee \$4.00 per month, effective January 1, 2022. Mr. Rulf seconded the motion, which carried.

Per Mr. Duhon's inquiry relative to overlaying Beadle Street in Amelia, Mr. LaGrange stated that this project was scheduled in the five year capital outlay ordinance for the 2022; however was initially rescheduled for consideration in 2023. He stated that since then, it is proposed that the engineering for a project to improve Beadle Street, James Street and Joseph Street be started this year.

In response to several Council Members inquiries relative to tipping fees, Mr. LaGrange stated that the Resolution to increase tipping fees by \$1.00 per ton was approved at the September 22, 2021 Council meeting and became effective November 1, 2021. He expounded on the intergovernmental agreement between the Parish and the five (5) municipalities and explained how the tipping fee is calculated each year. He further expounded on the deficit, operating expenses of the Landfill and Pick Up Station and that the \$1.00 increase in tipping fees will provide approximately \$75,000 in additional revenue based on the average number of tons received per year.

Per Mr. Duhon's inquiry relative to cleaning culverts along parish roads and possibly hiring an outside contract to perform this work, Mr. LaGrange stated that funding for this type of work would be provided within the existing Road Maintenance Budget and that an additional budget line item to hire an outside contractor is not included.

In response to Mr. Adam's inquiry relative to the percentage increase raise for employees, Mr. LaGrange stated that existing employees received a five (5%) percent pay increase in September, 2021 and an additional five (5%) percent increase is proposed in the 2022 budget to help with employee retention. It is also anticipated that the starting pay schedule will be increased for entry level positions in January, 2022 in order to be more competitive in attracting new employees.

After discussion, Dr. Rink suggested that Administration and the Council determine what the Parish's living wage is in order to determine pay.

In response to President Hanagriff's inquiry, Mr. LaGrange stated that the lowest paid Parish employee makes approximately \$8.50 per hour.

President Hanagriff suggested leaving the five (5) percent raise across the board and stated that any changes will affect the budget.

In response to Dr. Rink's inquiry relative to merit raises, Mr. LaGrange stated that every employee has an annual performance evaluation conducted by supervisors and reviewed by the Human Resources/Personnel Director and himself. Due to the downturn in our economy over the last four (4) years, merit raises have not been awarded. However, some employees that have changed job descriptions or have been assigned additional job duties have been approved for a pay increase. He further explained that the parish's pay scale is based on 2½ % step increases.

Per Dr. Rink's inquiry relative to funding the District Attorney's Office, Mr. LaGrange stated that State Laws require the Parish to fund certain expenses of the District Attorney's Office. President Hanagriff state that the Parish is mandated to pay for certain expenses of the District Attorney, the District Court system, and the District Judges. He informed that he has met with the Iberia and St. Martin Parish Presidents to discuss finding a funding solution relative to funding the District Attorney's Office and District Court outside of the Parish Government's budget.

In response to Dr. Rink's inquiry relative to the American Relief Funds and how it will be utilized, Mr. LaGrange stated that the funds utilized in the 2021 Budget will be used the same in the 2022 Budget.

There being no further business, Mr. Olander moved for adjournment. Mrs. Hidalgo seconded the motion, which carried.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

CRAIG MATHEWS, CHAIRMAN  
ADVISORY BUDGET/FINANCE COMMITTEE