



## Regular Meeting Minutes

Thursday, May 18, 2017

7:00 P.M.

### Members in Attendance:

Aldersperson Simeon Profit

Aldersperson Donald Richard

Aldersperson Wysinger Cleveland

Aldersperson Leola Keys

Aldersperson Janice Fleming

The Town of Richwood met for a Regular Meeting held on May 18, 2017 at 7:00 p.m. at the Richwood Multi-Purpose Center, 2710 Martin Luther King Drive, Richwood, Louisiana to consider the following business:

**I. Meeting Called to Order by Mayor Gerald Brown at 7:00 p.m.**

**II. Prayer-** was offered by Mayor Gerald Brown

**III. Pledge of Allegiance** - recited in unison

**IV. Roll Call-** Mayor Gerald Brown called roll with the following results:  
All (5) Board Members Present

**Present:** Aldersperson Simeon Profit

Aldersperson Donald Richard

Aldersperson Wysinger Cleveland

Aldersperson Leola Keys

Aldersperson Janice Fleming

**V. Adoption of the Agenda-** Aldersperson Wysinger Cleveland requested an amendment to the agenda to include a presentation by Mr. Ray Jones and Mr. Michael Castor on the agenda.

- **It was motioned by Aldersperson Donald Richard and seconded by Aldersperson Janice Fleming to adopt the agenda with the addition**
- **The record shall reflect all (5) five alderspersons voted yes to add a presentation by Mr. Ray Jones Jr. and Mr. Michael Castor to the agenda as Item XI.**

**VI. Adoption of April 20, 2017 Minutes:**

**Mayor Gerald Brown-** requested a motion to adopt the April 20, 2017 Minutes as presented.

- **It was moved by Alderperson Donald Richard and seconded by Alderperson Simeon Profit to accept the April 20, 2017 minutes as presented.**

**VII. Financial Reports:**

**Alderperson Wysinger Cleveland** – requested a breakdown as to the Professional Services shown on the financial report that the amount increased from \$15,000 to \$17,000.

**Fiscal Officer (Tanisha Jolla)-** advised the Board the Professional services does include the fees paid to J. Walker, and does not include employee salaries.

**The Fiscal Officer (Tanisha Jolla)-** reminded Alderperson Wysinger Cleveland they had discussed him coming into the municipal offices to access the financial information, and would be available to whatever information he required.

**Alderperson Leola Keys-** inquired as to the duration or period of time the amount shown (\$1619.19) paid for gas by the Town covered?

**The Fiscal Officer (Tanisha Jolla) -** confirmed the gas cost is billed to the Town monthly.

**Alderperson Wysinger Cleveland-** stated the monthly cost of fuel seems to be \$2500 a month when the diesel cost is added, and questioned which machines run off diesel?

**Mayor Gerald Brown** – advised the Town has a long arm and short arm tractor as well as the new green tractor which runs off of diesel fuel.

**Mayor Gerald Brown-** asked for a motion to accept the financials as presented.

- **It was motioned by Alderperson Wysinger Cleveland and seconded by Alderperson Janice Fleming to adopt the Financial Report as presented.**

**VIII. Mayor Dialogue:**

**Mayor Gerald Brown-** advised the forum there were a couple of things he wanted to share with them; the first as it regards to individuals affected by the floods, they are starting to work some of the funds through different sub-committees, and there are several meetings going on throughout the state; but none of them are here in our vicinity, but if they were affected or knew someone who had been affected by the floods, there is a survey they need to fill out and can do this by going to the website: [restore.la.gov](http://restore.la.gov) or they can be contacted by phone at 866-735-2001,

from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., and from what he was told the survey takes about 15 minutes to fill out, and is the first step in the process.

**Aldersperson Leola Keys-** inquired what agency what agency would they be talking too?

**Mayor Gerald Brown-** advised the agency is the Louisiana Housing Corporation.

**Mayor Gerald Brown-** advised the forum there is a District C Annual Meeting on Monday, June 26, in Tallulah. The Mayor advised refreshments at 6:00 p.m. and Dinner at 6:30 p.m.

**Mayor Gerald Brown-** advised they would be informed of some of the initiatives the Vice-President has in store, as well as the Vice-President would be elected at that time.

**Aldersperson Donald Richard-** inquired if reservations were necessary?

**Mayor Gerald Brown-** advised if the Board wanted to go just let us know.

**Mayor Gerald Brown-** advised July 27<sup>th</sup> through the 29<sup>th</sup> the Louisiana Municipal Association Annual Convention; and currently they are in the “Early Bird Session” where we can save a little money if the delegates go ahead and register before the 29<sup>th</sup>. The registration forms were on hand and could be filled out for submission.

**Mayor Gerald Brown-** indicated he received a request regarding the nation of Washitaw Demungdahyah tribe, for a proclamation to be presented as part of the Juneteenth Celebration, and because of his unfamiliarity with the tribe, he requested input by the Board.

**Aldersperson Leola Keys-** stated she would be willing to assist the Mayor with the needed information.

#### **IX. Public Comments (As it relates to the Agenda):**

**Mayor Gerald Brown-** advised the forum of the requirements to provide you name and address before giving comments.

**Audwin Madison (Public Attendee)-** indicated he was not in favor of annexation, Mr. Madison referenced Item # 14 (Annexation) as being on the agenda.

**Mayor Gerald Brown –** informed Mr. Madison the item is not on the agenda, the item was on the prior month’s agenda.

**Aldersperson Donald Richard-** stated he felt the Board should contact the Department of Transportation to address the congestion of traffic at the Richwood Road # 2 and Hwy 165 South in the morning and the evenings.

**Mayor Gerald Brown** - advised the Board discussions were currently underway concerning this issue, and there is a feasibility study underway now which would consider several options such as a light installation at the location or perhaps possibly an overhead walk, a cross walk where a pedestrian can cross by interrupting the flow of traffic by pressing a button were also being discussed.

**Aldersperson Janice Fleming**- commented there is an overhead crosswalk by Carroll High School and it is very ineffective, and she felt an overhead crosswalk would be ineffective.

**Aldersperson Leola Keys**- indicated because of the number of kids and families along the way, something needs to be done right away.

**Aldersperson Leola Keys**- inquired as to what was their idea on installing a light at that location?

**Mayor Gerald Brown**- advised the Department of Transportation would be willing to bring and install the light, but someone has to be responsible for the payment of the bill for the lighting service, and that would be based on where the light is installed.

**Mayor Gerald Brown** – stated another project he is working on is talking with the local businesses in the area to see if some type of lighting district can be established and those businesses would pay some type of tax to help support that light.

**Aldersperson Leola Keys**- inquired which businesses in that area are in Richwood?

**Mayor Gerald Brown**- stated he would like to commend Officer May, because he has been out there daily in the morning, and the evening helping those kids get across the highway

**Aldersperson Leola Keys**- this is an issue that has been on the board for a long time.

**Mayor Gerald Brown**- stated again that is the reason he is looking at the lighting district, as a way to help with incurred cost and service for the lights.

**Aldersperson Leola Keys (and several members of the Board)**- commented this would need to be placed on the ballot, so it would still be a long process.

**Mayor Gerald Brown**- advised the Board it may not necessarily be a long time, and this could be placed on the ballot.

**Mayor Gerald Brown**- inquired if there were any other comments?

**Mrs. Barbara Sydney**- addressed the Board/forum and inquired if there are ordinances on the book which advises how Richwood Cottages can conduct themselves relating to the upkeep of the property and if not she felt it was needed, and she felt Richwood should have a responsibility to its' citizens to address this.

**Mrs. Barbara Sydney-** stated the grass is so high it is a safety issue for the children playing outside at the apartment complex; Mrs. Sydney stated the snakes have been coming on the porches, the wasp and hornets are within the walls of the siding because it is all corroded.

**Mrs. Barbara Sydney** stated to top it off, the owner decided to go up on the rent, her rent has been raised \$95 per month, and for what? The outside lights are out; Entergy has replaced the ones they are responsible to service, but the owner has not replaced those on the apartment complex.

**Mrs. Barbara Sydney-** when the grass is cut is not cut low they just cut the top, and requested the Board comes by the complex and take a look at the grounds.

**Mayor Gerald Brown-** indicated that he we would try to setup a meeting which would include the owner and the citizen to address this issue as soon as possible.

**Aldersperson Wysinger Cleveland-** inquired if there was an ordinance dealing with the cutting of the grass?

**Attorney Jay Nolen-** stated he wasn't sure if the Town had that ordinance, but the Ouachita Parish has ordinances in place where if the owner does not cut the grass the parish can step in and cut the grass and charge the owner.

**Mayor Gerald Brown-** indicated we do have an ordinance dealing with cutting of grass, but he would have to check to see if it covers this situation.

**X. Southern Youth Movement:** (Requesting to sublease Old Richwood High School & Town Park)

**Mr. Perroyt Epting (President of Southern Youth Movements)** – addressed the Board, and advised his organization is a non-profit organization based out of California; which deals with at risk youths to provide sport and sport alternative programs for at risk children, this is a program which reaches out to male and females and addresses issues to move children from no choices to choices by enlisting partnerships with the governmental bodies, and the community with the Southern Youth Movement Program to bring about measurable changes to the community and its' children.

**Mr. Epting-** advised the Board he had previously addressed the Board to request a sublease to use the Old Richwood High School to provide a place where the children of the Richwood, and the surrounding area to occupy them year-round.

**Mr. Perroyt Epting** – stated he knew other programs was interested in the building, but no one other organization other than him, had done a door to door petition in the community to get feedback on what the community needed.

**Mr. Epting-** stated he and volunteers went and contacted the community excluding the persons who may not have been home, and not only did the community say they wanted this program, but they said they wanted it yesterday. This is the difference between him and others, he went out and talked to the people to see what they wanted.

**Mr. Epting** - advised the Board of the great need for the program to reach and engage children and the proposed plan to provide places where the community children can be engaged.

**Mr. Epting-** advised the Board he had spoken with and brought people in to see what it would take to renovate the building.

Mr. Epting – indicated he is a grant writer, and he would apply for grants for the renovation of the building.

**Mr. Epting** -stated His plan is to renovate the entire building to provide a weight room, indoor gym, swimming pool so the kids could learn to swim, also a medical room, a library and computer lab, would also include a new gym floor, a new playground play space for kids 3 to 8 years old, which would include handicap access.

**Mr. Epting-** stated he wanted the Board to look at the dates on the information he provided, because it shows he has been trying to get this done for about 2-3 years, he didn't just start requesting this.

**Mr. Epting stated** – in closing, basically what this program does is bring hope and opportunity to our kids, read the papers, go on Facebook and you will see the blind leading the blind, the answer is not more police cars or more jails or more rehab centers, these children need something to do, we need to realize some kids are into sports, some into the arts, that is why we need the building as well as the park to provide them access to all areas. Another thing that makes them different from the others is that the ballparks, classrooms etc. would be named after Richwood Greats, not only to build on it but to honor those that came before us; this is not just a sports club, but a petition that was answered saying we want this and need this.

**Aldersperson Wysinger Cleveland-** inquired how long will it take to get this started?

**Mr. Perroyt Epting** – answered as soon as they could get the sublease with the specifics from the Town showing what they expect of the organization, he could get started as soon as the next day. It is a must with the grant he has picked that you must have a physical location to apply for the grant.

**Mr. Epting** – stated with the grant he is applying to, it is a must that you have a physical location, and he wanted to say they are asking the Town for zero dollars, they are not asking the Town for one penny to , and he would be willing to go through some type of trial period; he is willing to work with the Town. .

**Aldersperson Wysinger Cleveland-** stated he has no problem with the program going forward, because we need to make a move and go forward.

**Aldersperson Wysinger Cleveland-** stated he knew for recreation, the kids would be knocking on the door of the Mayor, asking if they could play in the gym.

**Mayor Gerald Brown-** addressed the statement posed by Aldersperson Wysinger Cleveland and replied he doesn't mind one bit the children coming and asking if they can play ball in the gym; they basically do that every day, but it would be up to the Board to decide what they want to do, would they want to do some type of corporate endeavor or some type of lease agreement, how they would want to pursue it, and then we can get the attorney to start working on it, that would be his suggestion.

#### **XI. Presentation by Mr. Ray Jones and Michael Castor**

**Mr. Ray Jones Jr.** - stated our kids have to learn different skills and he had been sending out emails addressing the development of an incubator at the Old Richwood High School Building, with the passing of a resolution, and the first step being the adoption of the Statue 339034.

**Mr. Ray Jones Jr.** - went over some of the land ownership statistics currently on the record, and how people are reviewing that information to determine business strategies.

**Mr. Ray Jones Jr.** - indicated his proposal would open other avenues for income to the Town of Richwood, and in closing Mr. Ray Jones Jr. requested the forum provide (2) two things, the authorization to use the Head Start Building to create an incubation center for business and and a resolution accepting what the legislature passed in 1992 conveyed the importance of establishing an economic base in the Town of Richwood, and the Town needs a Chamber of Commerce.

**Mr. Michael Castor-** addressed the Board and spoke of the Town being his home and however and whatever we need to do, we need to come together and get it done.

**Mayor Gerald Brown** – Inquired if there were any questions?  
(With there being no questions, the meeting continued per the Agenda)

#### **XII. Adoption of Ordinance 2017-04 (An Ordinance to Amend the Sewer Tapping Fees)**

**Mayor Gerald Brown-** stated there was a question in the last meeting in connection to Commercial sewer taps being included in this ordinance, and upon closer examination, the commercial fees are covered in Item # 11.

**Mayor Gerald Brown-** asked if there were any questions before they continue? (With no questions, the request to obtain a motion to adopt Ordinance 2017-04 was requested)

- **It was then motioned by Alderperson Simeon Profit and seconded by Alderperson Janice Fleming to vote on Adoption of Ordinance 2017-04.**
- **The vote was taken to adopt Ordinance 2017-04 (An ordinance to Amend the Sewer Tapping Fees) with the following results:**

Alderperson Wysinger Cleveland	<u>Abstain</u>	Alderperson Leola Keys	<u>Yes</u>
Alderperson Janice Fleming	<u>Yes</u>	Alderperson Donald Richard	<u>Abstain</u>
Alderperson Simeon Profit	<u>Yes</u>		

- **The record shall reflect Ordinance 2017-04 received (3) Yea and (2) Abstain votes from the Board. (Ordinance 2017-04 passes)**

**XIII. Adoption of Ordinance 2017-06** (An Ordinance Prohibiting Smoking in Public Places, Places of Work and Other Locations within the Town of Richwood)

**Mayor Gerald Brown-** stated at the request of several Board Members Item # 5 has been adjusted to address additional ventilation.

**Mayor Gerald Brown-** inquired if there were any other questions?

**Linda Clark (Public Attendee)-** inquired if the current establishment met the requirements?

**Mayor Gerald Brown-** advised in the facility they are in now, they have ventilation on the smoking side and they also have a non-smoking side.

**Mayor Gerald Brown-** asked if there were any other questions? (with no other questions, a request for a motion was presented).

- **It was then motioned by Alderperson Simeon Profit and seconded by Alderperson Donald Richard to vote on the Adoption of Ordinance 2017-06.**
- **The vote was taken to adopt Ordinance 2017-06** (An ordinance to prohibiting smoking in public places, places of work and other locations within the Town of Richwood)

Alderperson Wysinger Cleveland	<u>Yes</u>	Alderperson Leola Keys	<u>Yes</u>
Alderperson Janice Fleming	<u>Yes</u>	Alderperson Donald Richard	<u>Yes</u>
		Alderperson Simeon Profit	<u>Yes</u>

- **The record shall reflect All (5) Alderpersons voted YES for Ordinance 2017-06. (Ordinance 2017-06 Passes)**

**XIV. Adoption of Resolution 2017-02** (A resolution for the Town of Richwood, to be submitted for consideration regarding the FY 2018-2019 Louisiana Community Development Block Grant (LCDBG) Program

**Mayor Gerald Brown-** advised the Board in the past few years we had submitted ours for streets, however last year we did not receive that much. It was later conveyed to us that streets are not really being addressed as much, with that in mind he would suggest submitting our request for sewer this time.

**Mayor Gerald Brown-** advised smoke test are conducted on the sewer to help determine where the cracks are in the sewer line; and the cracks are allowing larger debris to enter the sewer lines and causes the processing fee to be higher.

There was a discussion at the table concerning what items could be applied for with the LCDBG.

**Mayor Gerald Brown-** requested a motion to adopt Resolution 2017-02

- **It was motioned by Alderperson Simeon Profit and seconded by Alderperson Donald Richard to vote on the adoption of Resolution 2017-02.**
- **A vote was taken with the following results:**

Alderperson Wysinger Cleveland	<u>Yes</u>	Alderperson Leola Keys	<u>Yes</u>
Alderperson Janice Fleming	<u>Yes</u>	Alderperson Donald Richard	<u>Yes</u>
	Alderperson Simeon Profit	<u>Yes</u>	

- **The record shall reflect All (5) Alderpersons voted YES to Pass Resolution 2017-02 (A resolution for the Town of Richwood to be submitted for consideration regarding the FY 2018-2019.**

**XV. Introduction of Ordinance 2017-07** (An ordinance Amending Ordinance 2014-04 and set a yearly salary for the Richwood Police Chief)

**Mayor Gerald Brown-** advised the Board the current salary of the Police Chief was set by the prior Fiscal Administrator, and this ordinance is being presented to reset the salary of the Police Chief which was previously reduced by the Administrator.

**Mayor Gerald Brown-** advised the Board the Current Police Chief has re-established a positive relationship with the Sherriff’s Department.

**Alderperson Leola Keys-** inquired what the previous salary was for the Chief of Police?

**Mayor Gerald Brown** – answered \$36,000.

**Aldersperson Donald Richard**- asked if the Town had the money to pay the increase?

**Mayor Gerald Brown**- stated, I think so, I wouldn't suggest it if I didn't think we couldn't take care of it.

**Aldersperson Donald Richard**- stated he thought they should wait until they set the budget.

**Mayor Gerald Brown**- stated, that's why I am suggesting the change now, so when the budget is set the figure will be factored in the budget; because we are working on the budget now, and if we set it now, we don't have to call anyone in for a Special Meeting to set the amount after the budget is set.

*\*\* Inaudible discussion ensued from the floor concerning finances\*\**

*Question from the floor pertaining to the improvement of the Police Department.*

- **It was motioned by Aldersperson Simeon Profit and seconded by Aldersperson Simeon Profit to accept the introduction of Ordinance 2017-07** (A resolution for the Town of Richwood to be submitted for consideration regarding the FY 2018-2019.)

**Aldersperson Leola Keys**- stated any increase in an increment is usually awarded because of marked improvement, and she realize there is just the two (2) of them but it would have to be some reduction of the noise and hell raising at 2:00 am or 3:00 am in the morning, that is what senior citizens, people her age, is looking for to show improvement.

- **A vote to accept the introduction of Ordinance 2017-07 was taken with the following results: 1 Abstain, (3) No Voters and (1) Yes Vote.**

Aldersperson Wysinger Cleveland Abstain                      Aldersperson Leola Keys No

Aldersperson Janice Fleming No                                      Aldersperson Donald Richard No

Aldersperson Simeon Profit Yes

**XVI. Introduction of Ordinance 2017-08** (An Ordinance Amending Ordinance 2014-05 and set a yearly salary for the Richwood Town Clerk)

**Mayor Gerald Brown**- advised the Board this is an ordinance to set the salary of the Town Clerk, who is also the Clerk of Court, Code Enforcer, Grant Writer who has written grants for \$85,000 in grants since he has been here, and this is being addressed to set her salary to be included in the budget.

**Aldersperson Janice Fleming**- inquired did the Mayor say he was working on the budget now and should be completed when?

**Mayor Gerald Brown** – advised the budget must be completed by June 30.

**Aldersperson Janice Fleming** – stated she felt this should be revisited at that time.

**Mayor Gerald Brown**- asked if they were tabling Ordinance 2014-05 until after the budget was approved? (Answer from the Board Yes)

**Mayor Gerald Brown**- requested the motion to table.

- **It was the motioned by Aldersperson Simeon Profit and seconded Aldersperson Donald Richard to table the introduction of Ordinance 2017-08.**  
(An Ordinance Amending Ordinance 2014-05 and set a yearly salary for the Richwood Town Clerk)

#### **XVII. Adjournment:**

It was motioned by Aldersperson Simeon Profit and seconded by Aldersperson Donald Richard to adjourn @ 8:45 p.m.