

CITY OF PINEVILLE, LOUISIANA
PUBLIC HEARING & COUNCIL MEETING
MAYOR AND COUNCIL
 October 8, 2024 – 6:00 P.M.
MINUTES

Mayor Pro-Tempore Mary Galloway and the Council of the City of Pineville, Louisiana, met in regular session on Tuesday, October 8, 2024, beginning at 6:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the City Hall, 910 Main Street, Pineville, Louisiana

1. Mayor Pro-Tempore Galloway called the meeting to order.
2. Councilman Martin gave the invocation.
3. Councilman Bouchie led the Pledge of Allegiance.
4. Roll Call Present: District 1 Mayor Pro-Tempore Mary Galloway
 District 2 Councilman Kevin Dorn
 District 3 Councilwoman Christy Frederic
 District 4 Councilman Tom Bouchie
 District 5 Councilman Nathan Martin
 Absent: None

5. A motion was made by Councilman Dorn and seconded by Councilman Martin to accept the minutes of the September 10, 2024, regular meeting as published. There were no comments. On vote, the motion carried unanimously.

6. A motion was made by Councilwoman Frederic and seconded by Councilman Bouchie to accept the financial report as read by Finance Director David Humphries. Mr. Humphries attributed a phenomenal sales tax increase in September year-over-year to all the construction taking place around the City and the price increases of retail. There were no comments. On vote, the motion carried unanimously.

7. CONDEMNATION HEARING for Case File 2024-011, regarding the single-family home on the lot at 307 Stephen Street, owned by Ha Ngan, listed with the address of 6009 W. Alexandra Drive, Alexandria, Louisiana 71303, according to Rapides Parish Tax Assessor records. Mr. Tom David, City Engineer, was absent so Mr. Sam Gassiott reported the property owner has been working with the Rapides Area Planning Commission and has now completed the electrical and plumbing. He believes the property is no longer a candidate for condemnation. Mr. Gassiott recommended the condemnation proceedings be terminated and the property be removed from the condemnation list.

A motion was made by Councilwoman Frederic and seconded by Councilman Dorn to accept the recommendation as stated. There were no comments. On vote the motion carried unanimously.

8. CONDEMNATION HEARING for Case File 2024-027, regarding the single-family home on the lot at 720 Sycamore Street, owned by James Freeman ET AL, c/o Mary Wadsworth, listed with the address of 3223 Redwood Drive, Alexandria, Louisiana 71301, according to Rapides Parish Tax Assessor records. Mr. Gassiott reported the owner was duly served notice of this hearing and it was published in the official journal. He explained the home was inspected and is in a very dilapidated condition and does not believe it can be economically rehabilitated. Mr. Gassiott recommended the property be condemned and the owner be given 30-days to demolish and clear the property. There was no one present representing the owner. Mr. Chris Workman, City Clerk, indicated this is a continuation hearing from August, at that time we extended the hearing to give the owners time to assess the property and there is no update on the assessment. Mr. Gassiott then interjected that based on the inspection, nothing has been done to the property.

A motion was made by Councilman Bouchie and seconded by Councilman Dorn to accept the recommendation as stated. There were no comments. On vote the motion carried unanimously.

9. CONDEMNATION HEARING for Case File 2024-043, regarding the single-family home on the lot at 1904 Military Highway, owned by Reagan Boyd Nugent ET AL, listed with address of 1250 Dorchester Drive, Unit 118, Alexandria, Louisiana 71303, according to Rapides Parish Tax Assessor records. Mr. Workman reported the owner has been in contact with the administration and has volunteered to demolish the house. They have begun the process and asked for an extension of the condemnation hearing to December. Mr. Jason Nugent was present representing the owner and requested the extension for Dec 31st.

A motion was made by Councilwoman Frederic and seconded by Councilman Martin to extend the condemnation hearing to the December meeting to assess the progress. There were no comments. On vote, the motion carried unanimously.

-- Upon Ms. Mary Wadsworth's arrival to the meeting, a motion was made by Councilwoman Frederic and seconded by Councilman Dorn to reopen Agenda Item 8, Condemnation Hearing for 720 Sycamore Street. Ms. Wadsworth addressed the Council regarding this condemnation. She does not wish to have the house demolished and requested an additional extension to allow for more time to assess the property for rehabilitation.

There was no motion made for an additional extension. However, the Council explained she does have the option to readdress the Council with a plan of action for rehabilitation of the home. At that time the Council may reconsider the condemnation action.

10. CONDEMNATION HEARING for Case File 2024-040, regarding the single-family home near the corner of Wadley and Bragg Streets, described as LOTS 7 & 8, SQUARE 14, GRACE SUBD, owned by David F. Huffman, Jr., ET AL listed with the address of 440 Janet Drive, Pineville, Louisiana 71360, according to Rapides Parish Tax Assessor records. Mr. Gassiott reported the owner was duly served notice of this hearing and it was published in the official journal. He indicated the property is in a very dilapidated condition and has been gutted with only a few walls standing. Mr. Gassiott recommended the property be condemned and the owner be given 30-days to demolish and clear the property. Mr. Huffman was present and has no objection to the condemnation.

A motion was made by Councilman Dorn and seconded by Councilman Bouchie to accept the recommendation as stated. There were no comments. On vote the motion carried unanimously.

11. CONDEMNATION HEARING for Case File 2024-019, regarding the single-family home on the lot at 804 Erion Street, owned by Kimberly Johnson, listed with address of 2026 N. MacArthur Drive, Alexandria, Louisiana 71303, according to Rapides Parish Tax Assessor records. Mr. Gassiott reported the owner was duly served notice of this hearing and it was published in the official journal. He indicated this house is in a very dilapidated condition with the ceiling falling in. Mr. Gassiott recommended the property be condemned and the owner be given 30-days to demolish and clear the property. There was no one present representing the owner

A motion was made by Councilman Dorn and seconded by Councilman Martin to accept the recommendation as stated. There were no comments. On vote the motion carried unanimously.

12. CONDEMNATION HEARING for Case File 2024-002, regarding the single-family home on the lot at 1302 Jeannie Street, owned by Jerry R. Johnson, listed with the address of 2026 N. MacArthur Drive, Alexandria, Louisiana 71303, according to Rapides Parish Tax Assessor records. Mr. Gassiott reported the owner was duly served notice of this hearing and it was published in the official journal. He indicated the property is in a very dilapidated condition with no windows or doors and is a hazard to the community. Mr. Gassiott recommended the property be condemned and the owner be given 30-days to demolish and clear the property. There was no one present representing the owner.

A motion was made by Councilman Bouchie and seconded by Councilwoman Frederic to accept the recommendation as stated. There were no comments. On vote the motion carried unanimously.

13. CONDEMNATION HEARING for Case File 2024-039, regarding the single-family home on the lot at 1422 College Drive, owned by Jerry R. Johnson, listed with the address of 2026 N. MacArthur Drive, Alexandria, Louisiana 71303, according to Rapides Parish Tax Assessor records. Mr. Gassiott reported the owner was duly served notice of this hearing and it was published in the official journal. He indicated this is an old wood frame structure that is dilapidated and unsafe for the community. There was no one present representing the owner.

A motion was made by Councilman Dorn and seconded by Councilman Bouchie to condemn this property. There were no comments. On vote the motion carried unanimously.

14. CONDEMNATION HEARING for Case File 2024-041, regarding the multi-family home near the corner of Bell Street and Mills Road, described as .56 AC IN SOUTHEAST QUARTER OF THE NORTHWEST QUARTER OF SECTION 7, TOWNSHIP 4 NORTH, RANGE 1 EAST; 215' X 114', owned by Corine H. Roland ET AL, listed with the address of 116 JoAnn Drive, Pineville, Louisiana 71360, according to Rapides Parish Tax Assessor records. Mr. Workman indicated that a member of the family made contact with the administration this afternoon and requested an extension of some type because they would like to attempt to rehabilitate the home, but were not able to provide any kind of timeframe or cost estimate. There was no one present representing the owner

A motion was made by Councilman Dorn and seconded by Councilman Martin to grant an extension of this condemnation hearing and continue it at the November meeting. There were no comments. On vote the motion carried unanimously.

15. A motion was made by Councilwoman Frederic and seconded by Councilman Bouchie to introduce, accept for publication and refer to zoning a petition for annexation of 0.97 acres of property located at 2514 Donahue Ferry Road, belonging to Darren and Mary Lee Green, to be zoned Residential as R-1. There were no comments. On vote, the motion carried unanimously.

16. A motion was made by Councilman Dorn and seconded by Councilwoman Frederic to introduce, accept for publication, and refer to zoning a petition for variance of setback requirements relative to property located at 230 Dillon Street, belonging to Inner-city Revitalization Corp. There were no comments. On vote, the motion carried unanimously.

17. A motion was made by Councilman Dorn and seconded by Councilman Martin to introduce, accept for publication, and refer to zoning a petition for variance of the Mobile Home Overlay Ordinance relative to property located at 417 Hickory Street, belonging to Bill Leatherman and Alvin Hernandez. There were no comments. On vote, the motion carried unanimously.

18. A motion was made by Councilman Bouchie and seconded by Councilman Dorn to introduce and accept for publication an ordinance to amended and modify the Code of Ordinances, by adding Chapter 6, Article III, Section 6-54, to establish a Community Cat Program. Ms. Eden Oglethorpe, Animal Control Supervisor, briefed that this is a trap-neuter-return program that will help to reduce the overall stray cat population within the City. We have received a grant that will pay for this effort. No further comment was heard. On vote, the motion carried unanimously.

19. A motion was made by Councilman Dorn and seconded by Councilman Martin to approve a resolution to assume ownership of maintenance and operation of Pineville Elementary Sidewalks pursuant to the City of Pineville's participation in *FEDERAL AID PROJECT NO. H.011194*. There were no comments. On vote, the motion carried unanimously.

20. A motion was made by Councilwoman Frederic and seconded by Councilman Dorn to approve a resolution to award the contract for the project entitled *DEAD END WATER LINE ELIIMINATION MELROSE, CHANDER. BUCHANAN, LARRY AND AUBRY STREETS*. Mr. Gassiott indicated this is the fourth dead-end project and it should begin within the next 30-45 days. There were no further comments. On vote, the motion carried unanimously.

-- At this time Mayor Pro-Tempore Galloway proposed to move the "public comment" portion of the meeting up on the agenda, since there is an Executive Session schedule next as Item 21. With no objections from the Council, she opened the floor to public comment.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

- Mr. Cornelius White, of 3638 10th Street, Alexandria, spoke in support of Mayor Rich Dupree regarding the EEOC complaint by Brittany Poston and the Mayor's resignation extension from Oct 6 to Oct 20, 2024.
- Mr. Herman Odom, of 1307 Jeannie Street, expressed gratitude to Mr. James Robertson, Public Works Director, for having a tree cut down that was in the City right-of-way in front of his home and causing concerns. He also expressed several other concerns that he would like to have addressed by Mr. Robertson as well.
- The following individuals spoke in opposition to Mayor Dupree extending his resignation date from Oct 6 to Oct 20, 2024, to avoid a special election and/or urge the Council to appoint someone, outside of the Council, as Mayor to finish out the term: Mr. Mark Mertens of 104 Domino Ridge, Tom Murphy of 2491 Lakeview Lane, James Rachal of 132 Iberia Lane, Tanya Coffey of 185 Woodcliff Circle, Eddie Lashney of 506 Main Street, Gary Morrow of 204 Milky Way, Randy O'Neal of 1422 Donahue Ferry Road, Shirley Rachal of 1280 Susek Drive, Victor Rachal of 1280 Susek Drive, and Hugh Halle of 1610 College Drive.
- Jay Wooley of 146 Ron Mar Drive, requested the public leave innocent people out of the discussion on Facebook, surrounding the circumstance with the Mayor, of which he has been the target of.
- Mr. Donald Fritz of 202 Washington Street requested the Council to consider placing an electronic sign at Buhlow Lake to advertise events taking place there.
- Councilman Dorn "thanked" everyone for their attendance and for sharing their comments. He emphasized that we not allow the current circumstance of the City divide us as people and many of us in this room have touched each other's lives. As individuals have brought forth what they think needs to be done, he encouraged individuals to bring forth solutions. Councilman Dorn asked everyone to pray every day for the City to get through this. We have a lot to be proud of and if we wear that as a badge of honor, this issue will not ruin our City.
- Mayor Pro-Temper Galloway "thanked" the citizens for attending. She explained the City Council cannot make Mayor Dupree resign.

No further comments were heard.

21. A motion was made by Councilman Dorn and seconded by Councilman Bouchie at 7:29p.m., to enter into an Executive Session to discuss the pending EEOC complaint filed by Brittany Poston. There were no comments. On vote, the motion carried unanimously. Roll call was as follows:

Yea: Mayor Pro-Tempore Galloway and Councilpersons Dorn, Frederic, Bouchie, Martin

Nay: None

Abstain: None

Absent: None

-- Upon returning to the Council Chambers at 8:43p.m., a motion was made by Councilman Dorn and seconded by Councilwoman Frederic to exit the Executive Session and reenter the Regular Council Meeting. There were no comments. On vote, the motion carried unanimously. Roll call was as follows:

Yea: Mayor Pro-Tempore Galloway and Councilpersons Dorn, Frederic, Bouchie, Martin

Nay: None

Abstain: None

Absent: None

There being no further business to come before the Council, a motion to adjourn was made by Councilman Bouchie and seconded by Councilwoman Frederic at 8:44p.m. There were no comments. On vote the motion carried unanimously. Councilman Dorn closed the meeting with the benediction.

Chris Workman
Chris Workman, City Clerk

Mary Galloway
Mary Galloway, Mayor Pro Tempore

CERTIFICATE

I, Chris Workman, Clerk for the City of Pineville, Louisiana, do hereby certify that the above and foregoing constitutes a true and correct record of the official action taken at a regular meeting of the Mayor and Council of the City of Pineville, Parish of Rapides, State of Louisiana, in legal session convened, on the 8th day of October, 2024.

Chris Workman
Chris Workman, City Clerk