



MINUTES OF THE ST. TAMMANY PARISH COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 30, 2023 6:30 PM

ST. TAMMANY GOVERNMENT COMPLEX

21490 KOOP DRIVE, MANDEVILLE, LA.

CALL TO ORDER BY THE HONORABLE JACOB "JAKE" A. AIREY

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE BY MR. RANDOLPH

INVOCATION BY MR. SMITH

ROLL CALL:

Marty Dean	ABSENT
David Fitzgerald	
Martha Jenkins Cazaubon	
Michael R. Lorino, Jr.	
Rykert O. Toledano, Jr.	
Cheryl Tanner	
James "Jimmie" Davis, III	
Christopher Canulette	ABSENT
Michael "Mike" Maxwell Smith	
Maureen "MO" O'Brien	
Arthur Laughlin	
Jerry Binder	
Jacob "Jake" Airey	
Ronald Randolph	

**PUBLIC COMMENT: A three (3) minute time limit is established for each member of the public wishing to speak (for or against) an item on the Agenda.**

**To ensure that all speakers are heard please hold cheers and applause. Anyone who wishes to place a comment in the record but who does not wish to speak at the podium may fill out a speaker card and check the box indicating they do not wish to speak.**

**ORDINANCE FOR ADOPTION**

-Airey - 1. **Ordinance Calendar No. 7383** - Ordinance to appoint outside counsel to represent St. Tammany Parish Government in the matter of Military Road Revitalization Company, LLC V. St. Tammany Parish Government. (Airey) (Introduced 08/23/2023)

-Tanner – moved to adopt, seconded by Davis. Unanimous with 3 absent (Dean, Lorino, Canulette); becomes **Ordinance Council Series No. 23-5228**.

**\*\*Clerk position was taken over by Council Assistant at this time.**

**RESOLUTIONS**

-Airey - 1. **Resolution C. S. No. C-6822** - Resolution to the St. Tammany Parish Library Board of Control in support of Act 436 and to urge the adoption of policies and procedures to comply with the act and for related matters. (Smith)

-Airey – read part of letter from Library Board. (available on the St. Tammany Parish Library Board website)

-Airey - explained how the Public comment period would go.

***In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance, please contact the St. Tammany Parish Council Office at (985)-898-2591, describing the assistance that is necessary.***

## SPEAKERS (&amp; their positions according to the speaker cards submitted)

-Levi Seals Gregory (for), Deborah McKean , Kayla Martinez (against), Barbara Mamoulides (against), Lisa Rustemeyer (against), Jonathan Varnado (against), Diane Bruni (other), Leyla Hekmatdoost (against), Doyle Spell (against), Marty Bankston (against), Roland Gallatin (other), Terrice Moore (against), Andrew Benson (for), Joan Simon (against), Annie Spell (against), Chad Cocran (for), Bonnie Schmidt (against), Fran Smith (other), Jamie Segura (against)

\*\*Airey read 23 names of those who submitted a speaker card but did not want to speak: Elizabeth Kogler (other), MKay (against), Matthew Arbo (against), Kenneth Redich (for), Carolyn Redich (for), ? (for), Tina Heather ? (for), Dolores (against), Mitch Whitaker (other), Susan Whitaker (other), Michiel Van Voorthuysen (against), Dona Michell (other), Anita Gamble (against), Daniel Carter (for), JK Hall (against), Camille Thompson (other), Kristen Luchsenger (against), Lyndall O'Brien (for), Laura Dinapolis (against), JF Rushton (against), Gay DiGiovanni (against), Stephanie Atkinson (against)

-Melissa Copeland (for), Rachel Rhodes (against), Ruth Terry-Sipes (other), Candice Mallory (other), Sarah Cook (against), Carol Ostrander (other), David Ziegler, Blake Adair (for), Cara Bovet (against), Donna Bonnoitt, Johanna Miner (other), David Cogle (other), Roxanne Newman (against), Kathleen Wiley (other), Kristen Seals Gregory (for), Cynthia Weatherly (against), Richard Mahoney (other), Kim Turner (against), Kevin Marino (against), Terri Taylor-Joseph (against), Jonathan Heiman (against)

\*\*3 other cards of those who did not want to speak - 1 card with only a signature (for), Jon Miller (for), Paula Royce (against)

## COUNCIL DISCUSSION

-Smith – explained reasons for sponsoring the resolution.

-Davis – shouldn't have resolution at this time. Doesn't see purpose of it when there is already Act 436.

-Cazaubon – has heard Council be brow beat about this board and have also been told that they cannot tell a Board how to vote. Council has not turned back. Council has discussed what it is that they can do. Best thing would be to come up with rules and regulations to protect children. Is a protector, but also on parents to protect children.

-Toledano – Believes everyone wants to protect children. Act 436 is a law, so what are they doing in this resolution? Tired of fighting and confrontation and threats. Wants to support Mike Smith but cannot compromise himself as a lawyer and a person. If resolution has not passed, what will change? Nothing because Act 436 is the rule of the day. They are doing this because of the threats some of the people have made. Mike Smith does not deserve what he has gotten.

-Lorino – everyone up there has an opinion. When he looks out there, there's 2 sides. Wants one person from each side to come up and tell him why they are absolute right and why they are absolutely wrong. Everybody has a right to an opinion. Why can't they sit down together and figure it out? Had parental control on the top of his list. First speaker came up and demonstrated parental control. Wants to protect the children. Doesn't want to ban the books, but put them in a safe spot where the children can't get them unless the parent wants them to.

-O'Brien – a lot of comments have been made about banning books. Is not hearing a desire to ban anything in her district. Only request she has heard is objectional material be in a reserved area, barring one person. Hasn't heard anyone make derogatory statements about what adults want to do. What she sees is concerned parents. She is a reporter. It is not just age, but maturity level that must be considered. Just about putting things that rise up to the law in a reserved area.

- Fitzgerald – this is an issue that they have all battled. Have tried to get this issue under control. Now have some assistance with the act. Position has always been the same and that is parental guidance. Just a matter of children. Not banning anything. Resolution has no bearing on the law. Feels meeting is productive in giving people an opportunity to say what is on their mind. Having a reserved section isn't banning books or censoring anything.
- Binder – has read resolution several times. Thanks legislature and governor for signing Act 436. It has gotten them further along than they have been. Laws that handle the Library Boards of Control are state laws. They can work with the State moving forward. Said that law required any use of the graphic words textually or graphically be placed in an adult section. Said resolution is to the St. Tammany Parish Library Board of Control. Said act is a good path forward without censorship or banning. Said the resolution says they are saying to the Library Board of Control that they want to make certain that they understand that they support Act 436. Law gave Parish Council who is also the governing authority could take away the funding of the Library Board of Control if they did not follow what must be in the adult section. This is a good starting part.
- Davis – is for Act 436, but what he is not for is they don't have to make a resolution to inform the Library Board about a law that was passed. That is why he is going to vote no.
- Binder – Wants to make something clear. Everyone respects the yes and no votes and they all walk out as friends. They are not enemies. He respects Davis, but they just respectfully disagree. Wants to make it clear to the Library Board with his yes vote, but he respects the no votes. They are watching and are going to hold them accountable to follow the law.
- Smith – called a question.
- Airey – wanted to make a few comments since on the Library Board.
- Smith – deferred to the Chairman.
- Airey – made comments about the Library Board. Said the graphic novel resolution that they passed took maybe 98% of books in question off of the shelf. Said most people can not really tell him which books they are talking about. When he shows people a book, they say no that isn't one of them. Spoke about the book that the 13 year old read and how it was in the adult section. The adult section is geared toward the adults. Spoke about how some bans are being presented to the library. Let some people vent and probably should have reined it in more, but wanted people the opportunity to get things off of their chests. Has been difficult to try to address people's concerns with this State board. Can't tell people other than Council staff what to do. Can not go in and run the Library board. They would have to read all of the book in full. Do you want them to take time to read books or do you want them to figure out what FEMA is doing to your flood insurance? People are just going to have a disagreement over the library. Said resolution is saying lets get this done a little faster than the Act 436 and make policies a little broader than Act 436 to make them clearer.
- Smith – moved to adopt the resolution, seconded by Laughlin. Motion fails with 7 yeas (Fitzgerald, Smith, O'Brien, Laughlin, Binder, Airey, Randolph), 5 nays (Cazaubon, Lorino, Toledano, Davis, Tanner), and 2 absent (Dean, Canulette).
- There being no further business, meeting adjourned at the call of the Chairman.

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JACOB "JAKE" A. AIREY, COUNCIL CHAIR

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KATRINA L. BUCKLEY, COUNCIL CLERK