

PROCEEDINGS OF THE NATCHITOCHE PARISH COUNCIL
PARISH OF NATCHITOCHE, STATE OF LOUISIANA
TAKEN A REGULAR MEETING HELD, TUESDAY,
January 17, 2017
5:30 p.m.

The Natchitoches Parish Council met in regular and legal session in the Council Board Room of the Natchitoches Parish Courthouse, on Tuesday, January 17, 2017 for a Regular of Natchitoches Parish Council meeting at five(5:30) o'clock p.m. and for the Natchitoches Parish Council Meeting.

The Parish of Natchitoches was then convened as the governing authority by Chairman Russell Rachal who stated that the Parish was ready for the transaction of business.

The invocation was given by Councilman Doug de Graffenried and the Pledge of Allegiance led by Councilman Russell Rachal.

After the roll call there were present Chairman Russell Rachal and Council: Rodney Bedgood, Doug de Graffenried, Chris Paige, and Patsy Ward-Hoover.

Absent: None.

Chairman Rachal then stated the next item on the agenda were the election of a new chairman and vice-chairman. Councilman Chris Paige motion to open the floor for nominations and Councilman Rodney Bedgood seconded it. Councilman Rodney Bedgood nominated Councilwoman Patsy Ward Hoover for Chairman and Councilman Chris Paige seconded it and then the floor was closed for nominations. Councilwoman Patsy Ward Hoover is the new Chairman for the Natchitoches Parish Council for 2017. Councilman Chris Paige motion to open the floor for nominations for Vice-Chairman and Councilman Bedgood seconded. Councilman Chris Paige nominated Councilman Rodney Bedgood, and then the floor was closed for nominations and Councilman Rodney Bedgood is the Vice-Chairman for the Natchitoches Parish Council for 2017.

Chairman Hoover stated the next item was for the adoption of the agenda with the added amendment. The added agenda items are:

1. Council to award bids for Grader Blades
 - A. Scott Equipment
 - B. Doggett
2. Council to consider authorizing Parish Treasurer to submit a waiver for In-Kind for Head Start Grant up to \$175,000.
3. Council to consider adopting a resolution stating that the matching funds for the State Capital Outlay project to resurface Fish Hatchery Road instead of Blanchard Road that and instead of \$93,333 it's \$41,667 was on the agenda as #15.

On motion by Councilman Chris Paige, duly seconded by Councilman Rodney Bedgood that the Natchitoches Parish Council, in regular and legal session, does hereby amend the agenda to add the above items to the Agenda.

On a roll call vote, the vote thereon was as follows:

Ayes:	Councilman Paige
Ayes:	Councilman Bedgood
Ayes:	Councilman de Graffernied
Ayes:	Councilman Paige
Ayes:	Councilwoman Hoover

Motion Passed

Chairman Hoover stated the next item was for the adoption of the agenda.

On motion by Councilman Russell Rachal, duly seconded by Councilman Chris Paige that the Natchitoches Parish Council, in regular and legal session, does hereby adopt the agenda.

On a roll call vote, the vote thereon was as follows:

Ayes:	Councilman Rachal
Ayes:	Councilman Paige
Ayes:	Councilman de Graffernied
Ayes:	Councilman Bedgood
Ayes:	Councilwoman Hoover

Motion Passed

Chairman Hoover then asked for visitors at this time.

The first visitor was Mr. Charles Roge', Assistant Fire Chief of Fire District 1. Mr. Roge' felt that he needed to respond to the statements that Mr. James Edward's made at the December Council meeting concerning Fire District 1. Mr. Roge' wanted to let everyone know he was not eating at a fish fry and ignored a fire page while his neighbor's house burned. Mr. Roge' explained when Mr. Edward's fire occurred, "I responded by radio to the page and reported that his wife and him was in Alexandria at the time." Mr. Roge' also admitted to keeping a small fire truck at his residence for two reasons only. First, there was not enough room at the Central Station and he felt it was better off under his shed at his home instead out in the weather. Secondly, he's semi-retired and responds to over 90% of the fires, and it's easier and faster to be able to get in the truck and go, and he can make sure its full of water and gas. Mr. Roge' explained he has responded to fires at all hours of the day and night, in temperatures over 100 and temperatures of 10 degrees when the water was freezing as it was sprayed. Mr. Roge', stated, "Part of being a volunteer is being a first responder t medical emergencies, and we have had hundreds of those." Mr. Roge also wanted to comment on some other remarks that was made about the Fire District 1 Board. Mr. Roge' explained, "Mr. Prothro wrecking the truck in Rapides Parish, he was using his Sunday off to take the truck to Timmon's garage for needed adjustments, he hit a pothole and lost control-unfortunate, but it could happen to anyone. Mr. Prothro suffered painful injuries so I'm sure he would have avoided this if possible." Mr. Roge' touched on other items he felt was important to talk on, such as the no bids taken for the trucks, he said that's ridiculous. Mr. Roge, commented, "Mr. Nowlin, if you want the truck that I keep at my house, come and get it, but then you need to find someone who has the time and desire to operate it as I did, day or night, sleet or snow." Mr. Roge ended by quoting his wife, " If you live in this district and you want to know that the problem is with Fire District 1, look in the mirror, and if you don't see a fireman looking back at you-that is the problem."

John Gregory a Fire Fighter from District 1, he wanted to talk about Mr. Edward's Fire. He also had pictures of Mr. Edward's fire on his pad. Mr. Gregory, stated, "I was the first person on the scene, I received a page around 4:00pm, while I was working in Alexandria, at my day job. I got in my car and I drove all the way from Alexandria to the station in Gorum, Station 2, got the Fire Truck drove the Fire truck to Mr. Edward's residence, where the fire was at and I was the first person on scene with a fire truck, I was, no one else was. I was in communication with all the other Districts; so I knew I had backup, which I felt real good about. I didn't know Mr. Edward's had this type of fire load, he had a whole lot of wood and lumber stacked up and he estimated about a 20 percent loss. I've been doing this for 30 years in this District

and this was the biggest fire we have ever had, the fire load was just huge, it was just unreal. We saved his house, his house didn't burn, we saved his horse, barn, and all kinds of out buildings, I don't think the main structure actually burned, all he actually loss was his wood products, he said almost 20 percent. Everyone worked to 11:30pm o 2:00am in the morning shoveling water out there, I don't know a sole that didn't work very hard to save what ever he had. We will be very glad to have him in our fire department and any volunteers he will bring that will meet our criteria. We don't want any sex offenders, DWI or chronic theft problem coming to your house during your most vulnerable time, that's why we have the interview process, you just ask a few questions, it's no lie detectors, we're doing this for free."

Councilman Chris Paige wanted to know about the interview process, he wanted to make Mr. Gregory aware that some laws governs some questions that you should and should not ask. Councilman Paige, asked, "Are you guys familiar with those type of questions? You don't want to get into any problems with asking the wrong type of questions." Mr. Gregory, replied, "It's a very basic questionnaire that we asks, such as: Do you have a Driver's License? You have to be able to be insured." Councilman Bedgood, asked, "How many active volunteer fire fighters you have right now, that responds to a fire? Mr. Gregory, replied, "A hand full, about two (2) people." Councilman Rachal, stated, "You stated that you have only a couple of people or handful of people that shows up at a fire, but, How many have made application and you have failed to put them on?" Mr. Gregory, stated, "I don't know that, I don't handle that, I'm a fire fighter, I don't know that, your asking the wrong person." Councilman Rachal, stated, "Just like Councilman Bedgood stated, we're not here to pass judgement, we are here to make sure the residents are covered, if you have two or three that shows up, we would like to see you get more people involved, you have people that are willing, and went through the interview process, let's get the show on the road, and get some people out there to protect the people. You have a tax coming up and the people is not going to be behind you if you're not going to support them. Fire District 1 has a fire rating of ten (10) and that's rock bottom, and that's inexcusable."

Chris Posey, a resident of Fire District 1 came to express his concerns and gave out handouts on information that he had gathered with all the Fire Districts in the State, that was pulled off the Louisiana Fire Marshall Website. This information was on incidents that should have been reported to the State Fire Marshal. This report was from 2013 to 2016. No fire reports has been filed to the State Fire Marshall since 2013 from Fire District 1. LSU training is still available. No one has heard anything from the board on their applications that has been submitted to be volunteer fire fighters. Pictures of the new fire truck in November in a Parade in Boyce/Lena. The truck set up from November 11 to January 2. The truck was not fire ready, but road ready. Mr. Posey commended Mr. Roge' for his service, but stated, "Things needs to be done, Sixteen (16) applicants have applied and no one has been appointed of today."

Chairman Hoover, made some remarks. "Councilman Rachal and I share this Fire District 1 and we thank all of you for coming out to make the council aware of what's going on. I have had many calls complaining about the high insurance rates, some has double and some has even tripled. It has already been established here tonight there is some serious problems that needs to be corrected. I will like to make a recommendation to Mr. Nowlin, our President, that he will allow Councilman Rachal and myself to be apart of the screening process of the Board members for Fire District 1, they have the lowest Fire rating, allegations that the current board haven't received the LSU Fire training, reports not being turned in, and we need to help

Cloutierville School to be able to apply for any Grants if they can and no financial statement has been filed."

Parish President, asked, "Mrs. Hoover what is exactly would you anticipate your role to be in this?" Chairman Hoover, replied, "It has been stated by both groups, there is some problems, and we need to gather information together is to see exactly what the problem really is and try to work along with them, to try to get it corrected." Parish President, replied, "We welcome any Council persons involvement to try to assist the Fire District, we do not want to supplant the Board in that Fire District because they have the primary responsibility, if we would like to support the board and assist the Board we can, we don't want to take over the function of the Board." Chairman Hoover, asked, "Can we abolish that Board?" Parish President stated, "That's a legal answer, I'm not answering that." Chairman Hoover, stated, "I don't think this is illegal, we do have something from our District Attorney Office and it states we can." Chairman Hoover, then asked the attorney for a response. The Assistant District Attorney, stated "We just gave a legal opinion on this of today, I don't think the Council has had enough time to read and go over this, I think we should wait until everyone has the time permitted to review the opinion before we have public comments on it."

Councilman Paige, stated, "As I sit and listen, the area we'll talking about is already scrapped for volunteers. I think we are trying to see if we can amend the relationships with all parties involved. Get their volunteers up, if possible. I have heard everything, but I think in the past we would appoint a committee to try and help the board and help the volunteers to come together to see what the other Fire Districts has done to correct the same problems they had in the past and they have really moved their Districts up to a better fire rating. I think we don't want to up root the present board that we have in place, I would say if a committee is appointed that Councilman Rachal would be on that Board and they will come up with solutions to help the Board instead of all this pointing the finger at one another. We all have to come together to help each other, instead of trying to abolish a board right now."

Harry Hawthorne, he's the newly elect chairman for District 1. He has been in there for two to three months. Mr. Hawthorne expressed, "When I got on the Board it was a very sad situation no volunteers, we had names of volunteers on role, but couldn't they could not be notified or have shown up for any fires, you can't get in touch with them. I can personally address this, I have a house worth a half million dollars and only one person showed up. The insurance on my house is \$17,000 a year; so we know the problem. A couple of months ago we sent out letters to all the members in Fire District 1 asking for help to volunteer. I only received three (3) out of the 400 to 500 that were sent out and one was from an eight seven year old lady, that it was forwarded to her, because she had moved and now is renting out the house. She would love to help us out, but her age would be detrimental to us, I told her it doesn't matter what your physical condition is, you can help in some area. We have six person board which consist of two old board members and 4 four that are very new we are trying to change the thing, we trying to bring it up, we have some from the Southern part of city that we have met with and asked questions, The questions, is what everybody is hung up on. The questions are like What your name? What is your phone number? What station you live closer to? Have you ever driven a big truck before? Things that are important to be a volunteer Fire fighter. We set up appointments about 20 percent who turned in applications didn't come to the interview, they decided they didn't want to do it. We desperately need volunteers in the North part of the District, Point Place and so on. I personally went door to door knocking on doors and no one would do it, they are

expecting their neighbors to bail them out, but it doesn't work like that. I don't really want you to jump in here and do something that can mess up something. We have 20 firemen on the agenda. We get these application we need to ask them the basic question, Why do you want to be a Fireman? All this has to be compile, we send it to the State Fire Marshall, they have to pass on it, and get them on the role, they have to get insurance. I like to ask of you, of course, do as you wish, I think for the good of the District we're on the right path, this is a job, no doubt of about it, it's a job with no pay, you meet once a month and train once a month, you have three separate training a month, before you even start fighting fires. I ask whatever you do lay back and try to let us work our self out of it. Thank you."

Parish President, stated, "I like to bring this to a close. We have heard this from last month and this month. I would like to thank, Mr. Hawthorne he has started to make a difference along with the other new board members, they are heading into the right direction. I would like to appoint you, Chairman Hoover, and Mr. Rachal on the Advisory board, we have had Advisory Boards in the past. I would appreciate an update to let me know what's going on, how I can help and assist you in any ways, but the responsibility is the Board, and we just have to assist them and help them in any way, this is the direction we would like to go."

Mr. James Edwards was next he asked, "Mr. Nowlin, I have a question for you. If this board is so good and your one volunteer fireman is so great, they have been on it about a year, as the gentleman stated, How come it hasn't been a report file? How come it has not been nothing done? So what I'm getting at if you don't change the board or put a chief on there that knows what they're doing you're not going to get no change. If you ain't got it after 2013 up to now, you're not going to get it. These volunteers that you got, When they come in here?, when I had my fire, that's when they came in here. You have those people standing right out there, they're applicants, their applications has been in there since October, and they still haven't heard anything. They want to sit there and call me a trouble maker, thug, and a hoodlum, I've had enough, all we're trying to do is help and to change it, and if nobody can see that, you're not going to get it changed, because they're not doing nothing, period. I don't care how you look at it and how you trying to sugar coat it, there is nothing being done. This is it, if yal don't make a showing tonight, you just lost your South end, I have people that can cover all stations, but there is nobody that wants to work with them. You, Mr. Nowlin, you're been to all the meeting down there, they have done everything but shake you in the collar and you're still going to uphold them, until you get an audit and get this thing checked out the way it supposed to be, you'll still have a problem. Thank yal."

Mr. Roge' said he sympathize with Mr. Edwards he knows what he's going through. He just want to let people know their records was up to date, trucks up to date and training was sufficient. Personnel is the biggest problem at this the time the Chairman stopped Mr. Roge' to let him know the President has spoken and we'll be sitting down with everybody and listening to everybody concerns and try to take care of this problem. The chairman thanked them for coming out.

Ronnie Harris and Stephen Morel from Civic Source came to give a presentation on Adjudicated Properties. The Parish has many properties that are now considered adjudicated. This company, CivicSource will help get these properties back on the roll again, or if these properties are sold ,the owners, will have a clear title to the property by going through this company. This will not cost the Parish

any up front money. The company gets it money through the sale of the property from the person who's buying it.

These gentlemen answered questions from the Council and the Parish President and left information for the Council and Parish President to review about selecting them to help with adjudicated properties of the Parish.

Councilman Bedgood, stated, "I have some visitors from Pardee road that would like to speak, and I had a call stating that the School buses was not going down Pardee road. I don't know if this true or not, but this is what I've been told. If this is true we need to get something done."

Mr. John Hodgeson, from Pardee road, wanted to know, "Who's obligated to fix the Parish roads? Mr. President, that's you right? You're not doing your job. It has been about three or four years ago, you came out there and saw it, you said you was going to fix it, You're shaking your head, it's not going to be fix." Mr. Verret, replied, "I said we will do something with it if we can, with the resources that we have." Mr. Hodgeson, replied, "You can't do nothing apparently." Sooner or later someone is going to have an accident out there, and you're going to be able to fix the whole road for what it's going to cost you." Now, I don't what it's going to take to get that road done. You, know I told you I was going to make a call, well, I made that call, and it took me three days to get an answer, and you know what that answer was, "Done", that's all, one word, "Done." Apparently your Parish is about to get some money, if not already. Mr. Hodgeson, said when the Parish get the money from the Feds, he wants his road done."

Councilman Bedgood stated he has one more thing to discuss, I asked Mr. Verret about, "Why is there more work being done in District 5 than being done in District 4?" "Mr. Verret sent a letter out stating why more work was done in that District than the other District. I had a printout done to see just how much a difference it was." Councilman Bedgood began telling the difference and stating he just doesn't understand why District 5 is getting so much more and there is not a big difference between the Districts but a couple of miles difference. Mr. Bedgood, stated, "Well, I was told it was because of the rain, District 4 joins up with District 5, don't tell me it rains more in District 5 than in District 4, it rained all day in District 4. This work being done in District 5 just don't sit with me to good, I'm sorry. I'm here to support people in District 4. When you spend \$250,000 in 8 months in one District and not the other District, something just not right."

Councilman Paige, spoke, "All you're talking about Councilman Bedgood, is being fair and as fair as possible. For years we always try to watch that between the roads that have large amounts, such as yours and Councilman Rachal's has. If, I would have had as much roads that you two have, because as much, I'm just so furious about Payne Subdivision, I'm so sick of talking about Payne Subdivision, and I know Councilman Doug, is tired of me talking about and hearing me talking about it. I was proud to hear him say that. I think when money is spent on these road it should not be any favoritism or the appearance of favoritism given with any individual Council members for what ever reasons that there may be. We have a serious situation with the roads in our Parish. It's something that never going to be caught up with. We have had road problems in the beginning, don't get me wrong., people use to say, they will drive in a ditch to keep from hitting a pothole, but now they driving in the ditch hitting potholes. It's that bad, these people are so mad in Natchitoches Parish, right now, that these renewals are coming up, people are going to fight against them, and that's a shame, it's a disgrace, all that this man is saying is to fair, if I had as many roads distances that these two

gentlemen have and you see the disparity in it. We have to stop at some point of another and stop coming back, and to the tune, of ok, we passed that over. Let's just be fair."

Dwayne Rachal, wanted to talk about Pardee road. "They just fix the road a little bit, just put some gravel on it, people are going down the ditches on both side to get home. I own two homes out there both of them appraised over \$300,000 and now they both have dropped \$100,000 because of the roads, that's how bad the roads are, I can't even sell them, nobody wants to drive down that road. You can't miss a pot hole for hitting a pothole that's why they start going down the ditches, but somebody is going to have a serious accident down there, I've been down there 25 years and it's just been patch, patch, patch, just come down there and do an overlay and be done with it."

Mrs. Cele Cook, told the Council she's there with a present for them, a million dollars. I been working three years putting this together a wonderful 3,000 foot road that Mr. Verret supervised personally. She has a beautiful subdivision, about 70 lots out by the Country Club. But there is two little short roads that leads down to the Subdivision that is bad, Douglas Drive, and Cele Cook Drive that is bad to get to the Subdivision. Mrs. Cook is asking for these two roads to be fixed in order for her to sell her lots.

Parish President, Rick Nowlin no arguments from me on the Douglas Drive is in poor shape, and they have a dozen new pot holes along with the others are in bad shape just like the Pardee road, only thing we can do is put rock in the holes or cold mix in there, and we've stop doing that because that's just a temporary bandage that don't last. Mr. Verret will have more to say on the Pardee road when we get time.

Sherwood McBride, wanted to inform the Council, the Pardee road is only 3 miles long at the most and it's impassable and he calls once a week. Mr. McBride, stated, "I know there is a lot of people who don't pay taxes, but I do pay taxes." Chairman Hoover, informed Mr. McBride that he needs to talk with Parish President, Rick Nowlin, and Nick Verret.

Parish President wanted to speak on this matter of the renewal tax, this tax brings in 40 percent of the revenue of the Highway Department for the year and it's critical to get this tax passed. Mr. McBride asked, "Could we remove their road out of the road system and make it a private road? so they can fix it." Parish President, Rick Nowlin, stated, "There are options, you can remove it out the Public road system and make it a private road, or you can keep it public and make contributions to a community road group, you assess yourself a certain amount and the money could only be used for that road."

Mr. Verret wanted to address the issues on Pardee road. Mr. Verret, replied, "The School transportation offices, has not reported anything to my office that they're not going down the road. I spoke with the bus driver a few weeks ago, and she personally requested it to be scarified, it would be a better road for her. We have 300 miles of paved roads in the Parish that has deteriorated as poor, very poor ,or failed and most of them are being failed. It makes no sense to purchase aggregate to put out there when we can actually generate from the road its by scarifying the road we'll creating our own aggregate to put out there. I'm still asking the Council's consideration for scarifying these failed pavements to get something done. The second thing is the issue of the distribution of the road work by Districts. All things being equal if you have the same miles of road, but looking at the report all things are not equal." Mr. Verret went through all the problems that has happened during the storms and he supplied information on Cold patching that was done more this last month 5 times more in District 4 than District 5. Councilman Bedgood, replied, "One gentleman on the Goldonna road, went out there and took red paint

and put around six potholes made a telephone call with me standing there, the next day they came out and patch those six holes and didn't patch nothing else on the road, left all the other holes." Mr. Verret stated, "I knows there is problems in the everyday operations."

Councilman Rachal wanted to express his concerns about Mr. Bedgood problems with the difference in the road work done in their two Districts. "I can appreciate his concerns, I do have a concern with the statement that was made by favoritism, let me address that real quickly. I have not made any phone calls to anyone and ask for favors to be done in my District, I'm well aware of Ordinance 26 of 1983 that was adopted by the Police Jury in December 1983, stated it's illegal for any Police Juror as an individual to direct any works to be done on any roads in this Parish. I'm well aware of this law; so with that statement that there was favoritism being shone, I take major offense to that, Mr. Paige, because that hinges on the very verge of accusations to a legal matter, that I would call to ask for anything to be done; so let the record reflect, I do take opposition to it, I will continue to take opposition to it, and accusations must stop tonight, Thank you."

Councilman Paige, replied, "If you would play the tape back, I said the appearance of favoritism, if the shoe is tight on your foot, it's just tight on your foot."

Marjorie Conn, a resident of the Pardee road, stated, "I'm sorry if I offend anybody, I'm very sorry, I don't know a lot about this stuff, but I do know, that this place is suppose to take care of it's people, Right? So if you have somebody, like me, you don't know too much about it, and you're sitting and waiting, and one of your people say, "Oh, man, If I knew all these people was going to be here, talking about the roads, I would have went home." Ms. Marjorie, stated, "When you say something to them about it", "Well we don't have any money". Ms. Marjorie, continued, "If you didn't have enough money, then, Why is everybody running all over themselves, when it's time to elect somebody, to take over it again? If they are not going to pay you, you're not going to come up here, just like the Fire District man, said, You can't get any one to volunteer if they're not getting paid. So obviously it's some money somewhere. I will tell you this, I'm a nurse, I've been a nurse for over 40 years, and if you have family or you specifically would not be driven in ambulance on that road, because they can't start IV's , can't take blood pressure, they can't take care of you or your people on that road; so, What happens to them if they die? We're going to get sued, because we was unable to do our job. I have sit there and watch a lot of people die by themselves, I'm the only one with them, but you have to have some type of feelings. All of this talk about he say, she say, needs to stop. Yal need to work together to fix this problem, some where along Natchitoches is getting some money. I don't know what else to say, we have a legitimate issue, this just didn't happen. If anybody else come up here and hear those types of comments, they wouldn't have nothing to do with you."

Chairman Hoover, replied, "This is for the people, this time is set for to hear the people of Natchitoches Parish, We are policy makers and Mr. Nowlin and Verret are the one's responsible for your roads, when you come and address it to us, we feel your pain, these are the two gentlemen you're addressing that too. Anytime you have something to say to this Council, we sit here to hear what you have to say, so please don't feel the way that you do." Mr. Verret, replied, "Madam Chair you stated, all the Council does is make policies, but also you have to provide me and my department the resources we need in order to do our work, we simply do not have the resources."

Parish President, responded, "You don't have to tell me tonight or just at any time. Does anybody on this Council do not support the renewal of the road tax?, I'm not asking for a show of hands."

Councilman Paige, replied, "It's detrimental like you said, like I told you earlier, I'm hearing people, stating they wasn't going to support it, but I don't know how we're going to operate, the library, health unit, if it doesn't pass." Parish President, stated, "If the Health Unit tax doesn't pass, we might not have a Health Unit. We want have any mosquito spraying or pay or supported employees."

Chairman Hoover, commented to Mr. Verret, "We have tried to support you, with things needed to be done, you haven't done those things. You have promised to this Council to purchase needed equipment that you never purchased. We as the Council had approved you to buy equipment and you didn't. You bought a truck in this Parish, when people are screaming about their roads we do have a problem with how you're handling your business."

Mr. Verret, replied, "Madam Chair what is the equipment that wasn't purchased that we didn't?" Chairman Hoover, replied, "A roller." Mr. Verret, replied, "If we would have purchased the roller, we wouldn't have the hot mix to go with it." Chairman Hoover, but you had money to buy a double cab truck. At this time there were words back and forth, and Parish President, stated, "Madam Chair, he didn't interrupt you while you was talking, let show him the courtesy, Chairman Hoover, replied, "I'm going to respect you as the president." Parish President, replied, "I'm going to respect you also, as long as you respect, Mr. Verret." Mr. Verret, responded, "We do have to get people out to the roads to check the roads, employees to the graders , Employees responds at night, when trees falls, etc., any time any equipment goes down, we don't have any spares."

Chairman Hoover, explained to Parish President, "This is a Council meeting and a people meeting; so I want you to recognize that, this is a Council meeting." Parish President, replied, "My Department Heads are here as a courtesy to answer your questions, and not required to be here they will be treated with respect or I'll dismiss them." Chairman Hoover, replied, "That's up to you." Parish President, replied, "Thank you, ma'am."

Mrs. Hodgeson, wanted Mr. Bedgood and Mr. Verret to look at her while she spoke. "I like to invite each of you to my home to sit with me on my porch and have coffee and watch the guys fix the roads with a pick up truck and little biddy trailer with cold patch on them, that's the most entertainment I had to watch them with this big truck, little trailer, and small shovels. That was pitiful."

Carolyn Roy wanted to ask a question. "Was this about employees job performance? That you'll allowing to be spoken in an open meeting. Can these people be identified?" Chairman Hoover, asked Mrs. Roy, "What are you talking about?" Mrs. Roy, responded, "Letting this lady, talk about employees or anybody else talk about job performance. That's not allowed." There was discussion among Mrs. Roy, the Council, and others, but then, Chairman Hoover, requested Council to clear this matter up, and Assistant District Attorney Fair, stated if they were talking about job performance they can't do it in an open meeting, but Shantel Wemprem, Attorney that works with Mr. Fair, "Generally when it comes to performance evaluations of employees, Parish Council can't speak about a specific person, but I didn't hear, Mrs. Hodgeson speak of this specific person she was talking about the equipment they were working with."

Chairman Hoover stated the next item on the agenda was to adopt the minutes of the regular meeting of the Natchitoches Parish Council held Monday, December 19, 2016.

On motion by Councilman Chris Paige, duly seconded by, Councilman Rodney Bedgood that the Natchitoches Parish Council, in regular and legal session, does hereby adopt the minutes of the regular meeting of the Natchitoches Parish Council held Monday, November 21, 2016.

On a roll call vote, the vote thereon was as follows:

Ayes: Councilman Paige
Ayes: Councilman Bedgood
Ayes: Councilwoman Hoover
Ayes: Councilman de Graffenried
Ayes: Councilman Rachal

Motion Passed

Chairman Hoover stated the next item on the agenda was Council to consider authorizing Parish President to execute a revised lease agreement between Mr. Donny Whitehead for the polling place in Vowells Mill. The rent is \$1,000. per year.

On motion by Councilman Chris Paige, duly seconded by, Councilman Rodney Bedgood that the Natchitoches Parish Council, in regular and legal session, does hereby authorize Parish President to execute a revised lease agreement between Mr. Donny Whitehead for the polling place in Vowells Mill. The rent is \$1,000. per year.

On a roll call vote, the vote thereon was as follows:

Ayes: Councilman Paige
Ayes: Councilman Bedgood
Ayes: Councilwoman Hoover
Ayes: Councilman de Graffenried
Ayes: Councilman Rachal

Motion Passed

Chairman Hoover stated the next item on the agenda was Council to approve Mr. Rick Nowlin appointment of the new Building and Maintenance Supervisor.

Mr. Nowlin, informed the Council that Mr. Winston Bridges has been named the new Building and Maintenance Supervisor. He's an existing employee, he has been in charge of all of our maintenance position, and others as custodians. That position reports directly to me and I need the Council to approve his promotion.

Councilman Chris Paige, wanted to know, "I think before the agreement before he had some particular duties over the grounds. In the past this particular position went to all Government Buildings and worked on them. Is that what we're talking about?" Parish President, replied, "It has the same duties and responsibility of the former Supervisor." Councilman Paige, "That's what I'm was wanting to hear."

Chairman Hoover said she just had one question. "According to the Personnel Manual on page 115 does this person meets these qualifications?" and Chairman Hoover read over the qualifications. Parish President, replied, " Before he came to

the Parish he has 20 years experience running his own Construction Company, he holds several certifications, I reviewed his background against the Policy Manual and I feel he meets the requirements."

On motion by Councilman Russell Rachal, duly seconded by, Councilman Chris Paige that the Natchitoches Parish Council, in regular and legal session, does hereby authorize Parish President to promote Mr. Winston Bridges to Building and Maintenance Supervisor for the Parish of Natchitoches.

On a roll call vote, the vote thereon was as follows:

Ayes: Councilman Rachal
Ayes: Councilman Paige
Ayes: Councilman Bedgood
Ayes: Councilwoman Hoover
Ayes: Councilman de Graffenried

Motion Passed

Chairman Hoover stated the next item on the agenda was Council to Conduct a public hearing to hear any and all comments or objections relative to the adoption of the following items:

1. Council to consider adopting Ordinance 17-2016 giving authorization to the Parish President to enter into an agreement with the Natchitoches Parish Sheriff Office for the sale of the Parish building on 415 Trudeau Street and a certain parking lot to the NPSO, subject to an acceptable appraisal of the value of the property, a mutual agreement on the purchase price, and the review and approval of the Office of the District Attorney.

2. Council to consider adopting Ordinance 016-2016 to reduce the posted speed limit on Parish Road No.626, Willie Baner Road, from 35mph to 20 mph.

On motion by Councilman Chris Paige, duly seconded by Councilman Rodney Bedgood, that the Natchitoches Parish Council, in regular and legal session, does hereby open the public hearing to hear any and all comments or objections relative to the adoption of the following items:

1. Council to consider adopting Ordinance 17-2016 giving authorization to the Parish President to enter into an agreement with the Natchitoches Parish Sheriff Office for the sale of the Parish building on 415 Trudeau Street and a certain parking lot to the NPSO, subject to an acceptable appraisal of the value of the property, a mutual agreement on the purchase price, and the review and approval of the Office of the District Attorney.

2. Council to consider adopting Ordinance 016-2016 to reduce the posted speed limit on Parish Road No.626, Willie Baner Road, from 35mph to 20 mph.

On a roll call vote, the vote thereon was as follows:

Ayes: Councilman Paige
Ayes: Councilman Bedgood
Ayes: Councilwoman Hoover
Ayes: Councilman de Graffenried

Ayes: Councilman Rachal

Motion Passed

There was a lengthy discussion on agenda item 1. Council wanted to know if the building can be leased? Council wanted to know, what was the appraised value of the building? Parish President, stated, "I was disappointed in the appraised value, the appraised value came in at \$114,500 and the small parking lot which appraised at \$26,000 with a total of \$140,500.00. The building is not for sale, the Sheriff was inquiring about the building because he needed more space closer to the Courthouse. The Parish President wanted to show that the Sheriff did reach out to help the Parish on lowering the inmates rates.

The public body did have comments on this item, Ms. Marjorie Conn did expressed her feelings on it. She feels take what is needed, something is better than nothing. Mr. Randy Stelly, was recognized, "I have a question, Is that building occupied or empty? replies were "Empty" from different persons. Is that building being used by the Parish for anything? the answers were "No" from different persons. So Why in the hell would it just be sitting there not doing anything when you can get some money for it? Yal, have a Good One."

Agenda item 2 was discussed, and Mr. Verret gave reasons why this road speed should be lowered to 20 mph.

On motion by Councilman Chris Paige, duly seconded by Councilman Rodney Bedgood, that the Natchitoches Parish Council, in regular and legal session, does hereby closed the public hearing to hear any and all comments or objections relative to the adoption of the following items:

1. Council to consider adopting Ordinance 17-2016 giving authorization to the Parish President to enter into an agreement with the Natchitoches Parish Sheriff Office for the sale of the Parish building on 415 Trudeau Street and a certain parking lot to the NPSO, subject to an acceptable appraisal of the value of the property, a mutual agreement on the purchase price, and the review and approval of the Office of the District Attorney.

2. Council to consider adopting Ordinance 016-2016 to reduce the posted speed limit on Parish Road No.626, Willie Baner Road, from 35mph to 20 mph.

On a roll call vote, the vote thereon was as follows:

Ayes: Councilman Paige
Ayes: Councilman Bedgood
Ayes: Councilwoman Hoover
Ayes: Councilman de Graffenried
Ayes: Councilman Rachal

Motion Passed

Chairman Hoover stated the next item on the agenda was Council to consider adopting Ordinance 17-2016 giving authorization to the Parish President to enter into an agreement with the Natchitoches Parish Sheriff Office for the sale of the Parish building on 415 Trudeau Street and a certain parking lot to the NPSO, subject to an acceptable appraisal of the value of the property, a mutual agreement on the purchase price, and the review and approval of the Office of the District Attorney.

The Parish President didn't realize it was up for a vote, he thought it was for Introduction. Council had discussion if they

could table it or re-introduce another Ordinance, since this was for Introduction last month. The Legal Council, expressed it was up for Introduction last month, but they don't have a set price or been advertised and it hasn't been through all the legal channels.

On motion by Councilman Russell Rachal, duly seconded by, Councilman Rodney Bedgood that the Natchitoches Parish Council, in regular and legal session, does hereby table Ordinance 17-2016 giving authorization to the Parish President to enter into an agreement with the Natchitoches Parish Sheriff Office for the sale of the Parish building on 415 Trudeau Street and a certain parking lot to the NPSO, subject to an acceptable appraisal of the value of the property, a mutual agreement on the purchase price, and the review and approval of the Office of the District Attorney.

On a roll call vote, the vote thereon was as follows:

Ayes: Councilman Rachal
Ayes: Councilman Bedgood
Ayes: Councilman Paige
Ayes: Councilwoman Hoover
Ayes: Councilman de Graffenried

Motion Passed

Chairman Hoover stated the next item on the agenda was Council to consider adopting Ordinance 016-2016 to reduce the posted speed limit on Parish Road No.626, Willie Baner Road, from 35mph to 20 mph.

On motion by Councilman Rodney Bedgood, duly seconded by, Councilman Russell Rachal that the Natchitoches Parish Council, in regular and legal session, does hereby adopt Ordinance 016-2016 to reduce the posted speed limit on Parish Road No.626, Willie Baner Road, from 35mph to 20 mph.

On a roll call vote, the vote thereon was as follows:

Ayes: Councilman Bedgood
Ayes: Councilman Rachal
Ayes: Councilman Paige
Ayes: Councilwoman Hoover
Ayes: Councilman de Graffenried

Motion Passed

Chairman Hoover stated the next item on the agenda was Council to to consider discussing moving forward with requesting Legislative Audit.

There were discussion on this and in the month on September, 2016 Council agreed unanimously to request an Audit of the Parish of Natchitoches beginning from 2008 to 2016. This was to broad and need to be broken down for specific areas in which an audit is needed. With the help of the Assistant District Attorney Office, Council agreed to Introduce an Ordinance to request this Audit from the Legislative Auditor. This was only for discussion on what to do and how to do it.

Chairman Hoover stated the next item on the agenda was for Council to consider a Resolution of ordering and calling an election to be in Natchitoches Parish Fire District 1 continuation of an ad valorem tax March 25, 2017.

On motion by Councilman Chris Paige, duly seconded by, Councilman Russell Rachal that the Natchitoches Parish Council, in regular and legal session, does hereby adopt a Resolution of ordering and calling an election to be in Natchitoches Parish Fire District 1 continuation of an ad valorem tax March 25, 2017.

On a roll call vote, the vote thereon was as follows:

Ayes: Councilman Paige
Ayes: Councilman Rachal
Ayes: Councilwoman Hoover
Ayes: Councilman de Graffenried
Ayes: Councilman Bedgood

Motion Passed

Chairman Hoover stated the next item on the agenda was for Council to consider authorization to expand the previously-authorized bridge repair contract to include the repair of additional deficiencies that may be identified during the 2017 DOTD bridge inspections.

There was discussion on this with Council and Mr. Verret and after discussion

On motion by Councilman Bedgood, duly seconded by

The motion dies for a second.

Chairman Hoover stated the next item on the agenda was for Council to consider adopting a resolution stating that the matching funds for the State Capital Outlay project to resurface Fish Hatchery Road, FP&C Project No.50-J35-15-02, in the amount of \$41,667 [25% of project cost or one-third of State funding] have been included in the 2017 Highway Budget, and that the Parish Council as the governing body of the Parish of Natchitoches hereby commits these funds to this project.

On motion by Councilman Russell Rachal, duly seconded by, Chairman Patsy Ward Hoover that the Natchitoches Parish Council, in regular and legal session, does hereby adopt a Resolution stating that the matching funds for the State Capital Outlay project to resurface Fish Hatchery Road, FP&C Project No.50-J35-15-02, in the amount of \$41,667 [25% of project cost or one-third of State funding] have been included in the 2017 Highway Budget, and that the Parish Council as the governing body of the Parish of Natchitoches hereby commits these funds to this project.

On a roll call vote, the vote thereon was as follows:

Ayes: Councilman Rachal
Ayes: Councilwoman Hoover
Ayes: Councilman Paige
Ayes: Councilman de Graffenried
Ayes: Councilman Bedgood

Motion Passed

Chairman Hoover stated the next item on the agenda was for Council to consider Introducing Ordinance 001-2017 to add a part-time Parish Engineer paid a hourly rate as needed to the job description of the Parish Personnel Manual.

On motion by Councilman Russell Rachal, duly seconded by, Councilman Doug de Graffenried that the Natchitoches Parish Council, in regular and legal session, does hereby Introduce Ordinance 001-2017 to add a part-time Parish Engineer paid a hourly rate as needed to the job description of the Parish Personnel Manual.

On a roll call vote, the vote thereon was as follows:

Ayes: Councilman Rachal
Ayes: Councilman de Graffenried
Nayes: Councilman Paige
Ayes: Councilwoman Hoover
Ayes: Councilman Bedgood

Motion Passed

Chairman Hoover stated the next item on the agenda was for Council to consider Introducing Ordinance 002-2017 to remove Engineering duties/responsibilities off Director of Public Works job description in Parish Personnel Manual.

On motion by Councilman Russell Rachal, duly seconded by, Councilman Doug de Graffenried that the Natchitoches Parish Council, in regular and legal session, does hereby Introduce Ordinance 002-2017 to remove Engineering duties/responsibilities off Director of Public Works job description in Parish Personnel Manual.

On a roll call vote, the vote thereon was as follows:

Ayes: Councilman Rachal
Ayes: Councilman de Graffenried
Nayes: Councilman Paige
Ayes: Councilwoman Hoover
Ayes: Councilman Bedgood

Motion Passed

Chairman Hoover stated the next item on the agenda was for Council to consider awarding Grader Blades to the lowest bidder out of bids from:
A. Scott Equipment
B. Doggett

Mr. Nick Verret confirmed the lowest bidder was Doggett.

On motion by Councilman Rodney Bedgood, duly seconded by, Councilman Russell Rachal that the Natchitoches Parish Council, in regular and legal session, does hereby award Grader Blades to Doggett.

On a roll call vote, the vote thereon was as follows:

Ayes: Councilman Bedgood
Ayes: Councilman Rachal
Ayes: Councilman Paige
Ayes: Councilwoman Hoover
Ayes: Councilman de Graffenried

Motion Passed

Chairman Hoover stated the next item on the agenda was for Council to authorize Parish Treasure to submit a waiver for In-Kind for Head Start Grant up to \$175,000.

Councilman Doug de Graffenried wanted more explanation on this item. Parish Treasurer Debbie Miley and Executive Director Sharon Harris updated him on In-Kind and how it must be accumulated and reported. The is a Federal requirement.

On motion by Councilman Rodney Bedgood, duly seconded by, Councilman Russell Rachal that the Natchitoches Parish Council, in regular and legal session, does hereby authorize Parish Treasure to submit a waiver for In-Kind for Head Start Grant up to \$175,000.

On a roll call vote, the vote thereon was as follows:

Ayes:	Councilman Bedgood
Ayes:	Councilman Rachal
Abstain:	Councilman Paige
Ayes:	Councilwoman Hoover
Ayes:	Councilman de Graffenried

Motion Passed

Chairman Hoover then recognized Mr. Nick Verret, Director of Public Works, Mr. Verret gave a summary of FEMA Mitigation Grant Program.

FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant Program - The Parish President and staff have worked with other local entities [Office of Emergency Preparedness, City of Natchitoches, and Natchitoches Levee and Drainage District] to identify potential projects for utilization of the \$839,012 in HM funds that have been made available to the Parish as a result of the March 2016 flood disaster event.

A proposed project to improve the flow in the East Natchitoches Drainage Ditch will be submitted as the Parish's No. 1 Priority by the January 13, 2017, pre-application deadline. This project would benefit residents of Blanchard Subdivision, which is part of Parish Council District 3. Phase 1 of this project would consist of a drainage study that would identify the specific channel improvements that would lower the water surface elevation for the design storm frequency to eliminate the flooding of residential and commercial property in this area. These improvements could include enlarging the existing drainage structure under Chris Street, paving a portion of the channel with concrete, etc.

In the event that the drainage study indicates this proposed project will not meet the required 1.0+ Benefit-to-Cost ratio, two other projects will be submitted as the second and third priority for the Parish, in order to keep the HM funding from being lost.

The first of these additional projects [Priority 2] is to provide improvements to the drainage along Bienville Street, in order to prevent street flooding which cuts off access to Natchitoches Regional Medical Center and to other medical offices in the area, as well as to the administrative offices of the Natchitoches Parish School Board.

The second additional project [Priority 3] is to replace a deteriorated pipe and flap gate under Marco Road. This structure provides for the drainage of crop land into Lower Cane River and thus prevents backwater flooding during high stages on this part of Cane River.

After the prioritized list of projects and other required documentation is submitted, the Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness [GOHSEP] will review the proposed projects and select the one that is deemed to be the most feasible project, following which the Parish must submit a formal application for funding, including detailed cost estimate and Benefit-Cost Analysis, by February 13.

Whatever project is approved will require a 20% local match of the Federal funds.

Chairman Hoover then recognizes Ms. Sharon Harris, OCS/Head Start Executive Director, she gave her reports.

Ms. Harris wanted to know if the Council had any questions about her reports that was given to them. Council didn't have any questions.

Chairman Hoover wanted an update on the visit from the Head Start person from Dallas.

Ms. Harris, responded by saying, "We met on January 5 our T&TA team from the Regional Office that works with Government, Physical, and Education to come and visit with us. They went over the new Performance Standards. The new Performance Standards came out in November and their telling us that we need to look very closely to the new standards, that's when it came up about the In-Kind asking for a waiver. These people comes out to our site per our request to go over the rules and regulations is things are being done correctly, they can't tell us if our paperwork is correct but they can give us some guidance on how we're doing things. It was very informative. We done our self-assessment. They will be back, the finance person, on March 9, 2016, they will come back and talk about In-Kind.

Chairman Hoover recognizes Councilman Russell Rachal, which had a question for Mr. Nick Verret, He wanted to ask about the Coal Kiln Bridge, "A resident called and reported the boards that were placed on them was not secured, if this the case can you please check on it." Mr. Verret, replied, "It was at the end of the work day and the did not drive the spikes down, we do have what we need to do the work, they just have not gone back, but I believe, Mr. Salard, went out to checked it out." Councilman Rachal requested Mr. Verret to check to see if it's been done.

Chairman Hoover then recognizes Parish Treasurer, Debbie Miley. questions.

Ms. Miley, asked were there any questions on what she had sent out in the Council's packages. Ms. Miley sent out the In-Mate report, Head Start Credit Card report, and other reports that were given to the Head Start Policy Council.

Chairman Hoover then recognizes Parish President, Rick Nowlin. Mr. Nowlin wanted to go over two items first it was the Coco Bed Road Improvements: We received the 2nd Amendment to the Cooperative Endeavor Agreement from FP&C, the State funding remains at \$280,000. We have also received authorization to proceed with the preparation of construction plans in accordance with the revised project scope. Also for Payne Subdivision \$266,667 will be estimated enough to fix the bridge on Miller road, and on Payne Drive coming into the subdivision. Also the agenda for the State Bond Commission, on Thursday the 19th, the Bond Commission is considering additional \$300,000 for Payne Subdivision. Parish has asked permission to begin on the \$266,667 project. Mr. Nowlin, stated, "If they pass it on Thursday, we are gladly going to take, it, it can increase back to the \$500,00 we begin at."

Parish President also talked on the Parish Road District 40 Tax Renewals and the other renewals. District 40 includes the entire Parish except for the City of Natchitoches. The renewal of this existing tax is absolutely critical to the continued operation of the Parish highway department. It is imperative that all members of the Parish government support the renewal tax. The Health Unit can be in jeopardy if this renewal doesn't pass, support personnel will not be

able to be paid, or the mosquito spraying will not be done. The State would have to make a decision on keeping it open.

On motion by Councilman Russell Rachal, duly seconded by Councilman Rodney Bedgood, that the Natchitoches Parish Council, in regular and legal session, does hereby adjourn.

On a roll call vote, the vote thereon was as follows:

Ayes:	Councilman Rachal
Ayes:	Councilman Bedgood
Ayes:	Councilman Paige
Ayes:	Councilman de Graffenried
Ayes:	Councilwoman Hoover

Motion Passed

Since there was no other business the meeting was adjourn:

Attest:

Patsy Ward Hoover, Chairman

Sheryl Frederick,
Council Clerk