

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL
OF THE CITY OF ST. MARTINVILLE, LOUISIANA
HELD ON THE 18th DAY OF AUGUST, 2025.

The Mayor and City Council of the City of St. Martinville, Louisiana met in Regular Session on the 18th day of August 2025 at City Hall, their regular meeting place, pursuant to the call of the Mayor.

THERE were present: Jason Willis, Mayor

Mike Fuselier, Councilman

Carol Frederick, Councilman

Jonas Fontenette, Councilman

Flo Chatman, Councilman

Allan L. Durand, City Attorney

THERE were absent: Janise Anthony, Councilman

Mayor Jason Willis presiding called the meeting to order.

It was moved by Councilman Fontenette duly seconded by Councilwoman Chatman and unanimously carried that the minutes of the regular meeting held August 4, 2025 hereby be approved for publication in the Teche News, the Official Journal of the City of St. Martinville.

Mayor Willis presented Financial Report prepared by CFO Katy Bujard.

Pam Granger of McBade Engineering gave an update on current projects and grants for the City.

It was moved by Councilman Fuselier duly seconded by Councilwoman Frederick and unanimously carried that City Attorney Allan Durand prepare an amendment to the City's Burn Ordinance with the following changes:

- Increase the allowable pile of material to not exceed 10ft instead of 6ft
- Larger burn piles must obtain prior approval from Fire Chief
- Remove Item A from Section 24-3 – Burning of yard waste

Upon request of Nessie Laviolette of SM Garden Club, it was moved by Councilman Fuselier duly seconded by Councilman Fontenette and unanimously carried that permission be granted to close Evangeline Blvd on Sunday, December 7th to allow vendors to set up for the annual Christman Tour of Homes. Permission was also granted for the use of the electrical box and barricades.

Upon request of Dana Alexander of SMSH Alumni, it was moved by Councilwoman Frederick duly seconded by Councilwoman Chatman and unanimously carried that approval be granted for the following activities, contingent upon proper insurance being provided and Chief Martin providing all required documents.

October 26 th 1:00 pm – 2:00pm	Homecoming Parade
October 26 th following parade - 6:00pm	Fall Fest in Magnolia Park
	BYOB, Food Trucks, Admission will be charged and Security will be provided
	Access to the boat ramp will remain open
October 31 st 12:00 noon – 6:00pm	Homecoming Tailgating
	BYOB and Admission will be charged

Kathryn Pierce and Nancy Manning requested permission from the council to use their property located on Martin Luther King Drive to grow hay. The general consensus of the council was to have City Attorney Allan Durand prepare an amendment to the City's Grass Ordinance to allow anyone that has used their property in the City limits to grow hay prior to now be allowed to continue to grow hay. It was further decided that the amendment include the requirement that the grass on the outer 20 ft edge on all sides of the property not be more than 16 inches high at any time.

Otis Chatman Planning and Zoning Coordinator reported to the Mayor and Council that the nuisance property notice for 322 Columbus Street that was mailed by certified mail was delivered to Blair Boudreaux; however, no response was received to state intention for the property. Ms. Boudreaux was not in attendance of this meeting. City Attorney Durand advised that Public Works is allowed to enter the building to determine what is inside in order to determine the equipment needed to demolish the structure.

Otis Chatman Planning and Zoning Coordinator presented a letter to the Mayor and Council from Deborah Melancon, owner of the nuisance property located at 311 W. Madison and 315 W. Madison. Ms. Melancon's letter requested council approval be granted to allow her until December 31, 2025 to demolish the dilapidated structures located at said addresses and removal all debris. The council had no objection to Ms. Melancon's request.

Following the discussion of unauthorized food sales and permit enforcement, it was determined that the existing ordinance does prohibit food sales without an occupational license/permit. Anyone found in violation of the ordinance will be issued a \$500.00 citation and be shut down immediately. A social media post will be sent out informing the community.

The following ordinance was introduced for adoption at the September 2, 2025 council meeting:

ORDINANCE 25-10

An Ordinance by the City Council of the City of St. Martinville reconciling the various requirements for Orders to Abate a Nuisance, and for Service of Notice of Orders to Abate for all different types of Nuisances within the City.

WHEREAS the City of St. Martinville has slightly different notice provisions for different types of nuisances which may exist within the City, and

WHEREAS the City Council believes that it is in the best interest of the City to have a uniform notice procedure, and

THEREFORE be it ordained that Chapter 22 of the Code of Ordinances for the City of St. Martinville be and the same is hereby partially amended as follows:

1. Section 22.60 of the Code of Ordinances is amended and restated to read as follows:

“If the order to abate the nuisance does not provide a different length of time within which to either abate the nuisance or to request a hearing before the City Council to contest the finding of the existence of a nuisance, or to seek additional time to abate, then the time allowed to do one of the above shall be ten (10) days.”
2. Section 22.61 of the Code of Ordinances is amended and restated to read as follows:

“Anything to the contrary in this Chapter 22 notwithstanding, the following rules shall apply to Service of the Notice to Abate:

“The notice to abate a nuisance shall be served upon a resident of the State of Louisiana either by **personal delivery, or by mail. If neither is accomplished after good faith effort, then notice may be**

given by attaching the notice to the front of the residence of the Owner and/or Occupant.

“If the owner of the premises is a **non-resident** of the State of Louisiana, the notice shall be served by certified mail.

“If the premises where the nuisance exists is occupied by the Owner, or is unoccupied, the notice shall be served on the Owner. If the owner is not the Occupant of the premises, the notice shall be served on both the Occupant and the Owner. Such service may be made by personal delivery or by mail, **or posting to the front of the residence after delivery or mail is unsuccessful.**

“If the owner is unknown, or if the owner is deceased and the heirs are unknown, or if the owner is an non-resident of the state and mail delivery was unsuccessful, then the City shall declare at a regular meeting that a nuisance exists on the property, and shall publish its intention to abate the nuisance for 2 consecutive weeks in the official journal of the City.”

The foregoing Ordinance was offered by Mr. _____, duly seconded by Mr. _____, and upon being submitted to a vote, the vote was :

Yeas:

Nays:

Absent:

The Ordinance was thereon declared adopted on the _____ day of _____, 2025.

JASON WILLIS, Mayor

Mayor Willis stated that no action was needed on the adoption of the resolution to authorize grant application to Delta Regional Authority Community Infrastructure Fund program due to the approaching deadline for this funding cycle. Plans are to apply for next funding cycle in January.

It was moved by Councilman Fuselier duly seconded by Councilwoman Frederick, with Councilwoman Chatman opposed that Mayor Willis be authorized to negotiate and enter into lease with Domino’s Pizza for the land located at approximately 2310 North Main Street, St. Martinville, with monthly rent of \$1,100.00 per month.

It was moved by Councilman Fontenette duly seconded by Councilwoman Chatman and unanimously carried to adopt the following Travel Policy.

CITY OF ST. MARTINVILLE TRAVEL AND REIMBURSEMENT POLICY

Travel regulations and control over allowances to employees are necessary to ensure proper accounting and stewardship of government spending. As a general rule, reimbursement for such expenses is made only for the actual cost incurred while conducting official City business. These expenses must be reasonable and commensurate with the type of activity conducted. The following policy establishes reasonable limits and provides for the reimbursement of such expenditures.

The Mayor must approve all travel for City employees. The City of St. Martinville will pay for expenses incurred while on official City business, as outlined below:

A) TRAVEL

Travel will be reimbursed for the actual cost of transportation, not to exceed coach (tourist/second class) airfare from the nearest airport to the destination.

Travel by personal automobile will be reimbursed at the current mileage rate set by the State of Louisiana, Division of Administration.

As of July 1, 2024 (FY 2025), the approved mileage reimbursement rate is \$0.67 per mile. This rate is subject to change based on updates from the Louisiana Division of Administration and/or the IRS.

Mileage Reimbursement Requirements:

- Mileage must be calculated using the most direct route to and from the destination.
- A printout of mileage calculations (e.g., from Google Maps) must be attached to the reimbursement form.
- A completed "Convention & Overnight Travel or Workshop Reimbursement" form must accompany all requests.
- Commuting mileage (from home to regular work location and back) is not reimbursable.

Additional travel-related expenses such as taxi fares, parking fees, tolls, or rental cars may also be reimbursed with itemized receipts.

Out-of-state travel expenses will not be reimbursed unless specifically approved in advance by the City Council.

B) LODGING

Lodging is reimbursable at the single-occupancy room rate plus applicable taxes. The hotel or motel receipt must be attached to the reimbursement form.

Additional personal expenses such as valet services, long-distance phone calls, pay-per-view television, alcoholic beverages, and other incidental non-business-related charges are not reimbursable and must be deducted from the total claim.

Hotel Deposits:

- The City may pay a hotel deposit in advance to secure a reservation for an employee attending official City business (e.g., conventions, workshops, trainings).
 - In such cases, the employee must reimburse the City for the amount of the deposit upon return, unless the hotel applies the deposit directly to the final bill and no balance is owed to the City.
 - It is the employee's responsibility to submit the final hotel invoice to the City Accounting Department immediately upon return to reconcile the travel account.
 - Failure to submit the hotel receipt or reimburse the City for the deposit within **five (5) business days of return** may result in payroll deduction and/or disciplinary action.
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C) MEALS (PER DIEM)

Meal expenses for overnight travel or travel requiring two consecutive meals away from home are reimbursed based on the Louisiana State per diem rates for meals and incidental expenses (M&IE), as published by the U.S. General Services Administration. Receipts are not required when claiming the per diem for meals. The per diem includes taxes and tips and must be claimed according to the current breakdown rates and location.

As of FY 2025, the GSA rates for Louisiana are as follows:

Primary Destination	County	M&IE Total	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner	Incidental Expenses	First/Last Day of Travel
Standard Rate	Applies to all unspecified locations	\$68	\$16	\$19	\$28	\$5	\$51.00
Alexandria / Leesville / Natchitoches	Allen, Jefferson Davis, Natchitoches, Rapides, Vernon Parishes	\$68	\$16	\$19	\$28	\$5	\$51.00
New Orleans	Orleans, Jefferson Parishes	\$80	\$20	\$22	\$33	\$5	\$60.00

- The first and last day of travel is reimbursed at 75% of the total M&IE for the destination.
- Claimants must indicate the dates of travel, meals claimed (breakfast, lunch, dinner), and the business purpose on the City’s "Convention & Overnight Travel or Workshop Reimbursement" form.
- Business meals incurred during overnight travel will be reimbursed according to these rates. No meal receipts are required unless you claim reimbursement outside of per diem.

D) SAME-DAY RETURN MEAL EXPENSES

When meals are claimed for same-day travel (no overnight stay), reimbursement is allowed up to \$20.00 per meal, including taxes and tips.

- Receipts are required for same-day meal reimbursement.
- Claimants must submit the completed "Convention & Overnight Travel or Workshop Reimbursement" form with all required documentation.

E) ADVANCE PAYMENTS & REIMBURSEMENT PROCEDURES

- Registration fees for conferences and workshops should be paid in advance, when possible, particularly if it results in cost savings for the City.
- Airfare and lodging costs may also be paid in advance directly to the appropriate agency or provider.
- All expenses must be submitted in a timely manner to the City’s Accounting Department using the City’s approved reimbursement form.

If hotel accommodations are paid in advance by the City, the employee is responsible for submitting the final hotel bill to the City immediately following the stay.

Per diem payments may be requested in advance for overnight travel, subject to appropriate documentation and approval.

F) EXCEPTIONS

Any exceptions to this policy must be approved by the City Council. This policy supersedes any prior travel and reimbursement policies adopted by the City Council.

It was moved by Councilman Fuselier duly seconded by Councilwoman Chatman and unanimously carried that the following Public Records Request Policy be adopted.

CITY OF ST. MARTINVILLE
PUBLIC RECORDS REQUEST POLICY

(Including Fee Schedule)

Section 1: Purpose & Authority

To implement La. R.S. 44:1 et seq. and Act 247, this policy governs inspection, copying, and production of public records.

Section 2: Definitions & Custodians

Following R.S. 44:1 and 44:32, definitions (“public records,” “custodian,” etc.)

- **Mayor (or designee)** is Custodian for non-law-enforcement records.
- **Chief of Police (or designee)** handles law-enforcement inquiries.

Section 3: Submission & Timeline

- Requests must be **written** and directed to the appropriate custodian.
- Custodian must respond within **three business days**, acknowledging receipt. If records cannot be produced immediately, a date must be provided with approximate date records will be available.
- Inspections occur during normal business hours at designated locations, supervised by staff; movement elsewhere in City premises requires escort.

Section 4: Exemptions & Redaction

- Only statutory or constitutional exceptions apply (per R.S. 44:4.1).
- Non-exempt portions of records must be released; redactions and exemptions must be cited in writing; if separating records is unduly burdensome, custodian must so state and provide location details.

Section 5: Appeals & Enforcement

- Requesters may file suit in district court if custodian fails to respond within 3 days or improperly denies access. Remedies may include mandamus, injunction, attorney’s fees, civil penalties (up to \$100/day), or damages per R.S. 44:35

Section 6: Fee Schedule & Posting Requirements

Pursuant to Act 247 of 2023, custodians must adopt and **publicly post** a "reasonable fee schedule" before charging (La. R.S. 44:32(C)(2)(a)). Inspection is **free**, per R.S. 44:32(C)(3):

“No fee shall be charged ... to examine or review any public records”

Copying / Production Fees (posted publicly and used when requester requests copies):

Item	Fee
Black & White Copies	\$1.00/page
Color Copies	\$2.00/page
Electronic Transmission (email/CD/USB)	\$1.00/page
Media Reproduction (outsourced by hour)	\$20–\$60/hour
Research fee over ½ hr	Hourly rate of individual performing research

- Media costs (CD/DVD/USB devices) are charged separately.
- Multiple documents transferred to media count separately—each charged individually plus media fee.
- **Advance deposit** for substantial copying or outsourced costs is permitted under La. R.S. 44:32(C)(1)(a)
- **Fee waivers or reductions** may be granted to indigent Louisiana residents or for public-purpose use without commercial motive per R.S. 44:32(C)(2)(a).
- Fees may **not** recover original preparation cost or intrinsic record value (AG Op. No. 15-0056)
- The City does not have an employee whose primary function is to search for public records. Any public records request which requires more than thirty (30) minutes of any City employee’s time will be charged to the requesting party, at the pay rate of the City employee. Further, the City has no Information Technology employees, so any request for electronic records will have to be outsourced to an independent party, with the requesting party to bear all such charges. The City may require a good faith deposit to cover any such estimated charges.

Section 7: Records & Transparency

- The City shall maintain a log of all requests, responses, fees charged, denials, exemptions invoked, and appeals or enforcement actions.
- The fee schedule and Custodian contact information must be posted publicly (City website and at City Hall) per Act 247 requirements.

Section 8: Effective Date

This policy takes effect upon adoption by City Council and posting as required by law.

It was moved by Councilman Frederick duly seconded by Councilman Fuselier and unanimously carried to approve the out of state travel for CRT Director Danielle Fontenette and Office Manager Ryan Williams to Destination Downtown Conference on September 10th – 12th, 2025 in El Dorado, Arkansas.

Upon recommendation of City Attorney Allan Durand, it was moved by Councilman Fuselier duly seconded by Councilwoman Frederick and unanimously carried that the City reimburse one-half of the cost of the purchase and installation of the new electronic entrance gate limiting access to the City water treatment facility and the Foco property. The approximate cost of the City's portion is \$7,500.00.

Mayor's Report

- PD working diligently on Iris Davis Case – SMSO assisting
- Splash Bash held August 9, 2025 was a huge success
 - Thanks to Hall of Flame and everyone else that made it a success

There being no further business to come before the Mayor and City Council, Mayor Willis adjourned the meeting upon motion of Councilwoman Chatman and duly seconded by Councilman Fontenette.

JASON WILLIS, MAYOR

ATTEST:

LORRIE M POIRIER, CITY CLERK