



## City of Lake Charles

### Meeting Minutes

#### City Council

326 Pujo Street  
P.O. Box 1178  
Lake Charles, LA 70602

Tommy M. Bilbo, Jr., Donald W. Fondel, Ronnie Harvey, Jr.,  
Matthew Vezinot, Stuart Weatherford, Matt Young  
Council President: Craig Marks

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Wednesday, May 20, 2026

5:30 PM

Council Chambers at City Hall

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### AGENDA FOR REGULAR MEETING OF MAY 20, 2026 TO BE TAKEN UP IN ACCORDANCE WITH RESOLUTION NO. 150-97, RULES FOR MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF LAKE CHARLES, LOUISIANA

#### Call to Order

Call to Order - President Craig Marks, Presiding

#### Invocation

Invocation - Craig Marks

#### Pledge of Allegiance

Pledge of Allegiance - Matthew Vezinot

#### Roll Call

**Present:** 7 - Donald W. Fondel, Tommy M. Bilbo, Jr., Matt Young, Craig Marks, Ronnie Harvey, Jr., Matthew Vezinot, Stuart Weatherford

**Absent:** 0 -

#### Approval of Minutes

**1. 26-226**

Minutes

**A motion was made that the Minutes from the May 6, 2026 and May 12, 2026 meeting be Approved. The motion Passed by the following vote:**

**For:** 7 - Donald W. Fondel, Tommy M. Bilbo, Jr., Matt Young, Craig Marks, Ronnie Harvey, Jr., Matthew Vezinot, Stuart Weatherford

**Against:** 0 - None

**Absent:** 0 -

**Abstain:** 0 - None

#### Defer/Delete

#### Appointments

**2. 26-326**

Appoint a chairman to review bids for Project No. CP3242 - Southern Sewer Loop Gulf Highway Lift Station.  
Councilman Marks was appointed as chairman.

**3. 26-327**

Appoint a chairman to review bids for Project No. CP3507 - Lake Charles Event Center Green Rooms and amend the budget as necessary.  
Councilman Harvey was appointed as chairman.

4. **26-328** Appoint a chairman to review bids to purchase Roadbase Limestone Aggregate per specifications, for use by the Public Works Department. (RE-BID)  
Councilman Weatherford was appointed as chairman.
5. **26-329** Appoint a chairman to review bids to purchase replacement retractable/telescopic riser seating in the Coliseum at the Lake Charles Event Center. (RE-BID)  
Councilman Harvey was appointed as chairman.
6. **26-330** Appoint a chairman to review bids for the purchase of bus stop signage for use by the Public Works Department, Transit Division.  
Councilman Young was appointed as chairman.
7. **26-331** Appoint a chairman to review bids for the purchase of one (1) new service body crane, for use by the Public Works Department, Wastewater Division.  
Councilman Vezinot was appointed as chairman.
8. **26-332** Appoint a chairman to review bids for the purchase of Water Infrastructure Maintenance and Repair Parts for use by the Public Works Department, Water Division.  
Councilman Fondel was appointed as chairman.

## Public Hearings

9. **26-333** Public hearing and consideration of the Lake Charles Planning & Zoning Commission's decision to deny a request for a Variance in order to construct a new addition (United Way): 1) construction of single story building vs. required two story; and 2) allow channel letters and a 6' logo, thereby exceeding the allowable 3' in height, within a T 5 Urban Center Transect Zoning District, at 815 Ryan Street.

**A motion was made that this item be Approved. The motion Passed by the following vote:**

**For:** 5 - Donald W. Fondel, Tommy M. Bilbo, Jr., Craig Marks, Ronnie Harvey, Jr., Stuart Weatherford

**Against:** 2 - Matt Young, Matthew Vezinot

**Absent:** 0 -

**Abstain:** 0 - None

Doug Burguieres stated that this application came before the Planning & Zoning Commission who considered this application for these two variances and the Commission voted 4 0 against the variances. The application on appeal is just as it was presented to the Commission. Denise Durel, 815 Ryan Street, Lake Charles, LA, President and CEO of United Way of Southwest Louisiana stated United Way had been in the downtown area of the City of Lake Charles for 86 consecutive years and was committed to the region and believes it is imperative that they remain located in the downtown district as many other United Ways are situated nationwide, because it makes them centrally located and allows people to have an opportunity to have transportation and central services to serve the community. Billy Loftin, Jr., Attorney at Law, representing United Way, presented renderings and a packet of information to the city council members. He stated that in connection with the application United Way was only requesting the same

variances that were given to B1 Bank, because they had the exact same requests to be a one story, with a nice facade on the front street to give the effect of the look of the Smart Code and to change the size of the lettering. He stated that this was done and approved by the Downtown Development Authority in 2022 and then by the Planning & Zoning Commission, also in 2022. He also stated that they later came back to the Council 24 months ago and received another Variance for the signage that allowed for multiple signs that were not consistent with the Smart Code. He further stated United Way was not requesting a deviation, but consistency. He stated he believes that rigid application of the Smart Code is deterring downtown development. He further stated he believes that the Smart Code cannot be complied with unless it aligns with market demand and population density. Mr. Loftin stated that it cannot be over regulation or we will continue to have lack of foot traffic and vacancy in the downtown area. He stated that the key planners recognized that actual demand is necessary for the Smart Code to work. He requested that a Charette report that he provided along with other documents be made a part of the record. President Marks read into the record the names of the persons who were in opposition but did not wish to speak: Donna Richard, Virginia Webb, William Vaughn, Aimee Monk, William Monk, Cheree Chapman, Shelley Young, Jacob Rafferty, and Sarah Sonnier. He then read in a letter in opposition from Rhiannon Vaughan, 2709 Todd Jude Road, Lake Charles, LA which was made part of the record. Lauren Harrell, 725 Ford Street, citizen of the downtown area and licensed architect with an advanced degree in historic preservation, stated she had served as a consultant for the City and other citizens for multiple historic preservation projects. She stated that she is not opposed to United Way but the United Way development, as proposed, would be a missed opportunity on a permanent site in downtown Lake Charles. She further stated that by applying the Codes and ordinances that call for appropriate downtown and pedestrian friendly development, the City could prevent variances that undermine the purpose of the Codes and degrade the downtown area. She further stated that the proposed one story development is not what she would recommend for the downtown area. She further stated that the purpose of the variance is to provide relief when a requirement makes the site unusable. Anna Crawford, 727 1/2 Ryan Street, Lake Charles, LA, 24 year resident of downtown Lake Charles, was against the development due to the parking lot not being able to be used even if the parking lot became a paid parking lot for the public. Melissa Buxton, 729 Ryan Street, Lake Charles, LA, stated that she owns Bux's Cajun Corner in Historic Downtown Lake Charles and requested to know what kind of downtown were we trying to build, one with walk ability and thriving storefronts or one where the rules apply to some while others use their influence to try to avoid them. She stated that downtown was not just a collection of buildings, but a community. She stated that the community survived hurricanes and economic uncertainty with years of rebuilding. She stated that since the parking lot at Ryan and Broad was suddenly closed, the businesses have all experienced a dramatic decline in sales. She stated small businesses that operate on very thin margins are being harmed. She believes that just because one business received a variance that others should receive them as well. She stated that each project must stand on its own merits and B1 Bank has tried to become a partner of downtown. She further stated their employees shop and eat in the businesses downtown, sponsor their events, and actively support downtown and small businesses. She stated the Smart Code was adopted to ensure that downtown

remained walkable, mixed use, and economically vibrant and was designed to prevent single purposed developments that reduced street activity, limited engagement. Leslie Fain, 1215 Kirkman Street, Lake Charles, LA, downtown resident, requested the council to uphold the unanimous decision by the Planning & Zoning Commission. She stated that when the City invited Jeff Speck to come speak she saw what the real potential of downtown Lake Charles, making the city more walkable makes the city more aesthetically pleasing, safe for pedestrians and cyclists, and more viable for businesses. John Webb donated his time to Ms. Fain. She stated that Erdace, The Phoenix and Sanchez law firm all adhered to the Smart Code and it works. President Marks read into the record the names of the persons in favor of the development but did not wish to speak as follows: Penny Seneca, Jennifer Berry, Dustin Abshire, Rebecca Stockman, Van Seneca, Rae Zaunbrecher, Hunter Graham, Megan Daigle, Lori Morrison, Ashley Serrette, Morgan Clayton, Christina Labit, Uriah Serrette, Harley Ashworth, Kevin Lacy, Timothy Newsome, Charles Clayter, Jessica Lacy, Lorena Ceasar, Billy Loftin, Jr., Tami Chrisope, Ashley Norman, Jennifer Dimas, Kimberly Heckard, Sheneika Lemelle, Patience Frederick, Alisha Johnson, Laurie Masten, Chip Marten, Catherine Thevenot, Kacey Patrick, Sarina Clooney, Rebecca Ainsworth, Jacob Johnson, Autumn Johnson, Robin Onxley, Nikayla Thomas, Justin Keys, David Stutes, Brittany Akers, Skylar Houssiere, Kelsey Talbot, Missy Amidon, Jessica Saxby, Terry Johnson, Jonathan Johnson, Treviara Ramer, Kendra Hardy, Kiara Moss, Bethany Rolax, Chet Veillon, Paul Linberg, Kevin Thomas, Tonya Pousson, Erin Chesnutt, Bonnie Brawner, Anna Rasbeary, Keith Faul, Jason Martinez, Trish Martinez, Sheryl Piper, Diane Mueller, Angela Ellender, Eartha Guidry, Tina Collins, Tara Ross, Paula Koonce, Christon Nelson, Gay Gibson, Carol Mack, Jason Ponder, Bradley Stevens, Maria McGill, Wendy Johnson, Murtaza Khan, Phyllis Loftin, Mesonie T. Halley, Jr., Jan M. Halley, Marcie Bradley, and Roslyn Simien. Mr. Loftin gave a rebuttal and stated that the opposition seems to be conflicting and the parking lot is a liability issue and unlimited use by the public was not in the plan. He further stated that it would cost approximately \$2.5 M to add the second floor when that money could be used towards the community. Councilman Weatherford asked why not comply with the Code and build the size building that they were proposing in a two story rather than a one story. Mr. Loftin stated that they would shorten the depth of the building and bring some of the square footage to the top but essentially, they would end up spending \$2.5M extra dollars. He also stated that they want consistent treatment with the prior development. President Marks requested Doug Burguieres to come back and speak as to the actual depiction of B1 Bank. He then invited Mr. Loftin back to find out whether or not that the slide was an accurate depiction of what they were proposing. He also stated that the illustration shows that from the north side view, it would give an appearance of a two story building. Mr. Harvey stated that the building adjacent to the proposal never came before the City Council to allow a one story structure, it came before the Planning & Zoning Commission. He further stated that the City Council only approved the signage. He stated when Planning & Zoning heard the case for the B1 Bank, the DDA created a resolution in support that was included in the packet distributed at the meeting. He questioned whether the DDA had a stance for or against the United Way development. Mayor Simien stated he was unaware of any position taken by the Downtown Development Authority but he did know they heard the proposal by United Way for informational purposes only. Councilman Young stated that he

had heard from constituents on both sides but he did agree that United Way could use their parking lot in any way they chose as a private property owner, and it is up to the City to come up with a plan for parking. He also agrees that the Council had strived to work consistently in supporting the Planning & Zoning Commission. He further stated that several building owners had built their buildings and invested in the community while upholding the Smart Code, such as The Sanchez Law Firm, Empire of the Seed and The Phoenix Building, the original United Way building, Woodring Apartments, Crying Eagle and a few others. As of the night before the meeting he had received 44 emails, 42 in support of maintaining the Smart Code and two requesting the variance. He further stated that the work United Way does for the community is extremely important and the City would not be where it is today post hurricane. He also would like them to continue being a part of downtown but with a unanimous decision from Planning & Zoning, he felt it should be upheld. He also stated that he is not opposed to having a conversation moving forward about the Smart Code. Councilman Weatherford stated variances are meant to be exceptions and he agrees this is a mirror image of what was approved for B1 Bank, but it was a time coming out of recovering from the hurricane, on the end of a pandemic, a freeze, flood and insurance issues that people had to deal with which is why those variances were approved for the building by the Planning & Zoning Commission. It was more than an inconvenience for them. He further stated that several developments have followed the Smart Code. He stated that it is a new addition to an existing building that was compliant and that is why he questioned if they could build a two story building. He stated that the easier decision for the Zoning Commission may have been to just grant the variance. He also stated that he had not heard a really significant reason to overturn the Zoning Commission. He also wanted to hear the position of the Councilman whose district it is in. Councilman Harvey stated this was not a political decision for him and he did not want the way he voted to reflect or influence any councilman to vote a certain way. Mr. Fondel stated that he does not like a rigid Code and variances are a part of the system, but the council has that responsibility. Councilman Vezinot asked if the Smart Code showed that every building would have to be a two story. Doug Burguieres gave a response that for this particular location it was required. Councilman Vezinot stated that he wanted to uphold the Planning & Zoning Commission's decision and wanted to give them the weight that their efforts support. Councilman Bilbo stated that the City couldn't come to an agreement and he supports United Way to keep them from having to spend \$2.5M just to look like B1 Bank. He also apologized for not being able to return all of the calls he received, but he personally walked to some of the businesses to ask them how they would prefer him to vote, but he had not received any responses. He stated that he felt that looking at the rendering and seeing what was approved for B1, there was no reason he should tell them no and he was in support of United Way. Councilman Weatherford stated that the reason for the Smart Code was for density and the building would look just like B1 Bank, so spending the extra \$2.5M would not promote walk ability in downtown. Councilman Marks stated that he could not see making someone spend the extra \$2.5M to build a second floor when the renderings would give the same look and the height of the building didn't have anything to do with walk ability. The Council voted as follows:

enter into an agreement for demolition of a structure located at 1400 North Shattuck Street, Cleven Nash and Elvira Nash, owners

**A motion was made that this item be deferred. The motion Passed by the following vote:**

**For:** 7 - Donald W. Fondel, Tommy M. Bilbo, Jr., Matt Young, Craig Marks, Ronnie Harvey, Jr., Matthew Vezinot, Stuart Weatherford

**Against:** 0 - None

**Absent:** 0 -

**Abstain:** 0 - None

Robert Hester, Building Inspector, gave a report as to the condition of the structure and Russell J. Stutes, Jr., City Attorney, presented photographs and documentation showing proof of service which were made part of the record.

Mr. Stutes stated this was a rehearing from May 6, 2026 and Councilman Harvey had shown some concern that someone may be residing in the structure. Pastor Lawrence L. Nash, 1766 Thompson Road, Moss Bluff, La stated no one was residing in the residence and requested at least 30 days to make a decision on what to do with the property. Mr. Harvey recommended deferral to the July 15, 2026 regular council meeting which was approved by the following vote.

**11. 26-133**

An ordinance ordering demolition and authorizing the City of Lake Charles to enter into an agreement for demolition of a structure located at 411 Gelpi Drive, Gerald (NMI) Armelin, Sr., owner.

**A motion was made that Approve. The motion Passed by the following vote:**

**For:** 7 - Donald W. Fondel, Tommy M. Bilbo, Jr., Matt Young, Craig Marks, Ronnie Harvey, Jr., Matthew Vezinot, Stuart Weatherford

**Against:** 0 - None

**Absent:** 0 -

**Abstain:** 0 - None

Robert Hester, Building Inspector, gave a report as to the condition of the structure and Russell J. Stutes, Jr., City Attorney, presented photographs and documentation showing proof of service which were made part of the record.

Mr. Stutes stated this was a rehearing from April 15, 2026. There were no requests to speak on this item. Mr. Bilbo recommended time delays of 15/15 which were approved by the following vote.

**12. 26-267**

An ordinance ordering demolition and authorizing the City of Lake Charles to enter into an agreement for demolition of a structure located at 902 Camelia Street (garage only), Matthew A. McIntosh, owner.

**A motion was made that this item be deferred. The motion Passed by the following vote:**

**For:** 7 - Donald W. Fondel, Tommy M. Bilbo, Jr., Matt Young, Craig Marks, Ronnie Harvey, Jr., Matthew Vezinot, Stuart Weatherford

**Against:** 0 - None

**Absent:** 0 -

**Abstain:** 0 - None

Robert Hester, Building Inspector, gave a report as to the condition of the

structure and Russell J. Stutes, Jr., City Attorney, presented photographs and documentation showing proof of service which were made part of the record. He stated this was a rehearing from April 15, 2026. Corey Rubin, Assistant City Attorney, stated he had spoken to Gene Thibodeaux who represented one of the lienholders and he requested deferral until June 3, 2026. Mr. Fondel agreed with the deferral which was approved by the following vote.

**13. 26-91**

An ordinance ordering demolition and authorizing the City of Lake Charles to enter into an agreement for demolition of a structure located at 2725 Louisiana Avenue, Holly Rider Brouillette and Zoe Gaspard Rider, owners.

**A motion was made that this item be Approved. The motion Passed by the following vote:**

**For:** 7 - Donald W. Fondel, Tommy M. Bilbo, Jr., Matt Young, Craig Marks, Ronnie Harvey, Jr., Matthew Vezinot, Stuart Weatherford

**Against:** 0 - None

**Absent:** 0 -

**Abstain:** 0 - None

Robert Hester, Building Inspector, gave a report as to the condition of the structure and Russell J. Stutes, Jr., City Attorney, presented photographs and documentation showing proof of service which were made part of the record.

Mr. Stutes stated this was a rehearing from April 15, 2026. There were no requests to speak on this item. Councilman Fondel stated he was contacted by the owner who requested 60 days to demolish themselves. He recommended time delays of 60/120 which were approved by the following vote.

**14. 26-264**

An ordinance ordering demolition and authorizing the City of Lake Charles to enter into an agreement for demolition of a structure located at 2110 Railroad Avenue, Andre' N. Walker, Brittany Ann Walker, Denver Jerome Withers and Jevan Ramsey Yokum, owners.

This item was deferred at the beginning of the meeting until the June 17, 2026 regular council meeting.

**15. 26-269**

An ordinance ordering demolition and authorizing the City of Lake Charles to enter into an agreement for demolition of a structure located at 2107 Clarinda Street, Julius Lee Fontenot, Sr. and Jannifer V. Fontenot, owners.

**A motion was made that this item be Approved. The motion Passed by the following vote:**

**For:** 7 - Donald W. Fondel, Tommy M. Bilbo, Jr., Matt Young, Craig Marks, Ronnie Harvey, Jr., Matthew Vezinot, Stuart Weatherford

**Against:** 0 - None

**Absent:** 0 -

**Abstain:** 0 - None

Robert Hester, Building Inspector, gave a report as to the condition of the structure and Russell J. Stutes, Jr., City Attorney, presented photographs and documentation showing proof of service which were made part of the record.

Julius Fontenot, 2209 Clarinda Street, Lake Charles, LA requested to demolish. Councilman Harvey recommended time delays of 30/60 which were approved by the following vote.

**16. 26-270**

An ordinance ordering demolition and authorizing the City of Lake Charles to enter into an agreement for demolition of a structure located at 2105 Clarinda Street, Julius Lee Fontenot and Jannifer Valmont Fontenot, owners.

**A motion was made that this item be deferred. The motion by the following vote:**

**For:** 7 - Donald W. Fondel, Tommy M. Bilbo, Jr., Matt Young, Craig Marks, Ronnie Harvey, Jr., Matthew Vezinot, Stuart Weatherford

**Against:** 0 - None

**Absent:** 0 -

**Abstain:** 0 - None

Robert Hester, Building Inspector, gave a report as to the condition of the structure and Russell J. Stutes, Jr., City Attorney, presented photographs and documentation showing proof of service which were made part of the record.

Julius Fontenot, 2109 Clarinda Street, Lake Charles, LA requested additional time to repair the structure and stated that he had pulled a permit and started work on the property. Councilman Harvey recommended deferral until the August 19, 2026 regular council meeting, which was approved by the following vote.

**17. 26-184**

An ordinance ordering demolition and authorizing the City of Lake Charles to enter into an agreement for demolition of a structure located at 819 Moss Street, Brian Keith Design, LLC, owner.

**A motion was made that Approve. The motion Passed by the following vote:**

**For:** 7 - Donald W. Fondel, Tommy M. Bilbo, Jr., Matt Young, Craig Marks, Ronnie Harvey, Jr., Matthew Vezinot, Stuart Weatherford

**Against:** 0 - None

**Absent:** 0 -

**Abstain:** 0 - None

Doug Burguieres stated the house was located within the Historic District, but the staff was recommending and emergency demolition for this structure due to the condition. Russell J. Stutes, Jr., City Attorney, presented photographs and documentation showing proof of service which were made part of the record.

The owner, Brian Vallier, Brian Keith Design, LLC was present to answer any questions. Mr. Burguieres recommended time delays of 15/15 which were approved by the following vote.

**18. 26-185**

An ordinance ordering demolition and authorizing the City of Lake Charles to enter into an agreement for demolition of a structure located at 1751 6th Avenue (burned structure), Rose M. George Sias, owner.

**A motion was made that this item be deferred. The motion by the following vote:**

**For:** 7 - Donald W. Fondel, Tommy M. Bilbo, Jr., Matt Young, Craig Marks, Ronnie Harvey, Jr., Matthew Vezinot, Stuart Weatherford

**Against:** 0 - None

**Absent:** 0 -

**Abstain:** 0 - None

Robert Hester, Building Inspector, gave a report as to the condition of the structure and Russell J. Stutes, Jr., City Attorney, presented photographs and documentation showing proof of service which were made part of the record.

There were no requests to speak on this item. Councilman Bilbo requested to defer this item to the August 19, 2026 regular council meeting which was approved by the following vote. Councilman Weatherford questioned whether or not the property should be secured. Councilman Bilbo stated the house has to still be standing in order to have it repaired. The sister signed her part over to the owner. Councilman Weatherford stated his concern was that the structure was dangerous to the public and Councilman Marks stated the perimeter had a fence around it although from the pictures you could not see it.

**19. 26-186**

An ordinance ordering demolition and authorizing the City of Lake Charles to enter into an agreement for demolition of a structure located at 1701 ½ North Adams Street (burned structure), Robert Billings Pouchie, Robert Billings Pouchie, Sr., Nancy Auntuese Guidry Pouchie, Brenda Diggs Orphey, Robert Willie Pouchie, Alvin Willie Pouchie, Jr., and Alnetter Pouchie Gatewood, owners.

This item was deleted at the beginning of the meeting.

**20. 26-187**

An ordinance ordering demolition and authorizing the City of Lake Charles to enter into an agreement for demolition of a structure located at 2310 Channel Street, Louis Green (Estate), owner.

This item was deferred at the beginning of the meeting until the June 17, 2026 regular council meeting.

**21. 26-188**

An ordinance ordering demolition and authorizing the City of Lake Charles to enter into an agreement for demolition of a structure located at 2401 Woodard Street, Lashara L. Stenson, owner, subject to a tax sale to the State of Louisiana.

**A motion was made that this item be Approved. The motion Passed by the following vote:**

**For:** 7 - Donald W. Fondel, Tommy M. Bilbo, Jr., Matt Young, Craig Marks, Ronnie Harvey, Jr., Matthew Vezinot, Stuart Weatherford

**Against:** 0 - None

**Absent:** 0 -

**Abstain:** 0 - None

Robert Hester, Building Inspector, gave a report as to the condition of the structure and Russell J. Stutes, Jr., City Attorney, presented photographs and documentation showing proof of service which were made part of the record.

There were no requests to speak on this item. Mr. Harvey recommended time delays of 15/15 which were approved by the following vote.

**22. 26-190**

An ordinance ordering demolition and authorizing the City of Lake Charles to enter into an agreement for demolition of a structure located at 1206 Hunter Drive, Brandi Alexis Henderson and Edward Joseph Henderson, owners, subject to a tax sale to the State of Louisiana.

**A motion was made that this item be Approved. The motion Passed by the following vote:**

**For:** 7 - Donald W. Fondel, Tommy M. Bilbo, Jr., Matt Young, Craig Marks, Ronnie Harvey, Jr., Matthew Vezinot, Stuart Weatherford

**Against:** 0 - None

**Absent:** 0 -

**Abstain:** 0 - None

Robert Hester, Building Inspector, gave a report as to the condition of the structure and Russell J. Stutes, Jr., City Attorney, presented photographs and documentation showing proof of service which were made part of the record.

Brandi Henderson, 1206 Hunter Drive, Lake Charles, LA requested additional time because someone was supposed to be purchasing the property and had not heard from the prospective buyer since March. Councilman Bilbo stated he had been receiving several complaints that vagrants were coming in and out and animals. Ms. Henderson stated she had not received a purchase agreement and could not get in touch with them. Glenda Rideaux, 1210 Hunter Drive, Lake Charles, LA lives next to the property and the Hendersons had been given numerous times to do something but they had not lived in the property for three years and she has to deal with the raccoons and all of the animals. Councilman Bilbo recommended time delays of 15/15 which were approved by the following vote.

- 23. 26-189** An ordinance ordering demolition and authorizing the City of Lake Charles to enter into an agreement for demolition of a structure located at 1716 22nd Street, Bryan Keith Guillory, owner.  
This item was deferred at the beginning of the meeting to the June 17, 2026 regular council meeting.

### Ordinances for Final Action

- 24. 26-158** An ordinance accepting the lowest responsible bid and authorizing the City of Lake Charles to enter into an agreement for Project No. CP3520 - WWTP A Basin A 02 Sewer Rehabilitation.  
**A motion was made that this item be Approved. The motion Passed by the following vote:**

**For:** 7 - Donald W. Fondel, Tommy M. Bilbo, Jr., Matt Young, Craig Marks, Ronnie Harvey, Jr., Matthew Vezinot, Stuart Weatherford

**Against:** 0 - None

**Absent:** 0 -

**Abstain:** 0 - None

A motion was made by Councilman Weatherford to accept the recommended bid from Vortex Lining Systems, LLC in the amount of \$3,291,701.00. The vote was as follows.

- 25. 26-182** An ordinance accepting the lowest responsible bid and authorizing the City of Lake Charles to enter into an agreement for Project No. CP3503 - 2025 Asphalt Overlays, and amend the budget as necessary.  
**A motion was made that this item be Approved. The motion Passed by the following vote:**

**For:** 7 - Donald W. Fondel, Tommy M. Bilbo, Jr., Matt Young, Craig

Marks, Ronnie Harvey, Jr., Matthew Vezinot, Stuart Weatherford

**Against:** 0 - None

**Absent:** 0 -

**Abstain:** 0 - None

Mr. Bilbo let the council know that he was the successful bidder even though he was the chairman appointed and Wendy Robinson had been in constant contact with him throughout the process. President Marks requested that he let the entire council know beforehand next time.

A motion was made by Councilman Bilbo to accept the recommended bid from Empire Dirtworks, LLC in the amount of \$1,058,564.18. The vote was as follows.

**26. 26-225**

An ordinance authorizing the City of Lake Charles to enter into an agreement with the most qualified Architectural/ Engineering (A/E) firm responding to the Request for Statements of Qualifications to perform professional services to prepare cost estimates, provide engineering and design services, provide construction management oversight and other additional services as needed for the design and construction of an indoor recreation facility in Lake Charles.

**A motion was made that this item be Approved. The motion Passed by the following vote:**

**For:** 7 - Donald W. Fondel, Tommy M. Bilbo, Jr., Matt Young, Craig Marks, Ronnie Harvey, Jr., Matthew Vezinot, Stuart Weatherford

**Against:** 0 - None

**Absent:** 0 -

**Abstain:** 0 - None

Mayor Simien updated the Council on what had occurred since they sent out the RFQ in March. Mayor Simien stated the City picks the designer and the Council authorizes the City to enter into a contract with them, then it goes out to bid and once the bids come in, the Council makes the determination on who will actually construct the facility. Fifteen responses were received from the Requests for Qualifications and two of the responses were disqualified for not meeting the specifications. An advisory committee was formed with representatives from the City, the Parish, local industry, Ward 3 Recreation, tourism and hospitality. All thirteen of the remaining proposals were reviewed and five finalists were picked for interviews. Those interviews were conducted Monday. The five finalists were Grace Design Studios, Multi Studio, Diverse Design partnered with Perkins & Will, Chase Marshall partnered with PBK and WHLC Architectural partnered with Sosaki. The advisory committee rated WHLC Architectural partnered with Sosaki as the top scoring company and the recommendation. Mayor Simien stated that they will work with the Porche firm. The Mayor further stated they will provide charettes and consider community input. Miles Brown, 1020 4th Avenue, Lake Charles, LA stated most of his questions were answered by the Mayor in his presentation, but he wanted to know if it was still going to be of a national scale which the council responded yes to. The council voted as follows:

**27. 26-241**

An ordinance accepting the best proposal received for renewal coverage and authorizing the City of Lake Charles to enter into an agreement for Property and Casualty Insurance for the City of Lake Charles, effective May 22, 2026 through May 22, 2027.

**A motion was made that Approve. The motion Passed by the following vote:**

**For:** 7 - Donald W. Fondel, Tommy M. Bilbo, Jr., Matt Young, Craig Marks, Ronnie Harvey, Jr., Matthew Vezinot, Stuart Weatherford

**Against:** 0 - None

**Absent:** 0 -

**Abstain:** 0 - None

Russell J. Stutes, stated that the City was rejecting uninsured and underinsured motorists coverage and the premium came in lower at \$4,544,679.74 which is approximately \$210,000 more than last year's premium. Mr. Stutes also explained why the City was rejecting uninsured and underinsured motorists coverage. Dana Reed, stated the \$5,000 could be used for anything but had been used for upgrades to the claims system. She further stated that the City has a safety program in place with monthly safety meetings. The Council voted as follows:

**28. 26-309**

An ordinance authorizing the City of Lake Charles to accept North Ridge Road, Westmere Drive and Pinnacle Road in the Ridge at Morganfield, Phase III, including public right-of-ways, drainage, water and sewer lines, sewer, and traffic control devices, for ownership and maintenance by the City of Lake Charles. The City of Lake Charles will not take ownership of the detention ponds.

**A motion was made that this item be Approved. The motion Passed by the following vote:**

**For:** 7 - Donald W. Fondel, Tommy M. Bilbo, Jr., Matt Young, Craig Marks, Ronnie Harvey, Jr., Matthew Vezinot, Stuart Weatherford

**Against:** 0 - None

**Absent:** 0 -

**Abstain:** 0 - None

**29. 26-310**

An ordinance authorizing the City of Lake Charles to enter into an Architectural and Engineering ("A&E") agreement with D.W. Jessen & Associates, LLC for engineering services relative to Project No. CP3070 Oaklawn Drive and Ory Road Sewer Lift Station Upgrade.

**A motion was made that this item be Approved. The motion Passed by the following vote:**

**For:** 7 - Donald W. Fondel, Tommy M. Bilbo, Jr., Matt Young, Craig Marks, Ronnie Harvey, Jr., Matthew Vezinot, Stuart Weatherford

**Against:** 0 - None

**Absent:** 0 -

**Abstain:** 0 - None

**30. 26-315**

An ordinance authorizing the City of Lake Charles to enter into a cooperative endeavor agreement with the Calcasieu Parish Police Jury and the Consolidated Gravity Drainage District No. 2 East Calcasieu Parish to share in the cost of the Greenwich Terrace buyout initiative project.

**A motion was made that this item be deferred. The motion Passed by the following vote:**

**For:** 7 - Donald W. Fondel, Tommy M. Bilbo, Jr., Matt Young, Craig Marks, Ronnie Harvey, Jr., Matthew Vezinot, Stuart Weatherford

**Against:** 0 - None

**Absent:** 0 -

**Abstain:** 0 - None

John Cardone, City Administrator, explained that the grant program would allow the Parish to buy out seven properties that did not participate in the buy out program to be used for a dry detention pond that would be owned by Gravity Drainage and the Parish. The City would contribute \$38,333 per year for the maintenance of the dry detention pond. Mr. Cardone stated that the homes were located on General Moore and the City was being asked to participate in the cost of the buy out up to \$120,000 with the overall estimated cost being \$240,000. Councilman Vezinot stated that he was concerned because the Police Jury had federal dollars for the program and now they are coming to the City to ask for contributions. Carrie Withers, 2729 North General Wainright, Lake Charles, LA stated that the owners would not accept the amount of money being offered to them because the homes are pretty nice homes with residents living in the homes. Miles Brown turned in a card but declined to speak. Paul Geary, 2205 Highway 14, Lake Charles, LA, stated the Terrace was a viable community that never flooded and the State gave \$30M that should have been used to repair the drainage. He stated that Contraband Bayou has been really high lately because the water is being pushed back into the City and destroying the community and he does not feel the City should contribute. Councilman Vezinot and Councilman Fondel requested that this item be deferred. Councilman Marks made a motion to defer to the June 3, 2026 regular council which was seconded by Councilmsn Vezinot..

**31. 26-318**

An ordinance of the City Council of the City Lake Charles amending Resolution No. 313 23 to authorize the City of Lake Charles to modify the location and scope of RCIP LDI City of Lake Charl LC RR Ave Revital 0088 in order to transfer funding to the Goosport Community Center to construct a recreation facility in accordance with the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development's national objectives for the use of funds from the CDBG DR Program.

**A motion was made that this item be Amended. The motion Passed by the following vote:**

**For:** 6 - Donald W. Fondel, Tommy M. Bilbo, Jr., Matt Young, Craig Marks, Ronnie Harvey, Jr., Stuart Weatherford

**Against:** 1 - Matthew Vezinot

**Absent:** 0 -

**Abstain:** 0 - None

Mayor Simien requested a correction that this would not be a resiliency hub, it would be to build a recreational facility. Mayor Simien provided a Powerpoint on the proposed development. There was a discussion over whether or not this would be a new project since the initial project was dedicated to the Railroad Avenue area. Councilman Weatherford made a motion to amend the wording to state "construct a recreation facility in accordance with the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development's national objectives for the use

of funds" which was seconded by Councilman Bilbo. The motion to amend was voted as follows:

**32. 26-318**

An ordinance of the City Council of the City Lake Charles amending Resolution No. 313 23 to authorize the City of Lake Charles to modify the location and scope of RCIP LDI City of Lake Charl LC RR Ave Revital 0088 in order to transfer funding to the Goosport Community Center to construct a recreation facility in accordance with the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development's national objectives for the use of funds from the CDBG DR Program.

**A motion was made that this item be Approved as amended. The motion Passed by the following vote:**

**For:** 6 - Donald W. Fondel, Tommy M. Bilbo, Jr., Matt Young, Craig Marks, Ronnie Harvey, Jr., Stuart Weatherford

**Against:** 1 - Matthew Vezinot

**Absent:** 0 -

**Abstain:** 0 - None

**33. 26-319**

An ordinance of the City Council of the City Lake Charles amending Resolution No. 313 23 to authorize the City of Lake Charles to modify the location and scope of RCIP LDI City of Lake Charl LC Second Harvest 0084 and further authorizing the purchase of a vacant lot (Parcel No. 00751405) from Immaculate Heart of Mary Roman Catholic Church to construct and own a primary community resilience hub in accordance with the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development's national objectives for the use of funds from the CDBG DR Program.

**A motion was made that this item be deferred. The motion Passed by the following vote:**

**For:** 5 - Donald W. Fondel, Craig Marks, Ronnie Harvey, Jr., Matthew Vezinot, Stuart Weatherford

**Against:** 0 - None

**Absent:** 2 - Tommy M. Bilbo, Jr., Matt Young

**Abstain:** 0 - None

Mayor Simien stated that this was originally authorized for Second Harvest to build a facility off of Legion Street. He stated that Second Harvest did not meet the qualifications to receive these funds and was disqualified. Mayor Simien stated the Administration requested from OCD to not have a subrecipient, and that these funds stay in control of the City to put up another resiliency hub that the City owns in perpetuity. He stated that in the Just Imagine plan community resiliency hubs were recommended. He further stated that people were displaced and unable to return after the storms happened. He stated that strategically the idea now is to place community resiliency hubs throughout the City in strategic places on major thoroughfares for major staging and near communities for locals to get the help required for recovery. The 4.7 acre tract of land next to SWLA Center for Health Services was chosen for several reasons, i.e., that Center was a recovery center not only for hurricane recovery but because we were in the middle of a pandemic, it was a health center, there was telehealth and other resources that were available; the proximity to I 10, and the

administration of SWLA could oversee and handle those things. He also presented a Powerpoint. Councilman Fondel questioned the money being moved from his District to District A to build another resiliency hub. Mark Tizano, Community Development, explained that the money was for the City and not designated to one district. Councilman Bilbo made a motion to defer to the June 3, 2023 regular council meeting which was seconded by Councilman Fondel. During the discussion, Councilman Young exited the meeting and Councilman Bilbo exited the meeting as well. The motion passed by the following vote.

### **The Following Resolutions Were Adopted by Consent**

**A motion was made that Approve. The motion Passed by the following vote:**

**For:** 5 - Donald W. Fondel, Craig Marks, Ronnie Harvey, Jr., Matthew Vezinot, Stuart Weatherford

**Against:** 0 - None

**Absent:** 2 - Tommy M. Bilbo, Jr., Matt Young

**Abstain:** 0 - None

- 34. 26-334** A resolution accepting Project No. LCR409 - Buddy Prejean Park Enhancements as substantially complete and authorizing the advertising of the 45 day lien period.
- 35. 26-335** A resolution accepting Project No. PR0002 - North Beach Restroom Replacement as substantially complete and authorizing the advertising of the 45 day lien period.
- 36. 26-336** A resolution accepting Project No. CP3003 - Lakefront Signage Phase I as substantially complete and authorizing the advertising of the 45 day lien period.
- 37. 26-344** A resolution setting date for public hearing on condemnation of a structure located at 922 Gulf Street (burned structure), Benny Patrick Moreaux, owner.
- 38. 26-337** A resolution setting date for public hearing on condemnation of a structure located at 1703 Winterhalter Street, Bradley Joseph Calais, Armentine Pete, Armentine Patt, Henry Joseph Calais, Jr., Lutta Marie Calais, Mary Calais Savoie, Louis Calais, Ruby Marie Calais, Adley Joseph Calais, Gustane Calais, James Phillip Calais, Adelle Broussard, Norris Calcais, Audrey Mae LeBlanc and Marjorie Senegal, owners.
- 39. 26-338** A resolution setting date for public hearing on condemnation of a structure located at 2005 7th Avenue, Theresa (NMN) Vital Baldwin, owner.
- 40. 26-339** A resolution setting date for public hearing on condemnation of a structure located at 2007 7th Avenue, Demetris Antoine, owner.
- 41. 26-340** A resolution setting date for public hearing on condemnation of a structure located at 655 South Franklin Street, Norma Goodwin, owner, subject to a tax lien held by the City of Lake Charles.
- 42. 26-341** A resolution setting date for public hearing on condemnation of two structures located at 210 Cherry Street and 212 Cherry Street, Benjamin Geyen, Jr., Willie Mae Jackson, Chester Geyen, Claudette Mae Geyen, Franklin Geyen and Margaret Haley, owners.

43. **26-343** A resolution setting date for public hearing on condemnation of a structure located at 2436 Poplar Street, John Ladd, James Lee White, Charlie Carter, Willie Rogers White, Jr., Marie Thomas, Samuel White (Estate), Florence E. Espree, and Bertha H. Davis, owners.

**The Following Ordinances were for Introduction by Consent and read Into the Record the Day Following This Meeting at 11:00am in the City Council Chambers in City Hall**

44. **26-345** An ordinance authorizing the City of Lake Charles to enter into a rental agreement with Rent.fun to provide on-site automated kiosks for rental of equipment to be used for game and sport recreational activities at various parks throughout the city.  
Introduced as read into the record by Renee' P. DeVille, Clerk of the Council.
45. **26-346** An ordinance authorizing the City of Lake Charles to enter into a Cooperative Endeavor Agreement with Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority (CPRA) for administering a grant from National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) for construction of a kayak launch.  
Introduced as read into the record by Renee' P. DeVille, Clerk of the Council.
46. **26-347** An ordinance ordering demolition and authorizing the City of Lake Charles to enter into an agreement for demolition of a structure located at 922 Gulf Street (burned structure), Benny Patrick Moreaux, owner.  
Introduced as read into the record by Renee' P. DeVille, Clerk of the Council.
47. **26-348** An ordinance ordering demolition and authorizing the City of Lake Charles to enter into an agreement for demolition of a structure located at 1703 Winterhalter Street, Bradley Joseph Calais, Armentine Pete, Armentine Patt, Henry Joseph Calais, Jr., Lutta Marie Calais, Mary Calais Savoie, Louis Calais, Ruby Marie Calais, Adley Joseph Calais, Gustane Calais, James Phillip Calais, Adelle Broussard, Norris Calcais, Audrey Mae LeBlanc and Marjorie Senegal, owners.  
Introduced as read into the record by Renee' P. DeVille, Clerk of the Council.
48. **26-349** An ordinance ordering demolition and authorizing the City of Lake Charles to enter into an agreement for demolition of a structure located at 2005 7th Avenue, Theresa (NMN) Vital Baldwin, owner.  
Introduced as read into the record by Renee' P. DeVille, Clerk of the Council.
49. **26-350** An ordinance ordering demolition and authorizing the City of Lake Charles to enter into an agreement for demolition of a structure located at 2007 7th Avenue, Demetris Antoine, owner.  
Introduced as read into the record by Renee' P. DeVille, Clerk of the Council.
50. **26-351** An ordinance ordering demolition and authorizing the City of Lake Charles to enter into an agreement for demolition of a structure located at 655 South Franklin Street, Norma Goodwin, owner, subject to a tax lien held by the City of Lake Charles.  
Introduced as read into the record by Renee' P. DeVille, Clerk of the Council.
51. **26-352** An ordinance ordering demolition and authorizing the City of Lake Charles to enter into an agreement for demolition of two structures located at 210 Cherry Street and 212 Cherry Street, Benjamin Geyen, Jr., Willie Mae Jackson, Chester

Geyen, Claudette Mae Geyen, Franklin Geyen and Margaret Haley, owners.  
Introduced as read into the record by Renee' P. DeVille, Clerk of the Council.

52. 26-353 An ordinance ordering demolition and authorizing the City of Lake Charles to enter into an agreement for demolition of a structure located at 2436 Poplar Street, John Ladd, James Lee White, Charlie Carter, Willie Rogers White, Jr., Marie Thomas, Samuel White (Estate), Florence E. Espree, and Bertha H. Davis, owners.  
Introduced as read into the record by Renee' P. DeVille, Clerk of the Council.
53. 26-354 An ordinance for consideration to amend the official zoning map from a Residential Zoning District to a Mixed Use Zoning District companioned with a Major Conditional Use Permit in order to construct an accessory storage structure for a business located at 708 East School Street.  
Introduced as read into the record by Renee' P. DeVille, Clerk of the Council.
54. 26-355 An ordinance for consideration to amend the official zoning map from a Residential Zoning District to a Mixed Use Zoning District companioned with a Major Conditional Use Permit in order to construct a duplex located on the west side of the 500 block of McNabb Street.  
Introduced as read into the record by Renee' P. DeVille, Clerk of the Council.
55. 26-356 An ordinance amending Chapter 13, Sec. 13-42 of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Lake Charles regarding maintenance and quiet order of a business establishment.  
Introduced as read into the record by Renee' P. DeVille, Clerk of the Council.

### Adjournment

**With no further business to come before the Council, President Marks adjourned the meeting at 9:09 p.m. The next regular meeting is scheduled for June 3, 2026.**

I, RENEE' P. DEVILLE, do hereby certify that I am the duly qualified and acting Clerk of the Council of the City of Lake Charles, Calcasieu Parish, Louisiana.

I further certify that the above and foregoing constitutes a true and correct copy of the Minutes of a meeting of the City Council of said City, held on the 20th day of May, 2026.

WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto subscribed my official signature and impressed hereon the official seal of said City, this 26th day of May, 2026.  
s/Renee P. DeVille, Clerk of the Council.

I, RENEE' P. DEVILLE, do hereby certify that I am the duly qualified and acting Clerk of the Council of the City of Lake Charles, Calcasieu Parish, Louisiana.

I further certify that the above and foregoing constitutes a true and correct copy of the Ordinances adopted at a meeting of the City Council of said city held on the 20th day of May, 2026.

WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto subscribed my official signature and impressed upon the official seal of said City, this 26th day of May, 2026.  
s/Renee' P. DeVille, Clerk of the Council.

The City of Lake Charles fully complies with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Americans with Disabilities Act, and related statutes, executive orders, and regulations in all programs and activities. The City operates without regard to race, color, or national origin. Any person who believes him/herself or any specific class of persons, to be subjected to discrimination prohibited by Title VI and/or Americans with Disabilities Act may by him/herself or by representative file a written complaint with the City of Lake Charles. The City's Title VI Coordinator/ADA Coordinator may be reached by phone at (337) 491 1440, the Mayor's Action Line at (337) 491 1346, or contact the appropriate Department Head.