



The Plaquemines GAZETTE

www.plaqueminesgazette.com

92 YEARS, NO. 28

FEBRUARY 2, 2021

BELLE CHASSE, LA

50 CENTS

Vote to Reduce Plaquemines Council put on April 24 Special Election Ballot

By Justin Walton
reporter@plaqueminesgazette.com

The Plaquemines Parish Council voted to put a reduction in the number of council members from 9 to 7 on the April 24 special election ballot. If this proposed change were to pass, the council would switch to St. Bernard Parish's model of 5 district council members and 2 at large.

The ordinance, proposed by district 3 council member Corey Arbourgh, passed 5-4.

Voting in favor were district 2 council member Beau Black, district 3 council member Corey Arbourgh, district 4 council member Dr. Stuart Guey, district 6 council mem-

ber Trudy Newberry, and district 8 council member Richie Blink.

Voting against were district 1 council member John Barthelemy, district 5 council member Benny Rousselle, Carlton LaFrance, and district 9 council member Mark "Hobbo" Cognevich.

After much heated deliberation over the necessity of this change during the January 28 council meeting—and a promise from district 7 council member LaFrance that, if the ordinance should pass, he would introduce a separate ordinance that made it so there would be no parish president or charter directors, giving council

members executive power, the vote took place.

"This [ordinance will] only put this [possible change] to a vote of the people," said Arbourgh. "Since the budget constraints, this is a great way to reduce [our expenditures], get rid of four salaries."

Arbourgh also explained that the results from the upcoming U.S. Census and parish redistricting will show that many Plaquemines residents have consolidated in Belle Chasse.

LaFrance, responding to Arbourgh's reasoning, stated that if it's mainly about budgetary issues then his proposal of removing the parish president and char-

ter directors would actually save the Plaquemines Parish Government more money. According to the council members, which change to implement will be for the Plaquemines Parish voters to decide.

Neither Arbourgh nor LaFrance knew exactly how much money their proposed changes would save PPG.

Lead Parish Attorney Rennie Buras explained to the council that they had just adopted "a resolution to call an election." That adopted resolution does not just put the proposed changes on the April 24 ballot. The wording within

COUNCIL - PAGE 2

Discovery of "Possible" Slave Cemetery on PLT Site Forces Explanation from Tallgrass Energy

By Justin Walton
reporter@plaqueminesgazette.com

With mounting pressure from the public and port commissioners, representatives from Tallgrass Energy and ELOS Environmental spoke at the January 28 Plaquemines Port Harbor & Terminal District meeting in order to "clear up" what had been found during an archeological investigation of the potential Plaquemines Liquids Terminal site.

Those who appeared at the meeting were Tallgrass

PORT - PAGE 13

Plaquemines Business Occupational Tax Rate Doubled Due to "Discovered" Misinterpretation

By Justin Walton
reporter@plaqueminesgazette.com

The annual occupational tax rate for local Plaquemines Parish businesses for 2021 is double what it was in 2020. As an example, businesses categorized as "Retail Dealers" that pulled in \$0-\$50,000 in gross sales once paid \$25 for an occupational license; in 2021, they will be required to pay \$50 for a license.

While that may not seem like a huge jump, the doubling of the tax rate becomes more noticeable for businesses that bring in a higher amount of gross sales. A "Retail Dealer" business making \$500,000-\$600,000 will pay \$650 this year for an occupational license compared

OCCUPATIONAL TAX - PAGE 15

Gnots Reserve Owner Memorializes Former Plaquemines Community



Gnots Reserve's new MV Burrwood Wise towboat.

By Justin Walton
reporter@plaqueminesgazette.com

An article in Waterways Journal reports Danny Wise, owner of Gnots Reserve Inc. (a company that provides towing and fleeting operations on the lower Mississippi River), honored his Plaquemines Parish heritage recently by putting the newly built MV Burrwood Wise towboat into service. This new towboat—Gnot's Reserve's ninth since the early 2000s—is named after the former lower Plaquemines community Burrwood, Wise's hometown.

Burrwood was established in the early 20th century in response to the 1902 Rivers and Harbor Act that was meant to deepen the mouth of the Mississippi to a depth of 35 feet so it would be able to accommodate

BURRWOOD WISE - PAGE 2

Plaq. Parish receives Notice of Award for \$40.8 Million Restoration Project

Plaquemines Parish President Kirk Lepine and Coastal Director John Helmers are pleased to announce another coastal restoration project award from Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection and Restoration Act (CWPPRA). The project is located in Breton Sound Basin, Plaquemines Parish, west of Delacroix along Bayou Gentilly.

"Allocating these funds to projects in our parish means big steps are being taken toward bringing projects to reality. Marsh creation is key. Overall, marshes provide vital habitat for hundreds of thousands of birds and nursery

RESTORATION - PAGE 10

Chevron helps parish fight COVID-19 crisis

Chevron has a long history of supporting communities, particularly in times of need, by contributing to crisis response and relief efforts. Together with our local and global partners, we are committed to supporting initiatives that help communities and nonprofits address the COVID-19 public health crisis.

Chevron Oronite Oak Point's top priority is the health and safety of its workforce and the community in which we operate," said Brett Cooley, General Manager, Americas Region Manufacturing and Supply. "We remain committed to supporting this mission and are deeply grateful for the service of the emergency responders, medical professionals, and community leaders

CHEVRON - PAGE 5



Plaquemines Parish Council on Aging - David Lewis (Executive Director)



Plaquemines Parish Fire Department - Pictured, from left: Jason Wolf (Captain) and Jonathan Butcher (Superintendent).

Port Sulphur Civic Drive Fishing Pier Project Complete



Construction of the new Port Sulphur Civic Drive Fishing Pier in Plaquemines Parish is complete. A ribbon-cutting ceremony for the new pier was held on Friday, January 29, at 410 Civic Drive, Port Sulphur.

Plaquemines Parish administered the project which included the construction of a wooden fishing pier - including covered areas and lighting - as well as an improved parking area. The new pier features 54 feet

Officials from La. Wildlife and Fisheries were in attendance, as well as Deep South Construction (Project Contractors), Past and current council members, local fishermen, Parish President Kirk Lepine, Sheriff Jerry Turlich and Parish Clerk of Court La Turlich Vaughan.

PIER - PAGE 5

MAILING INFO HERE



The Fishing Pier located at 410 Civic Drive in Port Sulphur is open to the public. There is also a free public boat launch adjacent to the pier. Photo by Jade Duplessis

PIER

CONTINUED FROM THE FRONT PAGE

of gangway and approximately 185 feet of pier over the water.

The Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) provided \$150,000 in funds through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Sport Fish Restoration Program for this project; Plaquemines Parish provided an additional \$50,000.

“We chose this project because this area has become a very popular place to fish, and we are always looking for ways to expand fishing opportunities for our residents,” said LDWF Secretary Jack Montoucet. “This pier provides marsh fishing opportunities for anglers who do not have access to a boat.”

There is also a free public launch adjacent to the new pie. In addition to the public launch, Plaquemines Parish Coastal Resource Department will be adding an additional feature - a living oyster reef. The oyster reef will be added directly under the pier. Completion of the project is set for the end of 2021.

“The pier gives fishermen great access to



Pictured, from left: Brian Champagne (Project Manager with Deep South Construction), John Helmers (Plaquemines Parish Coastal Resource Director), Robert Shadoin (LDWF Deputy Secretary) and Plaquemines Parish President Kirk Lepine.

salt-water fishing” said John Helmers, Plaquemines Parish Coastal Restoration Director. “We are making great strides in opening up access to the parish’s waterfronts. We are so grateful for federal funding, the support of the Parish President, and the support of Councilman Carlton LaFrance in District 7 — where the pier is located.”

“The new Civic Drive Pier is a place where you can sit, bring your family for a day of fishing, and enjoy time together,” said Parish President Kirk Lepine “It is one of the most exciting waterfront enhancements the parish

has seen in decades. I think the pier is a great addition to Plaquemines Parish. Thank you to our state partners, the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) for their continuous support. Through a pandemic and many obstacles, we were able to work together and see this project to fruition.”

Plaquemines Parish Council Chairman, Carlton LaFrance expressed, “I am excited that this new attraction is ready for the public to enjoy. The people of this community deserve such a destination - as we are known for having the best fishing in Louisiana.”



YMCA Belle Chasse - Sissy Stricklin (Membership Director) Jodi Nohra (Executive Director) and Vanessa Paige (Youth Development Director).



Woodlands Conservancy - Katie Brasted (Executive Director)



[Plaquemines Parish School Board - Ronald Bateman (Director of Student Services) and Tara Means (Supervisor CTE)



Plaquemines Medical Center - Monica Martin (Clinical Coordinator)

CHEVRON

CONTINUED FROM THE FRONT PAGE

on the front lines who are keeping our communities safe during these challenging times.”

Chevron is proud to provide our local area front line workers, healthcare workers, emergency responders, educators, and community partners with hand sanitizer and almost 29,000 N95 and surgical masks. Organizations that received items were the YMCA - Belle Chase, Plaquemines Council on Aging, Plaquemines Medical Center, Plaquemines Parish Fire Department, Plaquemines Parish Government, Plaquemines Parish School Board, and the Woodlands Conservancy.

This donation will allow the parish to continue its efforts in fighting COVID-19 and contribute to the wellbeing of the community.



Plaquemines Parish Government- Jade Duplessis (Public Information Officer)



We are happy to announce
Maria Cartagena, MD
Family Medicine Physician
has joined our team!

ACCEPTING NEW PATIENTS

We are an FQHC (Federally Qualified Health Center)- Offering discounted services to those who qualify.

Primary Care for all ages:

- Wellness Exams
- Sick Visits
- Well Child Checks
- School Physicals
- Chronic Disease Management

Other Health services include:

- OB/GYN
- Mental Health
- Dental



**PLAQUEMINES
PRIMARY CARE**
27136 Hwy. 23, Suite A
Port Sulphur, LA 70083
504-564-0848