



The regular meeting of the Mayor and Board of Aldermen was held at 6:00 PM on Tuesday, May 6, 2025, at the Abita Springs Town Hall. Mayor Curtis called the meeting to order.

**PUBLIC HEARING:** The Mayor opened a public hearing to discuss INSTRUMENT 2025-008, AN ORDINANCE TO DECLARE A PORTION OF SOUTH STREET NO LONGER NECESSARY FOR PUBLIC USE, TO AUTHORIZE ITS DISPOSAL, AND TO PROVIDE FOR RELATED MATTERS. Ms. Schaefer explained that the square footage figures provided for the property were preliminary estimates prepared in advance of the meeting and may not reflect exact measurements. She emphasized that the primary focus was the intent of the ordinance and the general agreement among the parties involved to move forward with the proposed exchange. The Administration, Council members, and Ms. Randolph discussed the importance of maintaining drainage access for the Town and ensuring fair compensation to the Penton family. They also considered the potential inclusion of additional segments of Haynes Street in the overall disposal process.

All parties agreed that a professional survey is necessary before making any final decisions. Mr. Eastman emphasized the need to consider future uses of South Street, such as a potential bike path, and raised concerns about the impact on existing drainage.

With no further public comments, Alderman Patterson moved to close the hearing. The motion was seconded by Alderman Boudreaux and passed unanimously.

**MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS:** Mayor Curtis reported that the Administration is awaiting test results before moving forward with the Level/Burvant Street project. He also announced that Abita Springs received an "A" grade on its 2024 water quality report, which is the highest possible rating. Additionally, the Mayor relayed a notice from Coastal Environmental Services that during the summer months, waste collection will begin earlier, starting at 6:00 a.m.

**ROLL CALL:** A roll call confirmed that all members of the Board of Aldermen were present. Alderman Patterson made the motion to accept the minutes of the April 1, 2025, meeting. The motion was seconded by Alderman Templet and passed unanimously.

Michelle Cunningham of DHHM presented the January 2025 financial statements, including Balance Sheets, Income Statements, and Actual vs. Budget reports for each fund. A detailed discussion followed with Council and Administration regarding key findings and specific line items. Ms. Dufrene noted that budget amendments may be ready for Council review by July 2025.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:** Alderman Boudreaux reported progress on various public works and utilities projects. Alderman Patterson announced upcoming meetings with CLECO and WSTE regarding tree trimming. Alderman Contois summarized the April 24 Planning & Zoning Meeting and encouraged attendance at next meeting. Alderman Saussy invited questions on the January 2025 financials, during which Ms. Edwards raised concerns about QuickBooks accounting methods, countered by Ms. Dufrene as more complex than presented. Alderman Templet shared updates on community issues and recent actions by the Marshal and Administration. Alderman Saussy also noted ongoing discussions with the Mayor, Marshal, and others regarding law enforcement matters, which remain unresolved. The Marshal was absent and did not present a report.

#### **NEW BUSINESS:**

1. After discussion between Administration and Council Members, Alderman Patterson made a motion to adopt A RESOLUTION TO ACCEPT THE COMPLIANCE QUESTIONNAIRE FOR FISCAL YEAR 2024. Alderman Templet seconded the motion. The vote was: Yeas: 3, Contois, Patterson and Templet; Nays: 0; Abstain: 2, Boudreaux and Saussy; Absent: 0.
2. Alderman Saussy made a motion to adopt A RESOLUTION TO SELECT THE ST. TAMMANY FARMER AS THE OFFICIAL JOURNAL. Alderman Contois seconded the motion. Mr. Eastman asked about the possibility of transitioning to electronic publication of meeting minutes. It was explained that while the minutes are already posted on the Town's website, state requirements still mandate their publication in the official journal. Hearing no further public comments, the vote was: Yeas: 5, Boudreaux, Contois, Patterson, Saussy and Templet; Nays: 0, Abstain: 0, Absent: 0.
3. Alderman Saussy made a motion to adopt A RESOLUTION TO ACCEPT THE MUNICIPAL WATER POLLUTION PREVENTION REPORT. The motion was seconded by Alderman Contois. Ms. Edwards brought up concerns regarding the outfall from the additional building on the Longbranch Recovery Center on Hwy 36. The vote was: Yeas: 5, Boudreaux, Contois, Patterson, Saussy and Templet; Nays: 0, Abstain: 0, Absent 0.
4. Alderman Templet made a motion to adopt A RESOLUTION ACKNOWLEDGING FINAL ACCEPTANCE AND COMMITTING TO THE OWNERSHIP, MAINTENANCE, AND OPERATION OF LIGHTING IMPROVEMENTS INSTALLED AS PART OF THE ABITA SPRINGS TOWN CENTER LIGHTING PROJECT, NO. H.009934, AND



PROVIDING FOR RELATED MATTERS, seconded by Alderman Saussy. Ms. Schaefer informed the Council that the Administration is actively exploring options to address concerns raised by nearby residents regarding the intensity of the lighting. Mr. Calecas addressed the Board to express his appreciation for the goals of the project, particularly the emphasis on improved connectivity and public safety. However, he also shared that the brightness and reach of the lighting have significantly impacted his rural lifestyle and quality of life, and he asked the Administration to consider adjustments. Mr. Eastman offered several alternative solutions for the Council's consideration. The vote was called; the results were as follows: Yeas: 5. Boudreaux, Contois, Patterson, Saussy, and Templet. Nays: 0, Abstain: 0, Absent: 0.

5. A discussion was held on the Urban Forestry Ordinance of the Town of Abita Springs. The Mayor requested the Council review the ordinance and come up with any questions or concerns for a future discussion.

#### **OLD BUSINESS:**

1. Alderman Saussy made a motion to table INSTRUMENT 2025-003 AN ORDINANCE OF THE BOARD OF ALDERMEN OF THE TOWN OF ABITA SPRINGS TO CREATE A STANDARD OF PROCEDURE FOR THE FINANCE COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON'S ACCESSIBILITY TO ALL FINANCIAL RECORDS. The motion was seconded Alderman Patterson. Mr. Eastman recommended continued collaboration with legal counsel, and Alderman Saussy confirmed he is actively working with legal on the matter. The vote was: Yeas: 5, Boudreaux, Contois, Patterson, Saussy and Templet; Nays: 0, Abstain: 0, Absent 0.
2. Discussion was opened on A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF ALDERMEN OF THE TOWN OF ABITA SPRINGS TO AMEND AND CLARIFY THE RULES OF PROCEDURE FOR COUNCIL MEETINGS, INCLUDING MATTERS OF LEGISLATIVE DELIBERATION, COMMITTEE STRUCTURE, POLICY DEVELOPMENT, AND PUBLIC GOVERNANCE. Following Council discussion, amendments to the draft were approved. These included revising the process for selecting committee chairpersons so that they are recommended by the Mayor Pro Tem and confirmed by the Board, and removing the fourth bullet point under Section 4(a), which stated that the Governmental Committee would be chaired by the Mayor Pro Tem. Alderman Contois then moved to adopt the resolution. The motion was seconded by Alderman Saussy. The vote was as follows: Yeas: 4, Boudreaux, Contois, Saussy, and Templet. Nays: 0, Abstain: 1, Patterson, Absent: 0.

**OPEN/ADJOURNMENT:** During the public comment period, Mr. Eastman raised concerns regarding the Urban Forestry Ordinance. Ms. Slifer, President of Keep Abita Beautiful, invited volunteers to participate in a litter cleanup on Highway 435 scheduled for May 13. Mr. Deano announced the introduction of Senate Bill 124, which proposes amendments to the Louisiana Scenic Rivers Act that would remove several local rivers; he encouraged Abita residents to contact their legislators in opposition. Ms. Schaefer recommended that the Council review specific language in the Urban Forestry Ordinance, and Alderman Contois agreed to collaborate with the Administration on the matter.

At the conclusion of the public remarks, Alderman Patterson moved to adjourn the meeting, with a second from Alderman Contois.

#### **MEETING ADJOURNED**

Respectfully submitted this 6<sup>th</sup> day of May 2025.

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Janet Dufrene, Town Clerk

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Honorable Daniel J. Curtis, Mayor