

MINUTES OF PARISH COUNCIL FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 29, 2021 AT 10:00 A.M.

ST. TAMMANY GOVERNMENT COMPLEX

21454 KOOP DR., BUILDING B, MANDEVILLE, LA.

Call to Order by Honorable Rykert Toledano, Chairman

Invocation by moment of silence initiated by Mr. Toledano

**Roll Call: David Fitzgerald ABSENT
 Rykert O. Toledano, Jr.
 Cheryl Tanner
 James “Jimmie” Davis, III
 Maureen “MO” O’Brien ABSENT
 Jerry Binder
 Jacob “Jake” Airey ABSENT**

ALSO PRESENT: Lorino

- 1. Budget Discussions:**
 - a. St. Tammany Parish Coroner**

-Dr. Preston – St. Tammany Parish Coroner – made comments regarding the importance of getting the message about the budget and quality of life in St. Tammany Parish out to the public. He spoke about Act 151 and the annual report. They used 2019, 2020, and 2021 statistics in the preliminary annual report since this is their first report. The annual report will be out around February in future years. He gave information about the sexual assault programs, autopsy services, and out of Parish services. The Coroner’s office generates around \$500,000 for out of Parish autopsies. Spoke about how Safe Haven has helped tremendously. Dr. Preston handed out a document that included expenses and revenue of the Coroner’s office. He spoke about other safety initiative programs such as Cribs for Kids and Project Child Safe. The Coroner’s office had to hire a forensic pathologist. They have plans to start a suicide prevention task force.

-Riles – laid out the format for the day explaining how the discussions would go.

-Tanner – asked about charging other Parishes.

-Preston – they charge \$800-\$1000 over what it costs the Coroner’s office to perform the service.

-Tanner – asked how many employees they have.

-Preston – answered 32 and explained in further detail the types of employees.

-Davis - asked if the reserve fund can be used for this year.

-Preston – answered yes and gave reasons why.

-Toledano – asked if it is required to have a reserve fund under Act 151.

-Preston – answered maybe not required, but it is a good practice.

-Leslie Long – Director of Finance - gave an explanation of the fund balance (reserve fund).

-Binder – spoke about fund balance/reserve fund in relation to property tax. He encouraged the Coroner to keep in mind rolling back the tax in the future.

-Toledano – asked about any increases.

-Preston – answered that there would be increases in salary, wages, benefits, a storage building estimated between \$400,00-\$600,000, insurance +\$75,000.

-Toledano – asked Long if they looked into insurance.

-Long – answered that they do look into insurance companies.

-Binder – gave a suggestion on advising the public in the future on letting them know what came from the Coroner’s office (for example, the cribs).

-Toledano – asked about any foreseeable amendments.

-Preston – did not have any.

b. COAST

-George Nicoll – Operations Director, Syeda Naeem – Finance Director, and Kelly Walgamotte – President of the Board of Directors present on the behalf of COAST. George read a statement. He explained that the budget for transportation has increased due to salary and insurance increases. He explained that they are having a tough time hiring drivers. The current salary is \$12/hr and they plan to increase to \$14/hr.

-Binder – asked about certain increases in the budget.

-Davis – asked about increases in salaries.

-Tanner – asked about revenues other than grants or millages.

-Naeem – said they receive nothing from the parish.

-Toledano – asked about a fund balance.

-Toledano – asked if \$5 million was needed and is there a way to save money.

-Long – explained the budget and ending balance.

-Lorino – asked a question about the ending balance.

-Tanner – asked if they rolled back their millage.

-Long – answered yes.

-Binder – asked a question and made a suggestion about next year’s budget. They need to know what they need in reserve for Capital expenditures.

-Toledano – encourages them to consider an amendment because this will be under scrutiny. Suggested that maybe they meet with some members of the Finance Committee to determine changes that need to be made.

-Tanner – asked about problems with deposits previously.

-Naeem – answered that this has been corrected this year.

- Davis – gave suggestion on breaking down/explaining their budget.
- Binder – asked about any other places that do not have centers.
- Nicoll – answered that Folsom does not, but this has been put on the back burner.
- Toledano – asked about potential public/private partnerships.
- Nicoll – answered that the Executive Director, Julie Agan, was looking into this.

c. STARC

-Mark Baham – Executive Director and Angela Lamarque – Chief Financial Officer presented on the behalf of STARC. Baham explained STARC and its services. He explained that it is a fee for service organization. He explained the revenue services proposed for 2022. He also explained the proposed budget.

-Tanner – asked about Parish contracts.

-Lamarque – answered that this is the millage. When used, it is recognized as revenue income.

-Baham – explained that they are having to pay double overtime and also having to outsource to cover shifts and are paying around \$25/hour when they would typically pay around \$12/hour. He also explained that there were no audit recommendations.

-Toledano – asked about the fund balance.

-Tanner – asked if they rolled back the millage, and Long gave an explanation.

-Toledano – asked about the number of employees.

-Baham – answered around 200

d. St. Tammany Parish Assessor

-Louis Fitzmorris – Assessor and Troy Dugas presented on behalf of the Assessor's office. Fitzmorris explained the Assessor's office budget. They explained that there is about \$2 million in reserve which will last about 4 months. They explained that there are 41 employees in 2022 and they may add 1-2 employees. They plan to implement a 2.3% merit and cost of living raise. Their benefits are down to 71%. There are 41 full time employees and 7 part time employees who receive no benefits. They are asking for \$110,000 for the GIS system/pictometry (\$55,000 each). They have about 95% of the Parish mapped.

-Lorino – asked for a specific number.

-Fitzmorris - \$110,000 for the next 5 years.

-Tanner – asked about the recap sheet and about collectable percentage.

-Fitzmorris – answered no less than 95%.

-Long – responded that it is in the CAFRA in the 98 percentile.

-Long – asked if the \$110,000 is a state-mandated cost.

-Dugas and Fitzmorris – answered that this is all for technology, but is this is above and beyond. They will double check this.

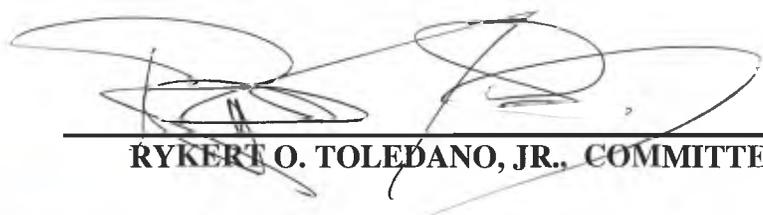
-Binder – made comments about real estate and homeowner’s insurance.

e. Registrar of Voters

-Dwayne Wall – Registrar of Voters - presented on behalf of the Registrar of Voters office. He said there is \$259,000 requested in 2022. 71% is salaries and 19% is postage. He spoke about a \$10,000 reimbursement from the state. He mentioned that they would need a 4th site for early voting for the Presidential election. He spoke about how they are responsible for hauling and setting up equipment.

-Council discussion ensued.

-There being no further business, meeting adjourned at the call of the Committee Chairman.



RYKERT O. TOLEDANO, JR., COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN



KATRINA L. BUCKLEY, COUNCIL CLERK