**MINUTES**

**FOR THE CITY COUNCIL MEETING OF FEBRUARY 10, 2022**

The regular meeting of the Mandeville City Council was called to order by the Council Chairman at 6:00 p.m. followed by roll call.

**ROLL CALL - present:** Jason Zuckerman, Jill McGuire, Rick Danielson, Rebecca Bush, Skelly Kreller

**Also present:** Kathleen Sides, Finance Director, Keith LeGrange, Director of Public Works, Elizabeth Sconzert, City Attorney, Mayor Madden

**MINUTES:**

1. Adoption of the January 27, 2022, Regular Meeting Minutes. A motion was made by Mrs. Bush and seconded by Dr. Kreller to adopt the minutes. With no further comments or questions a vote was taken and the minutes were adopted 5-0.

**REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**:

Mr. Zuckerman the Krewe of Eve will parade on February 18th and the Krewe du Pooch will be March 5th.

The mayor announced Spring concerts will run for the months of April and May. KMB clean-up will be April 23rd and Mrs. Delgado will give a presentation in March about the “Love the Boot” campaign and KMB recap. The mayor also thanked everyone for the success of the first annual Policeman’s ball.

**OLD BUSINESS**:

1. Adoption of [Ordinance 22-02;](https://www.cityofmandeville.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Ordinance-22-02-packet.pdf) AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF MANDEVILLE TO AMEND THE PAY SCALE RELATIVE TO COMPENSATION PLAN OF THE MUNICIPAL POLICE CIVIL SERVICE EMPLOYEES OF THE CITY OF MANDEVILLE AND PROVIDING FOR OTHER MATTERS IN CONNECTION THEREWITH

A motion was made by Mrs. Bush and seconded by Mrs. McGuire. Mr. Danielson explained this is the next step in the process from the salary survey. The mayor read a statement explaining how this arrived. “We kicked off the salary survey in May 2021. I wanted to do this as the new Mayor first because the City of Mandeville was once the employer of choice in our area, and I had noticed that now we were not. Second, the last salary survey was done in 2013, nine years ago. I believe we should do a salary survey once every five years. Lastly, we have long had trouble hiring public works employees, particularly maintenance workers and equipment operators. I had also noticed from the local media that various surrounding municipalities had recently given raises to their police, and I did not want our police department to be at a disadvantage. Once we got started, we selected SSA Consultants after a competitive process. Job descriptions of all active positions were submitted to SSA, and each employee completed their own personal Job Analysis Questionnaire (JAQ). Benefits and retirement information policies and information were also submitted to SSA for analysis. In November 2021, SSA delivered the salary survey report to the City of Mandeville. Also in November of 2021, the salary survey report was presented to both Civil Service Boards and the City Council. Between November 2021 and January 2022, the Salary Survey Implementation Committee met five times to review, analyze, discuss, and make recommendations to the pay scale as a result of the salary survey report. Council members were involved to better understand the inevitable budget adjustment. Voting members were Mayor Madden, Civil Service Boards Chairman Brian Burke, Civil Service Boards Vice-Chairman Richard Ainsworth, City Council Chairman Jason Zuckerman, and City Councilman-at-Large Rick Danielson.

Also, during this time our Finance Director, Kathleen Sides, and our Human Resources Director, Joanna Anderson, logged hours of hard work processing the discussions, ideas, and recommendations of the committee. It should be noted that the last time our employees received an across-the-board raise was in 2015. Furthermore, the last time the pay scale changed was in 2018, wherein minimum hourly employees who were making below $13.60 an hour received a raise of 48 cents an hour. This illustrates that our employees have been underpaid for quite a while. The salary survey recommendations we are being presented are an opportunity to make that right.

 The results of the salary survey report are as follows:

\* SSA delivered market research for every position based on BOTH the private market and our surrounding municipalities (NOTE: police do NOT have a private market comparison, so they were only compared to the city’s competitors-Slidell, Covington, STPSO and the State Police).

\*  SSA delivered these as ranges with market minimum rates and market maximum rates.

\*  The City of Mandeville was below market minimum on all positions with the exception of two.

\*  The City of Mandeville has also never given Cost of Living Adjustments (COLA), while many of our peers do.

\* The City of Mandeville's benefits package is in line with other surrounding municipalities and no changes were recommended for the benefits package.

The pay scale adjustments are due to us changing our minimum hourly rates to allow our employees to receive their market value in pay. Some positions were adjusted slightly more. Those employees affected will see different levels of pay increases, dependent upon how far under market value they were paid pre-salary survey and their years of service with the city.

The Civil Service Boards met on January 18, 2022, to consider the recommendations made by the Salary Survey Implementation Committee. The Municipal Police Employees’ Civil Service Board amended the recommended pay scale for Police employees to increase the minimum hourly rate of Clerk I to $15.35 and the minimum hourly rate of Dispatchers to $19.07 (at the request of the Police Chief). The Municipal Police Employees Civil Service Board approved the pay scale for Police employees and is asking the City Council to fund the Police Employees’ raise.

The Municipal Employees’ Civil Service Board amended the recommended pay scale for the non-Police employees to increase the minimum hourly rate of Clerk I, Receptionists, and Clerk I, Data Entry to $15.35. The minimum hourly rate of the Permit Coordinator was increased to $17.08, and the minimum hourly rate of the Accounting Specialist was increased to $18.38. The Municipal Employees’ Civil Service Board is asking the City Council to approve and fund the Non-Police Employees’ raise.

All in all, I am glad we went through this exercise. Mandeville must stay competitive and, in order to do so, we must not only retain good quality and well-trained employees, but also take the necessary steps to attract new ones.

Mr. Danielson added this is just for the police scale. The city is also going from a 30 to a 20-step scale and from a 2.5% increase between steps to 2%.

With no further comments or questions, a vote was taken, and the ordinance passed 5-0

2. Adoption of [Ordinance 22-03](https://www.cityofmandeville.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Ordinance-No.-22-03-packet.pdf); AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF MANDEVILLE TO AMEND THE PERSONNEL POLICIES RELATIVE TO THE PAY SCALE OF THE NON-POLICE MUNICIPAL CIVIL SERVICE EMPLOYEES OF THE CITY OF MANDEVILLE AND TO AMEND THE SALARY OF THE COUNCIL CLERK AND TO PROVIDE FOR OTHER RELATED MATTERS IN CONNECTION THEREWITH A motion was made by Mrs. Bush and seconded by Mrs. McGuire. Mr. Danielson explained this is regarding the non-police pay scale and the council clerk. This is the same as the prior ordinance, changing from 30 to 25 steps and 2.5% increases to 2% for future step changes. Mrs. McGuire does not want to defer the ordinance but according to section 2.7 of the charter she feels it needs to be amended. It states “Each year on or about August 1st a review and evaluation shall be made of the council clerk and the council shall determine the compensation and any appropriate changes in compensation of the council clerk for the next year; “Based upon the charter she wants to pick up the discussion in August. The purpose of the ordinance and the survey was to look at the positions that were underpaid. Mrs. McGuire made a motion to remove the adjustment of the council clerk; this was seconded by Mrs. Bush. Mrs. Sconzert explained the charter sec 2.9 says the council clerk’s salary is to be set by ordinance. In sec. 2.7 of the code of ordinance it where it is set in the budget. You can make this motion or can do it in a budget adjustment; either way is ok as long as it is done through an ordinance. Mr. Goodwin feels there are people here regarding the increase of the council clerk and he feels it should not be tabled. Mr. Danielson is not sure of the most efficient way to do this. Mrs. McGuire explained there are a lot of pieces that need to be answered and she feels she needs more time to assess. She feels the salary survey committee did not discuss the council clerk’s salary, she would like to see the job questionnaire and she does not want to hold up the other side.

Mr. Zuckerman stated this did not come with the recommendations from the survey committee and he feels it deserves more attention. Dr. Kreller asked Cody with SSA his opinion on the process. Cody stated the company looks at the detailed job analysis questionnaire and they provide market data ranges recommendations to the city. The job questionnaires are available for review if needed. There are a variety of reasons that you would want to go outside of the range. The city has adjusted a few positions outside of what they had provided. Dr. Kreller explained the clerk is singled out on her increase and the public does not realize the percentage change of increase ranges greatly for all employees. Mrs. Sides stated the ranges are from .77 to 66.1%. Mr. Danielson stated this ordinance is for a change of pay scale and then a budget adjustment. If this is removed, do we have to adjust the budget adjustment? Mrs. Sides did not feel that would be necessary. Mr. Danielson asked Mrs. McGuire if she would feel comfortable with amending her motion to move the clerk’s salary discussion to the first meeting in March, with a vote the second meeting in March. All of these employees will be receiving their increase in the next few weeks, and he does not feel waiting until August is fair. Mrs. McGuire does not want anyone to wait unjustly so if it can be done prior to August. Mrs. Sconzert feels the council would still be following the intent of the ordinance. Mrs. Bush wants to make sure we have enough time to get enough information. Mr. Danielson just wants to introduce an ordinance to move forward and if we need more time, push it back. Mr. Zuckerman does not feel a date needs to be added to the motion. Mrs. McGuire made a motion to delete the reference of the council clerk in the title along with the 5-7th Whereas paragraphs and 2nd not therefore be ordained; The motion passed 5-0.

Mr. Burguieres expressed the council clerk is not civil service, and council is not bound by the survey.

Mrs. Bush stated the city’s most important asset is employees. She has received questions about the amount of the increases and its impact on the future finances of the city. The mayor stated there are inefficiencies tied to pay, turnover, recruitment. There will be an impact on retirement and the budget, but the city justifies this with the data from SSA and the civil service board. Mrs. Bush feels these are valid questions. She still agrees we need to invest in our employees and make sure we are not losing them to other municipalities or sectors. Mrs. Sides stated the last pay scale change was in 2014 and our fund balance is sufficient, and sales taxes are increasing. Mrs. Sides stated the city is not attracting people, so this is responsible. Cody stated if you have the funds to do it all at one time its better. Mrs. Sides stated in future legislation we are looking at adopting the COLA annually that will keep us in market range. Cody explained if the city had been keeping up with inflation and the COL, most positions would be at market value. He recommends tying this to an index.

With no further comments or questions, a vote was taken, and the amended ordinance passed 5-0

3. Adoption of [Ordinance No. 22-04](https://www.cityofmandeville.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Ord-22-04-packet-revised.pdf); AN Ordinance for THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF MANDEVILLE TO AMEND ORDINANCE NUMBER 21-20 THE OPERATING BUDGET OF THE CITY OF MANDEVILLE AND FOR OTHER MATTERS IN CONNECTION THEREWITH A motion was made by Mrs. Bush and seconded by Mrs. McGuire. Mr. Zuckerman explained this is the corresponding monies for the prior ordinances. Dr. Kreller asked by removing the council clerk from the ordinance do we have to make any adjustments. Mrs. Sides does not feel that is necessary. She also wanted to clarify the adjustment includes not only the salary adjustments, but retirement benefits and payroll taxes as well. Mr. Danielson asked when employees will see the adjustment. Mrs. Sides stated the change will go into effect on February 23rd and will be on the March 11th pay checks. Mrs. Bush read a statement from Mr. Glen Runyon regarding the proposed adjustment. “I am not in town so I will not be able to attend the Council meeting tonight, but I wanted to express my strong disapproval of Ordinance 22-04 salary increases. This is an ill-conceived and reckless massive increase in the annual operating expenses that will have a significant impact by using General Fund balance funds every year it the future beginning next fiscal year without some offsetting budget reductions in the out years. Slidell had to eliminate the city paying the employee portion of the state retirement system when they could no longer cover this additional employee benefit. Are you and your fellow council members ready and willing to cut paying the employee retirement to offset these proposed salary increases?” Mrs. Sides explained this is not just coming from the general fund, it includes the water and sewer and enterprise funds. The mayor stated the city will offset this with the new grants and contracts position. Mr. Danielson stated the number one commodity is our people and if we don’t have the people, the work will not get done. It is up to the administration and the council to make things work and if adjustments have to be made further down the line, they will address those issues. Mr. Zuckerman stated retention and recruiting is more difficult over the years due to the lack of COLA increases. There were lots of discussions about what we need to do to retain in this market. Mrs. Bush fully agrees. She stated we need to retain and obtain top talent. Mrs. McGuire stated there are several employees who do multiple jobs and getting paid for one. She hears from constituents many things cannot be done because positions cannot be filled and many are overworked, especially in PW. Mr. Danielson wanted to say of the 100 employees all are important, including our council clerk and he would like to come back with a budget adjustment next month. Mr. Burguieres distributed several handouts. He stated “Last year we had discussions about salaries and the ability to hire qualified employees. Historically the city has hovered at just over 100 employees with new hires amounting to 2-3 per year. The city hired a consultant to perform a new salary survey. The survey came back a couple of months ago and was due to be accepted by the city at the November 18th council meeting. A few citizens, including myself, wanted to discuss the survey and submit questions to the authors since they were present. The council was not interested and instead indicated that everyone would get a chance to discuss this at a later date. I guess this is the later date. The salary survey was generally good. A good starting point. However, there were flaws and, in a few instances, errors. At this point there is little that can be done about it. It is a fait accompli. We are also at a point where it appears that every employee in the city knows what the result and effect of the salary survey will be, even before t is adopted by the council. This, for all practical purposes, is also a fait accompli. You probably cannot change anything; it ties your hands. That said, let me offer a few observations based largely on your own information. In ordinances 22-02 and 22-03 you will be implementing what you largely believe to be the recommendations of the salary survey. The original desire was to raise the starting wage of entry level people of those 2-3 employees the city hires in a given year. The result bears little in common with that goal. The salary survey revealed that a good deal of the entry level wages for new hires was below the average it eh area. However, the salary survey showed that a significant portion of the city’s employees have been with the city for quite sometime such that they were at the upper regions of their salary position. The result was that the city had the highest salaries in the area for many employees at the upper end of the pay scale. 66 positions were compared. The city had 49 positions where the starting salary was below the area starting salaries. However, the city also had 33 positions that were being paid above the area average. So, what happened? What you have before you today are the adjustments. This adjustment is only for the second half of the fiscal year, so it represents a six-month cost.

26 employees will get a $10,000 + yearly raise

18 of these employees will get a $15,000 + yearly raise

11 of these employees will get a $20,000 + yearly raise

3 of these employees will get a $30,000 + yearly raise

So much for helping to attract entry level employees. So, what is the big picture conclusion? The city’s current employee payroll, excluding benefits is about $5.7 million. This salary adjustment that will be taken up in Ordinance 22-04 will add about $750,000 for six months. However, for the year it will be $1.5 million. This would increase the city’s employee payroll to about $7.2 million, a 25% + increase in one year. But wait, there’s more. If the city follows through with tradition when the budget comes up in August, there will be another 2-2.5% pay raise. Now, there is talk of a 5% COLA (cost of living adjustment) as the result of inflation. If this comes in there will be another 7%+ increase worth about $500,000. In the span of less than 12 months you will have authorized an almost 35% increase in labor cost to almost $8,000,000 a year. Is this what you intended when you thought you were raising entry level wages?”

Mr. Burguieres stated this money is coming out of the fund balances and at this rate will eat through that money quickly. The city can choose to fund employees or build a new city hall; fund employees or fund a bike path. These are the choices the city has to make. He wants the council to know the big picture and the yearly increase. Mrs. Sides stated the city hires more and loses just as many increases. There is also only 1 with an increase of over $30,000. Mr. Zuckerman explained the intent was not just to improve the starting pay, a lot of it was retention especially with the police department. We are losing officers and not able to attract them. The adjustments were heavily focused on recruiting and retention. Mr. Burguieres suggested a 5 yr. projection of labor cost just as the city does for the capital project. Mr. Burguieres also commented the city pays for the employee’s social security. Dr. Kreller agreed it could come down to the point it may not be sustainable. Mrs. Sides explained the city has to pay social security.

With no further comments or questions, a vote was taken, and the ordinance passed 5-0

**NEW BUSINESS**:

1. Approval of the appointment to the Parks and Parkways Commission. A motion was made by Mrs. McGuire and seconded by Mrs. Bush. Ms. Bartholomew explained in the CLURO there are requirements for the application for commission members for Parks & Parkways. She does not believe the applicant meets those qualifications. Dr. Kreller explained the applicant is a civil engineer and feels he qualifies under the technical background in a related field. Mr. Zuckerman made a motion to extend the application period for 30 days; this was seconded by Mrs. Bush. Mrs. Sconzert added this could give the current applicant a chance to expand on his qualifications. With no further comments or questions, a vote was taken, and the extension was approved 4-1(Kreller against)

2. Approval of the [Old Golden Shores](https://www.cityofmandeville.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Old-Golden-Shores.pdf) neighbors block party, Sunday, February 20, 2022 from 11am-8pm. To be located on Copal Street between Cindy Lou & Live Oak. Requesting Street Closure – Copal Street between Cindy Lou and Live Oak. A motion was made by Mrs. McGuire and seconded by Mrs. Bush. Dr. Kreller explained this is for a neighborhood block party. There will be music and a food truck on private property. The neighborhood is requesting a street closure for safety purposes. With no further comments or questions, a vote was taken, and the application was approved5-0

3, Approval of [Ballard Brands](https://www.cityofmandeville.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Ballard-Folder.pdf) (WOW American Eats) Tailgate, Friday, February 18, 2022 – 5:30 pm. To be located at 4480 Hwy 22, Mandeville. Requesting to park their food truck in a parking space in front of their building before and during the Krewe of Eve Parade. A motion was made by Dr. Kreller and seconded by Mrs. Bush. Mr. Danielson explained the Ballard Brothers will have a food truck on their property for the Eve parade. A variety of party food will be available for purchase. With no further comments or questions, a vote was taken, and the application was approved5-0

4. Approval of [A Rhea of Hope](https://www.cityofmandeville.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/A-Rhea-of-Hope.pdf) pub crawl; Saturday, April 2, 2022, from 4pm-8pm. To be located in Old Mandeville (See map attached). Food and beverage will be consumed inside businesses. No open containers from stop to stop. All event activities will take place on private property. A motion was made by Mr. Danielson and seconded by Mrs. Bush. Mrs. McGuire explained the pub crawl will be for several local businesses in Old Mandeville. When you purchase a band, you will get discounts on food and drinks at selected establishments. Proceeds will go to the Bile Duct Cancer Research Foundation. With no further comments or questions, a vote was taken, and the application was approved5-0

5. Approval of the waiver of the sound ordinance for the [JILLIAN GUTIERREZ/HINGLE WEDDING](https://www.cityofmandeville.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Gutierrez-Hingle-Wedding.pdf). Saturday, April 23, 2022, from 8pm-11pm at the Maison Lafitte. Requesting music to be allowed to be played until 11:00pm. A motion was made by Mrs. McGuire and seconded by Mrs. Bush. Mrs. McGuire explained, due to covid, the couple had to relocate their wedding ceremony to Madisonville, thereby delaying their reception in Old Mandeville. The couple has minimized the volume of the band by using drapery. They are aware the police can still be called out if the noise gets too loud, but they are only asking for a 1-hour exception. With no further comments or questions, a vote was taken, and the application was approved5-0

6. Approval of the liquor license for [Sweet Olive Market & Bakery](https://www.cityofmandeville.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Sweet-Olive-Market-Bakery.pdf) to be located at 301 Lafitte, Mandeville, La. A motion was made by Mr. Danielson and seconded by Mrs. Bush. Mrs. McGuire explained over a year ago this was just going to be a bakery and small retail, but with anew partner, it will now be a restaurant. The restaurant is hoping to open mid to late March. With no further comments or questions, a vote was taken, and the application was approved5-0

7. Approval of the liquor license for [Dave & Jerry’s Sandwich Shop](https://www.cityofmandeville.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Dave-Jerrys-Sandwich-Shop.pdf), located at 445 Lafitte Street, Mandeville, La. Mrs. McGuire recused herself since the owner is a relative. A motion was made by Mrs. Bush and seconded by Dr. Kreller. Mr. Danielson explained this is a license for beer and wine and encouraged everyone to visit the sandwich shop. With no further comments or questions, a vote was taken, and the application was approved 4-0 (McGuire abstain).

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Mr. Craig Toomey requested an update on the traffic signal at Monroe and Causeway. He is greatly concerned with the increase in traffic in this area. Mr. Steve Gunn agreed with his concerns and wanted to know if more stop signs could be added.

Mr. Jeff Lyons requested an update regarding the abandoned houses, especially the one on the corner of Livingston and Lamarque. Mrs. Sconzert explained unfortunately, it is still in the legal process and is not a quick solution.

Mr. Charles Goodwin thanked the council for their service and stated he will be moving to Christwood.

The NAMI walks fundraiser is May 21st and the MPD has formed a team. The NAMI St. Tammany group has received state-wide recognition for their efforts, and everyone is asked to donate, form a team, and help this much needed cause.

**PROJECTS IN PROGRESS (STATUS REPORT):**

Mr. LeGrange updated the council on projects. There will be a presentation at the next council meeting on all capital projects for the City by Digital Engineering.

Mr. Zuckerman recessed the council meeting for 10 minutes before continuing on with the appeal hearing.

**HISTORIC DISTRICT APPEAL HEARING-** [HC 22-01-04 – 218 Lafitte Street](https://www.cityofmandeville.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/COA-Appeal-to-Council-Packet-1.pdf)

Mr. Zuckerman explained this is an appeal hearing regarding the denial by the Historic Preservation District Commission regarding a request for residential Demolition to a Contributing Structure located at 218 Lafitte St, Mandeville, LA. Mr. Zuckerman explained the process for an appeal and asked Ms. Bartholomew to explain the request.

Ms. Bartholomew stated the applicant came before the Historic District commission and the commission unanimously denied the Certificate of Appropriateness for demolition of a contributing structure located at 218 Lafitte St. at their January 20, 2022, meeting. Per the CLURO Sec. 7.6.4.14 (2) Appeals. It states any applicant aggrieved by any decision of the Commission shall have the right to appeal to the City Council. The Council shall affirm, reverse, or modify the decision f the Commission by a majority vote of all its members.

Mr. Main explained his reasoning for what he calls a selective demolition due to the age and repairs needed to bring the property up to code. Mr. Vaughn Sollberger, with the Historic District Commission, explained the commission’s findings and why they feel there is a prudent alternative.

After hearing and reviewing the opening statements, testimony and evidence presented, a motion was made by Mr. Danielson to uphold the decision of the Mandeville Historic Preservation District Commission; this was seconded by Dr. Kreller. The council expressed the Historic District Commission was just and reasonable in the context of the evidence presented. Without further questions or comments a vote was taken and the appeal was denied (5-0).

Ms. Bartholomew explained the applicant can still apply to raise and renovate the property.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Mr. Danielson made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mrs. Bush. Mr. Zuckerman adjourned the meeting at 9:20 p.m.

/s/ /s/

Kristine Scherer Jason Zuckerman

Council Clerk Council Chairman