

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE CITY COUNCIL
OF THE CITY OF NATCHITOCHES, STATE OF LOUISIANA,
MEETING HELD ON
MONDAY, JULY 22, 2024 AT 5:30 P.M.**

The City Council of the City of Natchitoches met in legal and regular session at the Natchitoches Council Chambers, 716 Second Street, Natchitoches, Louisiana on Monday, July 22, 2024, at 5:30 p.m.

There were present:

Mayor Ronnie Williams
Councilwoman At Large Betty Sawyer-Smith
Councilman Dale Nielsen
Councilman Christopher Petite
Councilwoman Rosemary Elie

Guest: None

Absent: Councilman Eddie Harrington

Mayor Ronnie Williams called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone for coming. Mayor Williams led the invocation and Councilwoman Elie led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Williams then called for the reading and approval of the minutes for the July 10, 2024 meeting. Councilwoman At Large Smith moved that we dispense with the reading of the minutes and approval of same. Seconded by Councilman Nielsen.

A roll call vote was as follows:

AYES: Elie, Nielsen, Smith, Petite
NAYS: None
ABSENT: Harrington
ABSTAIN: None

The following Ordinance was Introduced by Mr. Harrington and Seconded by Mrs. Elie as follows, to-wit:

ORDINANCE NO. 019 OF 2024

AN ORDINANCE APPROVING A COOPERATIVE ENDEAVOR AGREEMENT AND INDEMNIFICATION, DEFENSE AND HOLD HARMLESS AGREEMENT WITH THE CANE RIVER WATERWAY DISTRICT AND THE CANE RIVER NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA TO PROVIDE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT AND CONSTRUCTION OF IMPROVEMENTS ON THE MILLSTREET DISTRICT RIVERBANK, AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR, RONNIE WILLIAMS, JR., TO EXECUTE THE COOPERATIVE ENDEAVOR AGREEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE CITY OF NATCHITOCHES.

WHEREAS, the City of Natchitoches (sometimes hereinafter “City”) and the Cane River Waterway District (sometimes hereinafter “District”) are mutually desirous of improving developing and promoting Cane River Lake for recreation and tourism; and

WHEREAS FURTHER, the City and the District have agreed to enter into a Cooperative Endeavor Agreement (a copy of which is attached) to jointly meet their mutual goals and intentions, under authority of law, including the authority set forth under the provisions of Article 6, Section 20 of the 1974 Louisiana Constitution which specifically authorizes an Intergovernmental Agreement for the purpose of performing any power and function including financing a duly authorized project; and

WHEREAS FURTHER, the City of Natchitoches desires to develop and improve the riverbank adjacent to the Mill Street District which is located on the right descending bank of Cane River Lake between Mill Street and Cane River Lake; and

WHEREAS FURTHER, the City has developed a plan for the improvement and development of the riverbank adjacent to the Mill Street District which is located on the right descending bank of Cane River Lake between Mill Street and Cane River Lake (sometimes hereinafter “Project”); and

WHEREAS FURTHER, the City and the District are mutually desirous of developing and improving the Mill Street riverbank in order to provide access to Cane River lake, to increase recreational opportunities for the citizens of the City and Parish of Natchitoches, Louisiana, and developing and promoting Cane River Lake for tourism; and

WHEREAS FURTHER, the City has requested that the District assist the City and the Project Manager, Cane River National Heritage Area, with the Project through funding the cost of plans and construction cost of the Project; and

WHEREAS FURTHER, the District has indicated that it is of the opinion that the project is of significance to Cane River Lake due to the resulting increase in recreational use of the Lake, and the stabilization of the bank that will result from the construction of a seawall; and

WHEREAS FURTHER, both the City and the District are of the opinion that the Project will draw attention to and encourage the use of Cane River Lake, and provide opportunities to share the history of the Lake and the people who have lived on its shores; and

WHEREAS FURTHER, being of the opinion that its participation in the Project will benefit Cane River Lake and the public who utilize Cane River Lake, the District has agreed to contribute up to the sum of \$350,000.00 towards the cost of the overall Project; and

WHEREAS FURTHER, the District will make payments to the CRNHA as draws are requested and approved by the CRNHA, the City, the District and the Project Engineer in accordance with the terms of the Cooperative Endeavor Agreement; and

WHEREAS FURTHER, the District also desires to limit its liability for maintenance of all improvements constructed and also limit its liability for any damages or injuries associated with the Project or the facilities constructed as a part of the Project, to the extent possible; and

WHEREAS FURTHER, as consideration for the contribution by the District to the cost of the Project, the City has agreed to maintain the improvements and riverbank and to indemnify, defend and hold harmless the District for any damages or injuries which may arise during construction, and/or the use and operation of the facilities improved or constructed as part of the Project; and

WHEREAS FURTHER, as additional consideration, the City agrees to maintain ownership of the property upon which the improvements are made and keep the property open to the public; and

WHEREAS FURTHER, the City, the CRNHA and the District have drafted a Cooperative Endeavor Agreement which includes the terms contemplated herein, and which are approved by the City; and

WHEREAS FURTHER, to this end the City Council of the City of Natchitoches hereby expresses its approval of the Project, approves the attached Cooperative Endeavor Agreement, and

desires to authorize the Mayor, Ronnie Williams, Jr., to execute the Cooperative Endeavor Agreement on behalf of the City; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED in legal session convened the City Council of the City of Natchitoches does hereby approve the attached Cooperative Endeavor Agreement with the Cane River National Heritage Area and the Cane River Waterway District, further authorizes the Mayor, Ronnie Williams, to execute the Cooperative Endeavor Agreement on behalf of the City, and further authorize the Mayor to sign any and all other documents that may be necessary and proper in the premises.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that any Ordinance or parts of Ordinances in conflict herewith are hereby repealed.

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED that if any portion of this Ordinance is declared to be invalid or unconstitutional in any manner, the invalidity shall be limited to that particular section or provision, and shall not affect the remaining portions of the Ordinance, which shall remain valid and enforceable, it being the intention of the City Council of the City of Natchitoches that each separate provision shall be deemed independent of all other provisions herein.

THIS ORDINANCE was introduced on July 10, 2024 and published in the *Natchitoches Times* on July 13, 2024.

The above Ordinance having been duly advertised in accordance with law and public hearing had on same, was put to a vote by the Mayor and the vote was recorded as follows:

AYES:	Elie, Nielsen, Smith, Petite
NAYS:	None
ABSENT:	Harrington
ABSTAIN:	None

THEREUPON, Mayor Ronnie Williams, Jr., declared the Ordinance passed by a vote of 4 Ayes to 0 Nays this 22nd day of July, 2024.

RONNIE WILLIAMS, JR., MAYOR

BETTY SMITH, MAYOR PRO TEMPORE

Delivered to the Mayor on the 23rd day of July, 2024 at 10:00 A.M.

The following Resolution was introduced by Mrs. Smith and Seconded by Mr. Nielsen as follows, to –wit:

RESOLUTION NO. 066 OF 2024

**A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR OF
THE CITY OF NATCHITOCHES, RONNIE WILLIAMS, JR.,
TO AWARD AN ENGINEERING SERVICE CONTACT AND ENTER INTO AN
AGREEMENT WITH HALFF ENGINEERING FIRM FOR THE SOUTH
NATCHITOCHES DRAINAGE IMPROVEMENTS**

WHEREAS, the City of Natchitoches was conditionally awarded \$3,162,500.00 in Louisiana Watershed Initiative Round 2 funding for planning and construction of a project known as “South Natchitoches Drainage Improvements;” and

WHEREAS, the available funding includes the cost of engineering services; and

WHEREAS, the City of Natchitoches issued a Request for Qualifications dated June 5, 2024, to procure said engineering services; and

WHEREAS, the deadline for responses to the Request for Qualifications was July 9, 2024; and

WHEREAS, the Request for Qualifications contained detailed criteria by which submittals are to be evaluated; and

WHEREAS, in response to the Request for Qualifications, submittals were received from four engineering firms; and

WHEREAS, a Review Team consisting of Nicole Gray, City Grants Manager; Clarissa Brown-Smith, City Finance Director; Edd Lee, City Purchasing Director; and Nick Verret, City Engineer; reviewed and evaluated the four submittals that were received, based on the selection criteria contained in the Request for Qualifications; and

WHEREAS, based on their evaluation, the Review Team recommends selection of the firm of Halff for these engineering services; and

WHEREAS, the Louisiana Office of Community Development has approved the selection of the firm of Halff;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Natchitoches City Council hereby authorizes Mayor Ronnie Williams, Jr., to award an engineering services contract to the firm of Halff and to negotiate with this firm for the fee structure and amount of compensation to be made, and to execute a contract with Halff for these services, all within the guidelines of the Louisiana Watershed Initiative Round 2 Program and the requirements of the Louisiana Office of Community Development.

This Resolution was then presented for a vote, and the vote was recorded as follows:

AYES:	Elie, Nielsen, Smith, Petite
NAYS:	None
ABSENT:	Harrington
ABSTAIN:	None

The following Resolution was introduced by Mr. Petite and Seconded by Mrs. Smith as follows, to –wit:

RESOLUTION NO. 067 OF 2024

**RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO ENTER INTO A
GRANT AGREEMENT WITH THE STATE OF LOUISIANA
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
FOR THE LOUISIANA DEVELOPMENT READY COMMUNITY PROGRAM GRANT**

WHEREAS, the City of Natchitoches (sometimes hereinafter referred to as the “City”) is a Municipality located in the State of Louisiana, Parish of Natchitoches governed under a Home Rule Charter and a Code of Ordinances adopted by Ordinance No. 5 of 1977; and

WHEREAS, the Louisiana Economic Development (sometimes hereinafter referred to as the “LED” or “State”) is a Louisiana State Agency located in the State of Louisiana, Baton Rouge, Louisiana; and

WHEREAS, the Natchitoches City Council recognizes that strategic planning is the key to the future of economic and community development for the City of Natchitoches; and

WHEREAS, The Louisiana Development Ready Community Program Grant (LDRC Grant) has been established to support selected Louisiana towns, villages, cities, or parishes to become development ready by creating and implementing a strategic community and economic development plan to address grant writing and matching funds, education, workforce development, infrastructures, leadership, and marketing communications; and

WHEREAS, the City of Natchitoches, Louisiana was awarded a grant from the State in the amount of \$10,000.00 for the grant period beginning July 1, 2024 and ending June 30, 2025; and

WHEREAS FURTHER, the City Council of the City of Natchitoches is of the opinion that it is in the best interest of the City to accept the Grant from the State of Louisiana Department of Economic Development and does hereby authorize the Mayor to execute the Grant Agreement on behalf of the City of Natchitoches; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Natchitoches, in legal session convened, that Mayor Ronnie Williams, Jr., be and is hereby authorized, directed and empowered to accept the Grant from the State of Louisiana Department of Economic Development and to enter into and execute the Grant Agreement and all grant-related documents on behalf of the City of Natchitoches, Louisiana for the purposes as outlined more fully in the attached grant agreement.

This Resolution was then presented for a vote, and the vote was recorded as follows:

AYES:	Elie, Nielsen, Smith, Petite
NAYS:	None
ABSENT:	Harrington
ABSTAIN:	None

THEREUPON, Mayor Ronnie Williams, Jr., declared the Resolution passed by a vote of 4 Ayes to 0 Nays on this 10th day of July, 2024.

RONNIE WILLIAMS, JR., MAYOR

The following Resolution was introduced by Mrs. Elie and Seconded by Mr. Petite as follows, to –wit:

RESOLUTION NO. 068 OF 2024

**A RESOLUTION APPOINTING THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR
FOR THE CITY OF NATCHITOCHES**

BE IT RESOLVED that the Council does hereby take cognizance of the recommendation of Mayor Ronnie Williams, Jr., that Shanna LeBrum be appointed as Community Development Director for the City of Natchitoches; and

IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Council hereby confirms the said appointment.

This Resolution was then presented for a vote, and the vote was recorded as follows:

AYES:	Elie, Nielsen, Smith, Petite
NAYS:	None
ABSENT:	Harrington
ABSTAIN:	None

THEREUPON, Mayor Ronnie Williams, Jr., declared the Resolution passed by a vote of 4 Ayes to 0 Nays on this 10th day of July, 2024.

RONNIE WILLIAMS, JR., MAYOR

The following Resolution was introduced by Mrs. Smith and Seconded by Mr. Nielsen as follows, to –wit:

RESOLUTION NO. 069 OF 2024

**A RESOLUTION APPOINTING MEMBERS TO THE
NATCHITOCHES HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
FOR THE CITY OF NATCHITOCHES**

WHEREAS, the Mayor of the City of Natchitoches has submitted the following names for appointment to the Natchitoches Historic District Commission as follows, to-wit:

- 1. Jared Dunahoe
- 2. Ralph Wilson
- 3. Mrs. Sharon Gahagan
- 4. Dr. Steve Horton
- 5. Mrs. Melissa Robinson
- 6. Mrs. Marion Salter
- 7. Drake Owens

WHEREAS FURTHER, Ordinance No. 31 of 1986 of the Natchitoches Code of Ordinances provides that the members of the Commission shall serve at the pleasure of the Mayor with consent of the Council.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Natchitoches that they hereby acknowledge the appointment of the above individuals to the Natchitoches Historic District Commission and hereby approve and consent to same.

This Resolution was then presented for a vote, and the vote was recorded as follows:

AYES: Elie, Nielsen, Smith, Petite
NAYS: None
ABSENT: Harrington
ABSTAIN: None

THEREUPON, Mayor Ronnie Williams, Jr., declared the Resolution passed by a vote of 4 Ayes to 0 Nays on this 10th day of July, 2024.

RONNIE WILLIAMS, JR., MAYOR

The following Resolution was introduced by Mr. Nielsen and Seconded by Mrs. Smith as follows, to –wit:

RESOLUTION NO. 070 OF 2024

**A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO EXECUTE
CHANGE ORDER NO. 2 TO THE CONTRACT BETWEEN
THE CITY OF NATCHITOCHES AND MARTIN METAL CONSTRUCTION, LLC
LOVE LOUISIANA OUTDOORS PROJECT - PROFESSOR F.M. RICHARDSON
PARK IMPROVEMENTS**

(BID NO. 0664)

WHEREAS, the City of Natchitoches (CITY) awarded the bid to Martin Metal Construction, LLC (CONTRACTOR) on January 8, 2024 by Ordinance No. 074 of 2023 in the amount of **\$571,774.00** for Love Louisiana Outdoors Project - Professor F.M. Richardson Park Improvements (Bid No. 0664); and

WHEREAS, on **May 13, 2024**, the City Council approved **Change Order No. 1** in the amount of **\$33,650.10** making the revised contact total **\$605,424.10**; and

WHEREAS, on July 18, 2024 CONTRACTOR issued **Change Order No. 2**, fully described in Attachment “A”; and

WHEREAS, the contract sum will be **increased** by this **Change Order No. 2** in the amount of **\$10,439.40** and the revised contract total will be **\$615,863.50**; and

WHEREAS, the project Engineer, Randal Smoak, has recommended this change order; and

WHEREAS, the CITY is of the opinion that Change Order No. 2 is in the best interest of the CITY.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Natchitoches, in legal session convened, that the Honorable Ronnie Williams, Jr., Mayor, be and is hereby authorized, empowered and directed to execute the referenced Change Order No. 2 to the agreement between the City of Natchitoches and the contractor, Martin Metal Construction, LLC.

This Resolution was then presented for a vote, and the vote was recorded as follows:

AYES: Elie, Nielsen, Smith, Petite

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Harrington

ABSTAIN: None

THEREUPON, Mayor Ronnie Williams, Jr., declared the Resolution passed by a vote of 4 Ayes to 0 Nays on this 10th day of July, 2024.

RONNIE WILLIAMS, JR., MAYOR

The following Resolution was introduced by Mrs. Smith and Seconded by Mr. Petite as follows, to –wit:

RESOLUTION NO. 071 of 2024

**RESOLUTION APPOINTING J. W. SCARBOROUGH TO FILL THE UNEXPIRED
TERM OF MR. DAN SIMMONS AS A COMMISSIONER
ON THE NATCHITOCHES PARISH PORT COMMISSION FOR THE CITY OF
NATCHITOCHES**

WHEREAS, Mr. Dan Simmons submitted his letter of resignation to the City of Natchitoches, effective immediately; and

WHEREAS, The Natchitoches City Council wishes to appoint J.W. Scarborough as a Commissioner on the Natchitoches Parish Port Commission; and

WHEREAS, this term is to **expire on October 12, 2024.**

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of Natchitoches does, in legal session convened, hereby appoint J.W. Scarborough to fill the unexpired term of Mr. Dan Simmons as a Commissioner on the Natchitoches Parish Port Commission.

This Resolution was then presented for a vote, and the vote was recorded as follows:

AYES:	Elie, Nielsen, Smith, Petite
NAYS:	None
ABSENT:	Harrington
ABSTAIN:	None

THEREUPON, Mayor Ronnie Williams, Jr., declared the Resolution passed by a vote of 4 Ayes to 0 Nays on this 10th day of July, 2024.

RONNIE WILLIAMS, JR., MAYOR

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- The next scheduled City Council meeting will be **Monday, August 12, 2024.**

With no further discussion, Mayor Williams, Jr., made a motion for adjournment and all were in favor.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:41 p.m.

_____/s/_____
RONNIE WILLIAMS, JR., MAYOR

_____/s/_____
BETTY SMITH, MAYOR PRO-TEMPORE