

TOWN OF SIMMESPORT

MAYOR LESLIE DRAPER III

DISTRICT I
GLENN GAUTREAUX



DISTRICT II
TIESHA KENNEDY

DISTRICT III
PATRICK WRIGHT

ALDERMAN AT LARGE
ROMARO TURNER

DISTRICT IV
SHERMAN BELL

372 Mission Dr
P.O. Box 145

www.simmesportla.com
townofsimmesport@simmesportla.com

Simmesport, LA 71369
(318) 941 - 2493

January 8, 2024 Special Town Meeting Minutes

Minutes of a special meeting of the Mayor and Board of Aldermen of the Town of Simmesport held at the Simmesport Town Hall on Monday, December 11, 2023, at 6:00 p.m.

Presiding: Mayor Leslie Draper, III
Members Present: Sherman Bell, Glenn Gautreaux, Tiesha Kennedy, Patrick Wright,
Members Absent: Romaro Turner
Town Attorney: Kirk LaCour
Town Clerk: Jalesia Batiste

AGENDA ITEM 1,2,3: CALL TO ORDER, PRAYER, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Leslie Draper, III called the meeting to order and Alderman Sherman Bell gave the opening prayer followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

AGENDA ITEM 4: APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion was made by Councilwoman Kennedy and seconded by Councilman Gautreaux to amend the agenda to include the Water Rate Study from Timmy Lemoine as agenda item 8A. All present voted as follows:

	YES	NO	ABSENT	ABSTAIN
Alderman Bell	X			
Alderman Gautreaux	X			
Alderwoman Kennedy	X			
Alderman Turner			X	
Alderman Wright	X			

The motion passed.

A motion was made by Councilman Bell and seconded by Councilman Wright to accept the agenda as amended. All present voted as follows:

	YES	NO	ABSENT	ABSTAIN
Alderman Bell	X			
Alderman Gautreaux	X			
Alderwoman Kennedy	X			
Alderman Turner			X	
Alderman Wright	X			

The motion passed.

AGENDA ITEM 5: APPROVAL OF DECEMBER 2023 MINUTES

A motion was made by Councilman Bell and seconded by Councilwoman Kennedy accept the minutes from the December 11, 2023 meeting. All present voted as follows:

	YES	NO	ABSENT	ABSTAIN
Alderman Bell	X			
Alderman Gautreaux	X			

Alderman Kennedy	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Alderman Turner	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Alderman Wright	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

The motion passed.

AGENDA ITEM 6: PAYMENT OF BILLS FOR OCTOBER

Mayor Draper noted that the information the Council asked for last meeting, a list of delinquent bills and the amount owed, was included in the Council folders. The Council agreed that the report was more clear with the balances on the delinquent accounts. Mayor Draper clarified that We bought radios from Motorola and Kay Radio installed the radios in the police vehicles.

A motion was made by Councilwoman Kennedy and seconded by Councilman Bell to pay the bills for June as posted. All present voted as follows:

	YES	NO	ABSENT	ABSTAIN
Alderman Bell	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Alderman Gautreaux	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Alderman Kennedy	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Alderman Turner	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Alderman Wright	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

The motion was carried.

AGENDA ITEM 7: PUBLIC COMMENT TIME

No comments were made from the general public.

AGENDA ITEM 8: MAYOR’S UPDATES

Mayor Draper informed the Council that the Town was making progress with Quickbooks. Mayor Draper said that Attorney LaCour would give an update on the Louisiana Legislative Auditor.

AGENDA ITEM 8A: LWRA RATE STUDYBY MR. TIMMY LEMOINE

Mr. Timmy Lemoine, with the Louisiana Rural Water Association, presented his rate study on the Town of Simmesport Water System. He stressed that the information he received is less than what he usually gets because of the lack of current audits. Mr. Lemoine stressed that this is only for the water department and not the sewer department. Mr. Lemoine stressed that the purpose of the rate study is to assure that our rates for selling water would allow the water system to pay for itself. The study found that, based on the information provided, each water connection in the town would have to pay \$31.84 for the system to just cover costs. Last year the system lost just over \$42,000. For the system to pay for itself, the average bill would have to be \$40.79. During the study it was found that there were no commercial rates for water. Also, it was found that the Shenandoah Apartments have no meter and thus it is impossible to determine how much water the complex is using. The apartment complex pays a flat rate of \$1200 per month. With the current information provided, Mr. Lemoine found that for its size, Simmesport uses close to the national average per household, approximately 5,000 gallons per month. With the rate of \$19.50 for the first 2,000 gallons and \$2.00 per thousand gallons after that, the average bill would be approximately \$25.43 per month. Mr. Lemoine said firmly that LRWA and the rate study does not recommend rates, it only illustrates where the sustainability of the system is. During the discussion it was brought out that the largest expense in the water budget was salaries and that the workforce was less than half of what it was during the 21-22 fiscal year. This would bring down the expenses and thus the increase in the rates would not have to be as high. The council wanted to see what the study would show for the expenses incurred during the 22-23 fiscal year before making a decision. It was also decided to put a meter on the Shenandoah apartments.

AGENDA ITEM 9: DEPARTMENT REPORTS

A. UTILITY DEPARTMENT

Mr. Dana Smith reported that the tree that fell across the road was removed. The stump remains, but it was too wet to remove it and it was on private property.

B. SEWER PLANT

Mr. Charles Carter was absent.

C. FIRE DEPARTMENT

Mr. Cody Jackson was absent

D. POLICE DEPARTMENT

Chief Firmin was out for and Police Clerk Nicole Schuyler gave the report. In December there were 38 reports, 38 calls for service, 46 citations were written with 93 violations. There were three arrests made, two misdemeanors and one felony. The total collections for the month was \$9,458.50.

E. TOWN CLERK

Mrs. Jalesia Batiste said there was one new residence last month. Mrs. Batiste also said that there was a problem with the QuickBooks switchover because we needed the birthdays of all employees, including the ones who worked last year and are no longer employed. Mrs. Batiste informed those present that it looked as if we were going to have to run W-2's from the old Abila software.

F. TOWN ATTORNEY/MAGISTRATE

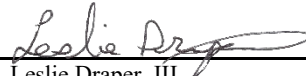
Magistrate LaCour said court was a success and attendance was increasing. He also informed the Council that the meeting with the Fiscal Administration Committee at the State Capitol was short and to the point. The committee, consisting of the State Legislative Auditor, the Attorney General's Office and the State Treasurer's Office, voted 3-0 to place the Town of Simmesport under fiscal administration and recommended Mr. Joel Robideaux of Lafayette as the administrator. Attorney LaCour said he completed the joint petition for fiscal administration in cooperation with the Attorney General's office along with the consent judgement to be filed with the district court in Marksville. Mr. LaCour said he expects the judge to sign off on the consent and agree with the Committee's recommendation in appointing an administrator. Mr. Robideaux will not only develop an plan to get the town back on firm financial footing, but is required to submit reports to the Attorney General's office every 90 days on his findings.

ITEM 12: ADJOURNMENT


There being no further business, a motion was made by Alderman Bell and seconded by Alderwoman Kennedy to adjourn. All present voted as follows:

	YES	NO	ABSENT	ABSTAIN
Alderman Bell	X			
Alderman Gautreaux	X			
Alderwoman Kennedy	X			
Alderman Turner			X	
Alderman Wright	X			

The motion was carried, and the meeting was adjourned.



Leslie Draper, III
Mayor



Jalesia Batiste
Interim Town Clerk