

**TOWN OF SIMMESPORT**

**MAYOR LESLIE DRAPER III**

**DISTRICT I**  
**GLENN GAUTREAUX**

**DISTRICT III**  
**PATRICK WRIGHT**



**ALDERMAN AT LARGE**  
**ROMARO TURNER**

**DISTRICT II**  
**TIESHA KENNEDY**

**DISTRICT IV**  
**SHERMAN BELL**

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**December 9, 2024 Regular Town Meeting Minutes**

Minutes of a regular meeting of the Mayor and Board of Aldermen of the Town of Simmesport held at the Simmesport Town Hall on Monday, December 9, 2024, at 6:00 p.m.

Presiding: Mayor Leslie Draper, III

Members Present:, Glenn Gautreaux, Patrick Wright, Tiesha Kennedy, Sherman Bell

Members Absent: Romaro Turner

Town Attorney: Kirk LaCour

Town Clerk: absent

Fiscal Administrator: Joel Robideaux

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

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

**AGENDA ITEM 4: APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

A motion was made by Alderman Gautreaux and seconded by Alderman Bell to amend the agenda by adding Resolution 12-2024-01, the removal of Leslie Draper as a signatory for all Town of Simmesport accounts, as agenda item 10 A. All present voted as follows:

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

The motion was passed.

A motion was made by Councilman Bell and Seconded by Councilman Gautreaux to amend the agenda by adding Resolution 12-2024-02, a resolution to add Fiscal Administrator Joel Robideaux as a signatory to all town of Simmesport accounts as agenda item 10B.All present voted as follows:

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

A motion was made by Alderwoman Kennedy and seconded by Alderman 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 was passed and the agenda amended.

**AGENDA ITEM 5: APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A motion was made by Councilwoman Kennedy and seconded by Councilman Wright to accept the minutes for the NovemberCouncil meeting. 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 passed and the minutes accepted.

**AGENDA ITEM 6: PAYMENT OF BILLS**

A motion was made by Councilman Bell and seconded by Councilwoman Kennedy concur with Administrator Robideaux on paying bills. 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 passed.

**AGENDA ITEM 7: PUBLIC COMMENT**

There were no public comments.

**AGENDA ITEM 8: ORDINANCE 10-2024-01: AN ORDINANCE, TO RE-ESTABLISH AND SET THE CHARGED RATES FOR THE SALES OF NATURAL GAS BY THE TOWN OF SIMMESPORT**

Mr. Robideaux explained that the gas rates needed to be increased to maintain the gas system safely. An increase was chosen to address this but also to keep in mind the stress that rate increases would put on citizens. Administrator Robideaux also told those assembled that we were severely delinquent to the Louisiana Municipal Gas Association, the organization that we purchase natural gas from. He also said his goal was to put the increase in effect in January. These rates could be applied to the January rates which citizens would receive in February.

A motion was made by Councilman Bell and seconded by Councilman Wright pass Ordinance 10-2024-01, An Ordinance to Establish and Set the Charged Rates for the Sales of Natural Gas By The Town of Simmesport. A roll-call vote was taken and 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 9: MAYOR’S SALARY REDUCTION**

Mr. Robideaux told those assembled that this was discussed at a previous meeting. After doing research, Mr. Robideaux found that the average Mayor’s salary in the area was approximately \$15,000 annually, but that was with two salaries above \$36,000 per year. Administrator Robideaux said the issue may be revisited at a future time.

AGENDA ITEM 10: HOURS OF OPERATION

Administrator Robideaux addressed the issue brought up at a previous meeting. The Council noted that many people get paid on Fridays and asked about the idea of reopening the offices on Friday. Mr. Robideaux told those assembled that the Council could recommend a five-day workweek if they wished. Councilman Bell said that the reason to moved to a 4-day work week to save money and saw no reason to move back to a 5-day week, especially in light of the financial distress the Town is currently experiencing.

A motion was made by Alderwoman Kennedy and seconded by Alderman Bell to pass a resolution making a recommendation to the fiscal administrator to move to a 5-day work week. 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 10A: REOSLUTION 12-2024-01: A RESOLUTION TO REMOVE LESLIE DRAPER AS A SIGNATORY FOR ALL TOWN OF SIMMESPORT ACCOUNTS

A motion was made by Councilwoman Kennedy and seconded by Councilman Bell to approve Resolution 12-2024-01, a resolution to remove Leslie Draper a signatory from all Town of Simmesport Accounts. A roll-call vote was taken and 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 10B: REOSLUTION 12-2024-02: A RESOLUTION TO ADD FISCAL SDMINISTRATOR JOEL ROBIDEAUX AS A SIGNATORY FOR ALL TOWN OF SIMMESPORT ACCOUNTS

A motion was made by Councilwoman Kennedy and seconded by Councilman Bell to approve Resolution 12-2024-02, a resolution to add Fiscal Administrator Joel Robideaux as a signatory from all Town of Simmesport Accounts. A roll-call vote was taken and 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 11: DEPARTMENT UPDATES

A. MAYOR’S UPDATE

Mayor Draper several complaints were addressed from the last meeting, including the road collapse and a gas leak. Mayor Draper said a gas leak was fixed the day of the meeting where a line was found in the bottom of a ditch. Mayor Draper said that since we asked for fiscal administration, we have been made eligible for grants. Mayor Draper also thanked Fiscal Administrator Joel Robideaux for all his assistance with Simmesport. Mayor Draper also said that he believes Mr. Robideaux genuinely has the best interests of Simmesport in mind when making decisions. Mayor Draper told those present that we are now able to apply for over \$4 million in grants for our water and sewer systems. To this end, the Mayor needs authorization to enter into a professional services agreement with the engineering firm of Meyer, Meyer, LaCroix & Hixon, Inc, our engineering firm, to apply for the above grants.

A motion was made by Alderman Bell and Seconded by Alderman Gautreaux to authorize the Mayor to enter into a professional services agreement with the engineering firm of Meyer, Meyer, LaCroix & Hixon, Inc., to pursue grants for the water and sewer ayatems. A roll-call vote was taken and 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.

Mayor Draper also thanked all the Council for their hard work during the last four years and offered his assistance to the incoming administration.

#### B. UTILITY DEPARTMENT STREETS

Mr. Dana Smith told those assembled that the maintenance department had been repairing potholes with what they have. He also said that they were working on water leaks and a particular water leak on Lincoln will be difficult.

#### C. SEWER DEPARTMENT

Mr. Charles Carter told those present that the sewer pumps in two of the lift station are in bad shape and require daily attention to keep them running properly. Mr. Cater told those assembled that the equipment in the sewer system is ageing. He said they have been doing their best to keep the system operating normally.

#### D. ENGINEERS: MEYER, MEYER, LaCROIX & HIXON, INC.

Representatives were not present. Attorney LaCour did iterate that the engineering firm is working diligently to meet the grant deadlines.

#### E. FIRE DEPARTMENT

The Chief was not present.

#### F. POLICE DEPARTMENT

The chief was unable to attend.

#### G. TOWN CLERK

Clerk Arleen Prater told those assembled that daily deposits were being made. She also said property taxes were coming in at a steady rate. Further, utility bills were being paid in a timely fashion. She explained that there was a error on the bills when they went out but the corrections were made in the system within two days.

#### H. TOWN ATTORNEY/MAGISTRATE

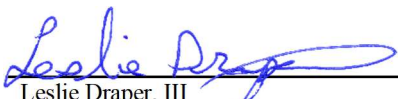
Attorney LaCour said the court turnout had a fair showing. Mr. LaCour welcomed anyone to come to court and watch if they pleased. There were no new lawsuits and the MPERS lawsuit is still ongoing.

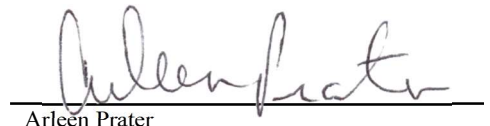
#### ITEM 11: ADJOURNMENT

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

  
 Arleen Prater  
 Interim Town Clerk