

TOWN OF SIMMESPORT

MAYOR TED TURNER

DISTRICT I
GLENN GAUTREAUX

DISTRICT III
CHARLES DUPAR



ALDERMAN AT LARGE
PATRICK WRIGHT

DISTRICT II
ALVIN DAUZAT

DISTRICT IV
SHERMAN BELL

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March 10, 2025 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, March 10, 2024, at 6:00 p.m.

Presiding: Mayor Ted Turner

Council Members Present:, Glenn Gautreaux, Patrick Wright, Alvin Dauzat, Sherman Bell, Charles Dupar

Council Members Absent:

Town Attorney: Kirk LaCour

Town Clerk: Gwen Barr

Fiscal Administrator: Absent

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

Mayor Ted Turner 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 Dauzat and seconded by Alderman Dupar to accept the agenda. 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>
Alderman Dauzat	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Alderman Dupar	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Alderman Wright	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

The motion was passed and the agenda was accepted as amended.

AGENDA ITEM 5: APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Councilman Dupar and seconded by Councilman Wright to accept the minutes for the December Council meeting. 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>
Alderman Dauzat	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Alderman Dupar	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Alderman Wright	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

The motion was passed and the minutes accepted.

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AGENDA ITEM 6: PAYMENT OF BILLS

A motion was made by Councilman Dauzat and seconded by Councilman Gautreaux to pay the bills. All present voted as follows:

	YES	NO	ABSENT	ABSTAIN
Alderman Bell	X			
Alderman Gautreaux	X			
Alderman Dauzat	X			
Alderman Dupar	X			
Alderman Wright	X			

The motion was passed.

AGENDA ITEM 7: PUBLIC COMMENT

An unknown gentleman asked about people could get involved in helping to clean up Simmesport and voice their opinions. Town Clerk Gwen Barr reiterated that everyone is invited to come to the Town Meetings and voice their opinions. Ms. Barr also spoke about a state-wide initiative Simmesport will be participating in called Love the Boot. This is sponsored by the Lieutenant Governor's Office and will take place on April 12 here in Simmesport. Any volunteers can sign-up to help. Further details will be posted soon.

Ms. Deidra Mack also asked that citizens come together to not only help clean up, but to help curb violence as well. Councilman Dauzat agree that the Love the Boot event is a start in getting people to come together.

AGENDA ITEM 8: RESOLUTION 03-2025-01: RESOLUTION TO GIVE GWEN BARR ONLINE ACCESS TO ALL SIMMESPORT ACCOUNTS

A motion was made by Alderman Dauzat and seconded by Alderman Wright to give Town Clerk Gwen Barr online access to all Town of Simmesport Bank accounts. Those present voted as follows:

	YES	NO	ABSENT	ABSTAIN
Alderman Bell	X			
Alderman Gautreaux	X			
Alderman Dauzat	X			
Alderman Dupar	X			
Alderman Wright	X			

The motion passed.

AGENDA ITEM 9: RESTORATION AND USE OF GENERATOR

Mayor Turner put forth the idea of taking a large generator the Town of Simmesport already owns and letting the fire department repair and refurbish it. In return, they would keep the generator at the fire department and the Town of Simmesport would have use of it when needed. During the discussion it was revealed that the generator was not mobile so the plan to use it to run the lift stations during emergencies would be difficult. When asked what the Fire Department needed the generator for, it was said that during power outages the batteries on the fire trucks need to be kept charged. Town Attorney Kirk LaCour said that a written agreement needed to be proffered between the Town and the fire department because the Fire Department is a private LLC. During the discussion it was brought out that the Town Hall has an emergency generator but the Police Department does not. It was also brought out that the lift stations would have to be rewired to accept power from the generator. Attorney LaCour said he would need details about the generator and a needs assessment about what exactly it would take to wire the lift stations and the generator.

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AGENDA ITEM 10: RESOLUTION 03-2025-02: A RESOLUTION TO SCRAP /SALVAGE SURPLUS PROPERTY

Mayor Turner informed the Council there were at least six or seven vehicles that are no longer functioning and need to be disposed of. Government property must be disposed of by auctioning off the equipment. Because Simmesport is a member of LaMATS (Louisiana Municipal Advisory and Technical Services), they will handle all of the paperwork and footwork of putting the vehicles and equipment on a nation-wide auction site.

A motion was made by Alderman Wright and seconded by Alderman Dauzat to pass Resolution 03-2025-02, A Resolution to Scrap /Salvage Surplus Property. Those present voted as follows:

	YES	NO	ABSENT	ABSTAIN
Alderman Bell	X			
Alderman Gautreaux	X			
Alderman Dauzat	X			
Alderman Dupar	X			
Alderman Wright	X			

The motion passed.

AGENDA ITEM 11: DEPARTMENT UPDATES

A. FISCAL ADMINISTRATOR UPDATE: Joel Robideaux

Town Clerk Gwen Barr gave a report from Administrator Joel Robideaux, who was absent. Mr. Robideaux wanted all to know that he was working on a budget. He is confident that, unlike in the past, this budget will be based on actual revenues and expenditures and not estimates based on the prior year's budget, as had been done in the past.

B. UTILITY DEPARTMENT STREETS

Dana Smith said with the warmer weather grass has begun growing and they are gearing up to start cutting on a wide-scale basis. He also said there were still water leaks and someone was coming tomorrow to evaluate the leaks and determine what it would take to repair them. Councilman Bell asked if they were going to evaluate the lot on the corner of MLK and South College. Mr. Smith said yes. Councilman Dauzat asked if the spray rig at the ship was working. Mr. Smith said it did work but it had been sitting for a while and he was not sure of it was still functioning. Mayor Turner wanted Mr. Smith to get some Round-Up and begin spraying weeds. Alderman Wright asked when the lot under the water tower was going to be cut. Mr. Smith said it is expected to be cut soon but the rain has kept them from cutting that lot. Alderman Dauzat asked if the warehouse property would be cleaned up. Mayor Turner said they were in the process of cleaning the shop area.

C. SEWER DEPARTMENT

Absent

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

Absent.

E. FIRE DEPARTMENT

Cody Jackson was absent.

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F. POLICE DEPARTMENT

Chief Fayazz said the department collected \$10,042 in February. There were 40 citations with 89 violations. Chief Fayazz said they had collected nearly \$4,000 this month already. The Chief said the city of Marksville donated another unit and that will bring the total running units to 4. Chief also expressed concern that people were requesting a work scheduled for his police officers. Chief Fayazz said this will not happen and said that it was not the Council's prerogative to dictate when officers work. Chief Fayazz said his main concern was for the safety of the people of Simmesport and if there are any concerns about officers they should contact the Chief. A citizen asked about putting a red light at the foot of the bridge. Councilman Bell told everyone that DOT took down the red light because of the lack of traffic on Highway 1 at that location.

G. TOWN CLERK

Ms. Barr discussed the March bills and pointed out that the cost was lower. She expressed that although the Town still owes a lot of delinquent payments, but we are now managing to bring current smaller accounts that were outstanding. Hawkins is our chemical supplier for the water and sewer system. We are now current with them. Lumen runs our internet and phone. We were delinquent with them but Ms. Barr said she spoke with them to work out a payment plan that would keep our services and pay off the account to current in a few months. Ms. Barr also spoke with local businesses so that we can now do business with them again. She said she told all local businesses again to not provide goods and services unless presented with a signed purchase order complete with a purchase order number. Ms. Barr told those assembled that in January the Town collected \$88,381 and in February the collections were \$106,798. This shows that collections are improving and the office staff is working hard to process and collect bills. Ms. Barr said there were 9 gas cards but that has been reduced to 3. She also said the Town has switched its IT support from Computers 911 to Bit Happens. Last meeting the council asked if there were ordinances for nuisance properties. Ms. Barr said there were ordinances for blighted property. Ms. Barr indicated that the City of Bunkie was doing a great job with blighted properties and we would talk with them to see what procedures were used. She also said we were looking for the contract with DOTD to cut along Highway 1 where the state would pay the Town of Simmesport to cut the grass. Ms. Barr also wanted to make public statement about utility services. When the water and/or gas is "cut off" the customer still receives a monthly bill. However, if the customer services are "discontinued", then the services are cut off and they will no longer a monthly bill for those services. However, to have the services revived, a new permit and deposits will be necessary. Last meeting there was a question about burning tree limbs. DEQ sent the law too the Town of Simmesport regarding burning wood debris. The rule is as follows:

"Burning of trees, brush, grass, or other vegetable matter in a parish having a population of 90,000 or less is exempt provided the location of the burning is not within the territorial limits of a city or town or adjacent to a city or town in such proximity that the ambient air of the city or town will be affected by smoke from the burning."

TOWN ATTORNEY/MAGISTRATE

Kirk LaCour he and Mr. Robideaux met with the MPERS attorneys. He said both sides have agreed to an indefinite continuance as long as the Town keeps open communication and enrolls any full-time officer in the system and/or give them the ability to opt out. This requirement does not affect part-time officers. Mr. LaCour said the court was light but went well.

ITEM 12: ALDERMAN REPORTS

- A. **District 1: Glenn Gautreaux** Mr. Gautreaux asked Mayor Turner when he had time, he wanted to show the Mayor some drainage issues in his district.
- B. **District 2: Alvin Dauzat** Councilman Dauzat said he put several work orders relating to drainage and it has been a month. Hew wanted to know the status of his work orders. Mr. Dauzat said there were several culverts that needed to be cleaned and a large limb needed to be taken out of a ditch. Superintendent Dana Smith said the Town does not have power saws to cut the limb. Councilman
- C. **District 3: Charles Dupar** Mr. Dupar asked about the road wash-out under Martin Luther King Dr. Mayor Turner said the Police Jury is willing to help us repair the road but the Town of Simmesport would have to purchase the long culvert that passes under MLK Dr.

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D. District 4: Sherman Bell

Mr. Bell said the beaver dam near Mayberry Pit needed to be removed. Mr. Bell said there were multiple water leaks that needed to be repaired.

E. District 5: Patrick Wright

Alderman Wright said the ditches needed to be cleaned out before the summer. Councilman Bell asked why we were not using the culvert-cleaning device we bought from the city of Rayne.

ITEM 11: ADJOURNMENT

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

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

The motion was carried, and the meeting was adjourned.

Ted Turner
Mayor

Gwen Barr
Town Clerk