

TOWN OF SIMMESPOT

MAYOR TED TURNER

DISTRICT I
GLENN GAUTREAUX

DISTRICT III
CHARLES DUPAR



DISTRICT II
ALVIN DAUZAT

DISTRICT IV
SHERMAN BELL

ALDERMAN AT LARGE
PATRICK WRIGHT

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July 14, 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, July 14, 2024, at 6:00 p.m.

Presiding: Mayor Ted Turner

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

Council Members Absent:

Town Attorney: Kirk LaCour

Town Clerk: Gwen Barr

Fiscal Administrator: Joel Robideaux

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 Wright to amend the agenda by adding item 7A, hours of operation for both town parks. 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.

A motion was made by Alderman Dauzat and seconded by Alderman Wright to amend the agenda by adding item 7B, restricting heavy truck traffic through the Town of Simmesport. 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.

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A motion was made by Alderman Wright and seconded by Alderman Gautreaux to amend the agenda by adding item 7C, a resolution to empower the Mayor to enter into a settlement agreement with MPERS (Municipal Police Employees' Retirement System). 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.

Alderman Wright and seconded by Alderman Dauzat to amend the agenda by adding item 7D, a discussion of water leaks in town. 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.

A motion was made by Alderman Gautreaux and seconded by Alderman Dauzat to accept the agenda. 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 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 May Council meeting. 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 and the minutes accepted.

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AGENDA ITEM 6: PAYMENT OF BILLS

A motion was made by Councilman Gautreaux and seconded by Councilman Dauzat 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

- A young lady wanted to rent the Senior Center for a back to school even on August. A motion was made by Alderman Bell and seconded by Alderman Dupar to allow the Senior Center to be used for a back to school event. 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 passed.

- Andre Webb asked about posting speed limit signs in proper places. He also said the community would like to see school zone signs.
- Deidra Mack said she was getting a bill but she had no meter. She said she would like to see this matter checked into.

AGENDA ITEM 8: HOURS FOR EHRHARDT PARK

Alderman Alvin Dauzat proposed hours for Ehrhardt Park to keep the park safe. Mr. Dauzat proposed a sun-up to dun-down time frame. A motion was made by Alderman Dauzat and seconded by Alderman Wright to propose an ordinance to restrict the use of Ehrhardt Park to the hours of sunrise to sundown. During subsequent discussions Town Attorney Kirk LaCour said there may be constitutional issues with restricting the hours on public land. Alderman Dauzat said believed other towns and cities put hours on their parks. Attorney LaCour said that if he were a tax-paying citizen and wanted to walk in the park at 1 AM he felt he should be able to do so. Attorney LaCour said that the Town of Simmesport needs to show a compelling reason to restrict the use of the park. A motion was made by Alderman Bell and seconded by Alderman Dupar to table the issue until more information could be ascertained about the legalities of closing the park. 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 passed and the issue was tabled.

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AGENDA ITEM 9: DEPARTMENT UPDATES

A. FISCAL ADMINISTRATOR UPDATE: Joel Robideaux

Administrator Robideaux said he was working with Attorney LaCour to work on paying back taxes. Mr. Robideaux also said that he is very close to finishing his analysis of income and expenditures so that he could present a meaningful budget. Once the Town had a budget in place, any deviation of 5% or more would require approval of the council. Mr. Robideaux said that once that budget is in place he would like to get back to the habit of showing the Council what the balance is on the delinquent accounts. He told those assembled that, with the exception of Sustainability Partners, all accounts are current and delinquent accounts are being sent money as we get extra. He stated that we are slowly paying the former accounting firm as we get money. One of our main goals is to be able to get to a financial position where we can hire an accounting firm to perform the state required audits. Mr. Robideaux said he is still looking at the police department to see if it can become more self-sufficient. He told the Council that the Sheriff's Office was approached about taking over policing of Simmesport. The Sheriff declined. Mr. Robideaux said that technically, if he dissolved the police department, the Sheriff was technically obliged to cover Simmesport, however, with the town being on the edge of the Parish, he was worried about the practicality of the Sheriff taking over.

B. UTILITY DEPARTMENT STREETS

Ms. Gwen Barr told those assembled that the pumps at the sewer lift stations are slowly failing. She said that a pump on Sycamore St. was replaced at a cost of over \$7,300. She also stated that the main lift station on Elm St, off Riverside Dr., is in very bad shape but will be replaced next month at a cost of over \$8,000. Each lift station has two pumps and the Town will attempt to replace pumps as we get money. Ms. Barr also noted that because the Town owes the IRS back taxes, it is possible that, should we get a grant, the IRS could confiscate those funds to pay the back taxes. Ms. Barr said that our town attorney, Kirk LaCour, was working with the boring company putting in fiber optic lines to determine a system of payment for utility lines they break. When this agreement is reached, the boring company will be back to finish the job.

C. SEWER DEPARTMENT

Absent

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

Absent

E. FIRE DEPARTMENT

Eric Rusk, assistant fire chief, said this was a rating year for insurance. As part of this rating system, the fire hydrants need to be tested. Mr. Risk said the fire department is willing to pay for the inspection, but they want to be held harmless if anything should break. Attorney LaCour said he thought the contractor had the agreement worked out, but some form could be reached with the fire department.

F. POLICE DEPARTMENT

Chief Fayazz was absent. Andre Webb asked if there were hours for the police chief. Attorney LaCour said there were no set hours for the police chief. It was also asked if the chief was working another full-time job. Mayor Turner said the Chief told him he quit that full-time job.

G. TOWN CLERK

Ms. Gwen Barr said bills were being paid and as we get extra monies in, we are paying off arrears on past bills. Ms. Barr said we still owe the former accountants \$15,000. We owed attorneys \$15,000 but we now owe them \$8,000, so the balances are decreasing.

H. TOWN ATTORNEY

Town Attorney Kirk LaCour said there are no new lawsuits at the moment. He also told those assembled that the MPERS lawsuit agreement was submitted in April and that he will seek a formal dismissal of the lawsuit. Mr. LaCour asked that people contact the courts about legal issues and find out all the facts before stating inaccurate facts in a public forum. A citizen asked about the absence of the Chief. Attorney LaCour said the Chief was at a Chief's conference in Baton Rouge. Alderman Bell asserted that every prior Chief had set hours. Attorney LaCour said he has not found any ordinances stating set hours for the Chief. Mr. LaCour said that demanding the Chief be here 24/7 is against federal labor laws.

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ITEM 10: ALDERMAN REPORTS

- A. **District 1: Glenn Gautreaux** Councilman Gautreaux had no issues to report.
- B. **District 2: Alvin Dauzat** Councilman Dauzat thanked the clerical staff and the maintenance crew for their hard work.
- C. **District 3: Charles Dupar** Councilman Dupar had no issues to put forth.
- D. **District 4: Sherman Bell** Absent
- E. **District 5: Patrick Wright** Councilman Wright had no issues to put forth.

ITEM 11: ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, a motion was made by Alderman Bell and seconded by Alderman Wright 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.

Ted Turner
Mayor

Gwen Barr
Town Clerk