

City Council July 23, 2009
Regular Meeting Summary

News Release

July 23, 2009

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[New Orleans
City Council](#)

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New Orleans, LA - July 23, 2009 - Today, the New Orleans City Council passed Ordinances ensuring proper collection of property liens and establishing spacing restrictions for the sale of tobacco products near children, and Resolutions honoring Edwin Hampton, band Director and Founder of the St. Augustine Marching 100, and supporting New Orleans Adolescent Hospital.

The Council also passed a Resolution and addressed a presentation congratulating Tulane University on the forthcoming opening of its new Disaster Management Leadership Academy.

Additionally, the Council deferred the Ordinance providing for the acquisition of the Chevron building as a potential new site for City Hall, and the hearing of the Lake Carmel subdivision appeal.

The Council also addressed a presentation on prohibiting floating vessels in canals in advance of a storm, thanked the New Orleans Metropolitan Realtors Association for its assistance to the City on legislative issues throughout the years, and received a status report from the New Orleans Redevelopment Authority.

Deferred Vote on Acquisition of Chevron Building



*Cynthia Sylvain-Lear,
Deputy Chief
Administrative Officer*

The Council, at the request of Budget Chair Councilmember Cynthia Hedge-Morrell, voted to defer until next week Ordinance Calendar No. 27,563 regarding the acquisition of the Chevron building as a possible site for a new City Hall.

Cynthia Sylvain-Lear, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer, gave a presentation to the Council on the need for a new City Hall, the improvements needed at the current City Hall, and a comparative analysis of the current City Hall and the Chevron building.



*Qi Wiggins,
Chevron Spokesperson*

Qi Wiggins, a Chevron spokesperson, informed the Council that Chevron was unwilling to extend the July 31st purchase agreement deadline and therefore recommended that the Council defer their vote to next week rather than the August 6th regular Council meeting.

The Councilmembers will collectively decide which day next week the majority of the Council can convene for a special Council meeting to address this matter.

Addressed Process for Collection of Property Liens



The Council passed Ordinance Calendar No. 27,571, authored by Councilmember Head, to ensure that collection of property liens and ad valorem taxes occurs as required by law.

District "B" Councilmember Stacy Head said, "This legislation directly links the payment of property liens to the payment of property taxes, therefore preventing property owners from taking advantage of any loopholes which might allow them to pay one without paying the other. We are working to make certain that any and all property liens are paid in a timely and appropriate manner."

Honored Legendary Founder of St. Augustine Marching 100



*St. Augustine High School
Marching 100*

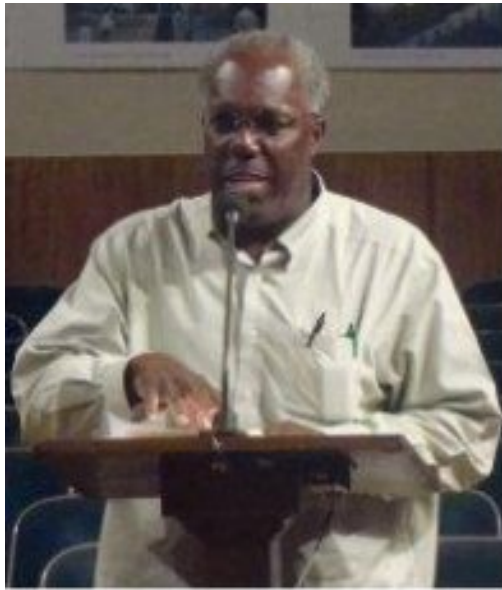
The Council unanimously passed Resolution R-09-374, authored by Councilmember Hedge-Morrell, honoring Edwin Hampton, legendary band Director and Founder of the iconic St. Augustine High School Marching 100.

The Resolution also recognizes Hampton for his many contributions to the City throughout his lifetime. Hampton passed away on Monday, July 20th at home in his sleep, at the age of 81.

District "D" Councilmember Cynthia Hedge-Morrell said, "St. Augustine High School's quintessential Band Master, Mr. Edwin Hampton, will forever be remembered for the look and sound of the Marching 100 Purple Knights. Mr. Hampton took over the band in 1952, the second year after the school's founding, and honed his vision to instill a 'different style of marching' in his students resulting in the complicated formation known as 'patterns in motion'."

Councilmember Hedge-Morrell continued, "'Hamp', as he was fondly called, was a mentor to thousands of musicians and young men who passed through the ranks of the Marching 100. He was a disciplinarian but a gentle man who taught teamwork through practice and hard work, first appealing to the integrity of the young men and requiring that they reciprocate with honesty."

Supported New Orleans Adolescent Hospital



Derrick Morrison

The Council passed Resolution R-09-376, co-authored by Council President Fielkow and Council Vice President Clarkson, requesting that the City Attorney consider filing amicus curiae briefs to support the New Orleans Adolescent Hospital (NOAH) in any and all litigation involving the closing of NOAH.

Amicus curiae, Latin for "friend of the court", briefs are filed by an individual who is not a party in the litigation being addressed, but who would like to submit their opinion on the matter for consideration of the court.

Derrick Morrison, Co-Founder of the Committee to Reopen Charity Hospital and Moderator for community forums sponsored by the Council to keep NOAH open, appeared before the Council to show his support for the Resolution.

Governor Bobby Jindal recently used a line-item veto to deny \$14.2 million for NOAH, causing the closing of NOAH and leaving no mental health beds for the uninsured in Orleans Parish.

Council Vice President Fielkow said, "NOAH is the only remaining institution in New Orleans that provides a continuum of care from inpatient beds to evaluations to daily group and family support. Relocating NOAH patients to Mandeville disproportionately impacts low and moderate income families who routinely use public transportation, which is not available between New Orleans and Mandeville. With this Resolution, the Council encourages our City Attorney to officially declare the City's support of any legal efforts to keep NOAH's doors open."

Established Spacing Restrictions for the Sale of Tobacco Products near Children



Councilmember Head

The Council passed Ordinance Calendar No. 27,550, authored by Councilmember Head, to establish spacing restrictions relative to the sale of tobacco products near playgrounds, schools, churches, and any entities providing structured, organized care for youth.

Specifically, the Ordinance requires that no tobacco retailer shall be permitted to sell, donate, distribute, or deliver to any person(s) tobacco products within 1,000 feet of any playground, church, public library, school, or any childcare

facility or similar entity providing structured, organized care for youth. The Ordinance also mandates that no tobacco retailer shall be permitted to establish or open in any residential district or park and recreation district of the City.

District "B" Councilmember Head said, "It is vital that we instill in our children the importance of a healthy lifestyle. By restricting the proximity of tobacco products to children, not only can we ensure that they are not exposed to second-hand smoke, but we can also encourage them to make healthy choices."

Addressed Lake Carmel Subdivision Appeal



The Council did not hear the appeal on the Lake Carmel subdivision, located in District "E", as a result of a stay of 30 days, granted by the Civil District Court this morning.

District "E" Councilmember Willard-Lewis said, "This morning there was a hearing on the Lake Carmel subdivision appeal at the Civil District Court in front of Judge Piper Griffin. The developer, VOB, was requesting that the court issue a mandamus ordering that this matter be removed from the Council's agenda - challenging the right of the Lake Carmel Subdivision Improvement District to file its appeal to the Council."

She continued, "After consideration of the arguments, Judge Griffin ruled in favor of the City and of the homeowners, denied the mandamus and then granted a stay of 30 days to allow the developer to appeal the ruling to the Fourth Circuit. This matter was on deadline before the City Council, but the court's granting of a stay suspends that deadline. The deadline for the Council to act will not begin to run again as long as this stay is in effect."

The Council deferred the hearing of this appeal to the next Council meeting on August 6th.

Received Report on Prohibiting Floating Vessels in Canals in Advance of a Storm



*Captain Edwin Stanton,
U.S. Coast Guard and
Port of New Orleans*

At the request of Council Vice President Clarkson, Captain Edwin Stanton of the U.S. Coast Guard and Port of New Orleans appeared before the Council to give a report on prohibiting floating vessels in the Inner Harbor Navigational Canal and the Harvey Canal in advance of a storm.

Captain Stanton discussed:

- The plan to mandate that all floating vessels be out of the two canals at least 24 hours before the impact of storm force winds
- The Army Corps of Engineers' request that the plan be extended to the Algiers Canal
- The potential economic impact of this prohibition on businesses along these waterways

Council Vice President Jacquelyn Brechtel Clarkson said, "Floating vessels in canals were one of the most prominent threats during Hurricane Gustav last year. We must learn from our previous experiences with hurricanes, and this is one step towards making our City as safe as possible in the face of both natural and man-made disasters."

Congratulated Tulane University on its New Disaster Management Leadership Academy



Dr. Charles Figley, Paul Henry Kurzweg Distinguished Chair in Disaster Mental Health at Tulane University School of Social Work, appeared before the Council

for a presentation congratulating the university on the formation of its new Disaster Management Leadership Academy (DMLA).

A three-year \$2.1 million federal grant will allow Tulane to begin the DMLA, which will grant certifications to high-level government officials and masters and doctoral degrees to students in research programs. Figley provided details on the formation and curriculum of DMLA, as well identified the DMLA staff and others who were integral in the formation of the academy. For more information on the DMLA, visit www.dmlatulane.org.

The Council passed Resolution R-09-325, authored by Councilmember Fielkow, applauding Tulane University for the forthcoming opening of the DMLA and anticipating a strong group of graduates who will be able to lead the City in the case of a natural or manmade disaster.

Council President Arnie Fielkow said, "Tulane has firsthand experience with disasters and their effect on the community - we are grateful that Tulane University is taking this proactive stance on disaster and emergency training. The academy's rigorous interdisciplinary curriculum will introduce students to the wide range of issues and the varied skills associated with disaster management."

Addressed NORA Report on New Headquarters



L to R: Jim Singleton, Rob Couhig, Richard Monteilh, Ommeed Sathe

Representatives from the New Orleans Redevelopment Authority (NORA) appeared before the Council, at the request of Councilmember Clarkson, to give a progress report and to detail the funding for its new headquarters, currently being built on Oretha Castle Haley Boulevard.

The representatives - Jim Singleton, NORA Board of Directors Vice Chair, Rob Couhig, NORA Board of Directors Secretary, Richard Monteilh, NORA Executive Director, and NORA Director of Real Estate Strategy Ommeed Sathe - provided detailed information on their funding sources and their ongoing efforts to supplement NORA's resources, as well as offered updates on the Lot Next Door program and their involvement with other projects throughout the City.



*Austin Penny,
Director of ORDA*

Austin Penny, Director of the Office of Recovery and Development Administration (ORDA), appeared before the Council to give additional information on NORA's funding sources.

Councilmember-at-Large Jacquelyn Brechtel Clarkson said, "We need to make sure NORA is aggressively fighting blight - an issue that affects nearly every neighborhood in New Orleans."

Recognized Metropolitan Association of Realtors for their Assistance to the City



***Diana LeBlanc,
Director of Intergovernmental
Affairs for NOMAR***

Diana LeBlanc, Director of Intergovernmental Affairs for the New Orleans Metropolitan Association of Realtors (NOMAR), along with other NOMAR representatives, was recognized by the Council for their assistance to the City on legislative issues throughout the years.

"I want to thank NOMAR for their tireless efforts lobbying our state and federal government for New Orleans' needs. NOMAR was instrumental in the City's effort to defeat Senate Bill 75, which would have derailed the City's master planning process," said Councilmember-at-Large Jacquelyn Brechtel Clarkson.

New Orleans City Council

The New Orleans City Council is the legislative branch of New Orleans City government. The Council considers and enacts all local laws that govern the City of New Orleans. The Council also approves the operating and capital budgets for the City, as recommended by the mayor, and continually monitors revenues and expenditures for local government operations. The City Council is also the regulatory body for public utilities. It also reviews and has final say on many land use and zoning matters, as well as considers major economic development projects for the City. As a Board of Review for Orleans Parish, the Council examines appeals of property tax assessments for real estate taxes, and certifies tax rolls to the Louisiana Tax Commission. Other responsibilities of the Council include overseeing the operation of the public access television in Orleans Parish.

The City Council is comprised of five districts and two councilmembers-at-large. Council President and Councilmember-at-Large Arnie Fielkow; Council Vice President and Councilmember-at-Large Jacquelyn Brechtel Clarkson; District "A" Councilmember Shelley Midura; District "B" Councilmember Stacy S. Head; District "C" Councilmember James Carter; District "D" Councilmember Cynthia Hedge-Morrell; and District "E" Councilmember Cynthia Willard-Lewis.