

City Council May 21, 2009
Regular Meeting Summary

News Release

May 21, 2009

Contact:
Ronald J. Pursell
Council Chief of Staff
Ph: (504) 658-1082
rjpursell@cityofno.com

[New Orleans
City Council](#)

Join Our Mailing List!

New Orleans, LA - May 21, 2009 - Today, the New Orleans City Council passed Resolutions addressing the Army Corps of Engineers' building plans for the 17th Street Canal and Orleans Canal pumping stations, and opposing the privatization of the John J. Hainkel Jr. Home and Rehabilitation Center, which serves the elderly and disabled communities of New Orleans.

Additionally, the Council passed an Ordinance supporting the continuing growth and success of Federal City, a Motion confirming the award of five four-year Tulane University Mayoral Scholarships, and a Resolution supporting the consolidation of functions relative to hurricane protection, flood control, and coastal restoration.

The Council also addressed presentations on the Expedited Screening and Disposition Initiative and mental health issues in the City, received a City-wide crime update from NOPD Chief Riley, and received a "State of Culture" Address from Irvin Mayfield.

Additionally, Council President Jacquelyn Brechtel Clarkson acknowledged the meeting as her last Council meeting serving as Council President during her current term. Clarkson thanked her staff and her colleagues for a wonderful year. In accordance with the Rules and Regulations of the Council, beginning June 1st Councilmember Arnie Fielkow will begin his term as Council President and Councilmember Clarkson will begin her term as Vice President.

Requested Preservation and Neighborhood Consideration from Army Corps of Engineers



Councilmember Midura

The Council passed Resolution R-09-248, authored by Councilmember Midura, requesting that the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) adopt a plan to build the 17th Street Canal pumping station which does not require confiscation of the land that Coconut Beach currently occupies. The Resolution serves as the Council's official public comment to the USACE regarding the plans for the two pumping stations.

Specifically, the Resolution calls upon the USACE to adopt a plan that both achieves maximum flood protection from storm surge and rain water, and also leaves the smallest possible environmental footprint in the neighboring human and natural environments; and declares the Council's support for a more neighborhood-friendly location and design for the Orleans Canal pumping station.

District "A" Councilmember Shelley Midura said, "Flood protection is of the utmost importance for our City and is high on the priority list of this Council. However, it's our hope that the Army Corps can develop a building plan for these pumping stations that takes into consideration the surrounding neighborhoods and residents, and in the case of the 17th Street Canal pumping station, preserves a beloved recreational facility - Coconut Beach."

Received Presentation on Expedited Screening and Disposition Initiative



L to R: Michael Jacobson, Jon Wool, Derwyn Bunton, NOPD Chief Warren Riley, Clerk of Criminal Court Arthur Morrell, Sheriff Marlin Gusman and DA Leon Cannizzaro

Local criminal justice leaders and national experts appeared before the Council today to give a presentation on the Expedited Screening and Disposition Initiative, which aims to expedite practices for simple possession drug cases, which account for roughly one third of all arrests on state charges.

Present at today's meeting were Chief Public Defender Derwyn Bunton, District Attorney Leon Cannizzaro, Criminal Sheriff Marlin Gusman, Clerk of Criminal Court Arthur Morrell, Superintendent of Police Warren Riley, Vera Institute of Justice Director Michael Jacobson, and Jon Wool, who directs Vera's work in New Orleans.

The presentation participants discussed the ways in which the Initiative will move New Orleans more in line with national good practices by expediting processes, conserving public safety resources, ensuring public defenders are assigned at the earliest opportunity, and automating and streamlining data entry and information transmission.

Criminal Justice Committee Chair Councilmember James Carter said, "I am very proud to have these criminal justice leaders here before us today to highlight some of the positive improvements in coordination and collaboration throughout our criminal justice system. The successful launch of this Initiative represents a positive sign that the City's criminal justice leaders are committed to working together to advance meaningful reforms."

For more information on the Criminal Justice Leadership Alliance (CJLA) and the Expedited Screening Initiative click [here](#). Click [here](#) to view a News Release on this Initiative.

Opposed Privatization of Local Rehabilitation Center for Elderly and Disabled



Carolyn Harris Carter

The Council passed Resolution R-09-244, co-authored by Councilmembers Fielkow, Clarkson and Midura, opposing Louisiana House Bill No. 783 and the privatization of the John J. Hainkel Jr. Home and Rehabilitation Center, which has served the elderly and disabled populations of New Orleans since 1895.

Carolyn Harris Carter, Finance Chairman for the Advisory Board of the Hainkel Home, appeared before the Council to offer her support for the Resolution and express her gratitude to Councilmembers for supporting the Hainkel Home.

Specifically, the Resolution urges Governor Jindal to reconsider his decision to lease the Hainkel Home, and requests that public meetings be held in New Orleans regarding any plan going forward relative to the selling or leasing of the Hainkel Home - enabling State policy makers to hear first-hand the impact such actions will have on services for the elderly and disabled.

Vice President Arnie Fielkow said, "House Bill No. 783 aims to divest the State of the Hainkel Home by leasing it out, thereby privatizing the community-oriented center and likely resulting in a reduction of the government-provided health services to those most in need in our community. We must ensure that these citizens in need receive the services they deserve."

Supported State Consolidation of Hurricane Protection, Flood Control and Coastal Restoration Functions



The Council passed Resolution R-09-243, authored by Councilmember Clarkson, supporting House Bill 833, which will create a new office in the Office of the Governor to consolidate functions relative to hurricane protection, flood control, and coastal restoration.

The Resolution also asks that the Orleans Parish Legislative Delegation support House Bill 833 relative to organizing and codifying the organization of the Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority and its implementation arm, the Office of Coastal Protection and Restoration.

Supported Continuing Growth of Federal City



*Councilmember at-Large
Clarkson*

The Council passed Ordinance Calendar No. 27,480, authored by Councilmember Clarkson, to expand the effective date of the Algiers Economic Development District No. 1 to continue the growth and success of Federal City.

Council President Jacquelyn Brechtel Clarkson said, "Federal City is a vital government installation that will expand New Orleans' ability to host military commands and federal agencies. It is important that we take action to further the growth of this project, which supports our City's strongest industry and is the largest economic development project in the state."

Addressed Community Matters and Presentations

- Motion M-09-247 confirmed the award of five four-year Tulane University Mayoral Scholarships to the following scholars:

- Alia Soomro, Louise S. McGehee
- Charlotte Fournier, Benjamin Franklin
- Caroline Sanches, St. Mary's Dominican
- Jillian Poche, Benjamin Franklin
- Van Kim Nguyen, Benjamin Franklin



NOPD Chief Warren Riley

City-wide crime update from NOPD Chief Riley who informed the Council that crime in all areas is down 12%, although there have been significant increases in auto break-ins in the 2nd, 5th, and 8th Districts. The NOPD continues to focus on the 22 designated "hot spots" around the City where the force has been successful in reducing crime.

Presentation by Judge Calvin Johnson and Dr. Craig Coenson of the Metropolitan Human Services District on

mental health issues in New Orleans and the mission of the District - to provide in an effective fashion, the outpatient mental health services that the community needs. The representatives noted several of the District's goals, including development of a patient guide on how to navigate the healthcare system and a method to track patients through the system of care.



Judge Calvin Johnson & Dr. Craig Coenson

"State of Culture" Address from Irvin Mayfield which outlined five objectives for the



Irvin Mayfield

City's cultural community including: supporting community-based cultural traditions, investment in cultural infrastructure and facilities, and tracking new investment and informational resources. Mayfield proposed that a mission statement on the maintenance of the City's culture be adopted as part of the Master Plan and informed Councilmembers that there will be a series of weekly "Culture at the Center" forums to allow the public to contribute to the discussion.

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 Jacquelyn Brechtel Clarkson; Council Vice-President and Councilmember-at-Large Arnie Fielkow; 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.