



Council Passes Resolutions Supporting Efficient Use of Law Enforcement Resources & Streamlined Tax Appeal Process

Council Holds Executive Session Addressing City Hall Security Plan & Pending Litigation & Honors the Life of NOPD Detective Thelonious A. Dukes

News Release

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[New Orleans City Council](#)

New Orleans, LA - February 21, 2008 - Today, the New Orleans City Council passed resolutions supporting efficient use of law enforcement resources and a streamlined tax appeal process.

The Council held an Executive Session to address the City Hall Security Plan and pending litigation. Councilmembers also joined to honor the life of New Orleans Police Department (NOPD) Detective Thelonious A. Dukes.

Supports Efficient Use of Law Enforcement Resources



The Council unanimously passed Resolution R-08-90 formally requesting the Louisiana State Legislature adopt legislation giving law enforcement officers discretion to issue a summons rather than make a custodial arrest in response to a misdemeanor offense or non-violent municipal offense.

This Resolution reflects the recommendation by the Vera Institute of Justice, NOPD Superintendent Warren Riley and the New Orleans Police Department to expand the use of summonses and reduce custodial arrests for minor criminal offenses.

The Council emphasized that it is in the best interest of the citizens of New Orleans for the police department to focus its law enforcement efforts on the apprehension of violent criminals.

Reducing the number of custodial arrests for misdemeanors will decrease the financial burden on the City associated with incarceration and permit the police department to direct its resources more efficiently.

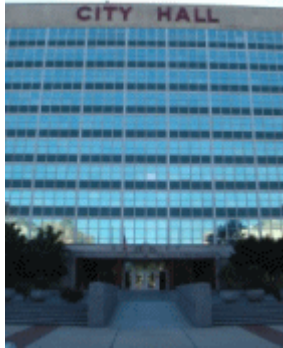


Supports Streamlined Tax Appeal Process

The Council unanimously passed Resolution R-08-88 requesting the New Orleans legislative delegation and the Louisiana State Legislature support the necessary changes in legislation governing the tax appeal process to remove the Board of Review from the appeal process and permit property owners to appeal assessments directly to the Louisiana Tax Commission.

This Resolution reflects the Council's belief that the Louisiana Tax Commission has the expertise and ability to more efficiently deal with the high volume process and that taxpayers would best be served by removing the Board of Review from the tax appeal process.

To meet statutory deadlines in 2007, the New Orleans City Council found it necessary to employ a private firm to manage the nearly six thousand appeals received at a cost of approximately \$1.6 million to New Orleans taxpayers.



Holds Executive Session

Today the City Council held an Executive Session to address the City Hall Security Plan and pending litigation. Due to the confidentiality of both issues, they were taken up in Executive Session closed to the public.

City Hall Security Plan Briefing

Attention was paid today in Executive Session to the continuing City Hall Security Plan.

Colonel Terry Ebbert of the City of New Orleans Office of Homeland Security briefed the Council on the City Hall Security Plan. Colonel Ebbert will continue to coordinate and implement security measures as they are developed and funded.

Pending Litigation

In Executive Session today City Councilmembers individually decided that it is their policy not to comment on pending litigation. All inquiries regarding pending litigation will be referred to the City Attorney.



Honors Life of NOPD Detective

The City Council passed Resolution R-08-85 honoring New Orleans Police Department Detective Thelonious A. Dukes for his valiant service to his community during his nineteen years as an NOPD officer.

The Council, along with the community, mourned the loss of Detective Dukes and sent its condolences, thoughts and prayers to his family, friends and fellow officers and shared in the knowledge that Detective Dukes's service was well done.

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.