



New Orleans
City Council

City Council Regular Meeting Summary

News Release

July 24, 2008

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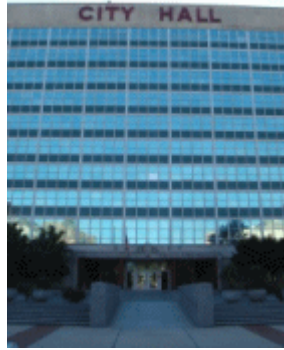
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New Orleans, LA - July 24, 2008 - Today the New Orleans City Council supported the establishment of a Southeast Louisiana Trade Office in Panama, and funding for the Computerized Web Video Streaming and Meetings Management System. The Council also addressed one hundred year flood protection and received a status update on the recovery of St. Bernard Parish.

Supports Southeast Louisiana Trade Office



The Council adopted Resolution R-08-403, co-authored by Councilmembers Fielkow, Clarkson, Hedge-Morrell and Willard-Lewis, requesting that the Mayor take the lead in creating a regional task force to establish a Southeast Louisiana Trade Office in Panama and develop a regional strategy for taking advantage of economic development opportunities associated with the Panama Canal.

The regional task force is to be comprised of port authorities, parish governments and other private and public sector stakeholders.

Councilmember-at-Large Arnie Fielkow said, "The expansion of the Panama Canal presents an unprecedented economic opportunity. This trade office will allow New Orleans to more effectively capture the ever-growing Central American trade business."

The Resolution reflects the Council's belief that the establishment of the trade office in Panama would maximize potential for economic success though providing staff on the ground to promote the interests of the City of New Orleans on a daily basis with Panama Canal authority officials, government officials and shippers.

Addresses One Hundred Year Flood Protection



The Council adopted Resolution R-08-402 calling for forgiveness of the local cost share for one hundred year flood protection for Southeast Louisiana, or in the alternative, urging that the executive branch and Congress work to allow the local cost share to be paid out over a thirty year period and to appropriate necessary funds to prevent the delay of construction and rebuilding.

Council President Jacquelyn Brechtel Clarkson said, "True one hundred year flood protection for Southeast Louisiana must be approached from a regional perspective with a contiguous system that eliminates all gaps. We will continue our work to ensure that Southeast Louisiana receives adequate flood protection."

The Resolution cites the fact that much of Southeast Louisiana is still rebuilding and attempting to bring in new business and economic development. Therefore, imposing an additional tax burden on citizens in order to cover the local cost share will greatly hamper recovery and rebuilding.

Supports Funding for Computerized Web Video Streaming and Meetings Management System



Councilmember Carter

The Council passed Ordinance Calendar No. 27,072, authored by District "C" Councilmember James Carter, approving the Government Access Capital Fund Committee's grant application for funding to be used to purchase the hardware, software and other equipment necessary for the implementation of a Computerized Web Video Streaming and Meetings Management System.

Cable & Telecommunications Committee Chair Councilmember Carter said, "Our goal is to increase public accessibility to information and public documents and make the business of public meetings more transparent - we are working to develop a system accessible to all citizens."

The Council is working through Granicus, the streaming media solution provider, to change the way the public views and participates in the government process by providing the general public easy access to information and public documents.

Addresses St. Bernard Parish Recovery Status



St. Bernard Parish President Craig Taffaro

St. Bernard Parish President, Craig Taffaro appeared before the Council to discuss the progress of recovery and rebuilding in St. Bernard Parish.

The status report detailed the substantial growth in the St. Bernard Parish community, as well as highlighted recovery projects in the area.

Council President Jacquelyn Brechtel Clarkson said, "St. Bernard Parish suffered total destruction from Hurricane Katrina and in the past three years it has shown remarkable progress due to the multitude of people driving recovery efforts forward."

The Council praised Taffaro's efforts and recognized the importance of rebuilding a community that shares common boundaries and a common spirit with the City of New Orleans.

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.

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