

**City Council January 22, 2009
Regular Meeting Summary**

News Release

January 22, 2009

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New Orleans, LA - January 22, 2009 - Today the New Orleans City Council passed an Ordinance repealing provisions of the City Code relative to the Office of Municipal Investigation.

The Council also introduced on first reading an Ordinance expediting the construction of five libraries throughout the City.

Additionally, the Council received a presentation on the City's public schools and recognized the many people whose efforts made the reopening of the Mahalia Jackson Theatre possible.

Addresses Presentation on New Orleans Public Schools

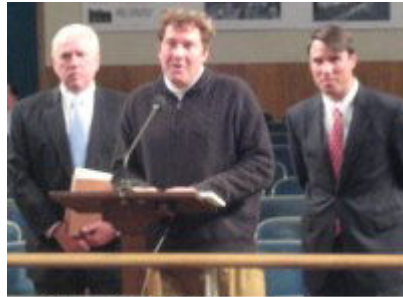


*Leslie Jacobs,
Founder of Educate Now!*

Leslie Jacobs, Founder of Educate Now! - a non-profit dedicated to effective and sustainable reform of New Orleans public schools, came before the Council today to give a presentation on the state and transformation of New Orleans public schools.

Jacobs discussed school performance measures, improvement rates, community involvement, the success of charter schools, demographics, support from state and non-profits, as well as internal school financing.

Councilmember-at-Large Clarkson said, "We are grateful for this very comprehensive and informative report - education is a priority for this City and this Council and we will continue to work to improve the public school system."



*Stan Smith, Woody Koppel
and Brett Bonin*

Additionally, Orleans Parish School Board President Woody Koppel, District 3 Board Member Brett Bonin, and Chief Financial Officer Stan Smith came before the Council to give a brief update on the progress of Orleans Parish schools.

Koppel expressed the Board's gratitude to the Council for their dedication to improving the public education system and welcomed the Council's feedback and ideas.

Addresses Changes in City Code Re: Office of Municipal Investigation



Councilmember Head

The Council passed Ordinance Calendar No. 27,270, authored by Councilmember Head, to repeal provisions of the Code of the City of New Orleans relative to the Office of Municipal Investigation (OMI).

The Council decided to eliminate this department during the Budget process, as the duties of the OMI are duplicative with the duties of the Office of Inspector General.

District "B" Councilmember Stacy Head said, "We as a Council worked very hard this year to present a cost-efficient and fair Budget. Through the elimination of the OMI we were able to redirect funds previously allocated to that office to other agencies and departments."

Recognizes Mahalia Jackson Theatre Contributors



Bill Chrisman, Cynthia Sylvain-Lear, Ernest Collins and Cindy Connick

Director of Capital Projects Bill Chrisman, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer Cynthia Sylvain-Lear, Head of the Office of Arts & Entertainment Ernest Collins and Executive Director of the Canal Street Development Corp.

Cindy Connick, came before the Council today to introduce the many people whose work and dedication made the reopening of the Mahalia Jackson Theatre possible.

Cynthia Sylvain-Lear called out the names of all the businesses, agencies, departments and others who worked to make the grand reopening of the Theatre a reality. Many individuals involved in the reopening of the Theatre were present in the Council Chamber to be recognized for their efforts.

Councilmembers spoke of the impressive grand reopening of the Theatre and thanked all those involved for their tireless work in recreating a New Orleans cultural icon.

Supports Construction of Five New Libraries



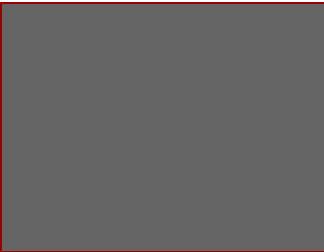
Councilmember-at-Large Clarkson

The Council introduced on first reading Ordinance Calendar No. 27,324, authored by Councilmember Clarkson, to add five additional projects to the list of approved projects to permit design-build procedures to be implemented, all of them public libraries.

The design-build method expedites the City's recovery projects by streamlining the contracting process, making it possible for one company to get a combined contract for both the design and build of a project.

The City of New Orleans previously passed Ordinance Calendar No. 27,059 authorizing 21 projects to be developed through the design-build procedures developed and approved by the Division of Administration, Office of Facility Planning and Control for utilization by the City of New Orleans.

The five additional projects are Algiers Regional Library, Nora Navra Library, Norman Mayer Library, Robert E. Smith Library and New Orleans East Regional Library.



Council President Jacquelyn Brechtel Clarkson said, "It is important that we do everything possible to expedite the completion of recovery projects throughout the City - the design-build method works to do just that."

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.