



City Council July 2, 2009 Regular Meeting Summary

News Release

July 2, 2009

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New Orleans, LA - July 2, 2009 - Today the New Orleans City Council passed legislation supporting 100-year storm protection, funding for crime fighting initiatives, emergency repairs at Cut Off Playground and Community Center and at various NORD facilities, and effective storm surge protection for the City's three outfall canals.

Additionally, the Council received a presentation from the Administration on the Chevron Building as a possible site for a new City Hall, and a status report on District "E", congratulated Major Bob Bardy on his Innovation Award and the New Orleans Hornets on a second consecutive playoff season.

The Council also held an Executive Session to address pending litigation, and passed Motion M-09-322 rescheduling the Council's regular July 16th meeting to July 23rd.

Received Report from Administration on Chevron Building



*Bill Chrisman, Cynthia Sylvain-Lear
and Brenda Hatfield*

Brenda Hatfield, Chief Administrative Officer, Cynthia Sylvain-Lear, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer, and Bill Chrisman, Director of Capital Projects, appeared before the Council today to answer the questions posed in

[Motion M-09-290](#), authored by Councilmember Clarkson and passed by the Council last month, regarding financial details of a pending purchase of the Chevron Building, located at 935 Gravier Street, and it possibly being the site of a new City Hall.

The Council pledged not to act on the purchase of this property as a site for City Hall until these questions are answered. The Administration's representatives presented the Council with a document containing answers to each question posed in Motion M-09-290, as well as a "Fact Sheet" on the Chevron Place purchase. The "Fact Sheet" contains a "funding matrix," as well as information including:

- The purchase price of the Chevron Building and anticipated additional expenses
- Potential savings that would result from moving City Hall
- Comparative analysis of facilities between the current City Hall and the Chevron Building

Council Vice President Jacquelyn Brechtel Clarkson said, "The Chevron Building is a good building at a good price, but is it a good building for City Hall? We need to consider whether the downtown building is an appropriate site for housing what should be a landmark building in any city; and whether the entire deal is a financial gain or loss for the City, including the value of the liquidation of our present site and other city owned properties."

Urged Army Corps to Meet Deadline for 100-year Storm Protection



*Councilmember-at-Large
Fielkow*

The Council unanimously passed Resolution R-09-326, authored by Council President Arnie Fielkow, urging the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to take steps necessary to ensure that it meets the June 1, 2011 deadline to provide a quality system of protection for a 100-year storm. A 100-year storm is defined as a storm with a 1% chance of striking in any given year.

Specifically, the Resolution requests:

- That top Corps officials attend the August 6th City Council meeting to testify as to the status of 100-year storm protection and the June 2011 deadline

- Quarterly written progress reports from the Corps so as to keep publicly stated timelines consistent with internal schedules

Councilmember Fielkow said, "Protection from a 100-year storm is a vital part of the City's overall hurricane protection and preparedness. The Corps has committed to provide this level of protection and we want to ensure that they are held accountable to the June 2011 deadline. Pushing the deadline back may result in perpetual delays and a lack of essential hurricane protection - we cannot allow that to happen. I look forward to hearing the Corps' plan to meet the deadline at the August Council meeting."

Voted to Fund Crime Fighting Initiatives



Councilmember Hedge-Morrell

The Council unanimously approved Ordinance Calendar Nos. 27,519, 27,526 and 27,527 to allocate funds for summer overtime for the New Orleans Police Department (NOPD) as well as to fund investigators for the District Attorney's office.

The Ordinances were authored and introduced by District "D" Councilmember and Budget Committee Chair Cynthia Hedge-Morrell and co-authored by Councilmembers Fielkow, Head, and Clarkson.

Ordinance Calendar No. 27,519 shifted \$1 Million from the Chief Administrative Office to the NOPD to fund 12 hour shifts for patrol officers through the summer months.

Ordinances 27,526 and 27,527 allocate \$150,710 from the General Fund to the Office of District Attorney. The money will be used to hire eight investigators who will work on cases that currently lack sufficient evidence for prosecution. The District Attorney hopes to close a number of homicide cases where a suspect has been identified but not charged, thereby reducing the number of violent criminals on the streets.

"Public safety is my number one concern. We typically see an increase in crime during the summer months," Councilmember Hedge-Morrell said. "These measures will have an immediate impact on our residents' safety."

Received Update on Repairs at Cut Off Playground & Community Center in Algiers



*Bill Chrisman,
Director of Capital Projects*

At the request of Councilmember Carter, Bill Chrisman, Director of Capital Projects, presented the Council with a report on the status of the air conditioning and lights at the Cut Off Playground and Community Center in Algiers.

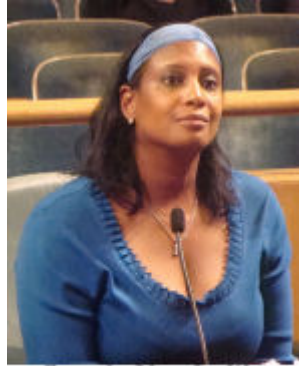
Currently Cut Off Playground and Community Center does not have outdoor lighting or a working air conditioning system. An Algiers resident, present at the meeting, also voiced concerns about the unpaved parking lot at the facility.

District "C" Councilmember James Carter said, "The current situation and lack of maintenance at the Cut Off Playground and Community Center is unacceptable. We owe it to the Algiers community and their children to provide a safe and comfortable recreational setting with air conditioning and appropriate lighting. We will do all we can to expedite improvements at this location so that citizens can safely enjoy the facilities once more."



Councilmember Carter

The Council unanimously passed an emergency Motion to direct the Department of Property Management to replace the air conditioning at the Cut Off Community Center under emergency procedures.



Pamela Sims Smith,
Director of Property
Management

Pamela Sims Smith, Director of Property Management for the City, indicated that contractors would go to the location next week to replace the air conditioning. Mr. Chrisman assured Councilmembers that the improvements to the lighting and parking lot would begin within the next 30 days, and he stated that he would return to the Council within that time frame to give an

update on the progress of those improvements.

Supported Option 2A for City's Outfall Canals



Councilmember-at-Large
Clarkson

The Council unanimously passed Resolution R-09-306, introduced by Councilmember Clarkson, thanking U.S. Senators Barbara Boxer and Mary Landrieu for demanding the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers pursue Option 2A, the most effective means of storm surge protection for New Orleans' three outfall canals - London Ave., Orleans Ave., and 17th St.

Option 2A includes deepening and repaving the canals, building new all-purpose pumps, and pumping excess water from the canals to the Mississippi River.



LaVerne Saulny, Regional
Manager of Senator Landrieu's
New Orleans Office

LaVerne Saulny, Regional Manager of Senator Landrieu's New Orleans Office appeared before the Council to thank the Council for their support on this issue.

Council Vice President Jacquelyn Brechtel Clarkson said, "This is a major component of hurricane protection for New Orleans. We thank Senators Boxer and Landrieu for their efforts to ensure New Orleans receives this superior protection."

Click [here](#) to read a News Release on this legislation.

Click [here](#) to read a News Release on this legislation.



Received Update on District "E"

District "E" Councilmember Cynthia Willard-Lewis presented the Council with a District Report on news and happenings throughout the District.

The Councilmember offered updates on:

- Funding sources for Methodist Hospital and Mary Queen of Vietnam's efforts to provide health services to New Orleans East residents

- Improvements at Joe Brown Park and Village L'Est Playground, and emergency repairs at Goretti, Sampson and Eastshore Playgrounds

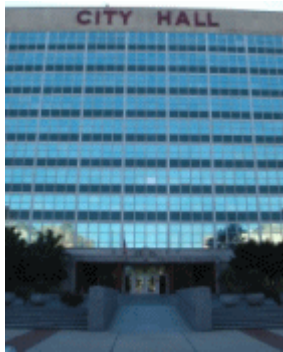
- Ongoing renovations at the 7th District Police Station and District "E" Fire Stations and the New Orleans Fire Department/New Orleans Police Department Municipal Training Academy

- New Orleans East Regional Library

- Build-out at Pete Sanchez Community Center

- Community Markets including the Sankofa and Renaissance markets

Councilmember Willard-Lewis said, "We salute the spirit and love for New Orleans of all those who have returned to District E and the City as a whole. District E residents dedicate their time and energy every day to move our City's recovery forward - they are a testament to the persistence and dedication of all of our citizens to make this City better than it was before."



Declared Emergency Status for Repairs at NORD Facilities

The Council passed Motion M-09-328, authored by Councilmember Hedge-Morrell, declaring the need for plumbing and general construction repairs at various New Orleans Recreation Department (NORD) facilities, to be a certified emergency. Therefore, the City may obtain bids without formal, public advertising and may contract the public work needed to abate and correct the emergency.

Property Management and NORD have been unsuccessful in obtaining contractors to perform the work in two formal bid attempts through the normal procurement process. Funding has been identified to complete the work and the Chief Administrative Officer has certified this situation as an emergency.

The NORD facilities which will receive emergency repairs are:

- Gorretti, Sampson, Conrad, Eastshore, Taylor, Milne, McDonogh, Skelly Rupp, and Kenilworth Playgrounds
- Treme Center
- St. Bernard Locker Rooms

- Perry Roehm Stadium
- Bunny Friend
- Pontchartrain NORD Center

Acknowledged Major Bob Bardy for Innovation Award



***Major Bob Bardy of
NOPD's 6th District***

The Council congratulated Major Bob Bardy, of the NOPD 6th District, on his Capital One Bank Keller Award for Innovation from the Bureau of Governmental Research (BGR).

The Capital One Bank Keller Award for Innovation recognizes employees who have used innovative solutions to solve pressing problems. It is named in honor of the Keller Family Foundation, the founder of the BGR Excellence in

Government Awards. The Keller Awards include a cash prize of \$1,000 each.

The Council thanked Major Bardy for his ongoing dedication to serving the City and for consistently going above and beyond the call of duty.

Congratulated Hornets on Second Consecutive Playoff Season



***Hornets Representatives
Harold Kaufman (L.) and Chad Shinn***

New Orleans Hornets representatives Chad Shinn, Executive Officer of the Board, and Harold Kaufman, Senior Director of Communications, appeared before the Council today for a presentation congratulating the team

on a second consecutive playoff season.

The representatives thanked the Council for their ongoing support of the team and Councilmembers recognized the Hornets for the economic impact and the spirit that the team brings to the City. The Council assured the Hornets representatives that they would continue to support the team in their endeavors and look forward to next season.



Held Executive Session

The Council held an Executive Session to address pending litigation. Due to the confidentiality of the issues, they were taken up in Executive Session closed to the public.

Special Counsel informed the City Council as to the current status of the following pending litigation:

- Case #09-2279 "D", Civil District Court for the Parish of Orleans,
- Case #2009-C-0389, 4th Circuit Court of Appeal, Case #09-1067, Louisiana Supreme Court, City Council versus Tracie Washington, Tionne Simon and the Louisiana Justice Institute;

- Case #09-4050, Civil District Court for the Parish of Orleans, City Council versus Penya Moses-Fields.

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.