

OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS
CITY OF MORGAN CITY
JANUARY 28, 2025

The Mayor and City Council of Morgan City, Louisiana, met at 6:00 pm (local time) in regular session, this date, in the City Court Building, Highway 182 East, Morgan City, Louisiana.

There were present: Honorable Lee Dragna, Mayor; and Council Members Ron Bias, Eriq Blanchard, Steve Domangue, Tim Hymel, and Bonnie Leonard.

Absent: None

Also present were Mr. Charlie Solar, Jr., Chief Administrative Officer and Mr. Paul Landry, City Attorney.

The invocation was given by Mr. Michael Loupe.

The first Positive Image recipient for January was Officer Joseph Coleman who was presented his Sergeant pin by Chief Chad Adams. The Mayor and Council congratulated him on his promotion.

Mayor Dragna said the second Positive Image recipient was Lee Price. He said that Mr. Price was not present tonight, but had worked tirelessly for the second year on the Christmas bonfires at the Lake and the event had a wonderful turnout. He thanked Mr. Price for all his hard work.

The final Positive Image recipients were Lee Babin with Babin Construction, Joey Billiot with Cleveland J. Billiot, III General Contracting, and Kevin Kocke with Elray Kocke Services. Mayor Dragna stated that the state was not prepared to clear the ice off of the bridge during the recent snow event. He said that these local businessmen came together with City employees to help make the bridge passable. They used their own equipment to clear the ice and gave freely of their time. He expressed his appreciation to them and presented those present at the meeting with Positive Image Certificates.

Mrs. Deborah Garber, Finance Director, submitted the following financial statement for the period ending December 31, 2024.

MONTHLY FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

DATE: January 28, 2025
TO: Mayor and Council
FROM: Deborah Garber
RE: Comments related to summary of revenues and expenses compared to budget for the period ended December 31, 2024.

Attached is a summary that compares our actual revenues and expenses to our operational budget for our major funds subject to budgetary control for the period ending December 31, 2024. The following comments are related thereto:

General and Ancillary Funds: Revenues are over budget by \$757,112. In General Fund, sales taxes ended the year over budget by \$317,420 and ad valorem taxes were \$298,000 higher than budgeted. Operating expenses are under budget \$1,971,050. The net income after transfer from other funds of \$580,478 is a positive variance of \$2,583,203 as compared to the original budget.

Utility Fund: Actual revenues for the year came in under budget \$2,118,246 due to Purchased Power Adjustments being much lower than anticipated. Purchased Power costs were under budget \$1,841,657 which contributed to the overall utility operational expenses being under budget \$1,980,894. The net income, after transfers to other funds, of \$266,339 creates a negative variance compared to the budget of \$66,785.

Sanitation and Sewer Fund: The operating revenues ended \$108,974 over budget, with total operating expenses under budget \$101,968. The net loss, after transfers, of \$65,626 results in a positive variance compared to budget of \$302,264.

Respectfully submitted,
/s/ Deborah Garber
Deborah Garber
Finance Director

**CITY OF MORGAN CITY
CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT
Actual Revenues and Expenses Compared to Budget
Period Ended December 31, 2024**

GENERAL AND ANCILLARY FUNDS	DECEMBER 2024 ACTUAL	DECEMBER 2024 BUDGET	VARIANCE
REVENUES			
General Fund	9,552,139	8,914,806	637,333
Recreation Fund	97,541	60,600	36,941
Library Fund	6,466	4,000	2,466
Auditorium Fund	407,759	371,703	36,056
Lake End Park Fund	1,075,616	1,031,300	44,316
Cemetery Fund	177,449	210,200	(32,751)
State Prisoner Fund	185,519	218,200	(32,681)
Total Revenues	11,139,521	10,382,409	757,112
EXPENSES-OPERATIONAL			
General Fund	11,414,347	12,662,545	(1,248,198)
Recreation Fund	450,236	607,586	(157,350)
Library Fund	118,941	156,729	(37,788)
Auditorium Fund	631,777	685,847	(54,070)
Lake End Park Fund	1,111,013	1,431,627	(320,614)
Cemetery Fund	251,002	328,087	(77,085)
State Prisoner Fund	639,918	715,863	(75,945)
Total Expenses	14,617,234	16,588,284	(1,971,050)
TRANSFERS			
Transfers from Funds	4,058,191	4,203,150	(144,959)
Transfers to Funds	0	0	0
Net Transfers	4,058,191	4,203,150	(144,959)
EXCESS NET OF TRANSFERS	580,478	(2,002,725)	2,583,203
UTILITY FUND			
Total Revenues	22,216,407	24,334,653	(2,118,246)
Total Expenditures	19,013,075	20,993,969	(1,980,894)
Net Excess	3,203,332	3,340,684	(137,352)

Net Transfers and non-oper.	(2,936,993)	(3,007,560)	70,567
Excess net of transfers	266,339	333,124	(66,785)

SANITATION AND SEWER FUND

Total Revenues	3,376,309	3,267,335	108,974
Total Expenses	4,387,957	4,489,925	(101,968)
Net Excess	(1,011,648)	(1,222,590)	210,942
Net Transfers/non- operating expenses	946,022	854,700	91,322
Excess net of transfers and non-operating	(65,626)	(367,890)	302,264

A motion to accept the financial statement was made by Mr. Domangue, seconded by Mrs. Leonard, and voted unanimously in favor.

Mrs. Catherine Holcomb and Mrs. Monica Mancuso submitted a request for permission to close the old bridge for the Atchafalaya Gateway Pedestrian Bridge Program (copy on file). Mrs. Holcomb said that once the bridge was opened up again, it was proposed that it would be opened on the first Saturday of each month from 6 AM to 6 PM. A list of possible additional bridge closures that could occur during special events was submitted. A motion to allow the bridge closures was made by Mr. Domangue, seconded by Mr. Blanchard, and voted unanimously in favor.

Brother Alvin Irvin with New Zorah Baptist Church submitted a request to hold the 3rd annual Gospel Fest on Saturday, May 3, 2025, from 10 AM to 6 PM (copy on file). He requested that Arkansas Street be closed from 11 AM to 6 PM. A motion to approve the request was made by Mrs. Leonard, seconded by Mr. Hymel, and voted unanimously in favor.

Mrs. Shelly Suire and Mrs. Jenny Bailelyy requested permission to hold the second annual Tri-City Weenie Spaghetti Festival on Saturday, October 11, 2025, under the US 90 bridge (copy on file). A motion to approve the request was made by Mr. Domangue, seconded by Mrs. Leonard, and voted unanimously in favor.

Mr. Bryce Merrill addressed the council regarding the placement of the ROV monument. Mayor Dragna said that he and CAO Charlie Solar felt it was best to place the monument inside the gate of Cypress Park. Mr. Merrill said that the monument design would be put for a vote at a later date.

Mr. Mac Wade gave a brief update on the Port of Morgan City. He said that the port's channel was back at its authorized depth after Hurricane Francine had dumped silt into it. He said that this was accomplished with the help of the area's congressional delegation and the US Army Corps of Engineers. Because of that help, a growing number of companies were doing business along the Atchafalaya and the nearby bayous.

Mr. Dustin Fromenthal with the local Fraternal Order of Police chapter requested permission to hold a car show at Lake End Park on April 12, 2025 (copy on file). If the event was rained out, he requested that it be moved to April 19, 2025. He advised the council that the event had already been approved by the Lake End Park Committee and the Recreation & Parks Commission. A motion to approve the request was made by Mr. Hymel, seconded by Mrs. Leonard, and voted unanimously in favor.

The next matter on the agenda was the public hearing for Table 5. Mayor Dragna said that Chief Adams requested that the matter be tabled until after all outstanding citations had gone to court. A motion to table the issue was made by Mr. Blanchard, seconded by Pastor Bias, and voted unanimously in favor.

Mayor Dragna thanked all of the residents who stayed home during the recent snow event. He said that there had been no accidents because there were very few people on the road.

The condemnation report for the property located at 207 Florida Street was the next matter on the agenda. Jimmy Knight presented all paper work showing that proper notices were given. Mr. Perro, owner of the land but not of the actual house, stated that he would like to be given the chance to fix the house instead of it being torn down and that he was interested in buying the house. Pastor Bias stated that he did not think that the house could

be repaired. A motion to approve the condemnation of 207 Florida Street was made by Pastor Bias, seconded by Mr. Blanchard, and voted unanimously in favor.

The minutes of the December 17, 2024 and January 13, 2025 meetings were submitted. There being no corrections, additions, or deletions, a motion to approve the minutes was made by Pastor Bias, seconded by Mr. Domangue, and voted unanimously in favor.

The next matter on the agenda was the resolution of support for the Louisiana National Estuarine Research Reserve Acquisition Process; whereupon,

Mrs. Leonard offered the following Resolution, who moved for its adoption.

RESOLUTION NO. R: 25-05

WHEREAS, in February of 2022, the community of the Atchafalaya area overwhelmingly spoke in favor of the Atchafalaya nomination for a Louisiana National Estuarine Research Reserve; and

WHEREAS, in June of 2022, the governor of the State of Louisiana, Governor John Bel Edwards, recommended the Atchafalaya nomination; and

WHEREAS, in June of 2023, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) accepted the Atchafalaya nomination; and

WHEREAS, in June of 2023, the Louisiana Universities Marine Consortium (LUMCON) was named as the state administration of the Atchafalaya National Estuarine Research Reserve (ANEER), and its administration publicly indicated that a **building would be placed in Morgan City, LA for the Reserve**; and

WHEREAS, because of the importance that the Morgan City, Louisiana property for the building reflects natural ecosystem habitat for a reserve telling the story of the area and is of such an acreage to accommodate education needs; and

WHEREAS, because of the importance of having a **willing seller of property** which was recognized as fitting for this property need since 2002; and

WHEREAS, because of a need to facilitate the process to connect a willing seller of property with a state agency (LUMCON) that will directly impact the City of Morgan City's forward economic advancement.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the City Council, the governing authority of the City of Morgan City, Louisiana, that it receives the Letter of Interest from Hellenic, LLC as a Willing Seller, and the City resolves to support, and if needed, to **partner in the ANEER acquisition process by facilitating** such said State Agency to secure Morgan City property for the reserve purpose.

Pastor Bias seconded the motion.

The vote thereon was as follows:

AYES: Leonard, Bias, Blanchard, Domangue, Hymel

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

The resolution was therefore declared approved and adopted this 28th day of January, 2025.

/s/ Lee Dragna
Lee Dragna
Mayor

ATTEST:

/s/ Debbie Harrington
Debbie Harrington
Clerk

Mr. Charlie Solar said that the firm of C.H Fenstermaker needed to be engaged to complete the engineering on the Sewer Valve Replacement Project. He said that the valves had not been turned in over 30 years and that Fenstermaker would work up a cost on replacement; whereupon,

Pastor Bias offered the following Resolution, who moved for its adoption.

RESOLUTION NO. R: 25-06

WHEREAS, The City of Morgan City will be undertaking a Sewer Valve Replacement Project, and

WHEREAS, the City has a master services agreement with the firm of C. H. Fenstermaker & Associates, LLC; and

WHEREAS, the firm of C.H. Fenstermaker & Associates, L.L.C. meets the City's needs of Consulting Engineers for the Sewer Valve Replacement Project.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council, the governing authority of the City of Morgan City, Louisiana that it engage C.H. Fenstermaker & Associates, L.L.C. to perform the necessary services to implement this project.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Mayor be and he is hereby authorized, empowered, and directed to execute any and all documents in connection with this project.

Mr. Hymel seconded the motion.

The vote thereon was as follows:

AYES: Bias, Hymel, Blanchard, Domangue, Leonard

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

The Resolution was therefore declared approved and adopted this 28th day of January, 2025.

/s/ Lee Dagna
Lee Dagna
Mayor

ATTEST:

/s/ Debbie Harrington
Debbie Harrington
Clerk

The public hearing for the 2024 Budget Amendment Ordinance was opened. No one appeared for or against said ordinance; whereupon,

This Ordinance introduced with first reading on November 19, 2024, a second reading on December 19, 2024 a third reading on January 28, 2025. Published by title on November 29, 2024, and December 20, 2024.

Mr. Hymel offered the following Ordinance, who moved for its adoption.

ORDINANCE NO. 25-01

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF MORGAN CITY, LOUISIANA AMENDING THE OPERATING BUDGET FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JANUARY 1, 2024, AND ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2024.

WHEREAS, by Ordinance Number 23-16 dated November 28, 2023, the City Council adopted the operating budget for the fiscal year beginning January 1, 2024, and ending December 31, 2024, and

WHEREAS, during the year certain amendments were deemed necessary,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT ORDAINED by the City Council, the governing authority of the City of Morgan City, Louisiana, that revenues and other financing sources for 2024 be amended to \$54,944,780 and the expenditures be amended to \$56,961,421 leaving a net deficiency of \$2,016,641.

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED, etc., that said net deficiency be applied to the fund balance of \$32,505,325 leaving a fund balance of \$30,488,684 for the fiscal year ended 2024.

Mrs. Leonard seconded the motion.

The vote thereon was as follows:

AYES: Hymel, Leonard, Bias, Blanchard, Domangue
NAYS: None
ABSENT: None

Certified approved and adopted this 28th day of January, 2025.

Delivered to Mayor Dragna at 1:30 pm this 30th day of January, 2025.

/s/ Debbie Harrington
Debbie Harrington, Clerk

Approved this 30th day of January, 2025.

/s/ Lee Dragna
Lee Dragna, Mayor

Received from Mayor Dragna at 1:45 pm on January 30, 2025.

/s/ Debbie Harrington
Debbie Harrington, Clerk

Published: February 5, 2025

The next matter on the agenda was the Resolution of Respect for Dr. Robert Paul Blereau; whereupon,

Messrs. Bias, Blanchard, Domangue, Hymel and Leonard offered the following Resolution, who moved for its adoption.

RESOLUTION NO. R: 25-07
IN MEMORIAM
DR. ROBERT PAUL BLEREAU

WHEREAS, God, in his infinite wisdom has taken Dr. Robert Paul Blereau from our midst; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Blereau was a man of boundless generosity, unwavering dedication, and an enormous heart for his family and his countless patients; and

WHEREAS, he was described as being a brilliant physician, boss, teacher, and encourager; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Blereau was a loving and devoted doctor, husband, father, and grandfather; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and City Council of Morgan City wish to acknowledge publicly their sorrow and sympathy to the family of Dr. Robert Paul Blereau; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and City Council of Morgan City hope that his family will find comfort in the thought that their grief and sorrow are shared by their friends.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the Mayor and City Council of the City of Morgan City through the unanimous adoption of this resolution that the solemnly deliberate with sincere condolences, sympathy, and understanding during this time of grief.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, etc., that this resolution be inscribed on a separate page of the official proceedings of this meeting; that a copy of this resolution be sent to his bereaved family; and that this meeting adjourn out of respect for the late Dr. Robert Paul Blereau.

Messrs. Bias, Blanchard, Domangue, Hymel, and Leonard seconded the motion.

The vote thereon was as follows:

AYES: Bias, Blanchard, Domangue, Hymel, Leonard

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Non

The resolution was therefore declared approved and adopted this 28th day of January, 2025.

Lee Dragna
Mayor

ATTEST:

Debbie Harrington
Clerk

Debbie Harrington
Clerk

Lee Dragna
Mayor