

**MINUTES**

**CITY OF NEW ROADS CITY COUNCIL  
REGULAR MEETING**

**September 21, 2021**

The New Roads City Council met in regular session at 5:30 o'clock P.M. Tuesday, September 21, 2021 at the City Hall in New Roads, Louisiana. Mayor Cornell Dukes called the meeting to order. A roll call resulted as follows:

**PRESENT:** Vernell Davis, Kurt Kellerman, Joy Nelson, Theron Smith and Kirk White

**ABSENT:** None

Notice of this meeting was duly exercised and mailed per bylaws:

**Public comments on agenda items**

There were no public comments

**Consent Calendar – Approval of Minutes of Regular Council Meeting of September 7, 2021**

The minutes of the Regular Council meeting of September 7, 2021 were submitted for approval.

Mr. Kellerman requested that the minutes be amended to include the statement “three seconds after the motion passed, the Mayor vetoed the ordinance. Mr. Smith clarified the procedure on the veto”.

The reading of the minutes was waived.

Motion by Mr. White and seconded by Mr. Smith that the minutes be approved as amended.

**RESOLVED,** That the minutes be adopted.

A roll call vote resulted as follows:

**YEAS:** Smith, Nelson, White, Kellerman, and Davis

**NAYS:** None

**ABSTAIN:** None

**ABSENT:** None

On a vote of 5-0-0-0, the motion carried.

**Consideration by council of Mayor’s veto of Ordinance adopted at previous meeting**

Mr. White read the item title and asked the council to vote to override the veto.

Motion by Mr. White and seconded by Mr. Kellerman to override the veto of the ordinance that was adopted at the last meeting.

A copy of the aforementioned ordinance is below.

### AN ORDINANCE

To prohibit the use of security personnel by the mayor.

ORDINANCE NO. 2021-01

BE IT ORDAINED by the City Council of the City of New Roads, Louisiana:

SECTION 1. The mayor may not use city employees, including but not limited to police personnel, hereafter "security personnel", while on duty to drive him or to otherwise accompany him, except as authorized from time to time by the city council. No security personnel shall receive pay for service prohibited by this ordinance from city funds.

SECTION 2. This ordinance shall become effective 30 days after its adoption.

SECTION 3. All ordinances or parts of ordinances in conflict herewith are hereby repealed.

SECTION 4. Should any provisions of this ordinance, or the application thereof, be held invalid, such invalidity shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of this ordinance.

The following is verbatim.

*Mr. White stated "Up for discussion is gonna be the events that led up to this ordinance of what the council felt that they needed an ordinance in place due to the actions and behavior of the Mayor. We went because he told us in the past that resolutions did not govern him and that he was governed by ordinance we felt the need to pass an ordinance based on information that we had so we did that and he intends to veto. Well he did veto. Well he did veto the ordinance so this is going to be an attempt to override the veto but before we do that we're gonna have a discussion of what led us to this moment. So I'm going to pass out this report if you'll hand those down.*

*This is a public record report that was given by one of our officers who I will not name names at this time but due to but any of the actors in this I will not name names at this time cause its still going on as a current investigation by the attorney general. So the event this statement was done by one of our police officers.*

*On July 13, 2021, he met with and I'm not going to read the whole thing I'm just gonna give you the highlights to save some time but I think you'll know by the statements in this why we felt the need to pass this the ordinance. This interview was done by the Sheriff's Office on July 13, 2021. An officer who had been with New Roads City Police for fourteen years. This tour of duty was a detail Mayor's detail that began on July 2<sup>nd</sup>. He stated that upon completion of these festivities held in New Roads that night he transferred the Mayor to his residence and was relieved of duty. His residence being in Baton Rouge. Okay. He also stated that he escorted Mr. Dukes to several bars and that Mr. Dukes at some point in time got into a verbal argument with his girlfriend. Sgt. Poirrier stated that not long after the disagreement between Mr. Dukes and his girlfriend ended he was released from duty that night.*

*On July 4<sup>th</sup> at approximately 10 to 10:15 he started his detail for Mr. Dukes. He stated that while with the Mayor that day Mr. Dukes informed him that he would have to bring him to New Orleans later that night and pick him up approximately 10;15 the next morning. He also stated that upon the completion of these festivities in New Roads he transferred Mr. Dukes to his residence again in Baton Rouge so that Mr. Dukes could prepare to travel to New Orleans.*

*You can stop me at any time when you see city business being conducted.*

**He also stated that he transported Mr. Dukes to the Ace Hotel in New Orleans later that night. He stated that after bringing Mr. Dukes' bags up to his room, he was relieved of his duty.**

**He stated that he drove back to his residence in Fordoche, Louisiana and stated that he left his residence at approximately 7:00 a.m. and headed to New Orleans to pick up the Mayor and his girlfriend. Upon arriving in New Orleans he was told by the Mayor that they'd be ready in about 45 minutes. He stated that Mr. Dukes came into the vehicle and was asked to be transported to the Houston a different hotel. He stated that approximately 30 minutes later the Mayor returned and asked that he and his girlfriend be transported to Landry's Seafood for lunch and Landry's Seafood after lunch stayed there for 2 to 3 hours.**

**After that lunch he was asked to bring them to Bourbon Street. Stated that they arrived in the French Quarter at approximately 3:30 and parked the vehicle at the intersection of Iberville and Royal Street.**

**He then escorted all three individuals there was another third lady now that had joined the party. He transported them all to Bourbon Street. The officer stated that while escorting the party he overheard the two ladies speaking about cones. Stated that he was unaware at the time of what that meant but later determined that the conversation was about the smoking of marijuana. The officer stated that long after that conversation one of the ladies that was in the car approached a male and solicited what he believed to be marijuana. The officer stated that he and the Mayor walked into the Walgreens corner of Iberville Street and Royal Street and stated that upon he and Mr. Dukes returning to the vehicle the two ladies began smoking what he believed to be marijuana solicited from the unknown male subject.**

**He stated that the Mayor then sat in the front of the Mayor's unit and was handed the substance the two ladies were smoking. Officer then stated that Mr. Dukes began to smoke the marijuana right in his face.**

**Stated that the party must have able to read the expression on his face because one of the ladies immediately stated that "Don't worry this happens all the time the other driver who I will not name does this stuff all the time." Okay.**

**So this is not the first time this happened. According to these statements the officer stated that Mr. Dukes and the party went to the hotel Monteleone and the Mayor and the ladies were escorted to Ricks Cabaret. If you don't know that Rick's Cabaret is a gentleman's club where people take their clothes off and dance. Alright.**

**Stated then he was transported to one of the ladies was transported back to her vehicle at Landry's Seafood. The next day he reported to his supervisor Captain Stringer and Chief McDonald of the incident that took place. When asked if the New Roads Police had launched a separate investigation the officer said he did not know. When asked what the response was the officer stated that Capt. Stringer and Chief McDonald stated that they would speak to the Mayor and remove him from the Mayor's detail. After all of this this has been turned over to the LA Attorney General's office.**

**So Mayor when you made the statement that to our city attorney and you asked him if you had done anything illegal and the city attorney told you he didn't know if you had done anything illegal as long as you're conducting city business you have nothing to worry about. Well I don't see in any of this any city business and if its not illegal and if its not up to this body right here to determine if its legal or illegal. But if its not illegal it damn sure ought to be.**

**Because this is a blatant misuse of city funds. It's a you've made a mockery of what we're truing to do here and I think you owe the people an explanation and a vote to not override this veto is saying that you condone this type of behavior and that's not what I what the council is here for.**

**So having said that I welcome any other comments.**

**Mr. Kellerman stated “Mayor I have a question. Do you dispute the statement from the officer? Do you agree with this or is it true or not true?”**

**Mayor stated “I’m gonna let ya’ll have your discussion. I’m here to officiate. I’ll just say that anyone can present allegations against any body that’s sitting in any of these chairs at any time but you have to prove any allegations that you make against any citizen of the United States and if something has been proven then I’ll talk further but this is allegations and this is ya’lls discussion.**

**Mr. Kellerman stated “So you’re denying it”.**

**Mayor Dukes stated “I don’t have anything else further to offer to this”.**

**Mr. Kellerman stated “So you’re not confirming its true and you’re not denying it. Accurate. Can you let us know if you used a city credit card to pay for the hotel room or was it your personal card.**

**Mayor Dukes stated “I think you know the answer to that”.**

**Mr. Kellerman stated “I do not that’s why I’m asking”.**

**Mayor Dukes stated “I have not used any city funds any city funds”.**

**Mr. Kellerman stated “So its paid for with personal credit cards”.**

**Mayor Dukes stated “I have not used any city funds you know the answer to that and the city needs to know that I have not used any city funds”.**

**Ms. Nelson commented that “I have one thing to say I can only speak I can only speak for myself. I’ve been in this community my whole life. I’m a educator, I’m a school teacher if anybody knows anything about discrimination its me and its my family a lot of you all know we al know justice isn’t just and freedom isn’t free. But we gonna leave that up to the good saviour Jesus Christ to judge but if somebody’s doing something wrong that is against the city for myself. I’ve been**

**After requesting that the ordinance be deferred to the next meeting so that the language in the ordinance be researched, Ms. Nelson offered a substitute motion. Due to lack of a second, the motion failed.**

**Motion by Mr. White and seconded by Mr. Kellerman to override the veto.**

**A roll call vote resulted as follows:**

**YEAS: Smith, White and Kellerman  
NAYS: Davis  
ABSTAIN: Nelson  
ABSENT: None**

**On a vote of 3-1-1-0, the motion failed.**

**Kenneth St. Romain – Discussion of possible grant to repair the park area in front of the church**

**Mr. St. Romain appeared before the council to request the city’s support for improvements at Kiwanis Park and a grant application to secure funding for said improvements.**

**Motion by Mr. Kellerman and seconded by Ms. Nelson.**

**RESOLVED, That the city support the Kiwanis Club in this endeavor.**

On a vote of 5-0-0-0, the motion carried.

**Marcus Daisy – Clarification of insurance requirement for park rental**

Mr. Daisy requested clarification of the city’s ordinance that states that the “City of New Roads may require the user of city parks to furnish public liability and property damage insurance, naming the City as the insured, in such amounts as reasonably necessary to provide recompense for personal injury or death or property damage to a member of the public as result of the event or activity; execute an indemnity and/or hold harmless agreement; and/or made a reasonable security deposit or provide a bond”.

Mr. Daisy feels that the public should be allowed to utilize the parks without having to secure coverage.

Ms. Nelson offered a motion to allow all the children in the city to utilize the parks and for the city to pay for the insurance. Due to lack of a second, the motion failed.

The insurance requirement was waived for Mr. Daisy’s one-time event.

**Presentation by Cedric Floyd of Data Center, LLC on redistricting of the city council based on the 2020 Census**

Cedric Floyd of Data Center presented a proposal to perform the 2020 Redistricting Plan for the New Roads City Council Districts.

The council requested a fee schedule and tabled the matter until the next meeting.

**Discussion of request from LA Office of Community Development to waive civic center rental fee for Pecan Acres Subdivision meeting**

Motion by Ms. Nelson and seconded by Mr. Davis.

RESOLVED, That the request be approved.

The motion was unanimously carried.

**Ratification of appointments to Historic District Commission**

Motion by Mr. Smith and seconded by Ms. Nelson.

RESOLVED, That the appointments be ratified.

The motion was unanimously carried.

**Appointment to Historic District Commission**

Motion by Ms. Nelson and seconded by Mr. Davis.

RESOLVED, That the appointment be approved.

The motion was unanimously carried.

With no further business to come before the council, the meeting adjourned at 7:31 p.m.

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**Cornell Dukes**  
**Mayor**

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**Lynette H. Nelson**  
**Secretary-Treasurer**