

STATE OF LOUISIANA  
PARISH LAFOURCHE

AN EMERGENCY MEETING OF THE LAFOURCHE PARISH COUNCIL, PARISH OF LAFOURCHE, STATE OF LOUISIANA, WAS CALLED AND HELD ON FRIDAY, MAY 30, 2008, AT 2:00 P.M., AT THE LAFOURCHE PARISH COUNCIL BARRIOS CENTER, 1612, HWY. 182, SUITE 100, RACELAND, LOUISIANA.

The Lafourche Parish Council was duly convened as the Governing Authority of said Parish by Mr. Michael Delatte, Chairman, who then stated that the Lafourche Parish Council was ready for the transaction of business at 2:00 p.m.

Proceedings of the meeting were called to order with the following:

**PRESENT:** Mr. Jerry Jones, Vice-Chair  
Mr. Michael Delatte, Chairman  
Mr. Matt Matherne  
Mr. Lindel Toups  
Mr. Phillip Gouaux  
Mr. Rodney Doucet  
Mr. Daniel Lorraine  
Ms. Charlotte Randolph, Parish President

**ABSENT:** Mr. Louis Richard  
Mr. Joseph "Joe" Fertitta

Chairman Delatte announced that the invocation would be led by Mr. Rodney Doucet. The Council then recited the Pledge of Allegiance led by Mr. Phillip Gouaux.

### PUBLIC WISHING TO ADDRESS THE COUNCIL

The first item on the Emergency Agenda was Public Wishing to Address the Council. Chairman Delatte asked three times if there was anyone from the public wishing to address the Council; with no one responding he moved on to the next item.

### RESOLUTIONS

The next item on the Emergency Agenda was a resolution approving the Parish President's appointment of Dr. John King to serve as Lafourche Parish Coroner until a Special Election is held on October 4, 2008 and November 4, 2008, and authorizing the Parish President to sign, execute, and administer all relevant documents. A **motion** was offered by Mr. Toups and seconded by Mr. Lorraine.

Mr. Gouaux asked what the October 4th and November 4th dates were; with several members of the Council replying that it was in case of a run-off election.

President Randolph expressed that she felt that it was necessary to explain the current emergency situation to the Councilmen, and that she knew that this was very unorthodox. She began by saying that it all started earlier in the morning when they had discovered that the two Deputies, whom Administration had been relying upon to cover until the Council would have made the official approval of Dr. King, were not officially signed in with the Secretary of State's office. President Randolph explained that no one had

ever done the necessary documentation, in that they were appointed seven or eight years ago. She said that their concern of them not being officially named by the Secretary of State was that they would not have anyone to fill the position until the meeting of Tuesday, June 3rd, which was originally planned. President Randolph continued by saying that they had spoken with the Governor's Office, asking if perhaps the Governor could have appointed someone in the interim, but he could not, and that he now has to call a special election because of the resignation. She went on to say that they had also spoken with the head of the Coroner's Association and with the District Attorney's Office, receiving conflicting information from them; in that the Coroner's Association had said that they probably will not be jailed if they did not appoint someone. President Randolph then mentioned that there was a State Law that states that "for public health and safety" that we must always have a Coroner's Office open and manned. She said therefore their last resort was to ask the Council to have an emergency meeting in order to appoint Dr. King; saying that he was ready to be appointed and that he was currently at work. President Randolph explained that Mr. Vernon Rodrigue, the Clerk of Court, will go to swear him in, if the Council approves him, and then file the proper documents for him. She said that once he appoints some Deputies that Administration will also take care of submitting the information to the Secretary of State, so they will not be in this situation again.

Mr. Lorraine asked President Randolph with Dr. King being appointed, if he could still run for that position. President Randolph replied that they did check with the Secretary of State, yes. Mr. Lorraine said that was the only concern he had because he had not seen too many people wanting to run for Coroner in Lafourche, maybe in other Parishes. He commented that he would then be eligible to run, in that he may be the only one that may put in his name.

Mr. Gouaux asked if the emergency meeting was justified under that pretense; with President Randolph replying by saying "under public health and safety, yes". Mr. Gouaux then questioned how, saying that dead people can not pose any threats. President Randolph replied by explaining if something should happen this weekend, if some major tragedy happens, that they were just protecting themselves in the event.

Mr. Toups asked if the Coroner had to be a Doctor; with President Randolph replying as yes. He then commented that he would make a deal with them, in that he would vote for Dr. King, but he did not want him to perform on him first and that he wanted to go a few more years, requesting that it be put in writing.

Mr. Matherne asked how the Coroner is compensated, how was he paid. President Randolph replied that the Parish pays the Coroner and the expenses of the office. Mr. Matherne then asked if it was salaried or if it was case by case. President Randolph explained that it was salaried, being only about \$25,000 a year, and that it generally is an addition to a regular medical practice. Several Councilmen then made comments, saying that it was being on call all hours, all the time, and it being 24 hour call. President Randolph briefly reiterated that the Parish Government pays all the expenses.

Mr. Toups asked what would happen if they could not get a hold of the Coroner to go pronounce someone dead, would somebody else then go. Several Councilmen had replied; Chairman Delatte explained that the Deputy can actually pronounce them dead, being over the phone or radio; with President Randolph adding as long as there was another medical person assisting. Mr. Toups then commented that the Coroner does not actually have to be there; with President Randolph as no, in that he was correct. President Randolph further stated that the Coroner signs the Death Certificates.

Discussions and examples of prior situations ensued in regards to deaths and the times waited. Further discussions and explanations then ensued in regards to the appointment of the Coroner and of the Deputy Coroners.

The resolution then *carried* by a vote of (7) yeas, (0) nays, and (2) absent, that being of Mr. Richard and Mr. Fertitta.

**RES. NO. 08-168      APPOINTMENT - DR. KING - CORONER**

## **ADJOURNMENT**

On **motion** by Mr. Lorraine and seconded by Mr. Doucet, and with no further business, the **Lafourche Parish Council Emergency Meeting** held on **May 30, 2008** *adjourned* at *2:11 p.m.*

MICHAEL F. DELATTE, CHAIRMAN  
LAFOURCHE PARISH COUNCIL

CARLEEN B. BABIN, COUNCIL CLERK  
LAFOURCHE PARISH COUNCIL