

Minutes
Public Hearing
115 N. Thomson, Iowa, LA 70647
January 12, 2026 at 7:00

Mayor Douglas Watkins opened the Public Hearing at 7:00pm.

There was present, Mayor Watkins; Council Members Joe Becnel, Julie Fontenot, Gerald Guidry, Daniel Hennigan, and Vernessa Guillory; Town Attorney Russ Stutes; Town Clerk Cynthia Mallett; Chief of Police Keith Vincent; About 11 persons.

Mayor Watkins announced that they would hear questions and comments on the following Ordinances. The first is Ordinance 2026-01, An Ordinance Imposing a Moratorium for a period of Ninety (90) days on the granting of all permits for Mobil Homes in the Town of Iowa, Louisiana. He asked if there were any questions or comments. A citizen asked if he could explain what it meant. Mayor Watkins said that it is a period of time given so that he and council members could go through the ordinance to see if there is something that needs to be tweaked a little bit. She asked if that was any mobile home. Mayor Watkins confirmed any mobile home in the city limits.

Mayor Watkins announced the next one: Ordinance 2026-02 An Ordinance fixing meeting place, days, and time for Mayor and Town Council. He asked if there were any questions or comments. He announced that the meetings will continue the second Monday of the month at the same time, 7:00pm.

There were no further comments. Mayor Watkins closed the public hearing at approximately 7:02 pm.

Minutes
Regular Meeting
115 N. Thomson, Iowa, LA 70647
January 12, 2026

Mayor Watkins and Town Council met in Regular session this date in compliance with all requirements as to notice.

Mayor Watkins called the meeting to order at 7:02pm.

Mayor Watkins called roll. Present: Mayor Douglas Watkins; Council Members: Gerald Guidry, Julie Fontenot, Daniel Hennigan, Joe Becnel, and Vernessa Guillory. A quorum was established.

Also, present were Town Clerk Cynthia Mallett; Town Attorney Russell Stutes III; Chief of Police Keith Vincent and about 11 people.

Invocation was said by Council Member Joe Becnel, followed by the pledge.

It was moved by Daniel Hennigan, seconded by Vernessa Guillory to adopt the agenda. The motion passed unanimously.

It was moved by Vernessa Guillory, seconded by Joe Becnel to approve minutes, as submitted, for regular meeting December 8, 2025 and special meeting December 22, 2025. The motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Watkins invited guest, Reese "Skip" Broussard, Candidate for State Representative for District 37 to come forward. Mr. Broussard addressed the Mayor and Council Members. He introduced himself and stated the reasons he decided to run for the open seat of the 37th District, which was vacated by Mr. Troy Romero. Mr. Broussard thanked them for having him.

Mayor Watkins announced that next item there will be a report of finance. Town Clerk Cindy Mallett gave the monthly and year-to-date financial report. She asked if there were any questions. Ms. Zelia Washington asked when the town's annual budget comes around. Cindy Mallett answered that it begins July 1st and ends June 30th. There were no further questions.

Mayor read item #3. He asked if there were any questions. There were no questions. It was **moved by** Daniel Hennigan, **seconded by** Julie Fontenot, upon the recommendation of Engineer, Beau Desormeaux III, to accept and award the qualified low bid of \$550,000.00 to Dezigner Construction and Consulting, LLC for the CDBG-DR 2020-2021 project, Wastewater Lagoon and City Park PS Upgrades. The motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Watkins announced the next item on the agenda, Ms. Belinda Sias to come forward. Ms. Sias came forward. She explained that on West Ally there are about seven people that live down this road. She said the town came to install and repair the water and sewer lines and damaged the road. She requested the town black top her road. Mayor Watkins said that the town could not currently spend tax dollars on a private road. Council Member Julie Fontenot asked Ms. Sias for details on the reason the town was on her property making repairs to the water and sewer lines. Ms. Sias explained that after the hurricane she moved a house and later a trailer on the property. The town came to install the utility lines and had to tear up the road to install the lines. Town Attorney asked Ms. Sias how long ago the last time the town went on the property was to make repairs to the utility lines. Ms. Sias could not remember. Mayor Watkins said it was about two years ago when the town installed the water and sewer lines for her house. There were discussions about the ownership of the road and there is traffic with others using the road. Mayor Watkins suggested she turn the road over to the town then the town could legally repair it. Ms. Sias declared that she didn't want to give the road to the town. There was discussion between the Council Members and Town Attorney of the expenditure of public funds on private property. Mayor Watkins suggested at this point that he would request the council get back with him with what you want to accomplish and how to go about it legally.

Mayor Watkins announced the next item on the agenda, Ms. Singleton, for Violation of Town Ordinance, to come forward. Ms. Singleton came forward and stated she received a letter from an attorney to appear. She explained her situation and that she doesn't feel safe. She explained all the crime that has occurred in the neighborhood. Mayor Watkins gave the history of the waiver she received from the council two years ago. He explained that she received a certified letter letting her know the town doesn't allow two trailers on one property. Further discussion was had between Ms. Singleton, Mayor Watkins, and Council Members about the situation. Mayor and Council decided that they would give her time to move the mobile home. They decided that they will contact her in May to come into City Hall and the information will be relayed to the council members.

Mayor Watkins announced the next item on the agenda, Ms. Zelia Washington, 306 S. Bowers. Ms. Washington came forward. She explained that it was brought to her attention that the house had been adjudicated for taxes and explained the history of the cause of the adjudication. She said she was on the list for the demolition program. Town Clerk Cindy Mallett told her that the house could not be demolished by the grant program because there is not a clear title. Town Attorney Russ Stutes said that all required notification has been done to demolish the structure and that Ms. Washington is responsible for the cost of the demolition. Town Clerk Cindy Mallett explained the process for the demolition if Ms. Washington doesn't demo it herself. She said that the town would invoice her for the cost of demolition and if the invoice isn't paid within four to six months a lien would be placed on the land. Ms. Washington agreed for the town to contract the demolition, and she would pay the town. It was **moved by** Daniel Hennigan, **seconded by** Julie Fontenot to order demolition of 306 S Bowers Avenue, Iowa, LA 70647. Motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Watkins read the next item on the agenda and asked if there were any questions or comments. None were made. It was **moved** by Daniel Hennigan, **seconded** by Joe Becnel upon the recommendation of Building Code Inspection Service, LLC, Rodney Richard, notify owner of condemnation hearing for Parcel #00724823B, 408A S. Welty Ave., Iowa, LA . The motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Watkins read the next item on the agenda. It was **moved** by Daniel Hennigan, **seconded** by Julie Fontenot to approve Cooperative Endeavor Agreement Between the Calcasieu Parish Police Jury and the Town of Iowa for the purpose of distributing commodity food boxes for the benefit of the citizens of Calcasieu Parish. The motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Watkins read the next item on the agenda. Motion to adopt Ordinance 2026-01, An Ordinance Imposing a Moratorium for a period of Ninety Days (90) on the granting of any permits for mobile homes in the Town of Iowa. Mayor asked if there were any questions or comments. Council Member Daniel Hennigan said he is opposed to that. It was **moved** by Joe Becnel to adopt Ordinance 2026-01, An Ordinance Imposing a Moratorium for a period of Ninety Days (90) on the granting of any permits for mobile homes in the Town of Iowa. Julie Fontenot questioned who would be doing the adjustment on the ordinance of the mobile homes. Mayor Watkins explained that what he anticipated was that it would be brought to you guys and red lining it and sending it back and forth to see if we can tighten it up. He said that is what this is all about. The motion was **seconded** by Julie Fontenot. The motion passed.

ORDINANCE 2026 - 01

An Ordinance Imposing a Moratorium for a period of Ninety (90) Days on the granting of all permits for Mobile Homes in the Town of Iowa, Louisiana

WHEREAS, the Town of Iowa, Louisiana continues to review and revise its planning efforts to continue the enhancement, growth, and quality of life for its citizens; and

WHEREAS, it is necessary for the Town to temporarily halt all Mobile Home permits while certain reviews and discussions on current ordinances are made to properly plan for the location, quantity and quality of Mobile Home Developments, including, but not limited to, a revision to the Code of Ordinances of the Town of Iowa, Louisiana.

THEREFORE, the Iowa Town Council is imposing a Ninety (90) day moratorium which expires on April 12, 2026.

THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the Mayor and the Iowa Town Council of the Town of Iowa, Louisiana, that:

1. There is hereby declared, effective the 12th day of January 2026, a moratorium in the Town of Iowa on the permitting of Mobile Homes, including variances for age of mobile homes, acceptance of application for the development or moving of a Mobile Home, or in any other such unified development, whether in whole or part of a Mobile Home development plan.
2. This moratorium shall not affect or impact any Mobile Home development/moving permit which have, on or prior to January 12, 2026, received from the Town of Iowa.
3. All laws, regulations and ordinances inconsistent herewith are temporarily suspended or superseded by this Ordinance until this Ordinance is revoked or amended by further action.
4. The Town Council may make an exception to the moratorium only for mobile homes used as rental properties for landlords that have not had any written demand letters for the past three (3) years on

the violation of current ordinances; and the mobile home is a replacement mobile home, code compliant, and falls within the current ordinances.

5. The Town inspection and permitting department shall enforce this ordinance by not issuing any new permits for Mobile Homes in the corporate limits of the Town of Iowa while this ordinance remains in effect.

The above ordinance was adopted at a duly convened meeting on motion of Joe Becnel, seconded by Julie Fontenot, upon a vote taken as follows:

YEAS: Joe Becnel, Julie Fontenot, Gerald Guidry, Vernessa Guillory

NAYS: Daniel Hennigan

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

WHEREUPON, the presiding officer declared the above Ordinance duly adopted on the 12th day of January, 2025.

DOUGLAS N. WATKINS, MAYOR

I certify that the above ordinance was presented to the Mayor by me on the 13th day of January 2025.

CYNTHIA MALLETT, TOWN CLERK

I, acknowledge receipt of the above ordinance from the Town Clerk on this 13th day of January 2025.

DOUGLAS N. WATKINS, MAYOR

I, hereby approve the above ordinance on this 13th day of January, 2025

DOUGLAS N. WATKINS, MAYOR

I certify that the above ordinance was received by me from the Mayor on this 13th day of January 2025

CYNTHIA MALLETT, TOWN CLERK

Mayor Watkins read the next item on the agenda and asked if there were any questions or comments. There were no comments or questions. It was moved by Daniel Hennigan, seconded by Julie Fontenot to adopt Ordinance 2026-02, An Ordinance fixing meeting place, days, and time for Mayor and Town Council. The motion passed unanimously.

ORDINANCE No. 2026-2
**AN ORDINANCE FIXING MEETING PLACE, DAYS, AND TIME FOR
MAYOR AND TOWN COUNCIL**

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Town Council, pursuant to law, desire to fix and publish the place, days and time for regular meetings of the Mayor and Town Council.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED that Town of Iowa Mayor and Town Council meetings shall be held at 115 N. Thomson Avenue in City Hall Meeting Room on the second Monday, at Seven O'clock p.m., of each and every month of the calendar year 2026 and shall be designated and published in accordance with law for the official meeting day of the Mayor and Town Council for the Town of Iowa, Louisiana.

THUS DONE AND INTRODUCED at a regular meeting of the Mayor and Town Council for the Town of Iowa, Louisiana, held on the 8th day of December, 2025.

After a public hearing was held on the above ordinance, the title having been read and the ordinance considered, on motion by Daniel Hennigan, seconded by Julie Fontenot to adopt the ordinance, a record vote was taken, and the following result was had:

YEAS: Daniel Hennigan, Julie Fontenot, Vernessa Guillory, Gerald, Guidry, and
Joe Becnel

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

WHEREUPON, the presiding officer declared the above ordinance duly adopted on this 12th day of January. 2026

APPROVED:

NEAL WATKINS, MAYOR ATTEST:

CYNTHIA MALLETT, TOWN CLERK

Mayor Watkins announced that he failed to make the comments he wanted to make at the beginning of the meeting. He read a letter that would be posted on social media. The letter was to congratulate the Iowa High School football team, coaches, and principal on the State Championship. He announced that plans are being made for the celebrations to honor these young men and their coaches.

Mayor Watkins addressed item 11 on the agenda. He talked about the recent water and wastewater rate study. He said that once we get the official letter from Louisiana Rural Water on the rate study we could possibly come down on the rates.

Mayor Watkins read item 12 on the agenda, presentation of 2024-2025 Financial Audit and Agreed Upon Procedure. He asked Cindy Mallett to report it. Cindy referred to the presented audit given to each council member. She reported that it was a successful audit stated the results. Ms. Johnson asked if it would be posted on the web site. Cindy said she would have it posted.

Mayor Watkins read item 13 on the agenda, Introduction of Ordinance 2026-03, An Ordinance Amending the FY 2025-2026 Budget for Town of Iowa, Louisiana. He asked if there were any questions. No questions were asked, no comments made.

Mayor Watkins read item 14 on the agenda, Motion to approve Resolution 2026-01, A Resolution of the Town of Iowa Creating a Recreation Advisory Committee. Mayor Watkins said a resolution had passed a

while back and this motion should be an “ask to change”. A citizen asked a question concerning the change. Council Member Daniel Hennigan explained that the logistics of the recreation advisory committee had not been ironed out. He explained how it was set out, how many members of the committee would serve, and how they would be chosen. There was discussion between the Mayor and Council Members about the number of committee members. It was **moved** by Daniel Hennigan, **seconded** by Julie Fontenot to table the item until next month. The motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Watkins announced Chief Vincent to come forward. Chief Vincent came forward and stated he had 2 recommendations for promotions. He stated the recommendations.

Upon the recommendation of Chief Vincent it was **moved** by Julie Fontenot, **seconded** by Joe Becnel to approve promotion of PFC Austin Sonnier to CPL. The motion passed with 4 YEAS and Council Member Daniel Hennigan abstained the vote. Upon the recommendation of Chief Vincent it was **moved** by Julie Fontenot, **seconded** by Joe Becnel to approve promotion of PTN Taylor Jackson to PFC. The motion passed with 4 YEAS and Council Member Daniel Hennigan Abstained the vote.

With no further business to discuss, it was **moved** by Joe Becnel, **seconded** by Julie Fontenot, to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 8:33pm.

Douglas N Watkins, Mayor

Attest:

Cynthia Mallett MMC, Town Clerk

PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Mayor and Town Council of the Town of Iowa, State of Louisiana, acting as the governing authority of the Town of Iowa, State of Louisiana, will meet on February 8, 2026 at seven (7:00) o'clock p.m., located at Iowa City Hall Meeting Room, 115 N. Thomson Avenue, Iowa, Louisiana at which time there will be a public hearing on the adoption of the below introduced ordinances:

Ordinance 2026-03

An Ordinance Amending the FY 2025-2026 Budget for Town of Iowa, Louisiana

All interested citizens will have the opportunity to give written or oral comments. Handicapped persons needing assistance or aid should contact City Hall, 337-582-3535 before the meeting.
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