

Minutes
Special Meeting
115 N. Thomson, Iowa, LA 70647
April 22, 2026

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

Mayor Watkins called the meeting to order at 6:00pm.

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

Also, there were present Town Clerk Cynthia Mallett; Chief of Police Keith Vincent and about 18 people.

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

It was **moved by** Daniel Hennigan, **seconded by** Julie Fontenot to amend agenda to add:

- a. Motion to add Willie Thomas from part-time patrolman to full-time patrolman as Senior Corporal. Motion passed unanimously.
- b. Motion to approve hire of Joseph Aymond as Senior Corporal. Motion passed unanimously.

It was **moved by** Daniel Hennigan, **seconded by** Julie Fontenot to Adopt the amended agenda. The motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Watkins read the first item on the agenda and asked Town Clerk to elaborate further on this item. Cindy Mallett explained that Phase I drainage project of Southland Estates has been completed and the final billing was due. She also stated that CPPJ Drainage Trust Fund contributed funds for the construction of this project. She stated the engineer has recommended the project be accepted as completed. Mayor Watkins asked if there were any questions. No questions were asked. No comments were made. It was **moved by** Daniel Hennigan, **seconded by** Joe Becnel to accept Southland Estates Drainage Improvements Phase I as complete. The motion passed unanimously.

Upon the recommendation of Chief Vincent, the following motions were made:

- a. It was **moved by** Julie Fontenot, **seconded by** Vernessa Guillory to hire Emily Martinez as part-time dispatcher. The motion passed unanimously.
- b. It was **moved by** Daniel Hennigan, **seconded by** Joe Becnel to transfer Willie Thomas from part-time patrolman to Full-Time Senior Corporal. The motion passed unanimously.
- c. It was **moved by** Daniel Hennigan, **seconded by** Julie Fontenot to hire Joseph Aymond as full-time senior corporal. The motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Watkins read the second item of the agenda. He asked if there were any questions. Council Member Julie Fontenot asked if the same schools as last year would be included and when would it be signed. Town Clerk said yes, it is the same schools, and it will be signed upon the approval of the Council. It was **moved by** Julie Fontenot, **seconded by** Joe Becnel to approve the CEA by and between Calcasieu Parish Police Jury and Town of Iowa for the purpose of the Summer Food Service Program. The motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Watkins read the fourth item on the agenda. It was **moved by** Julie Fontenot, **seconded by** Vernessa Guillory to enter executive session to discuss the professional competence, character, or reputation of an

individual as authorized by R.S. 42:16 and R.S. 42:17. The motion passed unanimously. The Mayor, Council, Town Clerk, and Town Attorney left the Council Room at 6:15 pm.

The Mayor, Council Members, Town Clerk, and Town Attorney came into the Council Room at 6:55 pm.

It was **moved by** Daniel Hennigan, **seconded by** Julie Fontenot to reconvene open meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Watkins read the sixth item on the agenda and asked if there were any comments. Mr. Todd Clements came forward and introduced himself to the Council as an attorney representing Ms. Johnson. He continued explaining their position in this issue and how much they oppose the suspension and termination of Ms. Johnson. Mayor Watkins thanked him for coming. Mr. Alex Doublemy came forward and gave a statement as a character witness for Ms. Johnson and the situation. Mattie Gaspard came forward. She talked about her experience when she was employed with the police department. Ms. Gaspard spoke in outbursts and was escorted out of the Council Room. No further comments were made. Upon the recommendation of Chief Vincent, it was **moved by** Julie Fontenot, **seconded by** Vernessa Guillory to terminate Asia Johnson. The motion passed with one Nay by Daniel Hennigan.

With no further business to discuss, it was **moved by** Daniel Hennigan, **seconded by** Vernessa Guillory, to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 6:57pm.

Douglas N Watkins, Mayor

Attest:

Cynthia Mallett MMC, Town Clerk