

Youngsville Chamber of Commerce Virtual Luncheon – 6/9/20

Meeting started at 12:00 pm

Thanks to our sponsors: Acadiana Bar & Grill – Offering 50% off of entrees for Lunch & Lance Beal with Beal and Hernandez, Attorneys At Law

Welcome to our new members: Coteau Custom Carts, Brown & Brown Insurance, Vital Integrators, Matt Long – GEICO Insurance, Nick Suire – Edward Jones, Acadian Pride Fragrance, Tread Connection, Davis Design & Consulting, Lagniappe Travel Agency

Scholarship Winner-Dalen Cambre, son of Sandra Cambre, CPA

Updates from Chief Rickey Boudreaux:

Happy to say the string of car burglaries has been solved. The perpetrator is currently incarcerated in Rapides Parish and once he finishes there he will be transported here to face charges.

Lock your doors! There were some attempts during the weather of Sunday night, but they were unsuccessful.

Updates from Mayor Ken Ritter:

The City of Youngsville is conducting business as usual. They decreased staffing in City Hall, but are continuing to work.

They were very concerned about the health of Youngsville's businesses, but the month of April fared well. Sales tax revenue was 12 percent higher than April of 2019 in April of 2020. Despite there being a stay at home mandate, our citizens were online shopping, cars were still being purchased, and our grocery stores were doing very well during that time period. Our fiscal year (July 1 – June 30) is up 5% from last year. Mayor Ritter will be submitting the budget for next fiscal year to the City Council at the end of the week. They want to ensure that the economic impact from the oil & gas slump and COVID can be handled by operating on a 6% reduction in budget from last year. They can always ramp up if these factors do not affect our city's economy. The mayor appreciates all for shopping local.

The State Legislature secured nearly \$6 million in upgrades for Youngsville Highway improvements. This will fund three lanes from Heart D Farm Road to the intersection of Hwy 89 and Hwy 92. That bill is before the Senate this week. Once passed, it will go to Gov. Edwards for signature.

The City reached a big milestone this past week, as they headed into hurricane season. They received a reimbursement check for \$56,000 for the Coulee LaSalle project north of Southside High School near Highland Ridge neighborhood. The property owner has also accepted a verbal offer from the City to purchase that property.

The City is also working on a fireworks event for the July 4th holiday. They recognize that is a big draw to businesses in our community. They will implement social distancing and will share details as soon as they become available.

The Mayor knows that many businesses are operating at a loss during COVID and they are trying to get things open and running as soon as possible. The Youngsville Sports Complex is the first step in this and they are opening businesses using the Safe Shop policies. The City Council approved an abatement for

water and sewer equal to the amount of the March and April bills for businesses. Youngsville.us is the web address where you can apply for this abatement. They have issued 23 credits thus far. The average credit was around \$114 and the total credit was \$2,600. They want to show that they care as a city for our businesses. Businesses have until July 31st to apply for this utility abatement. The City also relaxed the sign ordinance for 2 months (expired last Friday) so that businesses could put signs conveying they were open. PPP and the EIDL programs are available. LEDA can help or dial 311 to find out more. Mayor President Guillory has pledged to use \$850k in government funding for small business. They are waiting on HUD for this program to proceed. Be on the lookout for the kickoff of this program. Also on the horizon, is funding to help local governments with reimbursement of expenses due to COVID. Since local governments haven't spent that much, they are looking into using these funds for small business grants.

Mayor Ritter is looking to see what can be done to help the Youngsville Sports Complex and small businesses reopen and get back to work, what he can do to help small businesses get funds (with LEDA's help) and also to abate expenses for utilities to aid small businesses in surviving.

Foster Park is a leased property and the City is trying to get the park back into its hands as an asset while also trying to ascertain what the best use of that park would be.

The City is also working on a bike/walking trail as well as early voting being an initiative. The Mayor is trying to get an early voting site at the LaNeuille Library in conjunction with Broussard so our residents can vote closer to home.

The much awaited sidewalk project from Iberia Street to Waterview Apartments will begin soon running in front of the Post Office. It will be a 6 foot sidewalk.

Josh Carlson could not make it today, but Jessica gave a brief update from him. Road overlay projects to be completed in 2020. Savoy Road, Romero Road

Mayor Ritter also stated that the Chemin Metairie/Savoy Road Roundabout Traffic Management Plan has been completed and will be bid out soon, so the City is moving ahead with two roundabouts in two years.

They are also adding an additional 200 parking spaces to the Sports Complex.

Tonight is the first night of the adult league for Sugar Beach and last night was the first night of games for baseball, softball and tee-ball.

Mayor Ritter also welcomed some new businesses who are coming to the area soon:

Racks BBQ & Catering, Rollin Smoke, Lourdes Urgent Care, El Paso Mexican Restaurant, Huya Coffee and Pizzaville USA, Great American Cookie, & Marble Slab who will be in the Sugar Pointe Center Complex. The City also has good prospects for the Royville Development and landscaping was put in this past weekend at that location.

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Lance Beal stated if you are seeing a slowdown in the third quarter, and experiencing difficulties, please give him a call. They can help renegotiate leases for you and help you get through this time.

Thanks to our speakers Chief Boudreaux and Mayor Ritter.

Jessica Willis, Executive Director of the Chamber also asked that you please call her if she can be of assistance to you in any way at 337-451-5862.