

**TOWN OF ARNAUVILLE
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
DECEMBER 16, 2014**

POLICE DEPARTMENT REPORT

I wish to inform the Council of the pending resignation of Dispatcher Janice Morrison effective December 30 of this year (2014). Ms. Morrison worked five (5) months as a full time employee. Ms. Morrison felt that it was time for her to leave due to personal issues. A copy of her letter of resignation is attached.

Also attached is a copy of a letter by Ms. Dianna Richard. As you know the last day of Ms. Richard's employment will be this Friday, December 19, 2014. Ms. Richard has offered her services, after the first of the New Year, to be available to fill in for any shift at her current rate of pay. I have contacted Mr. Richey Haik with a question as to whether Ms. Richard can be used as a "contract laborer" whenever she fills in or if she must be listed as a part time employee. Currently if a Dispatcher misses work due to illness or vacation the other three (3) Dispatchers must cover the hours missed by working overtime. This means that we are not only paying for the time the employee misses but also time and one half for the employees who must cover. Should this recommendation be approved, the Police Department would be able to save the "half time" cost when Ms. Richard would relieve. A copy of her letter offering her service is attached.

I wish to seek the approval of the Council for the hiring of two (2) people, on a provisional six (6) month basis, at a rate of \$8.56 per hour. The six (6) month time is for me to gather information on each of their performance. The two new Dispatchers are Ms. Yvonne Howe and Ms. Norma Jean Breaux. Both of these Dispatchers will be working the night rotation, one replacing Ms. Richard and the other Ms. Morrison.

Now that the computer server is installed, the Department has taken the necessary steps to have the LEMIS program for report writing and the LACRASH program for auto accident reports installed. We had hoped to have both programs up and running in a relatively short period of time; however, with the approaching holidays I was informed that the installation of both would have to wait until the first quarter of next year. Note that even after the installation a training period for the Officers and Dispatchers will have to follow. Sorry that I cannot give you further information but rest assured that I will do so as we progress.

The new Ford Explorer is currently at the St. Martin Parish Sheriff's Department Fleet Maintenance division where they are in the process of having the accessories (lights,

sirens, and cage) installed. St. Martin Fleet Maintenance will also be receiving our decals and they will be placing them on the vehicle as well. The Dodge Charger is at Hub City Ford having its doors painted white. Once this job is complete, and the Ford Explorer is ready to be sent back to us, we will have the Charger sent to St. Martin for the necessary work required.

We have decided to place our French slogan "Prêt à protéger, fier de servir" which I pointed out means, "Ready to Protect, Proud to Serve" on all four (4) of our Police Equipped Vehicles. I struggled with the wording and thought seriously about having the slogan written in our Arnaudville dialect; however, the more I researched the more I found that some of our words can be different from those used of Cecilia, Sunset, Krotz Spring, or other towns in our Acadian homeland. With that in mind, and not wanting to offend other areas, it was decided to go with the France French translation. Understand that our vehicles will be seen in other towns and cities in the area and the correct spelling will be fully understood by visitors to our lovely town. I wish to point out that having this slogan in French will set a precedence. No other agency in our State has a French slogan on any of their law enforcement vehicle, or any of their other vehicles, to my knowledge.

We recently hired a POST certified law enforcement professional at a rate of \$11.90 per hour. This Officer is a replacement to Officer Craig David whom we lost at the end of September. I wish to ask the Council to approve the hiring of Officer James Bell on a 6 month provisional basis, after which he will be evaluated for performance.

Although we do not have a replacement Patrolman in the event of illness or vacation, as we might should my request to use Ms. Richard for the Dispatcher relief be approved, I recommend that the Council approve the hiring of an additional Officer for that purpose as well. As with the Dispatchers, any illness or vacation taken by one Officer must be covered by the remaining Officers at time and one half. As I pointed out at the last meeting, there was a possibility of another Patrolman leaving; however, I have since learned that it may not happen as early as expected. Be that as it may, having another Patrolman on our force would alleviate the forced overtime necessary to cover the shifts when an Officer resigns and while we are in the interview process for a replacement. Once again, an extra Officer would give us greater flexibility with scheduling.

I have been told that I must advertise prior to the hiring of any personnel. I did not advertise in the local newspapers but I did on the Arnaudville Police Department website as well as through social media (facebook). When I first took office I had no applications for any position within our Department and, per being informed, I did advertise in the local newspaper. The result of that expense was negative. I now advertise on the website that was created by my spouse and paid for by me. The results of that advertising, at no cost to the Town, has been five (5) applications submitted for Officer and four (4) applications for Dispatcher. Those applications resulted in the hiring of the three people that you will approve tonight. Not all the applications I received were from people in the area where our newspapers cover.

Some applications came from as far away as Baton Rouge. The Arnaudville Police Department website and facebook page are effective -- not only in getting applications, but informing the public. I have done so in the past and wish to once again urge the Council to consider a website for the Town of Arnaudville. Currently 9 out of 12 (75%) municipalities in St. Landry Parish have developed and launched websites. Minutes of Council meetings, notices, advertising for personnel, information related to tourism and other important information could be posted on that website. Links to other parish, state and federal sites could be provided to the user. It could be expanded for use in paying utility bills and/or taxes.

Statistics from our Department for the month of November were: 3 Citations issued, 17 FIC's written, 105 MIC's written, 3 Arrests, and 179 calls for service.

It is my honor to name the "Employee of the Month" for the Department. This person has done an outstanding job during the past month. This is especially true even though this employee was preparing to leave. She could have had an attitude that she would lay back and do the minimal duty necessary to complete her time. Instead, she has been instrumental in training the newly hired dispatchers and has never complained. It is my pleasure to give the award certificate as well as a gift certificate from the Little Big Cup for this month's Employee of the Month, Ms. Dianna Richard.

This concludes the Arnaudville Police Report.

Respectfully submitted,

Eddy J. LeCompte, Chief of Police