

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Kate Schneiderman

Office of Councilman-at-Large Arnie Fielkow

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City Council Sets Special Election for October 20, 2007

Election to Fill Vacant At-Large Council Seat; Qualifying Period is September 4-6

New Orleans, LA (August 15, 2007) – Today, the New Orleans City Council officially set the Special Election to fill the seat recently vacated by former Councilman-at-Large Oliver Thomas for October 20, 2007. The Resolution calling the election, which passed 5-0, also set the qualifying period for all candidates for September 4-6, 2007. A run-off election will be held, if necessary, on November 17, 2007.

Council President Fielkow comments, “Today the City Council continued its conduct of the city’s business by formally setting October 20th for the Special Election to fill the vacancy on the City Council. The Council acted swiftly and efficiently in a unified way and will continue to perform its duties and represent all citizens of New Orleans.” He continued, “The Special Election is set for the same time as the Louisiana gubernatorial and state legislative elections, thereby hopefully allowing for the best possible voter turnout.”

The election date was approved by the Louisiana Secretary of State, the Attorney General and the Commissioner of Elections.

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NEWS RELEASE

Board of Review Appeal Process for Property Owner Appeals Set to Begin

(New Orleans - September 6, 2007) – Today, the New Orleans City Council, acting in their capacity as the Board of Review, has announced that its contractor, Frilot, L.L.C., has begun the process of administering the Board of Review appeal process for property owner appeals from the recent revised property tax assessments. Frilot, L.L.C. has reviewed most of the 5000 plus individual appeals that were filed and has begun to organize those appeals for the review process.

All appeals hearings will take place between September 17 and October 15 before qualified hearing officers, many of whom will be experienced local realtors. Each tax payer filing an appeal will be provided with a toll free number to reschedule a hearing if given a hearing date that is inconvenient. It is planned that all residential appeal hearings will be held in the New Orleans Superdome, at the Club Level, courtesy of the Louisiana Superdome. Parking will be free at the Superdome. Given the space provided by the Superdome and the number of hearing officers available, it is anticipated that no tax payer should have to spend more than one (1) hour at the Superdome on their appeal.

All property owners who filed timely appeals from their property assessments will shortly receive a letter, giving them the details of the process of reviewing their appeal. This will include the date, time and location of the hearing on their appeal, and instructions on what to bring to the appeal.

Arnie Fielkow, president of the New Orleans City Council stated, “The City Council, in their legally mandated capacity as the Board of Review, is committed to ensuring a timely and equitable appeals process. We urge citizens undergoing an appeal to look for the forthcoming letter detailing their appeals process and to visit the website next week to receive the most up-to-date information. It is our hope that property owners with appeals will find this upcoming process to be straightforward, transparent and fair.”

Following the appeal hearings, the hearing officers who hear each appeal will make their recommendations. These recommendations will be gathered by Frilot, L.L.C. and given to the Board of Review. The Board of Review will schedule a date in mid-October to act upon these recommendations.

Kerry Miller, Partner with Frilot, L.L.C. added, “Frilot has experience and expertise in the handling of mass disputes and is pleased to be able to partner with the Board of Review on this important matter. We will aim to provide the best services to the citizens of New Orleans.”

Following the Board of Review’s action on each appeal and after consideration of all of the recommendations of the hearing officers, a notice letter will go to each tax payer appealing, giving the results of the appeal, and informing the tax payer of the right to appeal further to the Louisiana State Tax Commission if necessary. Each tax payer will be provided with the Louisiana Tax Commission regulations and forms necessary for any further appeals. Detailed information about the process and a schedule of the appeal hearings will be posted by next week at www.NewOrleanstaxappeal.com. Tax payers are encouraged to review this site on a regular basis for updated information.

Board of Review Appeals Hearing Schedule Posted at www.NewOrleanstaxappeal.com Property Owners Asked to Check Website for Appointments

(New Orleans - September 12, 2007) – The Board of Review has begun posting the schedule for appeals hearings by property owners from the recent revised property tax assessments on its website www.NewOrleanstaxappeal.com.

All property owners who filed timely appeals from their property assessments should be receiving a letter giving them the details of the process of reviewing their appeal. This includes the date, time and location of the hearing on their appeal, and instructions on what to bring to the appeal. Property owners can also go to the website for information on their respective appointment.

All appeals hearings will take place between September 17 and October 15 before qualified hearing officers, many of whom will be experienced local realtors. Each tax payer filing an appeal will be provided an email address and a toll free number to reschedule a hearing if given a hearing date that is inconvenient. All residential appeal hearings are being held in the New Orleans Superdome, at the Club Level, courtesy of the Louisiana Superdome. Parking will be free at the Superdome. Given the space provided by the Superdome and the number of hearing officers available, it is anticipated that no tax payer should have to spend more than one (1) hour at the Superdome on their appeal.

Following the appeal hearings, the hearing officers who hear each appeal will make their recommendations. These recommendations will be gathered by the Board of Review's contractor, Frilot, L.L.C., and given to the Board of Review. The Board of Review will schedule a date in mid-October to act upon these recommendations at a publicly noticed meeting in the City Council Chamber at City Hall.

Following the Board of Review's action on each appeal and after consideration of all of the recommendations of the hearing officers, a notice letter will go to each tax payer appealing, giving the results of the appeal, and informing the tax payer of the right to appeal further to the Louisiana State Tax Commission if necessary. Each tax payer will be provided with the Louisiana Tax Commission regulations and forms necessary for any further appeals. Tax payers are encouraged to review the website on a regular basis for updated information.



Council Expected to Reaffirm a Roll-Down of Property Tax Millage Rates Vowing Not to Balance the City's Proposed 2008 Budget On the Financial Back of Citizens and Businesses

Supports Stepped-Up Recovery with Careful Budget Deliberation & Management

News Release

October 31, 2007

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New Orleans, LA - October 31, 2007 - At its regular Council meeting on Thursday, the New Orleans City Council is expected to reaffirm its resolution passed late last summer to roll-down property tax millage rates making certain that an undue financial burden is not placed on taxpayers - as the Council is poised to hold budget hearings to review the City's proposed 2008 Budget.

The Council is poised to begin its month-long review of the City of New Orleans Budget, which must be adopted by the Council by December 1st. As the Council's first order of business on Thursday, Mayor C. Ray Nagin is scheduled to present the City's Proposed 2008 Budget to the Council. The Council is expected to pledge its support, guidance and authorization to step-up the recovery but will clearly state its intention that recovery efforts will not be conducted on the financial backs of the city's citizens and businesses. Hearings are scheduled throughout the month of November.

According to Council Budget Chairman Cynthia Hedge-Morrell, the council is fully supportive of a quicker recovery pace but will move with careful review and management oversight of the proposed 2008 City Budget staying a deliberate course of recovery and rebuilding for New Orleans.

Hedge-Morrell said, "This budget process will fully complement the recovery effort. Our number one priority is to recover, rebuild and grow the New Orleans economy. The City Council is united in its efforts to move the city's recovery and rebuilding efforts forward in 2008. We stand committed to conduct a complete and thorough budget review when hearings begin on November 8, 2007."

The Council offered its position that it did not intend to roll forward property tax millages last summer after it received preliminary estimates indicating that the total value of assessed property within the city has substantially increased.

The council is required by the Louisiana Constitution to adjust millage rates downward to a level which would yield revenue equal to the prior year's revenue and is permitted subsequently to adjust millage rates up to the rates levied in the prior year. The Council resolution passed in August states the council's desire to maintain the millage rates at the downward-adjusted level this year, wherever it is legally permissible to do so without impairing public health and safety and vital services of the city.

Hedge-Morrell went on to say, "We know that our reality post Katrina is high insurance, high utilities, high rents and we must be mindful of the cost of living for citizens who live here, citizens who have lived here and want to return - and for those people interested in locating in the city in the future."

New Orleans City Council

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The City Council is comprised of five district and two councilmembers-at-large. Council President and Councilmember-at-large Arnie Fielkow; Council Vice-President and Councilmember-at-Large Michael C. Darnell; Council District "A" Shelley Midura; Council District "B" Stacy S. Head; Council District "C" James Carter; Council District "D" Cynthia Hedge-Morrell; and Council District "E" Cynthia Willard-Lewis.



Joint Jefferson-Orleans Parish Council Delegation Wraps Up Successful Meetings with Congressional Leaders

Group Optimistic Federal Officials Will Act to Fully Fund Critical Needs in the Region

News Release

October 31, 2007

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Washington, D.C. - October 31, 2007 - New Orleans Councilmen-at-large Arnie Fielkow and Michael C. Darnell together with Jefferson Parish Council Chairman Tom Capella concluded a series of successful meetings on Tuesday with key Congressional leaders in Washington, D.C. The regional delegation leaves the Capital encouraged by the support voiced by Congressional leaders.

"We made great progress on Capitol Hill this week, and I am optimistic the federal government will meet its obligation to fill the funding shortfall in the Road Home program," says Councilman Fielkow. "Coming to D.C. as a cohesive regional voice demonstrated that Southeast Louisiana is working together to make our home better and stronger than pre-Katrina. The pressing needs of our community transcend parish lines and it was important for Congress to understand that we are working together for the betterment of the region."

Fielkow continues, "Many thanks go to Senator Mary Landrieu and her staff for spearheading these key meetings and for her tremendous support of all Jefferson and Orleans Parish legislative priorities."

"The reception that we received on Capitol Hill was very positive and I am confident that the Leadership will begin to quickly address the pressing regional issues we discussed," says Councilman Michael C. Darnell.

"Specifically, our delegation outlined top priorities for the region including, fully funding the Road Home program, ensuring the full implementation of a 100-year storm protection system, and securing federal dollars to address the challenges we face in mental health and criminal justice."



Councilman Capella comments, "I think we had a very successful trip. The recovery has not been forgotten in Washington, but 2008 is a critical year for us. It was important for the nation's leaders to hear us speak in one voice. We need to take advantage of every opportunity for this type of coordination in the future."

During their day in Washington, Councilmen Fielkow, Darnell and Capella met with key leaders in the House and Senate including: Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV), Senator Patty Murray (D-WA), Senator Debbie Stabenow (D-MI), Senator Richard Durbin (D-IL), Senator Jack Reed (D-RI), Senator Pete Domenici (R-NM), Senior Staff of the Senate Homeland Security Committee, Senior Staff of Senator John Kerry's office, and Representatives Rodney Alexander (R-LA) and Charlie Melancon (D-LA).

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City Council Joint Statement: Resignation of District Attorney Eddie Jordan

News Release

October 30, 2007

Email Contents

City Council Joint Statement
Interview Scheduling

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New Orleans, LA - October 30, 2007 - Mr. Eddie Jordan, Jr. has resigned from his position as District Attorney, effective tomorrow. The Council of the City of New Orleans thanks him for his service and his ongoing efforts alongside his criminal justice system colleagues to make New Orleans a safer city.

In the interest of public safety, the City Council is dedicated to the effective and uninterrupted functioning of the District Attorney's Office. Toward that end, we offer our full support to the Acting District Attorney until such time as a new District Attorney is duly elected.

Unfortunate circumstances frequently compel change, and transitions can be challenging. Throughout this process, the Council is committed to making New Orleans a better, safer and stronger city.

Councilmember James Carter, Council District "C," will be the spokesperson from the New Orleans City Council today on this issue. He will be available for interviews immediately following today's announcement. To schedule an interview contact Councilmember Carter's Director of Legislation and Communication, Kimberly Parker at (504) 658-1030 or email kmparker@cityofno.com.

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New Orleans City Council: Joint Statement Regarding Judgment Rendered Against Orleans District Attorney

News Release

October 26, 2007

Email Contents

City Attorney's Legal Opinion

Quick Links

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New Orleans, LA - October 26, 2007 - The City Attorney's legal opinion issued today confirms that the City has no legal responsibility for the payment of the outstanding judgment against the Orleans District Attorney. (See opinion below)

Further, we reiterate the point made in the resolution passed at yesterday's City Council Budget Committee meeting. This Budget Committee resolution will come up for consideration by the full council on November 1, 2007. In light of the recent committee action, it is anticipated that the resolution will pass.

City Attorney's Legal Opinion

October 26, 2007


Opinion Number: 07-06

Re: Judgment against Orleans Parish District Attorney - City's Responsibilities

Opinion Request Number: 07-10-08

Dear Councilmember Fielkow:

We are in receipt of your request for an opinion regarding the responsibilities of the New Orleans City Council and the City of New Orleans in funding the judgment rendered against the Orleans Parish District Attorney.



Our office has reviewed the judgment rendered in this case, and we note that it is not against the City of New Orleans. In fact, the City was originally named as a defendant in this litigation and was voluntarily dismissed by the plaintiffs. Further, after review of the federal and state statutes and jurisprudence, our research reveals that the City of New Orleans has never been required to fund any judgments rendered against the Orleans Parish District Attorney or any other state official.

Please call me to discuss this issue if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Penya M. Moses-Fields

City Attorney

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Announcement

October 26, 2007

JOB FAIR

- WHAT:** Community Job Fair
- WHO:** The Central City Partnership (CCP), the 6th District Police and Councilmember Stacy Head (District B)
- WHEN:** Friday, November 2, 2007; 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
- WHERE:** Allie Mae Auditorium
2020 Jackson Street (enter on Philip St.)
- PARTICIPANTS:** Home Depot, Job 1, Police Department, Fire Department, Lowes, McDonald's and many more
- CONTACT:** Barbara Lacen-Keller
(504) 658-1022
blacenkeller@cityofno.com
- Evelyn Green
(504) 258-4328
ebby227@netzero.net

This Partnership between the CCP, the 6th District Police, Councilmember Stacy Head and the community is an effort to assist in the development of a work force that will be a catalyst for the revitalization of the neighborhood - reducing crime and providing a vibrant quality of life for individuals and families.

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October 19, 2007

Dear Community Stakeholder,

Tax Incremental Financing (TIF) is an important tool in the continued economic recovery and growth of the City of New Orleans. The City Council is ever mindful of the paramount importance of this issue in our community - especially as our neighborhoods rebuild.

The City Council is reviewing the mayor's proposal and will approve a TIF policy that sets standards, defines eligibility, and reviews and monitors applications. Our goal is to adopt a policy by the end of the year. Our purpose in this communication is to request input and suggestions on a proposed TIF policy being offered by the Mayor's Office.

Since you are an important stakeholder in the successful and ordered recovery and redevelopment of New Orleans, we value your input and ask that you take a moment to comment on this vital economic development issue. You may view the **Mayor's Office Proposed TIF Policy** on the City Council's web site at www.neworleanscitycouncil.com.

Please direct your suggestions and comments by November 20th, to the City Council Fiscal Office, Calvin Aguillard (504) 658-1093 cjaguillard@cityofno.com and/or Barbara Avalos (504) 658-1092 btavalos@cityofno.com, fax (504) 658-1100.

The Council knows clearly that Tax Incremental Financing (TIF) must be granted and administered with objective standards and is an important tool in economic development policy. As the Council, together with the Administration, moves forward with developing a comprehensive economic development policy we hope you will take part in this important dialogue.

We thank you for your interest and look forward to receiving your input.

Sincerely,

Arnie Fielkow

Arnie Fielkow
City of New Orleans
Councilmember at-Large

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News Release

October 15, 2007

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The City Council to Consider Recommendations on Tax Appeals at October 18, 2007 Meeting

New Orleans, LA - October 15, 2007 - The City Council, Acting as a Board of Review, will consider recommendations on appeals from property assessments at its regularly scheduled meeting on Thursday, October 18th at 10:30 a.m. in the New Orleans City Council Chamber at City Hall.

Property owners who appealed to the Board of Review do not need to attend the Council meeting on October 18th to find out the results of their appeals. Because of the appeals numbering 6000, it will not be possible to review appeals on an individual basis during the Council meeting. However, immediately following the Council meeting, the Board of Review's determinations will be posted at www.NewOrleanstaxappeal.com. **Property owners can also call 1-800-918-1024 to find out the Board of Review's determinations of their appeals beginning on October 19, 2007.**

Following the recent property tax assessments issued by the seven Orleans Parish Assessors, 6,000 property owners filed appeals of their tax assessments to the Board of Review. Because of the unprecedented volume of appeals, the Board of Review contracted with Frilot L.L.C., a New Orleans law firm, to handle the appeals. In prior years, the Board of Review usually handled less than 50 appeals. The residential appeals were heard in the Louisiana Superdome between September 17, 2007 and October 15, 2007 before qualified hearing officers, many of whom are experienced local realtors. Following the appeal hearings, Frilot L.L.C. gathered the recommendations made by the hearing officers and will be presenting their recommendations to the Council, acting as the Board of Review.

By the end of October, each appealing taxpayer will receive a letter giving them the results of their appeal and informing the taxpayer of their right to appeal further to the Louisiana Tax Commission. Each taxpayer will be provided with the Louisiana Tax Commission regulations and forms necessary for any further appeals in this letter. **Appeals to the Louisiana Tax Commission must be filed within 10 days of receiving the letter.** The Louisiana Tax Commission regulations and forms are also available at www.NewOrleanstaxappeal.com.

New Orleans City Council

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Council to Adopt 2008 City Operating Budget

News Release

November 29, 2007

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New Orleans, LA - November 29, 2007 - After a month-long review of the City of New Orleans Operating Budget, the City Council is expected to formally adopt the 2008 Budget at its regular meeting beginning Friday morning.

The budget to be approved by the Council is expected to reflect support, guidance and authorization of a stepped-up recovery but will differ from the Nagin Administration's budget blueprint as presented on November 1st.

The City Council's action will reaffirm a council resolution passed late last summer to not roll forward property tax millage rates, making certain that an undue financial burden is not placed on taxpayers. The Council stated its position that it did not intend to roll forward property tax millages last summer after it received preliminary estimates indicating that the total value of assessed property within the city had substantially increased.

The Council is required by the Louisiana Constitution to adjust millage rates downward to a level that which would yield revenue equal to the prior year's revenue and is permitted subsequently to adjust millage rates up to the rates levied in the prior year. The Council resolution passed in August states the Council's desire to maintain the millage rates at the downward-adjusted level this year, wherever it is legally permissible to do so without impairing public health and safety and vital services of the city.

Budget Committee Chairman District "D" Councilmember Cynthia Hedge Morrell, led the council's budget process, saying the council has had to make some tough decisions, but has been clear from the beginning of this process that certain priorities would be funded to the best of the Council's ability.

"Since conclusion of the budget hearings, we have been working to attain a consensus that works for every citizen of New Orleans - ever mindful of continuing a deliberate course of recovery. We have funded public safety, transparency in government and important recovery and infrastructure items," said Councilmember Hedge-Morrell.

According to President and Councilmember-at-Large Arnie Fielkow, "During this month-long process we intended to send a clear message through our budget priorities that New Orleans supports all our current, returning and new residents and businesses. To that end, we are emphasizing full funding for public safety, the office of the Inspector General, both short-term and long-term economic development, and improving the City's accountability to our citizens through better customer service practices."

Councilmember Fielkow continued, "Our budget priorities are proof that this City Council is committed to having the community and government working together to foster an equitable and progressive environment necessary for a full recovery, growing economy and dynamic community."

Councilmember-at-Large Jackie Clarkson, joining the budget process this week immediately after being sworn-in, emphasized her council colleagues commitment to open and transparent government.

Councilmember Clarkson said, "I am in favor of full funding of the Inspector General's Office and the Ethics Review Board. I support removing future budget bureaucracy hurdles for the Office of the Inspector General and reinforcing our commitment to transparency in government."

According to District "A" Councilmember Shelley Midura, the budget philosophy that was put forth was to prioritize items and programs that have high returns on investment, whether that return is in the form of revenue, social benefit, or cleaner, more efficient, well-managed government.

"Our goal is a lean budget and bang for the buck. Funds for the office of the Inspector General, criminal justice reform implementation, and code enforcement are a must and they should all reap dividends beyond the dollar figures we allocate to them," said Councilmember Midura

District "B" Councilmember Stacy Head, discussed the resolve of the council through the budget process, to ensure that recovery and rebuilding stays on track and that the administration is fully accountable to the recovery plan it has laid out.

Councilmember Head said, "The budget that will be adopted is fiscally responsible and focused on assuring the achievable goals are reached. It will contain fund reserves to assure that the administration meets set goals. We intend to be a partner with the administration, but along the way we will hold complete and thorough budget reviews and performance standard checks."

District "C" Councilmember James Carter, Chairman of the Criminal Justice Committee, reiterated his intent to support appropriate funding for all components of the criminal justice system, along with funding for the implementation of best practices that will bring about reform and increased accountability from all departments.

"This Council is committed to making our criminal justice system fairer and our communities safer. We will continue to work systematically to implement innovative best practices and improve public safety, and I am looking forward to working closely with the Inspector General to create a just and equitable criminal justice

system. We also recognize the importance of addressing quality of life issues - blight, streets, drainage, overgrown lots, lighting - through this budgetary process. Public safety and quality of life issues will ultimately determine whether the citizens of New Orleans choose to remain in our great city," said Councilmember Carter.

During the budget process, District "E" Councilmember Cynthia Willard-Lewis, along with her council colleagues, continued recognition of the reality of post-Katrina life in New Orleans.

"During the budget review process, as a united City Council, we continued to root the recovery of this great city in its neighborhoods. It is time for us to start implementing the plans that were created by the citizens. It was imperative that we put our resources where they are needed most. I think we accomplished that. I continue to support a fair and equitable distribution of resources to all parts of the city and strengthening those departments that provide essential city services, recovery assistance, and crime prevention. We still have many challenges ahead and we must confront them head on," Councilmember Willard-Lewis said.

Budget presentation and comprehensive testimony was offered to the City Council by the heads of city departments and other municipal agencies throughout the month of November. The council is fully supportive of a quicker recovery pace but during the budget process has moved with careful review, management and oversight of the proposed 2008 City Budget, with the goal of staying a deliberate course of recovery and rebuilding for New Orleans.

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Councilmember-At-Large-Elect Jacquelyn Brechtel Clarkson To Take Oath of Office on Tuesday November 27th

News Release

November 26, 2007

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New Orleans - November 26, 2007 - Councilmember-at-large-elect Jacquelyn Brechtel Clarkson is scheduled to be sworn in at 8:45 a.m. on Tuesday, November 27, 2007 in the Council Chamber.

The Secretary of State has indicated that his office will issue the councilmember-elect's commission at 8:00 a.m. on Tuesday morning, allowing the oath to be administered at the earliest possible time allowed under state law. The swearing-in will immediately precede the City Council's budget hearing, scheduled to start at 9:00 a.m. A ceremonial reenactment will be held at a later date to be announced.

Councilmember-elect Clarkson requested that the oath be conducted in this manner allowing her to officially participate in the budget hearing process on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday leading up to the adoption of the city's operating budget by the full Council on November 30, 2007. Due to hiring procedures, organizational requirements and the Thanksgiving holiday, Clarkson's council office will officially open Monday December 3, 2007. Beginning at 9:00 a.m. constituents may contact the office at (504) 658-1070.

Clarkson is the first City Councilmember to be elected to three non-consecutive terms (1990, 2002, and 2007) since the Mayor-Council form of government was enacted in 1954.

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Joint Council Statement: 2008 Presidential Debate Site Selection

Statement **November 20, 2007**

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New Orleans - November 20, 2007 - The Presidential Debate Commission's reasoning for passing on New Orleans as a debate site is not justifiable. Post Katrina, New Orleans has twice successfully hosted its signature events - Mardi Gras and Jazz Festival and will host the Sugar Bowl, the College Football National Championship, Mardi Gras and the National Basketball Association's All-Star Game - all within a six-week period early next year. Our willingness to pay for related debate expenses coupled with our capabilities with regard to hotel rooms and a proven record of being America's host city is unrivaled.

This was a clear missed opportunity for our nation's presidential candidates to be present in a city that is experiencing the reality of all of the challenging issues facing every American city.

New Orleans and its citizens are dealing with public safety and crime issues, education, healthcare delivery, housing shortages, high utility costs, infrastructure challenges and employment and labor shortages - all issues debated everyday by potential presidential candidates.

Given the national attention and support that New Orleans has received in its efforts to recover and rebuild - this decision comes as a surprise and a disappointment.

It is unfortunate that our nation will not be given the opportunity to view the presidential debate in a forum that is the best suited for a discussion of relevant issues facing our country. We urge the commission to reconsider its decision.

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Joint Council Statement: 2008 Presidential Debate Site Selection

Statement

November 20, 2007

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Council Statement: Firefighter Longevity Pay Raises Litigation

Statement

November 1, 2007

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New Orleans, LA - November 1, 2007 - The City Council will not make a determination at this time to appropriate funds for additional city firefighter longevity pay raises until appeals in the firefighters' litigation are brought to a final conclusion. The City Attorney's position is that recent judgments of the civil district court have deprived the city of financial credits to which it was entitled under previous rulings of the Louisiana Supreme Court and the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals.

Today, the City Council took action requesting that the City Attorney seek an expedited appeal of these matters in order to resolve all remaining issues as quickly as possible. While the appeal is pending, the City Council Budget Committee will vigorously explore options to bring firefighters and other first responders' salaries in line with the southern regional average.

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City Council President and Mayor Lead Joint Council-Administration Customer Service Task Force

News Release

November 19, 2007

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New Orleans - November 19, 2007 - City Council President and Councilmember-at-Large Arnie Fielkow is spearheading a joint Council-Administration Customer Service Task Force to improve citizen experience and enhance accountability at City Hall. The Task Force is a collaborative consisting of the Mayor's Office of Public Advocacy, the City Council Staff Offices and City Government Departments.

Councilman Fielkow comments, "First and foremost the Task Force's goal is to deliver greater accountability for citizen issues at City Hall. Our challenge is to stop the duplication, and often ineffective, delivery of services to citizens. This Task Force will comprehensively address both of these issues with technology, enhanced collaborative communication among Council offices, the Administration and city departments, and public outreach efforts."

The Customer Service Task Force is actively pursuing budget options, volunteer involvement, technology integration and public and community outreach alternatives to implement City Hall "Best Practices" Customer Service with the goal of improving and enhancing the delivery of public services.

Among the options being discussed to improve customer service are:

- Establishing City Hall Customer Service Information Booths staffed with volunteers. The volunteers would greet and direct visitors offering general information and assistance in locating specific city departments.
- Strengthening the Mayor's Office of Public Advocacy to be a "one-stop shop" model for information relative to all City Departments.

- Designation and training of Customer Service Staff Representatives in each City Department dedicated solely to responding to citizen inquiries and ensuring resolution of issues. The representatives will work in cooperation with the Mayor's Office of Public Advocacy and City Council Staff.
- Enhancement and comprehensive use of technology as a customer service tool, using City Hall information kiosks; consistent tracking and reporting information available to the customer service task force collaborative; use of the City's MIS system to integrate into the most citizen utilized departments of City government.

The joint Council-Administration Customer Service Task Force was established by a Council resolution and has recently concluded its second meeting. The Task Force is targeting early 2008 to begin a phased-in implementation of the initiative.

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Joint Council and Mayoral Statement Regarding Judgment Against District Attorney's Office

News Release

November 15, 2007

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New Orleans - November 15, 2007 - The City Council and the Mayor consulted with the City Attorney in executive session regarding the judgment against the office of the District Attorney and the garnishment which was served on the City of New Orleans.

The public should know that the City is fully committed to maintaining the prosecutorial functions of the Criminal Justice system. We are engaged with all stakeholders in an effort, if possible, to find an expeditious and mutually beneficial resolution.

Furthermore, we urge the plaintiff's attorneys to participate in this process and to discontinue their counter productive threats of closing down the District Attorney's office, an act which would be detrimental to all New Orleanians.

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New Orleans City Council to Address Regional Approach to City's Curbside Recycling Program and Consider Re-establishing Acute Healthcare Delivery in the East

News Release

November 14, 2007

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New Orleans - November 14, 2007 - At Thursday's regular meeting, the New Orleans City Council is expected to introduce and vote on a resolution in support of a regional approach to the city's curbside recycling program and will consider authorizing matching funding for a feasibility study to look at the re-establishment of acute health care delivery in New Orleans East.

Council Taking Regional Approach to Curbside Recycling

Councilmember-at-Large Arnie Fielkow, Councilmember-at-Large Michael Darnell and District "B" Councilmember Stacy Head formally requested the Regional Planning Commission (RPC) take up the recycling issue.

Councilmember-at-Large Arnie Fielkow said, "Together with my Council colleagues on the Regional Planning Commission we pushed for this important issue to be addressed at a regional level. A comprehensive recycling program for New Orleans is needed and we must all look for ways to provide cutting edge service, keep costs down and work with our governmental neighbors to address critical issues facing our community."

Councilmember-at-Large Michael Darnell said, "As a council, we fully support a city solid waste recycling program - and we believe that program's primary component should be curbside recycling. We also clearly recognize the efforts made in this area by Jefferson Parish and embrace the benefits of regional management of solid waste curbside recycling."

The Regional Planning Commission (RPC) has committed to conducting a joint parish recycling program feasibility study. The RPC study will investigate cost-sharing benefits and is expected to be complete within 60 days.

Council Focusing on Restoration of Healthcare in New Orleans

The City Council is expected to consider authorizing \$500,000 from the City's Economic Development Fund be transferred to the Orleans Parish Hospital Service District for a healthcare feasibility study. Specifically, the proposed study will determine the costs and scope of services needed to re-establish an acute healthcare facility in New Orleans East. The issue will be taken up on November 28, 2007 in the Special Council Economic Development Committee meeting.

District "E" Councilmember Cynthia Willard-Lewis said, "We know that delivery of healthcare services in the city is in dire need of improvement. This measure is another option for the Council to explore as we work to improve healthcare services for citizens."

The funds under consideration in the Council resolution would match a grant provided to the City by the Methodist Health System Foundation. Along with the Council, the New Orleans Health Department, in collaboration with the newly established Orleans Parish Health Service District Commission, is looking at ways to bring back an acute healthcare facility to east New Orleans.

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NOLA Council News

November 30, 2007

Vol. 1, No. 1

Council Adopts 2008 City Operating Budget

(November 30, 2007)



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The budget approved by the Council reflects support, guidance and authorization of a stepped-up recovery but differs from the Nagin Administration's budget blueprint as presented on

November 1st.

The City Council's action reaffirmed a Council Resolution passed late last summer to not roll forward property tax millage rates, making certain that an undue financial burden is not placed on taxpayers. The Council stated its position that it did not intend to roll forward property tax millages last summer after it received preliminary estimates indicating that the total value of assessed property within the city had substantially increased.

Budget presentation and comprehensive testimony was offered to the City Council by the heads of city departments and other municipal agencies throughout the month of November. The Council is fully supportive of a quicker recovery pace but during the budget process has moved with careful review, management and oversight of the proposed 2008 City Budget, with the goal of staying a deliberate course of recovery and rebuilding for New Orleans.

For a complete News Release [click here](#).

Public - Private Partnership Models Reviewed by Special Projects and Economic Development Committee

(November 28, 2007)



The New Orleans City Council's Special Projects and Economic Development Committee reviewed plans for a new economic development model for New Orleans.

Participants included Dr. Ed Blakely, Director, Office of Recovery Development and Administration; the RAND Corporation; the Horizon Initiative and members of the local university and business communities.

Councilman Fielkow said, "The presentations are the culmination of these collaborations, but it is just the first step. All stakeholders in this effort will continue to work together to determine the appropriate public-private partnership model for New Orleans. This is an essential sign of progress in our city and hopefully represents an exciting new day for New Orleans business efforts."

In August a forum of local business leaders and economic development experts testified to best practices in economic development before the Council Committee. Following that meeting, the Council approved a Committee Resolution supporting a "best practices" assessment of how other municipalities handle economic development.

New Councilmember-At-Large Takes Oath

(November 27, 2007)



Councilmember-at-Large Jacquelyn Brechtel Clarkson took her oath of office on Tuesday, November 27, 2007 in the Council Chamber.

"I am so pleased that there was such a diverse vote. I'm proud of that and I take this seriously. Thank you from the bottom of my heart and let's go rebuild this city," said Councilmember-at-Large Clarkson.

The swearing-in immediately preceded the City Council's budget hearing. Councilmember Hedge-Morrell said, "This is an exciting day. We will swear Mrs. Clarkson in and then we are going to put her straight to work at the budget hearing."

Councilmember-at-Large Clarkson has served the citizens of New Orleans for over sixteen years. Since the Mayor-Council form of government was enacted in 1954, she is the first councilmember to be elected to three non-consecutive terms. In 1990 and 2002, Councilmember Clarkson represented Council District "C."

She is a former Louisiana legislator, representing District 102 in the Louisiana House of Representatives from 1994 - 2002. As a State Representative, she was recognized for her leadership, championing landmark legislation that focused on ethics and government reform, women's healthcare, fiscal reform, education, child protection, law enforcement, and neighborhood preservation.

Council Comments on Presidential Debate Site Selection

(November 20, 2007)



The Presidential Debate Commission's reasoning for passing on New Orleans as a debate site is not justified. Post Katrina, New Orleans has twice successfully hosted its signature events - Mardi Gras and Jazz Festival and will host the Sugar Bowl, the College Football National Championship, Mardi Gras and the National Basketball Association's All-Star Game - all within a six-week period early next year.

Our willingness to pay for related debate expenses coupled with our capabilities with regard to hotel rooms and a proven record of being America's host city is unrivaled.

This was a clear missed opportunity for our nation's presidential candidates to be present in a city that is experiencing the reality of all of the challenging issues facing every American city.

New Orleans and its citizens are dealing with public safety and crime issues, education, healthcare delivery, housing shortages, high utility costs, infrastructure challenges and employment and labor shortages - all issues debated everyday by potential presidential candidates.

Given the national attention and support that New Orleans has received in its efforts to recover and rebuild - this decision comes as a surprise and a disappointment.

It is unfortunate that our nation will not be given the opportunity to view the presidential debate in a forum that is the best suited for a discussion of relevant issues facing our country. We urge the commission to reconsider its decision.

For a complete Statement [click here](#).

14th Annual Military Appreciation Day Hosted by New Orleans City Council and Mayors Military Advisory Committee *(November 15, 2007)*



The City Council in conjunction with the Mayors Military Advisory Committee (MMAC) hosted the 14th annual Military Appreciation Day as part of its regular Council Meeting.

The Marine Band kicked-off the ceremony with patriotic melodies followed by an update by local military commanders outlining the activities of their military organizations over the past year.

During the Military Appreciation Day, the City Council took the opportunity to express its gratitude to the military for its support during Katrina, the continued recovery efforts and current impact in New Orleans as well as their incredible work overseas.

Regional Approach to City's Curbside Recycling and Acute Healthcare Delivery Addressed *(November 14, 2007)*



The Council passed a resolution supporting a regional approach to the city's curbside recycling program and will consider authorizing matching funding for a feasibility study to look at the re-establishment of acute health care delivery in New Orleans East.

Council Taking Regional Approach to Curbside Recycling

Councilmember-at-Large Arnie Fielkow, Acting Councilmember-at-Large Michael Darnell and District "B"

Councilmember Stacy Head formally requested the Regional Planning Commission (RPC) take up the recycling issue.

The Regional Planning Commission (RPC) has committed to conducting a joint parish recycling program feasibility study. The RPC study will investigate cost-sharing benefits and is expected to be complete within 60 days.

Council Focusing on Restoration of Healthcare in New Orleans

The City Council is considering authorizing \$500,000 from the City's Economic Development Fund be transferred to the Orleans Parish Hospital Service District for a healthcare feasibility study. Specifically, the proposed study will determine the costs and scope of services needed to re-establish an acute healthcare facility in New Orleans East.

The funds under consideration in the Council Resolution would match a grant provided to the City by the Methodist Health System Foundation. Along with the Council, the New Orleans Health Department, in collaboration with the newly established Orleans Parish Health Service District Commission, is looking at ways to bring back an acute healthcare facility to east New Orleans.

Council - Administration Customer Service Task Force

Spearheaded

(November 13, 2007)



City Council President and Councilmember-at-Large Arnie Fielkow is spearheading a joint Council-Administration Customer Service Task Force to improve citizen experience and enhance accountability at City Hall. The Task Force is a collaborative consisting of the Mayor's Office of Public Advocacy, the City Council Staff Offices and City Government Departments.

The Customer Service Task Force is actively pursuing budget options, volunteer involvement, technology integration and public and community outreach alternatives to implement City Hall "Best Practices" Customer Service with the goal of improving and enhancing the delivery of public services.

The joint Council-Administration Customer Service Task Force was established by a Council resolution and has recently concluded its second meeting. The Task Force is targeting early 2008 to begin a phased-in implementation of the initiative.

For a complete News Release [click here](#).

Community Job Fair in Central City

(November 2, 2007)



City Councilmember Stacy Head together with the Central City Partnership (CCP) and the 6th District Police hosted a community job fair in Central City at the Allie Mae Williams Auditorium.

Councilmember Head said of the turnout "I am so pleased to see so many people from the community taking advantage of this great opportunity and I look forward to continuing to bring events like this one to the Central City neighborhood."

The partnership between the CCP, the 6th District Police, Councilmember Stacy Head and the community is an effort to assist in the revitalization of the neighborhood with the goal of reducing crime and providing a vibrant quality of life for individuals and families.

The Community Job Fair provided New Orleans residents with an opportunity to speak with representatives from many prominent New Orleans and Louisiana-based businesses. Among the companies present at the job fair: Home Depot, Job One, Entergy, InterContinental New Orleans, Louisiana Center for Workforce Recovery, Harrah's Casino, and New Orleans Police and Fire Departments.

Joint Jefferson Parish - Orleans Council Delegation Meets with Congressional Leaders

(October 30, 2007)



New Orleans Councilmember-at-Large Arnie Fielkow and Acting Councilmember-at-Large Michael C. Darnell together with Jefferson Parish Council Chairman Tom

Capella concluded a series of successful meetings with key Congressional leaders in Washington, D.C. The regional delegation leaves the Capital encouraged by the support voiced by Congressional leaders.

"We made great progress on Capitol Hill this week and I am optimistic the federal government will meet its obligation to fill the funding shortfall in the Road Home program," said Councilmember Fielkow.

"Our delegation outlined top priorities for the region including fully funding the Road Home program, ensuring the full implementation of a 100-year storm protection system, and securing federal dollars to address the challenges we face in mental health and criminal justice," said Acting Councilmember Michael C. Darnell.

Councilmember Capella commented, "I think we had a very successful trip. The recovery has not been forgotten in Washington, but 2008 is a critical year for us. It was important for the nation's leaders to hear us speak in one voice. We need to take advantage of every opportunity for this type of coordination in the future."

For a complete News Release [click here](#).

NOLA Council News

December 28, 2007

Vol. 1, No. 2

Council Votes 7-0 to Allow Demolition and Planned Mixed Income Redevelopment of the Big Four Public Housing Complexes

(December 20, 2007)



After more than four hours of public comment, the New Orleans City Council voted 7-0 to allow demolition of the Lafitte, St. Bernard, C.J. Peete and B.W. Cooper housing developments and expressed its commitment to planned mixed income redevelopment.

Prior to the Council's vote on the motion, each side was given equal time to comment. The Housing Authority of New Orleans gave the main presentation for the proponents. Individual citizens, representatives of groups and organizations and the faith community also offered comments.

For a complete News Release [click here](#).

Councilmember-At-Large Clarkson Leads New Council Arts and Culture Committee

(December 20, 2007)



Councilmember-at-Large Jacquelyn Brechtel Clarkson leads the new Council Arts and Culture Committee. Clarkson is the chair of the new committee which addresses the revitalization of the arts and entertainment industry in post Katrina New Orleans. Specifically, with regard to the revitalization of economic development of the arts and entertainment industry the committee reviews the recommendations of the Bring Back New Orleans Commission.

Other councilmembers in the committee are District "B" Councilmember Stacy Head, District "C" Councilmember James Carter and alternate Councilmember-at-Large Arnie Fielkow.

Clarkson Swearing- In Reenactment

A swearing-in reenactment was held in the New Orleans City Council Chamber. The ceremony was held just prior to the regular Council Meeting on December 20th and included the Presentation of the Colors by the U.S. Marine Corps, the National Anthem followed by an invocation by the Reverend W.L.T. Littleton and remarks by Councilmember-at-Large Clarkson. Fourth Circuit Court of Appeal Judge James McKay conducted the swearing-in reenactment.

For a complete News Release [click here](#).

Council Receives Positive Federal Response On Its Regional Government Request for Reinstatement of Funds For Katrina Debris Removal

(December 19, 2007)



Council President, Arnie Fielkow and representatives of metro area governments signed a letter to Senator Landrieu, Senator Vitter, Congressman Jefferson, Congressman Jindal and Congressman Melancon requesting assistance to reinstate 100% federal coverage of storm related debris removal in the most severely affected parishes of Orleans, Plaquemines, St. Bernard and St. Tammany. The requested timeline for New Orleans is an additional two years.

The letter states, "We recognize that our federal government, like our citizenry, is trying to respond to an unprecedented catastrophic disaster. Both extending the time and broadening the mission are warranted by this unprecedented situation."

In a written response from Senator Landrieu's office it was stated that FEMA "acknowledged the fact that a February deadline for completion of work is untenable given the fact that there are still structures that have not yet been demolished in each of the jurisdictions that are party to this letter. They also acknowledged that the Administrator has the authority to extend this deadline for certain jurisdictions, and while the timeframe of the extension may differ for each of the parishes, we are optimistic that FEMA will grant extensions to each of the signatories."

To view complete Letter [click here](#).

Council Approves Reduction in Citizen Utility Bills

(December 18, 2007)



The Council Utility Committee recommended approval of a resolution approving Entergy New Orleans Inc.'s (ENO) request to implement a voluntary credit that will lower most customers' electric bills. The full Council formally adopted the implementing resolution at its regular meeting on December 20th.

Utility Committee Chairperson, Councilmember Shelley Midura said, "This is great news for the Holiday Season! Ratepayers in New Orleans will enjoy much needed rate relief going into the New Year. It is an example of the good things that can happen when Entergy and the City Council work together for the benefit of the entire City."

Entergy's request was prompted by the greater speed in which customers have returned to New Orleans based on its 2006 estimates developed while ENO was in bankruptcy. Due to faster rate at which citizens have returned home, ENO finds itself in the unique financial position to give back to ratepayers in the same spirit of cooperation that the Council and customers supported ENO during its bankruptcy.

For a complete News Release [click here](#).

Council Criminal Justice Committee Receives Initial Quarterly Report From Criminal Justice Leadership Alliance

(December 11, 2007)



The Criminal Justice Committee of the City Council received the first Quarterly Report from the Criminal Justice Leadership Alliance documenting the progress made thus far in the implementation of the recommendations of the Vera Institute of Justice.

This information is among the most anticipated and important information to be received this year by the City Council. "This Alliance is historic," said Councilmember James Carter, Chair of the Criminal Justice Committee. "Leaders from every criminal justice agency have signed a statement of commitment to work collectively to implement best practices to make our city safer."

This Quarterly Report will include information on alternative sanctions for low-level offenders and municipal court reforms, along with statements from key stakeholders in the criminal justice system. "Our goal is an accountable, just, transparent and efficient criminal justice system," said Carter, "one that will serve as a model for other cities."

For a complete News Release [click here](#).

City Councilmembers Attend Louisiana Recovery Authority Meeting

(December 10, 2007)



President and Councilmember-At-Large Arnie Fielkow, Vice-President and Councilmember-At-Large Jackie Clarkson, District "A" Councilmember Shelley Midura, District "D" Councilmember Cynthia Hedge-Morrell and District "E" Councilmember Cynthia Willard-Lewis attended the Louisiana Recovery Authority (LRA) meeting. They addressed the following points at the LRA Board Meeting on behalf of the entire City Council and the City of New Orleans:

The City of New Orleans Recovery Action Plan recently requested \$324 million from the State of Louisiana. We are eagerly anticipating that minimum amount. The Council wants to be clear that its position is that Louisiana Recovery Authority stay true to its original model for distribution. As the hardest hit parish, Orleans should receive 58% of all remaining funds.

We are at a critical point. Our citizens are making decisions now on their future - whether or not to reinvest in their homes based on the recovery pace of their surrounding neighborhoods. On behalf of the City, we must do all that we can to demonstrate this investment - doing our part - just as citizens are doing their part. This investment will stabilize the neighborhoods through blight eradication, commercial redevelopment, and improved public safety.

To that end, we urged the LRA to approve these funds. The next step is for the State Legislature's joint budget committee to take the appropriate action to ensure that money begins to flow into the designated parishes. Following the joint budget committee action, the recovery action plan must be submitted and approved by HUD.

For a complete Statement [click here](#).

**Councilmember Cynthia Hedge-Morrell and Recovery Director
Dr. Edward J. Blakely Host "Commercial District Development Series"**
(December 7, 2007)



District "D" Councilmember Cynthia Hedge-Morrell and Dr. Edward J. Blakely recently hosted a walking tour showcasing future and on-going development along and nearby the Gentilly-Elysian Fields Corridor as part of the "Commercial District Development Series."

Throughout the walking tour, Councilmember Hedge-Morrell and Dr. Blakely discussed the City's plan for revitalizing the corridor and its potential impact on surrounding neighborhoods and universities.

The walking tour was attended by existing and potential investors, the general public, and professional and academic community.

**The City Council Makes Its Strongest Commitment in History
To Energy Efficiency and Development of a Comprehensive
Energy Efficiency Plan for New Orleans**
(December 6, 2007)



The City Council passed a resolution making its strongest commitment in its history to energy efficiency and the development of a comprehensive and viable energy efficiency plan for New Orleans.

The resolution called for continued work through the Council Utility Committee to develop city policies to ensure robust energy efficiency practices; the integration of energy efficiency into energy resource plans at the utility and regulatory level; and providing sufficient, timely, and

stable program funding to deliver energy efficiency where cost-effective.

For a complete News Release [click here](#).

**City Council Addresses Homeless Population Challenges, Pledges Support of
Ethics Reform, Authorizes Retention of Special Counsel & Launches Program
To Promote Local Music Industry**
(December 6, 2007)



The New Orleans City Council passed resolutions addressing the challenges facing the homeless population and pledging support of ethics reform. The Council also authorized the retention of special counsel for itself and launched a program to promote the local music industry.

Addressing Challenges of Homeless Population

The City Council passed a resolution asking the State of Louisiana to postpone demolition of the State Building and old Supreme Court Building to allow time to find permanent, affordable housing for individuals living in Duncan Plaza.

District "E" Councilmember Cynthia Willard-Lewis, Co-Chairman of the Housing Committee, said, "We need more time to be able to find adequate housing for the citizens currently residing in Duncan Plaza before any demolition can begin."

"Together with my Council colleagues and other organizations and agencies of government, we are working diligently to help find permanent housing for our citizens living in Duncan Plaza. Unfortunately, this is the reality we are living post-Katrina - but this is a reality that we as a Council will vigilantly continue to address," said District "B" Councilmember Stacy Head, Co-Chairman of the Housing Committee.

Pledging Support for Ethics Reform

In anticipation of the possibility that the new Governor will call a special legislative session early next year, the City Council pledged its support of a special session to address comprehensive ethics reforms.

Council President Arnie Fielkow said, "The New Orleans City Council is unanimous in its support of ethics reform policies that protect our future. For too long the state of Louisiana has had a poor reputation relative to corruption, but Governor-elect Jindal's call for a special ethics session is a positive and encouraging step in the right direction."

Authorizing Retention of Special Counsel

The City Council unanimously passed a motion determining that it requires the services of special counsel to provide assistance in legal and policy matters in situations in which the advice and guidance of special counsel serve the Council's best interests and/or there exist or are potential conflicts between the City Council and the executive branch.

The motion authorizes the council staff to issue a Request for Qualifications to begin the competitive selection process to choose the special counsel.

Promoting Local Music Industry at City Council Meetings

The City Council launched a program which will showcase local musical talent. The Treme Brass Band kicked-off the series, designed to market and promote local entertainers through the use of New Orleans Access Television and the Council Chamber venue.

For a complete News Release [click here](#).



City Councilmembers to Attend Louisiana Recovery Authority Meeting

Statement

December 10, 2007

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New Orleans, LA - December 10, 2007 - In a Joint Statement this afternoon, on behalf of the entire City Council, President and Councilmember-At-Large Arnie Fielkow, Vice-President and Councilmember-At-Large Jackie Clarkson, District "A" Councilmember Shelley Midura, District "D" Councilmember Cynthia Hedge-Morrell and District "E" Councilmember Cynthia Willard-Lewis, who are planning to attend the LRA meeting, put forth these points that they expect will be addressed tomorrow at the LRA Board Meeting on behalf of the City of New Orleans:

The City of New Orleans Recovery Action Plan recently requested \$324 million from the State of Louisiana. We are eagerly anticipating that minimum amount. The Council wants to be clear that its position is that Louisiana Recovery Authority stay true to its original model for distribution. As the hardest hit parish, Orleans should receive 58% of all remaining funds.

We are at a critical point. Our citizens are making decisions now on their future - whether or not to reinvest in their homes based on the recovery pace of their surrounding neighborhoods. On behalf of the City, we must do all that we can to demonstrate this investment - doing our part - just as citizens are doing their part. This investment will stabilize the neighborhoods through blight eradication, commercial redevelopment, and improved public safety.

To that end, we urge the LRA to approve these funds. Next, we respectfully request that the State Legislature's joint budget committee immediately convene to take the appropriate action to ensure that money begins to flow into the designated parishes. Following the joint budget committee action, the recovery action plan must be submitted and approved by HUD.

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City Council Addresses Homeless Population Challenges, Pledges Support of Ethics Reform, Authorizes Retention of Legal Counsel & Launches Program To Promote Local Music Industry

News Release

December 6, 2007

Contents

- Addressing Challenges of Homeless
- Pledging Support of Ethics Reform
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New Orleans, LA - December 6, 2007 - Today, the New Orleans City Council passed resolutions addressing the challenges facing the homeless population and pledging support of ethics reform. The Council also authorized the retention of legal counsel and launched a program to promote the local music industry.

Addressing Challenges of Homeless Population

The City Council passed a resolution asking the State of Louisiana to postpone demolition of the State Annex Building to allow time to find permanent, affordable housing for individuals living in Duncan Plaza.

District "E" Councilmember Cynthia Willard-Lewis, Co-Chairman of the Housing Committee, said, "We need more time to be able to find adequate housing for the citizens currently residing in Duncan Plaza before any demolition can begin."

The Council, the Mayor's Office and various other agencies and organizations are working in tandem on this issue. In addition to the Council's request to the State of Louisiana for additional time to identify permanent housing, several Council committees are looking at a variety of options to assist the homeless population.

District "B" Councilmember Stacy Head, Co-Chairman of the Housing Committee, acknowledges that this is a monumental task that will not be accomplished overnight.

"Together with my Council colleagues and other organizations and agencies of government, we are working diligently to help find permanent housing for our citizens living in Duncan Plaza. Unfortunately, this is the reality we are living post-Katrina - but this is a reality that we as a Council will vigilantly continue to address," said Councilmember Head.

Pledging Support of Ethics Reform

In anticipation of the possibility that the new Governor will call a special legislative session early next year, the City Council pledged its support of a special session to address comprehensive ethics reforms. The Council will also seek the advice of the Inspector General, the City Ethics Review Board, and the local community to develop recommendations for ethics reform at the local and state level, and forward those to the Legislature and Governor.

Council President Arnie Fielkow assured the commitment of the entire Council to work cooperatively with the new Governor and the new Legislature on behalf of ethics reform.

Council President Arnie Fielkow said, "The New Orleans City Council is unanimous in its support of ethics reform policies that protect our future. For too long the state of Louisiana has had a poor reputation relative to corruption, but Governor-elect Jindal's call for a special ethics session is a positive and encouraging step in the right direction."

He continued, "Louisiana is poised to become a center of economic activity and strong ethics policies will reinforce this effort. The City of New Orleans stands in full support of these efforts and pledges to work with the state to enhance and enforce ethics reform at all levels."

The Council has already gone on record supporting comprehensive measures to improve ethics laws and provide greater transparency in government operations. The Council created an independent Office of Inspector General and funded that office and the City's Ethics Review Board with an initial appropriation of \$3.43 million.

Authorizing Retention of Special Counsel

The City Council unanimously passed a motion determining that it requires the services of special counsel to provide assistance in legal and policy matters in situations in which the advice and guidance of special counsel serve the Council's best interests and/or there exist or are potential conflicts between the City Council and the executive branch.

The motion authorizes the council staff to issue a Request for Qualifications to begin the competitive selection process to choose the special counsel.

The Council emphasized that the City Attorney's Office routinely provides excellent legal services to the City Council and that the special counsel will in no way or at anytime serve as the chief legal officer of the City.

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The City Council launched a program which will showcase local musical talent. The Treme Brass Band kicked-off the series, designed to market and promote local entertainers through the use of NOA-TV and the Council Chamber venue.

During today's meeting, the Treme Brass Band played an original song, via taped broadcast. Beginning in January, entertainers will perform the National Anthem, substituting the current music and video that is played prior to council meetings.

NOA-TV will produce the monthly music video that will be shown prior to the start of the first Council meeting of each month. Following the taped performance, the featured group or performer will be live in the chamber to take a bow. In addition to the exposure on government access television, a professional DVD of the performance will be presented to each group.

Throughout the year, Councilmembers will make recommendations regarding the appearances of performers. The program was initiated by Faubog St. John resident Vivian Cahn who approached Council President Arnie Fielkow with the proposal to showcase the great musical talent of New Orleans.

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The City Council Makes Its Strongest Commitment in History To Energy Efficiency and Development of a Comprehensive Energy Efficiency Plan for New Orleans

News Release

December 6, 2007

Contents

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Authority

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New Orleans, LA - December 6, 2007 - The City Council has passed a resolution making its strongest commitment in its history to energy efficiency and the development of a comprehensive and viable energy efficiency plan for New Orleans.

The resolution calls for continued work through the Council Utility Committee to develop city policies to ensure robust energy efficiency practices; the integration of energy efficiency into energy resource plans at the utility and regulatory level; and providing sufficient, timely, and stable program funding to deliver energy efficiency where cost-effective.

Council Utility Committee Chairman, District "A" Councilmember Shelley Midura, is encouraged about the direction the city is taking citing this resolution and the City Council's unqualified support of the National Action Plan for Energy Efficiency and the Vision for 2025.

Implementation of a Comprehensive Energy Efficiency Plan

The implementation of a comprehensive energy efficiency plan could have far reaching impact on the citizens of New Orleans. Consider these recent statistics. According to some estimates, making cost-effective energy efficiency resources available to the public may assist in meeting fifty percent or more of the expected energy load growth nationally. This could yield energy bill savings of over \$100 billion annually by 2025. Energy savings exceeding 900 billion kilowatts/hour, the equivalent to over 50 gigawatts of power (or more than 100 500 megawatt power plants) over 20 years could result in over \$500 billion of total net savings, as well as reductions in greenhouse gas emissions on the order of 500 million metric tons of carbon dioxide annually. This is the equivalent of 90 billion cars off the road.

Council Utility Regulatory Authority

The Council of the City of New Orleans is the governmental body with the power of supervision, regulation and control over public utilities providing service within the City of New Orleans. Additionally, this authority gives the Council direct responsibility for fixing and changing rates and charges of public utilities and making all necessary rules and regulations to govern rates, terms and conditions of utility service in the City of New Orleans.

New Orleans City Council

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Council Votes 7-0 to Allow Demolition and Planned Mixed Income Redevelopment of The Big Four Public Housing Complexes

News Release

December 20, 2007

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New Orleans, LA - December 20, 2007 - This afternoon, after more than four hours of public comment, the New Orleans City Council voted 7-0 to allow demolition of the Lafitte, St. Bernard, C.J. Peete and B.W. Cooper housing developments and expressed its commitment to planned mixed income redevelopment.

The Lafitte complex will follow a phased redevelopment. The St. Bernard complex will follow a phased redevelopment, if workable under the plan.

The motion specified that upon completion of the redevelopment, a minimum number of units will not be demolished and will be prepared for occupancy in the next six months. Specifically, 94 interim and potentially 102 additional interim units will be prepared for occupancy at Lafitte as well as 75 interim units at St. Bernard.

The Council's motion further requested that the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the Housing Authority of New Orleans (HANO) assure immediate redevelopment following the targeted demolitions. The Council asked that HUD and HANO provide to the Council quarterly performance reports on the status of redevelopment. The Council also asked that HUD ensure equitable restructuring of the board of directors of HANO and pledged that the Council will solicit local input into the redevelopment process.

Prior to the Council's vote on the motion, each side was given equal time to comment. The Housing Authority of New Orleans gave the main presentation for the proponents. Individual citizens, representatives of groups and organizations and the faith community also offered comments.

Before action on the demolition motion was taken, the Council by a vote of 7-0 overruled the decision of the Housing Conservation District Review Committee (HCDRC), granting demolition of the Lafitte Development. HCDRC, a historic district review committee and an arm of the City's Safety and Permits Department, had previously denied the request of the Housing Authority of New Orleans to demolish the Lafitte complex. The City Council took up the issue because under the law it is the appeal body of the HCDRC.

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Councilmember-At-Large Clarkson to Lead New Council Arts and Culture Committee

*Clarkson Swearing-In Reenactment
To be Held at December 20th City Council Meeting*

News Release

December 14, 2007

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New Orleans, LA - December 14, 2007 - Councilmember-at-Large Jacquelyn Brechtel Clarkson will lead the new Council Arts and Culture Committee. Clarkson will chair the new committee which will address the revitalization of the arts and entertainment industry in post Katrina New Orleans. Specifically, with regard to revitalization of economic development of the arts and entertainment industry the committee will review the recommendations of the Bring Back New Orleans Commission. Once the Council approves the motion creating the new committee it is anticipated that members of the committee will be District "B" Councilmember Stacy Head, District "C" Councilmember James Carter and alternate Councilmember-at-Large Arnie Fielkow.

Clarkson Swearing In Reenactment

A Swearing-in Reenactment will be held Thursday, December 20, 2007 at 9:00 a.m. in the New Orleans City Council Chamber. The thirty minute ceremony will be held just prior to the regular Council Meeting and will include the Presentation of the Colors by the U.S. Marine Corps, the National Anthem followed by an invocation by the Reverend W.L.T. Littleton and remarks by Councilmember-at-Large Clarkson. Fourth Circuit Court of Appeal Judge James McKay will conduct the swearing-in reenactment.

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Notice of Public Safety Policy and Procedures Relative to City Council Meetings

News Alert

December 18, 2007

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EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY

Notice of Public Safety Policy and Procedures Relative to City Council Meetings

At the request of the Fire Marshal and Law Enforcement Agencies and in the interest of public safety, the following procedures shall be in effect for meetings of the New Orleans City Council and its committees effective immediately:

- Persons wishing to enter the Council Chamber must enter City Hall through the security entrances at Perdido and Poydras Street or any other secured entrance as may be subsequently established. Upon exiting City Hall, persons wishing to re-enter the Council Chamber must enter City Hall through the security entrances.
- Access to the Council Chamber shall be limited to the capacity designated by the fire marshal and restricted to the number of seats available in the Chamber at any given time.
- Persons shall not be allowed to stand in the aisle, nor be permitted to congregate at points of ingress and egress to the Chamber so as to impede safe egress from the building. Security personnel shall keep points of egress from the Chamber clear and unobstructed.
- All bags and persons shall be subject to search and at the discretion of law enforcement personnel, may not be permitted in the Chamber.

- Only the person recognized by the presiding officer shall be permitted to approach the podium to address the council. No congregation of persons or groups of persons shall be permitted unless authorized by the presiding officer or the Council.
- Persons addressing the Council shall give their name, address and affiliation, if any. The order of selection of speakers and time limits for speakers shall be proscribed by Council rules and regulation.
- Access to the dais area shall be restricted to those persons authorized by the presiding officer or councilmember.
- The provisions of Regulation 10 of the Rules and Regulations of the Council concerning standards for electronic coverage shall be enforced. Private video and sonic recordings shall be permitted so long as the individuals remain seated and are not disruptive to Council proceedings.
- Provisions of City Code Chapters 54-408 (Disturbing the Peace in the City Council Chamber) and 54-410 (Breach of Public Security) will be enforced.

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**Jefferson Parish
City of New Orleans, Orleans Parish
Plaquemines Parish
St. Bernard Parish
St. Tammany Parish**

December 5, 2007

The Honorable Mary Landrieu
United States Senate
724 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable David Vitter
United State Senate
516 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable William Jefferson
United States House of Representatives
2113 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Congressman Bobby Jindal
United States House of Representatives
1205 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Charles Melancon
United States House of Representatives
404 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Senator Landrieu, Senator Vitter, Congressman Jefferson, Congressman Jindal and
Congressman Melancon:

Thank you for your work to support the recovery of the New Orleans region and all of the areas affected by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. We are encouraged by the recent passage of the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA), the appropriation of an additional \$3 billion for the Road Home Program, and past legislative actions including the waiver of the match for disaster grants.

Today, we are requesting your assistance to have Congress reinstate 100% federal coverage of storm related debris removal in the most severely affected parishes - Orleans, Plaquemines, St. Bernard and St. Tammany - for a period of two additional years and Jefferson Parish for an additional three months, to allow for completion of the mission. Unfortunately, our efforts to have this basic and vital need fulfilled via normal administrative (FEMA) processes have been unsuccessful, which has motivated us to ask for legislative relief. Our communities and our citizens' lives were shattered by the hurricanes and subsequent floods as a result of problems with federally built levees. There should be an evolution in disaster aid to allow for a recovery of this magnitude from this man-made disaster.

Despite their restrictive interpretation of the debris mission, FEMA's own regulations state that one of the agency's goals is to "ensure economic recovery of affected communities to the benefit of the community-at-large." To ensure this recovery, we need continued federal coverage of the costs for debris removal which is not statutorily prohibited and is justified by many factors.

The extent of damage from Hurricane Katrina alone dwarfs previous disasters. The relief costs are approaching the total combined amount of FEMA assistance (both public and individual assistance) for fiscal years 1989-1994 (\$1.24 billion) as reported by the General Accounting Office in 1996. FEMA's figures show Hurricane Katrina's relief costs are over three times those of Hurricane Andrew. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers debris removal work for Hurricane Andrew continued for over two years in Metro-Dade County, according to the Environmental Protection Agency. Proportionately, that comparison alone could justify several more years of debris assistance for our region.

Relief is necessary also because of how long homeowners have had to wait to receive financial relief. Two and a quarter years have passed and the Road Home program continues to move slowly in paying out the grants. To date only one-third of the applicants to the Road Home have received funding. Our citizens, many of whom are still displaced, are struggling to make decisions about returning. Securing the resources necessary to rebuild has been a severe burden. An added significant expense for debris removal might be the breaking point for many who would like to return and rebuild. Many homeowners are doing their own repairs due to limited available funding. They cannot afford significantly higher hauling and disposal costs.

The federal government itself has caused challenges that justify this request. Both citizens and their local governments have had to deal with confusion caused by revolving FEMA personnel, counterintuitive regulations and inconsistent responses to questions and requests. We recognize that our federal government, like our citizenry, is trying to respond to an unprecedented catastrophic disaster. Both extending the time and broadening the mission are warranted by this unprecedented situation.

Though each of our communities has different approaches to the handling of debris removal, we are all agreed that this extraordinary catastrophe requires extraordinary response from our federal government. All parishes are struggling with increasing piles of debris from gutting and reconstruction, and other debris related issues.

FEMA granted Jefferson Parish until Feb. 29, 2008 to complete all demolitions and private property debris removal (PPDR). We have received a Project Worksheet from FEMA for demolition work, and expect to start this work in the next few weeks; however, we have not yet received a Project Work Sheet from FEMA for the PPDR work. We estimate that there are approximately 1,000 of these properties left to complete. With no FEMA authorization to start this work, it will be extremely difficult to complete this work by the Feb. 29th deadline. Thus, we are requesting extension of 100% funding for an additional three months to complete the PPDR work in Jefferson Parish.

In New Orleans, approximately 1.5 million cubic yards of debris remain from over 300 homes on non-profits' lists that still have not been gutted. We have thousands of slabs from structures as a result of FEMA's mission assignment to the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) for demolition which must be removed in order for us to rebuild. Another issue is the discontinuance of the FEMA mission assignment to the USACE for the operation of the Elysian

Fields Citizen's Drop Off Site. This facility is not as yet renovated due to a lack of funds. Citizens are resorting to alternate and often times illegal disposal which further strains our severely limited resources. Lastly, we would also ask to extend the operation of the Household Hazardous Waste processing site beyond February 28, 2008. A major public health crisis could develop without continued assistance for all of these issues.

Plaquemines Parish has been working closely with FEMA and the Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness (GOHSEP) on debris removal. However, over the past few months there have been difficulties in working with the FEMA debris team on numerous issues regarding debris eligibility, the refusal to write versions to project worksheets, delay in writing requested project worksheets for clearly eligible storm generated debris and the time it takes FEMA to obligate debris project worksheets. GOHSEP staff agrees that our requests are valid and eligible under the Public Assistance Program. Due to the painfully slow process in writing and obligation of project worksheets, Plaquemines Parish has expended over \$15,000,000 of parish funds in debris removal that is pending FEMA reimbursement. The Parish needed to proceed with this debris removal without PW obligation since it was a necessity for our recovery. This Parish is still awaiting PWs to be written for an additional estimated \$40,000,000 in debris removal that remains to be removed. A more detailed letter outlining our critically important debris issues will be sent under separate cover.

St. Bernard was the parish hardest hit by both Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Approximately 27,000 homes were damaged, with hundreds still to be gutted and demolished. Debris already remains in front of many that have been gutted – it will take several years to complete all of the debris operations. Without federal assistance, St. Bernard Parish will not have the resources to improve the neighborhoods and complete its economic recovery.

St. Tammany Parish continues to work to remove hundreds of abandoned structures through its condemnation process. These demolitions require that all legal requirements are met prior to the involuntary condemnation and demolition of hazardous structures. Work also continues to identify damaged trees and related debris for removal. Due to the expanse of the Parish and the amount of land with wooded areas bordering public rights of way and private property, this debris removal will continue for some time. Extensive work also needs to be done to rid the Parish of hurricane debris remaining in lakes and interior waterways. Lake Borgne, Lake Ponchartrain and the canals bordering the Coin du Lestin subdivision, to name a few, still have significant amounts of debris which pose a threat to the health and safety of residents and their property and hinders the economic recovery of the Parish. Unfortunately, the Parish's efforts to identify and remove this marine debris have been hampered by FEMA's inconsistent responses, morass of policies, procedures and bureaucracy. This failure to act on the part of FEMA in St. Tammany Parish needs to be addressed with 100% funding of all remaining debris removal in the Parish.

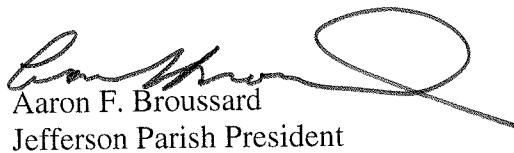
The attached Regional Planning Commission resolution shows that we speak with a unified voice from the region. All of our parishes need and deserve that debris operations continue - the

human and economic vitality of the entire region may be contingent on the outcome of this request.

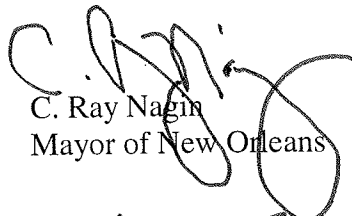
Additionally, we request that Congress urge the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to extend its No Action Assurance (NAA) for these impacted parishes so that it coincides with the FEMA authorized demolition work, and does not expire until all demolitions are completed. The NAA waives many of the asbestos related demolition requirements for FEMA financed demolitions. Without the NAA, the structures scheduled for demolition will have to undergo asbestos abatement prior to their demolition. This will result in significant time delays as well as a significant increase in costs.

Thank you all for your tireless support of our region and Louisiana. Please feel free to contact us for any further information you may need on this issue.

Sincerely,

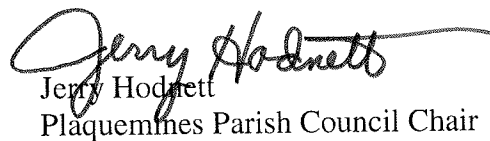

Aaron F. Broussard
Jefferson Parish President


Thomas Capella
Jefferson Parish Council Chair


C. Ray Nagin
Mayor of New Orleans

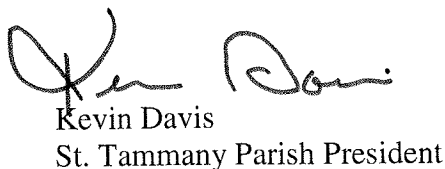

Arnie Fielkow
New Orleans City Council President


Billy Nungesser
Plaquemines Parish President


Jerry Hodnett
Plaquemines Parish Council Chair


Henry Rodriguez
St. Bernard Parish President


Joey DiFatta
St. Bernard Parish Council Chair


Kevin Davis
St. Tammany Parish President


Barry Bagert
St. Tammany Parish Council Chair

C: Governor Kathleen Blanco
Dr. Norman Francis, Chairman of the Louisiana Recovery Authority
Attachment



Council Utility Committee Expected to Approve Reduction in Citizen Utility Bills

News Release

December 17, 2007

Contact:
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New Orleans, LA - December 17, 2007 - At a Special Council Utility Committee meeting on Tuesday, December 18, 2007, the Committee is expected to consider and recommend approval of a resolution approving Entergy New Orleans Inc.'s (ENO) request to implement a voluntary credit that will lower most customers' electric bills. The full Council will formally adopt the implementing resolution at its meeting on Thursday, December 20.

District "A" Councilmember Shelley Midura said, "This is great news for the Holiday Season! Ratepayers in New Orleans will enjoy much needed rate relief going into the New Year. It is an example of the good things that can happen when Entergy and the City Council work together for the benefit of the entire City."

The key elements of ENO's Recovery Credit Rider is a credit equal to approximately 6% of base electricity rates. Base electricity rates are the rates exclusive of the fuel charge and taxes on a customer's bill.

This action is expected to provide a net benefit to ENO customers in excess of \$10 million over the course of the next year. The second key component of Entergy's expected filing will be an offer to commit about \$2.5 million that will be designated for use at a later date.

The 6.15% credit on electric base rates is proposed to begin with the first billing cycle of the January 2008. The total amount of the credit is approximately \$10.6 million annually and will remain in effect at least throughout 2008.

For a typical residential bill, the Recovery Credit will result in a bill reduction of around \$2 on average. Bill reductions for commercial customers it will be somewhat greater. The 6.15% credit will appear as a line item credit on the customers' bills as a "Recovery Credit" beginning in January 2008.

Entergy's request was prompted by the greater speed in which customers have returned to New Orleans based on its 2006 estimates developed while ENO was in bankruptcy. Due to faster rate in which citizens have returned home, ENO finds itself in the unique financial position to give back to ratepayers in the same spirit of cooperation that the Council and customers supported ENO during its bankruptcy.

The credit is timely in that it will more than offset a rate increase scheduled to become effective in January of 2008, which was a part of the October 2006 modest negotiated rate increase approved in October 2006 as well as the surcharge for ENO's Storm Reserve Rider.

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Council Criminal Justice Committee To Receive Initial Quarterly Report From Criminal Justice Leadership Alliance

News Release

December 11, 2007

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New Orleans, LA - December 11, 2007 - On Wednesday, December 12, 2007 at 10:00 a.m. in the City Council Chamber, the Criminal Justice Committee of the City Council will receive the first Quarterly Report from the Criminal Justice Leadership Alliance documenting the progress made thus far in the implementation of the recommendations of the Vera Institute of Justice. Confirmed representatives from the criminal justice system include Criminal Sheriff Marlin Gusman, Orleans Parish Criminal Court Judge Calvin Johnson, Acting District Attorney Keva Landrum-Johnson and City Attorney Penya Moses-Fields.

Established in the fall of 2007, the Criminal Justice Leadership Alliance is working to rebuild a criminal justice system that incorporates and advances the recommendations of the Vera Institute of Justice, based on research and data collected over a six-month period of study of New Orleans's criminal justice system. The work of the Alliance to date has been made possible through the generous support of Baptist Community Ministries and the New Orleans City Council.

This information is among the most anticipated and important information to be received this year by the City Council. "This Alliance is historic," said Councilmember James Carter, Chair of the Criminal Justice Committee. "Leaders from every criminal justice agency have signed a statement of commitment to work collectively to implement best practices to make our city safer."

This Quarterly Report will include information on alternative sanctions for low-level offenders and municipal court reforms, along with statements from key stakeholders in the criminal justice system. "Our goal is an accountable, just, transparent and efficient criminal justice system," said Carter, "one that will serve as a model for other cities."

The Criminal Justice Committee will also hear from Darlene Cusanza, Executive Director of Crimestoppers. She will update the Committee on programs and progress made by Crimestoppers during 2007. Crimestoppers works in cooperation with local law enforcement, media and the public to "reduce crime by the identification and apprehension of perpetrators of felony crimes through anonymous information provided for financial reward purposes over a telephone hotline by informants who remain permanently anonymous." Since 1981, Crimestoppers has assisted law enforcement in solving over 6,000 crimes in the Greater New Orleans metropolitan area.

New Orleans City Council

The New Orleans City Council is the legislative branch of New Orleans city government. The Council considers and enacts all local laws that govern the City of New Orleans. The Council also approves the operating and capital budgets for the City, as recommended by the mayor, and continually monitors revenues and expenditures for local government operations. The City Council is also the regulatory body for public utilities. It also reviews and has final say on many land use and zoning matters, as well as considers major economic development projects for the City. As a Board of Review for Orleans Parish, the Council examines appeals of property tax assessments for real estate taxes, and certifies tax rolls to the Louisiana Tax Commission. Other responsibilities of the Council include overseeing the operation of the public access television in Orleans Parish.

The City Council is comprised of five districts and two councilmembers-at-large. Council President and Councilmember-at-Large Arnie Fielkow; Council Vice-President and Councilmember-at-Large Jacquelyn Brechtel Clarkson; District "A" Councilmember Shelley Midura; District "B" Councilmember Stacy S. Head; District "C" Councilmember James Carter; District "D" Councilmember Cynthia Hedge-Morrell; and District "E" Councilmember Cynthia Willard-Lewis.



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City Councilmembers to Attend Louisiana Recovery Authority Meeting

Statement

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New Orleans, LA - December 10, 2007 - In a Joint Statement this afternoon, on behalf of the entire City Council, President and Councilmember-At-Large Arnie Fielkow, Vice-President and Councilmember-At-Large Jackie Clarkson, District "A" Councilmember Shelley Midura, District "D" Councilmember Cynthia Hedge-Morrell and District "E" Councilmember Cynthia Willard-Lewis, who are planning to attend the LRA meeting, put forth these points that they expect will be addressed tomorrow at the LRA Board Meeting on behalf of the City of New Orleans:

The City of New Orleans Recovery Action Plan recently requested \$324 million from the State of Louisiana. We are eagerly anticipating that minimum amount. The Council wants to be clear that its position is that Louisiana Recovery Authority stay true to its original model for distribution. As the hardest hit parish, Orleans should receive 58% of all remaining funds.

We are at a critical point. Our citizens are making decisions now on their future - whether or not to reinvest in their homes based on the recovery pace of their surrounding neighborhoods. On behalf of the City, we must do all that we can to demonstrate this investment - doing our part - just as citizens are doing their part. This investment will stabilize the neighborhoods through blight eradication, commercial redevelopment, and improved public safety.

To that end, we urge the LRA to approve these funds. Next, we respectfully request that the State Legislature's joint budget committee immediately convene to take the appropriate action to ensure that money begins to flow into the designated parishes. Following the joint budget committee action, the recovery action plan must be submitted and approved by HUD.

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