

DANA General Meeting May 10, 2025

Cm. Giarrusso -

- Didn't get many complaints about JazzFest this year
- News about Bayou Boogaloo over the past couple days - issues with Bayou Boogaloo are longstanding issues not from this year. Had a meeting with neighborhood leadership Thursday night.
- Should have been done with Orleans Parish Schoolboard settlement back in Nov/Dec. Hoping by EOM that is resolved. If anyone needs details, contact Cm. Giarrusso.
- State level - a couple bills filed, 1 not going anywhere (change of SWBNO governance) because it should happen under new mayor and new council, 2 bill from rep from Slidell and would have taken SWBNO out of city's hands and putting it in the state's hands doesn't make sense. Last bill is allowing public service commission to initiate a fee for drainage collection in addition to current millages. It's not legal, and city should be in charge of that.
- 247 days left in his term. He has 4-5 macro items he's working on but happy to answer questions quickly as well.

SWBNO Sarah Sharp - Smart Meter Program; Lana

- Not in billing or drainage but can collect info and follow up with those folks if you do have them
- Most folks in the area are scheduled to be installed in the coming months.
- Most of city has them installed 140k so far, going neighborhood by neighborhood
- Smart meter will be much more accurate and provide much more information on usage.
- Handout has some info
- Advantages: Smart meter provides usage every 4 hours There's an online portal You'll receive notice and get a door hanger when it's installed, good idea to flush your line by running the water for about 5 minutes after it's installed 20 year lifespan, very low maintenance
- Could see a potential increase, so on first bill making sure that nobody gets more than 20% increase
- What makes up your bill: There are fees for SWBNO before you even get to usage (infrastructure fee 34.65 + sanitation fee) Water costs 1.3 cents per gallon used \$1 state water and testing fee

- New customer portal
- Can also detect potential leaks, so if it's registering there's constant water usage, it can send a notice to customers that they have a potential leak (SMS or email notifications available).

Rep Willard - District 97

- Fiscal session last 2 months happening now - normally this would focus on taxes, but that hasn't been the focus because they made a lot of tax changes in Nov.
- Back to drawing board trying to pass constitutional amendments to overhaul tax structure, there was one dealing with merging of rainy day fund, and it is back out as a const'l amend't and frees up that money to pay down retirement debt to give teachers a raise but in tandem with lowering personal income tax (as of January this year, it's a flat 3%, and lowering it to 2.75%). Also have a bill to double the standard deduction for seniors over 65 that is paired with lowering the flat personal tax rate.)
- There's also an amendment to eliminate educational funds dedicated to teacher pay, special education, contributes to ~ \$40MM in state's budget. It's all the same content as last time we voted down these amendments but separating them out.
- Insurance is the biggest issue this session - one of the biggest bills has governor at odds with insurance commissioner. Would allow commissioner to determine if premiums are excessive. But the commissioner is opposed to that bill. Right now he can say that premiums are excessive but only if the market is not competitive. In order for that to be determined, commissioner has to hold some meetings and allow people to challenge that notion. The commissioner currently says that auto and homeowner insurance markets are competitive, so he doesn't have interest in using this tool. Remember this when he's running for re-election.
- There's a bill for fortified roof tax credits up to \$10k to reduce state personal income taxes.
- Quick update on Rep. Willard's bills: Deals with FAFSA for student loans and grants. There used to be a rule that people had to apply for FAFSA/TOPS, or request a waiver if they didn't plan to go. When they removed this rule, the rate of people applying for college plummeted, which dropped us to #5 to #25 in rates of people applying to college. His bill doesn't fully replace the policy but ensures that high school kids learn about opportunities to go to college without having to take out loans. Got some bills that seek to increase the homestead exemption, got some pushback from local council so changed the bill to say local authorities could increase homestead exemption up to \$125k. Currently it's at \$75k. Safe gun storage. Last year a bill was passed to say local governments can't have any gun policies more restrictive than the state. There's a bill this session that adds a misdemeanor penalty and a fine for improperly storing gun in car. Working on a bill to double the earned income tax credit, we have the lowest as a

state. Have a bill to create a child tax credit but unlikely to move out of committee unfortunately.

Office of Resilience and Sustainability

- Safe Streets for All - Ideology behind it is that nobody should take life in hands to get from point A to point B. More than the national average. 60 people a year, national average is 40 people a year.
- nola.gov/ss4a - survey about priorities
- Results of process will be strategic plan to invest in these projects

Officer Wild from NOPD third district; email address jgwild@nola.gov

- 3 of 4 property crimes this year resulted in arrest for attempted auto thefts; 1 is still open for auto theft
- Problems with parking at Jockey Pub, they have installed some flex posts and have had night watch folks hanging on Gentilly
- Can call Parking Enforcement 504-658-8100
- Complaints of speeding on DeSaix and Gentilly in school zones, but in the last month, at least 15 days have had officers writing tickets
- Complaint that it's difficult to see over the cement barrier and it's so difficult to cross at Moss/Desaix. This is DPW.
- Every Monday at 2pm Captain Bush and Lt. Giroir does 3rd District Max meeting on Facebook live. You can tune in and follow NOPD Third District. If there's an incident where it has to be canceled, he posts to let folks know. And the first Monday of every month there's a NONPACC meeting but usually not everyone comes. Invite everyone to it.

Delta Utilities

- Taking over gas billing and providing
- No base rate changes to billing as a result of transition. Any rate changes would have to go through public utility process.

- No interruption in service happening this summer. Will have to register and set up payment. There's communication coming in the summer from Delta Utilities about what you're going to do in your account.
- Same payment options: online, by phone, at a payment center, by mail
- Electric will continue with Entergy but natural gas will go to Delta Utilities
- They're offering guaranteed employment for all Entergy gas employees to bring over institutional knowledge and creating up to 200 jobs here in New Orleans for administration at HQ in downtown NO.

How can people without access to internet/computers access portal? If they don't access via smart phone/computer, all information is available via customer service agents if they call in. They will also send out paper bills which has usage graphs etc., it just doesn't have as much information as is available online. If you sign up for paper statements, there's no charge for that.

Elise District A Liaison from the Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Engagement

- Statement from DPW about DeSaix intersection: The City of NO will need to conduct a traffic study at this intersection to evaluate the feasibility of constructing a roundabout. We understand the current configuration is confusing and preliminary crash data do support the research. There's a bond that could be on the ballot to help fund this.