

**MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING  
OF THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BROUSSARD, LA  
HELD ON MONDAY JUNE 1, 2021, AT 6:00 P.M.**

**Present:** Mayor Ray Bourque, Councilwoman Angel Racca (District 1), Councilman David Bonin (District 2), Councilman Jesse Regan (District 3), Councilman Michael Rabon (District 4), Councilman Kenny Higginbotham (District 5) and Councilman Ray Gary (District 6), Councilman Jeff Delahoussaye (At Large)

**Staff:** Tina Emert (City Clerk), Callie Laviolette (Executive Assistant), Karen Fontenot (CFO), Gerald de Launay (City Attorney), Holly Cope-Lynn (Director of Tourism and Communications), Andrea Fontenot (Community & Business Development Coordinator), Capt. Zac Gerard (Police Dept), and Chief Bryan Champagne (Fire Chief)

**1. OPENING**

- 1.1 Pledge of Allegiance
- 1.2 Invocation

**2. INTERVIEWS OF INTERIM POLICE CHIEF CANDIDATES VANCE OLIVIER AND JAMES ROGERS**

Mayor Bourque stated that we are here tonight to interview two candidates for the interim police chief position, which are Vance Olivier and James Rogers.

**2.1 Lieutenant Vance Olivier with Lafayette Police Department**

Mr. Olivier gave a brief background about himself. He is currently employed with the Lafayette City Police Department for 25 years and has been in law enforcement for 30 years. He was born and raised in Lafayette, and he has resided in Broussard for the past 7 years. He started his career with the Lafayette Sheriff's Department and then went on to work for the Lafayette City Police. He is currently a Lieutenant in charge of the Criminal Investigation Division. He has worked in several divisions throughout his years in the police department. He has 7 siblings and he graduated from Teurlings High School in 1984 and attended SLCC and LSU-A.

**Mayor Bourque:** Why are you interested in the Interim Police Chief's Position in Broussard?

**Vance Olivier:** I feel after many years in law enforcement, it gives him a great opportunity to come to the City of Broussard and it would be a great

experience and great challenge for me to move the department forward from this point on and I would like to be part of this community with the leaders. I would like to provide professionally police services to the citizens of this community.

Mayor Bourque: Can you describe some improvements you would like to make within our police force or what you would like to see as a leader?

Vance Oliver: I would like to meet with the community leaders and then with the staff to see what their needs are and what the community needs are; that way we can put together a team and get out to neighborhoods and walk the neighborhoods to see what some of the issues are they are having.

Councilman Regan: On a daily basis how many individuals do you manage?

Vance Olivier: Probably like close to 60. I have property persons, supervisors of school resource officers, crime, and our special investigative team as well.

Councilman Higginbotham: How many years have you managed these people?

Vance Oliver: About 2 years for this amount of people. Under my first rank as a Lieutenant, I was Watch Commander on the night shift. Then I moved on to Swing Lieutenant.

Mayor Bourque: As a police lieutenant can you describe some of the challenges police officers face daily and how will you be able to help our officers overcome some of those challenges?

Vance Olivier: One of the biggest issues is our officers are not heard. It is important and imperative to sit down with each officer and see what challenge they are facing daily. We have to provide them with all the resources and technology available to do their jobs. Anything to make their job easier is a plus.

Councilman Gary: What can you bring to the community for the youths?

Vance Olivier: I would like to maybe have a sponsorship and get with them and maybe have a mentor program, whether it is baseball or the boys club, whatever activities we have out there for them.

Councilman Higginbotham: What leadership style do you see successful in yourself?

Vance Olivier: I feel I lead by example. I feel I can be there daily, to see what their needs are and what they go through. I have gone thru the training just like them and I have worked alongside them. It is important to listen to them and see what their needs are. It is an important part of leadership. You must, help them accomplish that whether it is material or

psychological, you must be there for them. You tend to see a lot of stuff out there.

Councilman Higginbotham: Do you think policing needs to be micro-managed?

Vance Oliver: Absolutely not. I feel you need to have open communications with your council, with your leaders of the community and with anyone who wants to be heard. We work for the people. We want to make sure they get professional police service, that is what he is hoping to provide.

Councilman Regan: In your career, have you had to deal with public relations and the media outlets?

Vance Oliver: Yes, I was a Public Relations Officer for a while, so I had to deal with the media. I am in the point of my career where we start getting into upper management, where we must deal with the public. I was a K-9 Officer for 13 years and a Recruiting Officer for 2 years to get new officers into the department, which allowed me to get out there and meet with the public.

Councilman Regan: In your 25 years have you always been Civil Service?

Vance Oliver: Yes.

Councilman Regan: So, you are well-versed in Civil Service?

Vance Oliver: Yes, for the most part. I have not had the need to use Civil Service. I do need to educate myself more on how it works if accepted as the Interim Chief.

Councilman Higginbotham: Have you ever been involved with the process of a budget?

Vance Oliver: Now since I have made the rank of Lieutenant. With the City of Lafayette, you do not get involved in the process of the budget, until you get to the upper ranks. He has the opportunity to go over it.

Councilman Higginbotham: How much is the City Police Budget?

Vance Oliver: I think it is around 28 million.

Councilman Regan: What do you do in your free time?

Vance Oliver: I spend time with my family and work out. That is pretty much it. I have 2 oldest daughters, so I spend pretty much time with them.

Councilman Regan: What are some professional accomplishments you are particularly proud of?

Vance Olivier: One is recruiting, and the other is when he was training officer. There is no better feeling than mentoring another officer and watch them move up in their career?

There were no other questions from the council for Mr. Olivier.

Mayor Bourque stated Nicole Oates would like to speak in support of Vance Oliver.

Nicole Oates: I am a citizen of Broussard. I decided to move here with my child a year ago. Out of all the communities I chose Broussard. I have been employed with the Lafayette City Police for 21 years. I have a vested interest in this community. I have worked with Vance my entire career, not directly for him, but with him. He has always given me good advice. I feel he can move our fractured police department forward here. He possesses compassion coming in to help move the officers forward. I know that is what an officer and the citizens need. I have no jurisdiction here. He leads up and down and from the front and that is what we are looking for. I do recommend him, and because my heart is here.

## **2.2 Detective James Rogers with Lafayette Sheriff's Department**

James Rogers gave brief background about itself. He has been a resident here for almost 13 years. He has been in law enforcement for 27 years. He first started with the Sheriff's Office in 1993 and he has worked himself up the ranks in corrections, then in patrol and then in investigations and then in juvenile investigations. He left the Sheriff's Department 2007 and came on with Broussard as an investigator and made the rank as a Sergeant until he left in 2016 and went back to the Sheriff's Department. At that time he went back on Patrol and then he went into juvenile investigations and now he is in the District Attorney's office as the Liaison Officer for all the area agencies in Lafayette, Acadia, and Vermillion Parish. He has a wife and 2 children. His in-laws also lived here.

Mayor Bourque: What changes or improvements will he do to keep the department advancing?

James Rogers: I feel stability is the main thing for this department, which it has lacked for several years. We have to show these guys that they are doing an exceptional job here and we need to keep pushing them, because of the hard times they are going through. I know these officers I have been with them thru the good and the bad. We do have good people left, and good people have refused to come here. My main goal is to change that. I want this to be the best law enforcement agency in the State. We can

only do that together with the officers, the council, and the citizens. I feel that is what is most important.

Councilman Higginbotham: How many people have you most managed?

James Rogers: At a most given time 5 or 6. My current position with the DA's office, I am pretty much managing a lot of them. They come to me with a lot of questions. In Investigations 6 and in Corrections 25 on shift. Basically, the same size as our department here.

Councilman Higginbotham: Why do you want this job, in the midst of what is going on?

James Rogers: I feel as a member of this community, I want to bring back the trust in the community. I want to find out the issues in the community and how we can help the people. We need transparency with the council and the public. I believe in that strongly and that is what has drawn me to this position; especially since I spent almost 10 years here before. I see some areas internally where we can enhance, and that will take these guys to the next level for the community.

Councilman Gary: What can you bring to the community for the youth?

James Rogers: Most of my investigative background is in juveniles, so I feel experienced in that. Also, I will get more involved in the schools. The schools are the best place to start at. Kids know a lot of information and the schools are a great place to start.

Mayor Bourque: What professional accomplishments are you proud of?

James Rogers: His biggest is to adapt and accel at any position I am in. One big accomplishment is a 30-year-old case that I was able to solve. I also have many other cases like that. Giving these people closure is the greatest feeling of all.

Councilman Regan: Any dealings with public relations or media?

James Rogers: Never dealt with media relations. I have been around a lot of other officers and friends who deal with public relations, but I have never been assigned as a Public Information Officer.

Mayor Bourque: What is your view on the qualities of a good leader and what do you think you can bring to our help officers in particular?

James Rogers: Qualities of a good leader are communications. You must be down at their level and not give up. You must be willing to work with them. It is important to help your officers and the people. The more you listen to

your own officers, the better they will be able perform at their own job, which in turn will help the community, at that is what we all want.

Mayor Bourque: As far as a leader, and in technology, do you have experience in that, making sure we do not get left behind?

James Rogers: Yes, I do have experience working cases in social media like Snapchat and Facebook. I am not a big fan of those sites, but I understand the importance of them.

Councilman Regan: Do you have any experience in managing a budget?

James Rogers: My only experience is when I was on the command staff here, I would help Rhonda with the training as much as I could.

Councilman Delahoussaye: This is for both of you. Whoever is picked will you run for Chief of Police in the next general election?

James Rogers: Yes, I will.

Vance Olivier: Yes, I will.

Councilman Regan: Both of you, what are your thoughts for an Assistant Chief during your Interim Chief Term?

James Rogers: I feel that time needs to be spent assessing the department on what needs to be done. I also feel that position need to be a thorough process as I am going through right now and let the council have an input on it. I would want that person to know you all individually and I feel the council's input is important. If I provide good police work, then this makes the council's job easier. That would be my first major decision if I would be interim, to go that route.

Vance Olivier: It is important that you bring someone in who has the same vision as you and going in the same direction as you. Also, someone who is a strong supporter and has the same values as I have. And in the beginning, you really need to evaluate the department and the staffing in the department. Yes, I really would like to bring someone in that can help me. I feel it is very important to do that.

Councilman Bonin: Both of you; who is your mentor?

Vance Olivier: My mentor is my dad. Because he was a 25-year veteran of law enforcement with the state police. He worked 2 jobs to raise 7 kids. That is a big task. He had a real good work ethic. He gave back to the community, and he was in church every day. He was also with the Lion's Club.

James Rogers:

My mentor is Craig Stansbury. He has been with me every step of the way with my career. He has been instrumental helping me navigate thru the good times and bad times. His experience speaks volumes for me. I am the first person in my family to go into law enforcement. He has given me a lot of great advice on a personal and professional level and to me that is very important. If I am selected, I am trustworthy, loyal, and ready to work. I have high integrity and I am a go getter.

Mayor Bourque:

I would like to thank the candidates for coming tonight and being part of this process. I would also like to thank one person who is here with us tonight that was part of the panel. Thank you, Ross Stevens from the St. Martin Parish Sheriff's Department.

**ADJOURNED**

Meeting adjourned.



Mayor Ray Bourque



Tina Emert, City Clerk