

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF HAUGHTON STATE OF LOUISIANA TAKEN
AT THE REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING**

April 9th, 2024

The Town Council of the Town of Haughton, State of Louisiana, met in regular session in council chambers, 118 W. McKinley Avenue, Haughton, Louisiana, April 9th, 2024 at 6:00 P.M.

Invocation was given by Council Member Phillip Smith

Pledge of Allegiance was led by Council Member Colby Isom

Roll call as follows:

Present: Carlton Anderson, Buck McGee, Colby Isom, and Phillip Smith. Also present: Mayor, Kim Gaspard, Town Attorney, Neil Erwin, MPC Director, Sam Marsiglia, Fire Chief, Jimmy Holland, Police Chief, Todd Gibson, Public Works Superintendent, Jacky Hicks, Town Clerk Misty Pee, and Deputy Clerk, Lane Brown.

Absent: Doug Adams

By Mr. Smith

Motion to approve council minutes from the March 2024 regular meeting.

Seconded by Mr. Anderson

No Comment

Vote in favor of motion is unanimously approved.

OLD BUSINESS

By Mr. McGee

Motion to accept the budgeted financial statements from February 2024.

Seconded by Mr. Smith

No Comment

Vote in favor of motion is unanimously approved.

New Business

The council was presented with budgeted financials for March 2024 and will vote on them next month.

By Mr. McGee

Motion to accept Resolution 6 of 2024 – a resolution approving the construction of a 199’ cell tower at 317 S. Cherry street as recommended by the Haughton Planning Commission.

Seconded by Mr. Smith

Comment by Stacey Mathis from Smartlink: They are about 6 to 8 weeks from starting construction of the project and the construction should last about 4 weeks.

Vote in favor of motion is unanimously approved.

TOWN OF HAUGHTON

RESOLUTION 6 of 2024

WHEREAS, New Singular Wireless PCS, LKC dba as AT&T Mobility has applied to the Haughton Metropolitan Planning Commission for Conditional Use approval for a 199’ wireless monopole telecommunication tower at 317 South Cherry Street, Haughton, LA; and

WHEREAS, a public hearing for the Conditional Use application was held on March 18, 2024; and

WHEREAS, the Haughton Metropolitan Planning Commission unanimously recommended approval of the telecommunication tower,

WHEREAS, the Conditional Use approval shall expire after One (1) year from the date of approval unless the project has begun or the applicant re-submits a complete Conditional Use application for review to the Haughton Metropolitan Planning Commission.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Aldermen of the Town of Haughton in regular and legal session that the Mayor of Haughton be and is hereby authorized to approve on behalf of the Town of Haughton, the construction of a 199’ Cellular Monopole at 317 South Cherry Street, Haughton, LA 71037.

Upon motion by Buck McGee duly seconded by Phillip Smith

and carried, the foregoing Resolution adopted by the Town of Haughton in regular session convened on April 9, 2024.

CERTIFICATE

I, Misty Pee, Town Clerk for the Town of Haughton, hereby certify that the attached constitutes a true and accurate copy of a Resolution, which **UPON MOTION** of Buck McGee seconded by Phillip Smith was adopted by the following Yea and Nay vote:

Buck McGee 1 Yea
Philip Smith 1 Yea
Carleton Anderson 1 Yea
Colby Isom 1 Yea
Doug Adams 1 Absent



Misty Pee, Town Clerk



Kim Gaspard, Mayor

By Mr. McGee

Motion to introduce Ordinance 4 of 2024 – an ordinance amending the employee personnel handbook by creating an assistance program.

Comment by Mr. Isom: Asking if this program was just going to be for police and fire, or for all town employees? Mayor responded with all employees.

Seconded by Mr. Anderson

Vote in favor of motion is unanimously approved.

ORDINANCE 4 of 2024

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE CODE OF ORDINANCES OF THE TOWN OF HAUGHTON, LOUISIANA BY ADDING SECTION 22: EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM TO THE TOWN OF HAUGHTON EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK, AS SET OUT HEREIN.

Let it be ordained, by the Board of Aldermen of the Town of Haughton, in regular session convened, that the Employee Handbook of the Town of Haughton, Louisiana, shall be hereby amended to include Section 22: Employee Assistance Program, as follows:

Section 22. Employee Assistance Program

The Town of Haughton is committed to promoting the well-being and mental health of its employees and their families. The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is designed to provide confidential assistance and support for employees and their families in times of personal and professional challenges. This policy outlines the various components of the EAP, including employee and family counseling, pre-employment evaluations, fitness for duty exams, and critical incident stress debriefing

A. Employee and Family Counseling

- a. The EAP offers confidential counseling services to employees and their immediate family members (spouse, children, and dependents). Counseling services are provided by licensed and certified mental health professionals. These services encompass a wide range of personal and work-related issues, including but not limited to stress, anxiety, depression, family problems, substance abuse, relationship issues, grief, and workplace conflicts. All counseling sessions are strictly confidential, and the Town of Haughton will not have access to any individual's counseling records.
- b. Counseling Sessions
 - i. Eligible employees are entitled to a maximum of six counseling sessions per year, either for themselves or their immediate family members.
 - ii. Counseling sessions can cover a wide range of topics, including stress management, relationship issues, grief, work-related concerns, and more.
- c. Authorization for Additional Sessions
 - i. In cases where an employee or their immediate family member requires more than six counseling sessions, the Mayor or his/her designee may authorize additional sessions.
 - ii. Authorization for additional sessions will be based on a recommendation from a qualified medical professional or licensed counselor, indicating the necessity of extended counseling for the well-being of the individual.
 - iii. Requests for additional sessions should be submitted in writing, along with the medical professional's recommendation, to the designated authority for approval.

B. Pre-Employment Evaluations

- a. Pre-employment evaluations may be conducted to assess an applicant's suitability for a specific position within the Town of Haughton. These evaluations focus on job-related skills, physical fitness, and mental health. The Town will ensure that all pre-employment evaluations comply with applicable laws and regulations, and that candidates are treated fairly and consistently throughout the evaluation process.

C. Fitness for Duty Exams

- a. Fitness for duty exams may be required in cases where an employee's physical or mental health condition is suspected to impact their ability to perform essential job functions safely and effectively. These exams will be conducted by qualified medical professionals. The Town will only request a fitness for duty exam when there is objective evidence or a reasonable belief that an employee's condition may jeopardize their safety, the safety of others, or their job performance. All information related to fitness for duty exams will be treated as confidential medical information.
- b. Notification of Failure

- i. If an employee fails to meet the established fitness standards, the designated medical professional will communicate the results to the employee.
- ii. The notification will be made in person and followed up in writing, detailing the specific reasons for the failure.

c. Review and Appeal Process

- i. Employees who disagree with the fitness assessment results have the right to request a review of the assessment.
- ii. The appeal process should be initiated within the specified time frame set by the Town of Haughton. Employees should reference the Grievance Procedures outlined in Section 15 of the policy.
- iii. The employee should submit a written appeal outlining the grounds for the disagreement and any supporting documentation.
- iv. The appeal will be reviewed the mayor and/or his/her designee.
- v. The decision of the review will be final.

d. Accommodations

- i. The Town of Haughton is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for employees who may not meet all fitness standards due to disabilities or medical conditions.
- ii. Employees requesting accommodations should follow the designated accommodation request process, which may involve providing medical documentation.
- iii. Accommodations will be considered on a case-by-case basis, and the HR department will work with the employee to determine appropriate adjustments.

e. Remediation and Reassessment

- i. Employees who fail the fitness for duty exam will be provided with a written plan outlining necessary actions for remediation.
- ii. Remediation may involve medical treatment, therapy, training, or other activities as determined by the designated medical professional.
- iii. After completing the remediation plan, the employee will undergo reassessment to determine if they now meet the fitness standards.

f. Termination or Reassignment

- i. If an employee is unable to meet the fitness standards even after reasonable accommodations or remediation efforts, the Town of Haughton will explore reassignment to a different role if possible.
- ii. If reassignment is not feasible or appropriate, the employee's employment with the Town may be subject to termination.

D. Critical Incident Stress Debriefing

- a. In the event of a critical incident, such as a workplace accident, natural disaster, or traumatic event, the Town of Haughton will provide critical incident stress debriefing services. These

services aim to mitigate the psychological impact of the incident on employees and their families. Trained professionals will facilitate group or individual debriefing sessions, offering support, coping strategies, and resources to help employees navigate the aftermath of the incident.

E. Confidentiality

- a. Confidentiality is of the utmost importance in the EAP. All interactions between employees, family members, and EAP professionals will be kept strictly confidential. Information shared during counseling sessions or assessments will not be disclosed to the Town of Haughton without the explicit written consent of the individual, except in cases where there is a risk of harm to oneself or others, or as required by law.

F. Accessibility and Communication

- a. The Town of Haughton will provide clear and accessible information to employees regarding the EAP, its services, and how to access them. This information will be communicated through various channels, including employee handbooks, intranet portals, and workplace posters.

G. Compliance and Enforcement

- a. Non-compliance with this policy, including attempting to manipulate exam results or refusing to participate in required exams, may result in disciplinary action as outlined by the Town's policies and procedures.

Upon motion by Buck McGee duly seconded by Carlton Anderson and carried, the foregoing ordinance adopted by the Town of Haughton in regular session convened on this 9th day of April 2024.

Adams	Absent
Anderson	1 Yea
McGee	1 Yea
Isom	1 Yea
Smith	1 Yea



Misty Pee, Clerk



Kim Gaspard, Mayor

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

By Fire Chief Holland

They attended the BPEMS new Haughton Station grand opening and also conducted fire education at Haughton Elementary. A CPR class was taught at the Haughton Library, and Pre-K fire safety was conducted at Joe Delaney Park. The department is currently accepting applications to fill a vacancy in the department. All apparatus is in service. Daily training continues for full-time personnel. HFD will be putting on an Officer 1 class April 8th – May 5th. Enrollment for the class is full.

By Police Chief Gibson

The HPD remodel is just about complete. New paint, new ceiling tiles, new flooring, one new office built, new storage building, and extra parking area. Eventually there will be a new fence built to legally store seized vehicles in a secure area. On April 5th, a truck was stolen from S. Elm at Polk and was used in an attempted theft of the ATM at Citizens Bank. 3 suspects were observed on video, with face masks and gloves. The truck was abandoned at Burns cemetery. The case is still currently under investigation.

By Public Works Superintendent Hicks

Mowing around town has started and everything at the sewer plant is working well.

By MPC Director Sam Marsiglia

He and the mayor have been riding around town checking into violations and dilapidated homes and he is currently working on a case currently.