

The Emergency meeting called by the Mayor and the City Council of the City of Gretna, was held on Monday, **January 20, 2025**; at Gretna City Hall, 740 Second Street, Council Chambers, on the second floor, Gretna, Louisiana.

**1. Call to Order and Roll Call:**

Mayor Belinda C. Constant was in the chair; the City Clerk was present; Mayor Constant called the meeting to order at 12:33PM. The roll was called; a quorum of three Council Members was present; Wayne A. Rau, Council at Large; Rudy S, Smith, District 1; Michael A. Hinyub, District 2.

Absent: Mark K. Miller, District 3, and Jackie J. Berthelot, District 4.

**2. Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance**

Upon opening of the meeting, Councilman Rau offered a prayer. Thereafter the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

**3. Opening remarks by the Mayor:**

- Mayor Constant welcomed the public and all the invited city employees and thanked them for being here. At this time, she wanted to acknowledge that today was a government holiday in honor of Martin Luther King, Jr., unfortunately the city finds itself in an emergency situation and the city’s emergency staff was here present to conduct the business of the city. Secondly, she would like to apologize to everyone in the audience because the city started the HVAC project and we have no heat in the Council Chambers; thank you for bearing with us, as we do what with need to do for the citizens of the City of Gretna.

Mayor Constant acknowledged that yesterday the Jefferson Parish President Cynthia Lee Sheng declared a State of Emergency under the name of the Artic Air Mass, and a Proclamation was issued. Now, the City of Gretna will follow the lead of Jefferson Parish as well as the State of Louisiana.

**4. Adoption of Emergency Ordinances:**

1. On a motion by **Councilman Rau** and seconded by **Councilman Smith**, the following ordinance was read, and adopted section by section and then as a whole by the following vote:

- Yeas: **Council Members Rau, Smith, and Hinyub.**
- Nays: None
- Absent: Council Members Miller and Berthelot.
- Abstain: None

**ORDINANCE NO. 5015**

**An emergency ordinance acknowledging the State of Emergency declared for the City of Gretna, on January 20, 2025, by Mayor Belinda C. Constant; and acknowledging the state of emergency declared by Jefferson Parish President Cynthia Lee Sheng, in accordance with LA R.S. 29:727; and effecting the City of Gretna, authorizing the expenditure of emergency funds related to the Artic Air Mass; and effecting the Emergency Overtime Payroll Policy on Monday, January 20, 2025, at 12:00 Noon of the Declared Emergency or imminent threat of weather-related disaster.**

**WHEREAS**, the city may find it necessary to utilize employees to protect the health and safety of the citizens of the City of Gretna and improved property of the city or to assist in preparing the city to open after a “Declared Emergency;” and

**WHEREAS**, the resources of the City of Gretna may also be called upon to assist in protecting the health and safety of the citizens of the Parish of Jefferson and neighboring communities; and

**WHEREAS**, if an exempt employee (Salaried) is called upon to perform work during the time of the “Declared Emergency;” the employee will be paid their regular pay until such time, that full activation of the Gretna’s “Emergency Operations Center” (EOC) is called into action. When the EOC is called into action, a premium hourly rate of pay calculated based on one and a half times the derived hourly rate of the salaried professional employee will be paid; and

**WHEREAS**, if a non-exempt employee (Hourly) is called upon to perform work during the time of the “Declared Emergency,” the employee will be paid a premium hourly rate of pay calculated based on one and a half times the hourly rate of pay regardless of the 40-hour work requirement; and

**WHEREAS**, payment is predicated on the completion and submission of the FEMA required ICS 214 form by every employee. The ICS 214 forms must be submitted daily to the City’s Finance Department to assure adequate FEMA reimbursements will be received; and

**WHEREAS**, duration of the emergency will be that period from the first day the Mayor and Council Declares the Emergency through the day when the City of Gretna determines that all employees must return to work. It is also at the discretion of the Mayor and Chief of Police to pay premium pay for emergency preparation work prior to the Emergency Council Meeting; and

**WHEREAS**, there are several distinct decisions, which have to be authorized as it relates to the public health, safety, and welfare during this state of emergency; and

**WHEREAS**, it is strongly recommended that citizens have the following items available for the storm duration: water, non-perishable food, first aid supplies, tools, and emergency supplies to prepare themselves with necessary supplies to sustain life because city services may not be available.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED** by the City Council, acting as legislative authority for the City of Gretna, that

**It is hereby acknowledged and declared the State of Emergency for the City of Gretna, on January 20, 2025, by Mayor Belinda C. Constant; and acknowledging the state of emergency declared by Jefferson Parish President Cynthia Lee Sheng, in accordance with LA R.S. 29:727; and effecting the City of Gretna, authorizing the expenditure of emergency funds related to the Artic Air Mass; and effecting the Emergency Overtime Payroll Policy on Monday, January 20, 2025, at 12:00 Noon of the Declared Emergency or imminent threat of weather-related disaster.**

Provided that a majority of the City of Gretna Council have voted in favor of this ordinance, this ordinance shall have the full force and effect of law immediately following the Clerk ‘s presentment of the same to the Mayor, in accordance with Louisiana Revised Statutes 33:406(c)(2).

No comments from the public or Council members.



### **Discussion of the Ordinance prior to adoption**

Mayor Constant emphasized that this ordinance was being introduced and adopted as an emergency ordinance. There has been an increase in homelessness in the City of Gretna and based on the ordinances passed, and the declaration by the state, that everyone should seek shelter. They were shelter running stations in Jefferson Parish on the Eastbank and the Westbank. The City Administration and the Gretna Police Department ensuring the well being and health of the people outside and for this reason this ordinance was being considered as an emergency ordinance today.

Chief Lawson said that recently there had been some issues with homeless individuals, and with the efforts of the City of New Orleans to remove the homeless from the streets; some are placed on buses and end up in Gretna, where there are no facilities or care for anyone in those means. Jefferson Parish recent ordinance was due to the escalation of homelessness on the Westbank. Certainly, this ordinance was needed as an emergency now, due to the impending weather and it would certainly help the Police Department with the enforcing in the future.

2. On a motion by **Councilman Rau** and seconded by **Councilman Smith**, the following ordinance was read, and adopted section by section and then as a whole by the following vote:

Yeas: **Council Members Rau, Smith, and Hinyub.**

Nays: None

Absent: Council Members Miller and Berthelot.

Abstain: None

### **ORDINANCE NO. 5016**

**An emergency ordinance to amend the Gretna Code of Ordinances of the City of Gretna, Louisiana by adding Section 16-158, relative to prohibited camping on public and private property.**

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED** by the Gretna City Council acting as governing authority of said City that:

**– Definitions.**

For the purposes of this ordinance , the following definitions shall apply:

- (1) *Camping* means engaging in any one or more of the following:
  - (a) Erecting or occupying a tent, temporary structure, or vehicle for living accommodation purposes in a public area or on the private property of another;
  - (b) Starting or maintaining a campfire;
  - (c) Sleeping, lying down on, or residing in a public area or on the private property of another overnight;  
or
  - (d) Storing personal items in any public area or on the private property of another overnight.
- (2) *Campsite* means a place where camping occurs.
- (3) *Overnight* means between the hours of 10:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m.
- (4) *Personal items* mean any items that are reasonably recognizable as belonging to a person and having apparent utility or monetary value.
- (5) *Private property* means any property that is not publicly owned.
- (6) *Public area* means any publicly owned outdoor area that is accessible to and meant for public use including, but not limited to streets, sidewalks, rights-of-way, parking lots, banks of waterways, underpasses, bridges, parks, railroads, bus stops, benches, entry ways of buildings, or parking garages.

**That the Gretna Code of Ordinances is hereby amended by adding a Section 16-158, which said section reads as follows:**

**– Prohibited camping.**

- (a) It shall be unlawful for any person to camp in a public area.
- (b) It shall be unlawful for any person to camp on the private property of another without the express written consent of the property owner or the owner’s agent.
- (c) This section shall not apply to any publicly or privately-owned facility where camping is a specifically authorized activity.

**SECTION 3. That the Code of Ordinances is hereby amended by adding a section, to be numbered 16-158 which said section reads as follows:**

**Section a) – Enforcement.**

- (a) Upon discovery of a campsite prohibited by this section, the campsite may be removed under the following circumstances:
  - (1) A notice to vacate the area within 24 hours shall be posted, which shall include information on available shelters, housing assistance, and human services, and the contact information for public and private entities that offer such services.
  - (2) Any items that remain after the expiration of the 24-hour period are subject to removal by the City.
  - (3) A 24-hour notice to vacate shall not be required if a law enforcement officer determines that there is an imminent health and safety threat.

- (b) Any personal items shall be held for a minimum of 30 days for the owner to claim after providing proof of ownership. Items not claimed after a minimum of 30 days are subject to disposal by the City.
- (c) A copy of every summons issued under this ordinance shall be served on the Jefferson Parish Human Services Authority.
- (d) Any person who fails to vacate the area within 24 hours following the posting of the notice to vacate the area, or after being ordered to do so by a law enforcement officer who has determined that an imminent health and safety threat exists, shall be punished as follows:
  - (1) Upon first conviction, a violator may be sentenced to no more than ten hours of community service.
  - (2) Upon a second conviction, a violator may be sentenced to not more than 20 hours of community service.
  - (3) Upon third or subsequent conviction, a violator may either be sentenced to not more than 30 hours of community service, punished by a fine not to exceed five hundred dollars (\$500.00), or punished by imprisonment for a term not exceeding six (6) months, within the discretion of the trier of fact.

Provided that a majority of the City of Gretna Council have voted in favor of this ordinance, this ordinance shall have the full force and effect of law immediately following the Clerk's presentment of the same to the mayor, in accordance with Louisiana Revised Statutes 33:406(c)(2).

No comments from the public or Council members.



## 5. Other Matters: Preparation and Logistics Information

- Mayor Constant reviewed and provided information on the preparation for the Artic Air Mass in accordance with the information received from the National Weather Service; any and all new information received will be posted on the City's Website and Facebook page. The seven-day weather threat outlook, updated today at 10:00 AM. The important dates to consider were Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, but it has been reiterated today that today was the date for everyone to get prepared to stay home for two to three days and today is the day to get all essentials needed to prepare for the predicted hazardous situation expected, due to snow and freezing rain and sleet conditions on the streets (melting snow and icy conditions on the streets and threat of freezing rain will continue through Thursday. Emphasized to stay tuned to the news, National Weather Service, the media; and city's Website and page on Facebook. -At 11 a.m. this morning the city administration had an emergency call with Jefferson Parish Emergency Operations Center (EOC). The Jefferson Parish EOC was now opened and Gretna's EOC was opened at 12:00 Noon today (January 20, 2025). This will be for any emergencies throughout the city on the administrative side, you will call (504) 363-1500; and the city's Website for any emergency services that may be needed. Any other emergencies call 911 for the Police Department and EMS.

- Fire Chief Mike Labruzzo was in attendance at this emergency meeting.

Water Production and Wastewater Department:

- Mayor Constant dwelled on the concerns the city administration had about problems with water or wastewater due to the aged infrastructure, which is constantly on the radar. Everyone has been advised to run their water due to pipes freezing, and that was of high concern for Jefferson Parish and for the City of Gretna. Gretna was the only municipality in the parish that handles their own water treatment and wastewater facilities, and the city was dependent on the public's cooperation. Pencil thing water drip would be for houses on slabs/above ground with exposed pipes; houses on slab do not need to do water dripping. There will be no garbage service for the City of Gretna tomorrow. The City of Gretna will be closed on Wednesday. Mayor's Court is shutdown; garbage collection shut down on Tuesday and Wednesday of this week. Pay attention to road closures through [www.jeffersonparish.gov](http://www.jeffersonparish.gov); road closures if any, will be on the city's Website and the Facebook page.

- Mayor Constant said they were warming shelters on the Westbank at Terrytown Gym on Heritage Drive; and citizens of the City of Gretna are welcomed too. The city was expected to receive four to six inches of snow, and the city was preparing for that. Also, they were told by Entergy that with this type and amount of freeze, there could be power outages, and were not anticipating any rolling power outages. The city will be staging generators at the sewer lift station areas in of power outages.

**Fire Chief Mike Labruzzo**

- Fire Chief Labruzzo said that all their equipment were in readiness and will be adding manpower tonight. Space heaters should be spaced 3-ft away from clothes and furniture. Smoke and Carbon Monoxide detectors are important, they are life savers. Generators should be used 15-20 feet away from house and face exhaust away from house. Do not fill generator while hot.

**Police Chief Arthur Lawson**

- Chief Lawson informed that the Police Department Emergency Operations Center was opened at Noon today. The Police Department will add personnel and will be housing personnel living outside the city in order to have adequate and ready personnel. The department will be prepared and on track; the building was self-sufficient. The down power lines and trees could be a problem; and ask to stay off the streets unless it was absolutely necessary.

Mayor Constant suggested sharing the pertinent weather information with neighbors and friends. Please stay safe.

**6. Adjournment**

There was no further city business to conduct, and on a motion by **Councilman Rau** and seconded by **Councilman Smith**, the Emergency Meeting for JANUARY 20, 2025, adjourned at 12:58 PM; and the same was unanimously approved.

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**CITY CLERK  
CITY OF GRETNA  
STATE OF LOUISIANA**

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**MAYOR  
CITY OF GRETNA  
STATE OF LOUISIANA**