



# NEWS RELEASE

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PARISH PRESIDENT

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **THE FIRST 100 DAYS**

It is said that the journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step. When I took office 100 days ago, I committed that every day this Administration would work to restore the public's trust and confidence in their parish government by requiring complete transparency into our management practices, and streamlining and consolidating operations without reducing the quality of services our citizens deserve and expect.

In this first 100 days we worked to:

- Develop a Values Statement establishing core values for Jefferson Parish employees, and conduct training sessions at all levels to ensure that the core values will guide the staff's professional interactions, govern the way they treat others, and inspire a dedication to superior public service, high ethical standards and indisputable integrity. These core values may be viewed on the parish government's web page at [www.jeffparish.net](http://www.jeffparish.net).
- Restructure the organization of parish government departments to advance increased efficiency and accountability of operations. This reorganization clustered the operating units of parish government into six distinct subject matter areas, such to provide for clear and practical lines of responsibility, authority and interdepartmental communication.
- Make personnel changes at the Administrative Officer level to ensure the best and brightest serve the citizens of Jefferson Parish. These staff changes resulted in a cost savings of \$154,000, which equals a 6% decrease in the budget for the Parish President's Office.
- Restructure our Security and Public Integrity unit and direct a greater emphasis be made on the protection and lawful use of public assets and resources. The shift in staff resources resulted in a cost savings of \$20,000, which equals a 9% decrease in that unit's budget.
- Consolidate the operation of Parc des Familles into the Department of Recreation. This arrangement eliminated a Director's position, resulting in a cost savings of \$112,000.

- Allocate additional related responsibilities to the Community Justice Agency, and hire a new Director which resulted in a \$14,000 reduction in payroll expenses, or a 2% decrease in the department's budget.
- Have every unclassified employee who is appointed to a position in parish government execute a sworn affidavit stating their public job is and shall be their sole employment. That is, secondary employment by any appointed parish government employee is prohibited.
- Hold all Administrative Officers and Department Directors accountable for their actions by requiring each to take the constitutional oath of office to obey the law, and to annually participate and complete ethics training provided by the state ethics board. This training also is made part of the new-hire orientation process for all employees.
- Appoint the Parish Attorney as the parish government liaison to the Louisiana Ethics Administration Program.
- Prohibit the rescission of an employee's resignation subsequent to its effective date. This measure bans a hire date from being backdated to avoid a break in employment service and ceases the practice of restoring employment after an employee leaves parish service in order to perform a job otherwise prohibited by law or rule (e.g., to work in a political campaign).
- Reinstate the pre-1986 benefit payment and a retiree COLA in the 2011 operating budget, while at the same time present a balanced budget to the Parish Council.
- Cancel parish government-issued credit cards for all employees, except for the Chief Operating Officer and Finance Director, whose use of the credit card is restricted to exigent circumstances (e.g., to purchase unanticipated disaster response supplies). This measure requires that established policies and procedures related to purchasing must be followed.
- Limit the in-state travel of parish government employees, restrict their out-of-state travel, and prohibit all international travel. This directive curtails any travel that is not essential to the effective operation of parish government and should result in significant savings to the budget.
- Eliminate all attorneys and paralegals who work part-time, and all paralegals who lacked requisite employment qualifications when hired.
- Revise administrative processes for compliance with public records law to provide citizens with convenient access to public records.

Other priorities:

### **Inspector General**

- Creating the first Office of the Inspector General in Jefferson Parish by identifying and evaluating options to provide a permanent funding source for the IG's office without putting any burden of increased taxes or fees on our citizens, and by pursuing an opinion from the Attorney General regarding the extent of the authority of the Inspector

General. After hand-delivering last month a third request for the opinion, the Attorney General's office committed to issuing the opinion no later than January 31.

### **Zero Tolerance Policy**

- Investigating all complaints or notifications, made anonymously or otherwise, of any suspected criminal activity, waste or abuse of a parish asset or resource, and unethical behavior relating to the operation or administration of parish government. Of the 34 separate cases probed, 17 had a sustainable allegation for which necessary action was taken. Five of the closed cases resulted in the arrests of two current employees, a volunteer fire department Chief, a parish vendor, and a non-employee. Of the remaining 17 cases, eight were referred to the appropriate department director or outside agency for an internal review and resolution, and nine cases warrant continued scrutiny.

### **Peoples Healthcare Network**

- Facing an impending move from Metairie to New Orleans of the corporate offices of Peoples Health Network and its 500-employee workforce, a package of tax incentives was developed through a coordinated effort with JEDCO, such to anchor the company's operating facility in Jefferson Parish. Additional effort with their leasing agent to provide Peoples Health Network more favorable lease conditions allowed for the expansion of their Jefferson Parish-based workforce to 650 employees.

### **EJGH/Blue Cross Blue Shield**

- After months of failed negotiations, East Jefferson General Hospital and Blue Cross Blue Shield agreed to part their longstanding business relationship. To avoid certain hardship on the affected citizens and patients, Jefferson Parish officials pressed for and facilitated additional discussion and negotiations between the parties. On November 23, 2010, East Jefferson General Hospital announced Blue Cross Blue Shield members could once again access physicians as in-network providers.

### **BP OIL DISASTER**

#### **Town Hall Meetings**

- Worked out scheduling and logistical issues to bring Gulf Coast Claims Administrator Kenneth Feinberg to visit Jefferson Parish for two standing-room-only Town Hall meetings. Citizens in Grand Isle and Lafitte personally addressed Mr. Feinberg with their concerns and issues regarding the loss claim process Feinberg is administering.

#### **Shoreline Clean-Up Assessment Team**

- Won approval from the United States Coast Guard to embed Parish government personnel on Shoreline Clean-Up Assessment Teams whenever the shores and marshes of the parish are threatened or impacted by natural and man-made disasters. This will facilitate the complete, timely and accurate submittal of Shoreline Treatment Recommendations, such to result in quicker remedial action plans and their funding.

## **QUALITY OF LIFE**

### **Jefferson Parish Landfill Cost Projection and Analysis**

- Released to the public the long-awaited Jefferson Parish Landfill Cost Projection and Analysis, and immediately posted it to the parish website.

### **Revisiting Parish-wide Curbside Recycling**

- Although recycling efforts are available monthly in the parking lot of the Joseph S. Yenni building, parish government is completing the RFP process to determine the cost consequence of curbside recycling.

### **Water Department Billing**

- The Administration is presently working to implement a process for customers in good standing to transfer their existing water service account and deposit over the phone from one address to another within the parish. Also, landlords can establish a reserve deposit account allowing them to transfer service into their name without having to do so in-person at a payment center.
- No longer will require customers to be home for water service activation, in most cases. For customers who choose to be present at the activation, the length of time they must be home is reduced from a maximum of 10 hours to no more than 4 hours.

### **Progressive Jefferson Available When Paying Water Bill Online**

- *Progressive Jefferson* insert, which is included in Jefferson Parish water bills, is now available to citizens online. Citizens who use the online service to pay their water bill will be able to see and print *Progressive Jefferson* notices of events or important information.

### **Marsh Restoration Project**

- Although no state funds were provided this year to accumulate and utilize discarded Christmas trees for marsh restoration, the Administration coordinated staff and volunteer efforts of the Louisiana National Guard, Sheriff's Office, Community Emergency Response Team, every Jefferson Parish Fire Department, and parish government to continue the project. Additional assistance was provided by court-ordered community service workers who fulfilled a total of 430 service hours.

### **Public Property Grass Cutting**

- Every parish property currently under vendor contract for grass cutting has been re-measured to resolve any discrepancy which may exist relative to the scope of service and the proper payment for same. Related, the Administration directed any and all future vendor contracts for goods and services which can be put out to bid shall be bid and awarded to the low bidder.

### **Pet Care**

- The Animal Shelter designated a Lost and Found Coordinator who will take reports of missing pet dogs and cats to match with stray animals which are brought to a shelter. This assignment centralizes information that can be used to reunite pets with their owners.

## **Code Enforcement**

- Established a semi-annual seminar for the staff of the Department of Inspection and Code Enforcement to meet with citizens and members of the Home Builders Association of Greater New Orleans and promote a better understanding of parish codes and ordinances.

## **COMMUNITY MINDEDNESS**

### **Family Gras**

- Joined with the Parish Council to work with private organizers to have the Family Gras celebration return to Jefferson Parish on Friday, February 25<sup>th</sup> through Sunday, February 27<sup>th</sup>.

### **Jefferson Performing Arts Center**

- Successfully solicited the Jindal Administration to release the remaining \$1,435,000 from the state Division of Administration to complete construction of the Jefferson Performing Arts Center by early 2012.

### **Senior Citizens**

- Provided bus transportation for seniors to visit and enjoy the 'Holiday in the Park' light display in Lafreniere Park.

The path we are taking to restore trust and confidence in parish government began with a commitment and will end only at the goal of restoring the public's trust and confidence in parish government. There is still much to do, and we are up to the challenge of conducting the business of parish government in a manner which ensures this Administration arrives at its initial destination and goes beyond.

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