

PARISH OF ST LAWRENCE



Minutes of the Parish Assembly

Held on Wednesday 20th July 2023 at 7.00p.m.

Assembly Room, St Lawrence

Present: 28 Principals and Electors

Welcome:

The Connétable welcomed all present.

Apologies:

Rector Phil Warren, Procureur Bruce Harrison, Deputy Hilary Jeune, Centenier Mike Haden, Miss Pam Staley and Mr Michael Orpin

Deputies in Attendance:

Deputy Kirsten Morel, Deputy Andy Howell and Deputy Elaine Millar

Minutes taken by Parish Secretary Mrs Leasa Nozedar.

Convening Notice:

An Assembly of the Principals and Electors of the Parish will be held at the Parish Hall on **Thursday 20th July at 7.00pm** for the following business:

1. To receive and, if agreed, to approve the Minutes of the Parish Assembly held on 29th March 2023.
2. To receive and, if agreed, to adopt the accounts of the Connétable for the year ending 30th April 2023, the said accounts having been audited by Alex Picot Chartered Accountants and examined by the Comité Paroissiale named for that purpose.
3. To approve the estimates of the funds required by the Parish for the financial year ending 30th April 2024 to include a sum of money for the upkeep and maintenance of the by-roads.
4. To approve a Rate for the financial year 2023/24 in accordance with Article 21 of the Rates (Jersey) Law 2005.
5. To name the Comité Paroissiale to examine the accounts of the Connétable for the year ending 30th April 2024.
6. To appoint auditors to audit the Connétable's accounts for the year ending 30th April 2024.
7. To elect three parishioners to the St Lawrence Sports & Community Centre Management Committee.

Copies of the audited accounts will be available at the Parish Hall and on our website from Friday 14th July.

Deidre Mezbourian
Connétable de St Laurent

13 July 2023

- 1. To receive and, if agreed, to approve the Minutes of the Parish Assembly held on 29th March 2023.**

The Connétable asked for a proposer and seconder for the minutes. They were proposed by Norman

Laverack and seconded by Deputy Kirsten Morel.

On a show of hands, all were in favour with none against; the Minutes having been approved were signed by the Connétable as President of the Assembly.

2. To receive and, if agreed, to adopt the accounts of the Connétable for the year ending 30th April 2023, the said accounts having been audited by Alex Picot Chartered Accountants and examined by the Comité Paroissiale named for that purpose.

The Connétable invited Mr Don Connolly from Alex Picot Chartered Accountants, to address the Assembly. Mr Connolly explained that he would go through the accounts welcoming any questions at the end, and focusing on where there were significant differences between the actual and the estimated figures.

Page 7 Expenditure:

Comité des Connétable:

Mr Connolly explained that the Secretary of the Comité sends each Parish a budget for the financial year for the use and administration of the Parish systems including Licar, Rates Management System and Electoral system together with computer costs. He explained that the actual figure was less than the estimate as the cost of new Driving Licences had been placed against Driving Licence income in the Roads Account.

Election:

Mr Connolly confirmed that the Parish had received £2,500 towards expenses for the Election held in 2022. Costs were taken from this figure leaving a balance of £614, however, this did not take into account additional staff hours incurred.

Honorary Police:

£34,155 against £42,000 estimate. He advised the Assembly that the actual expenses were under due to fewer new recruits and a new speed indicator device not being purchased during the period. He also confirmed that the Chef de Police had managed to negotiate a much lower figure for the maintenance of the Tetra radios.

Rates written off:

From an accounting perspective, rate debtors are written off after one year, in reality the Parish still chases these amounts with the assistance of their lawyers Le Gallais and Luce.

Salaries, Social Security and Pension Contributions:

The Assembly was informed that there had been a number of staff changes within the year including the loss of a senior member of staff.

Establishment:

A new staircase had been installed in the Bell Tower and there were no other substantial one-off expenses.

Refuse Collection:

The Assembly was advised that all Parishes are dealing with refuse increases due to the rising costs of fuel, salaries, vehicle maintenance costs and insurance. The estimates in the previous year were high as the Parish was working through contract negotiations at the time.

Page 9 Roads Account:

The vote agreed at the Parish Assembly held on the 20th July 2022 was £50,000 from the rate, added to this was approximately £51,000 from net Driving Licence and firearms certificate income etc. That the driving licence income had dropped by £5,000 due to the purchase of the stock of licences. The two major repairs to Parish roads were on Le Mont Sorsoleil and La Ruelle d'Avranches. The Roads and Drain Cleaning had significantly increased due to a change in contractor and a catch up period. As agreed at a previous Assembly the surplus had been transferred to the Roads Reserve Account.

Page 8 Grants and Special Votes:

Mr Connolly informed the Assembly that it was worth noting that rather than paying individual charities small amounts, the Parish, being one of the first, had paid a lump sum of £5,500 to the Association of Jersey Charities as recommended by John Mills CBE, the Charity Commissioner.

Page 10 Income:

Mr Connolly informed the Assembly that although there had been a negligible increase in quarters, the Rate had been increased to 1.01p in the previous year, which had resulted in an additional £60,000 in income. The Parishes tended to have substantial amounts on deposit and with the rise in the base rate this had resulted in a large increase in deposit interest, from £700 to over £10,000.

Total income £792,558. Expenditure £752,326. A surplus of just over £40,000, and the estimate had been for a deficit of £20,000. The Parish should hold 16 weeks of potential expenditure to allow for the Rates income to be received after the Rates Assembly, and there is sufficient for that need.

Page 14:**Rectory Improvements and Maintenance Fund:**

The bathrooms had been refurbished in the Rectory and some consultancy works carried out following storm damage.

Mr Connolly having completed his presentation, the Connétable asked the Assembly if they had any questions.

There being no questions the Connétable asked for a proposer and seconder to approve the accounts for the Connétable for the year ending 30th April 2023.

Proposed: Mrs Christine Gill

Seconded: Deputy Kirsten Morel

On a show of hands, all were in favour with none against.

3. To approve the estimates of the funds required by the Parish for the financial year ending 30th April 2024 to include a sum of money for the upkeep and maintenance of the by-roads.

The Connétable went through the draft estimates for 2023 / 2024 as set out on Page 22.

Comité des Connétables:

The Connétable gave the Assembly a breakdown of charges the Parish will incur. This includes all Government of Jersey websites, Licar, RMS and the Electoral system. Proposed budget £21,000.

Honorary Police:

The Connétable informed the Assembly that the estimate will remain the same as previous year at £42,000 and asked Centenier Lusby [Chef de Police] to address the Assembly with a breakdown of the forecasted expenditure. Centenier Lusby informed the Assembly that he was intending to buy an additional Speed Indicator Device (smiley face) but as he had located 2 owned by the Parish, which could be utilised, the intended purchase was not required. He had been able to negotiate a much lower figure for the Tetra Radio contract last year and this year was the same. Another big expense is the Police Vehicles, which are now road worthy and in a good condition. He informed the Assembly that this year he would be intending to purchase Body worn cameras and replace the radios at a cost of £800 each. He also hoped to recruit more officers within the new financial year. The Connétable informed the Assembly that all Parishes had allocated £1,000 each towards a centralised recruitment campaign.

Salaries, Social Security and Pensions:

The Connétable informed the Assembly that the 2024 estimate had increased, however, the actual

was lower in 2023 due to a senior member of staff leaving.

Les Laurentins:

The Connétable explained that this was a new line in the estimates for this year. MediaMasters have published the magazine at no cost to the Parish, however, due to a decrease in advertising revenue, the Parish has now been asked to contribute towards costs of publication. The Connétable informed the Assembly that funds had been held by the Parish (previous years advertising revenue) and will be used to contribute towards the costs for this coming year, however, there will be a shortfall of £900 that has been included in the estimate. The Connétable stated that the magazine was a valuable community asset and was a good way to keep in touch with Parishioners. The Connétable thanked Marion Hibbeard for doing the job of Editor.

Tresor:

The Connétable confirmed that the Tresor will remain the same at £12,000, for the day to day running and upkeep of the Parish Church.

Refuse Collection:

The Connétable informed the Assembly that the actual 2023 figure had been less than the estimate due to negotiations with the Contractor. She confirmed that the contract would be reviewed again in February 2024.

Roads Account:

The Connétable proposed £50,000 from the estimate and the potential £50,000 income totalling £100,000 for the Roads.

Total expenditure before grants and special votes, including £50,000 for the upkeep of the roads, is £785,582.

Page 23 Grants to Parish Associations:

The Connétable explained that the grant to the Battle of Flowers Association would be dropped to £1,000, the senior float is not being entered this year so costs would be lower. The junior float will be entered as a float with paper flowers costing £1,000 for the paper, so will be covered by this grant. As no accounts have been received from the St Lawrence Football Club or Miniature Rifle Club the grants are reduced to £1,000.

St Lawrence Parish Church:

The Connétable informed the Assembly that the Church had asked for an increase in grant, to £20,000 as the heating system needs replacing, The Connétable invited Church Warden, Peter Noble, to explain the works required. Mr Noble informed the Assembly that the current boiler is 29 years old and that he had been liaising with the JEC for proposals for the best solutions as they would need to change from oil to electricity. The work needed would be carried out over 3 phases and could cost up to £150,000.

Special Votes:

Parish Vehicle Fund:

The Connétable advised that she is adding £11,000 to the Parish Vehicle Fund to bring the total up to £20,000.

The Green Canopy:

The Connétable explained that this would be a one-off grant to create a wildflower area with indigenous trees behind the cemetery for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. Garden Scene are working on this with the Connétable and Rector. She confirmed that this would go to planning and hoped to begin planting in the New Year.

Total Expenditure £848,182 against last year's figure of £752,326.

The Connétable opened the floor to questions.

Deputy Morel asked the Connétable why the Tresor had not been increased to include the £20,000 toward the heating system. The Connétable confirmed that historically any Tresor money not spent was returned to the Parish. Giving a grant meant that the funds could be kept ringfenced and used when required. Mr Noble confirmed that the Tresor bank account had approximately £17,000 as at the 13th April 2023.

Deputy Howell asked the Connétable what interest rate the Parish was receiving on the deposit accounts. Emma Woodward, Assistant Parish Secretary, confirmed that it was approximately 5.9% on the 6 month fixed account. The Connétable confirmed that before expiry, herself and the Procureurs considered the various fixed terms available. Procureur Steve Linney confirmed that there was little difference between the 3 and 6 months interest rates quoted.

There being no further questions the Connétable asked for a proposer and seconder to approve the estimates of the funds required by the Parish for the financial year ending 30th April 2024.

Proposed: Deputy Kirsten Morel

Seconded: Mr Peter Noble

On a show of hands, all were in favour with 0 against.

4. To approve a Rate for the financial year 2023/24 in accordance with Article 21 of the Rates (Jersey) Law 2005.

Procureur Steve Linney addressed the Assembly and, referring to Page 24 of the Accounts, asked the Assembly to look at the 3 possible rates suggested. He continued that having carefully considered the possibilities, the recommendation was to increase the rate to 1.04p per quarter. He explained that this would leave a notional deficit of £1,211 for the year, which was 'roughly a break even' scenario. He informed the Assembly that the Island Wide Domestic rate had increased by 11.25% and the parish was asking for only a 3% increase, which together equates to a 6.6% increase and is significantly below inflation and that the Connétable and her team had worked well to keep their figures down.

Mrs Christine Gill asked what the percentage increase would be if the Assembly adopted the 1.05p rate. Mr Linney confirmed that it would be approximately 7%.

Deputy Morel stated that the rate of 1.04p was a good compromise in the current climate. He then proposed a rate of 1.04p and this was seconded by Centenier Lusby.

The Connétable asked if there were any other proposals for the rate.

With no other rate proposed the Connétable asked for a show of hands to approve a rate of 1.04p for the financial year 2023/2024.

On a show of hands, all were in favour with none against. The Connétable declared the rate set at 1.04p per quarter.

5. To name the Comité Paroissiale to examine the accounts of the Connétable for the year ending 30th April 2024.

The Connétable proposed the following as members of the Comité Paroissiale and explained that they meet a week before the Rates Assembly to receive a presentation of the Accounts from the auditors and to ask any questions they may have in order to satisfy themselves on the transparency and management of the annual Parish expenditure.

The Connétable

The two Procurers

The Rector

Deputies who reside in the Parish

<p>The two Churchwardens A member of the Roads Committee Chairman of the Rates Assessors The four Centeniers</p> <p>Proposed: Mrs Pat Sabey Seconded: Mrs Sue Noble</p> <p>On a show of hands, all were in favour with none against.</p>
<p>6. To appoint auditors to audit the Connétable's accounts for the year ending 30th April 2024.</p>
<p>The Connétable informed the Assembly that following a discussion with the Procureurs it was decided to continue with the appointment of Alex Picot Chartered Accountants, Alex Picot completes the audits for 10 Parishes. They offer a good service at a good cost and provide a continuity of knowledge which is valuable; she then called for a proposer and seconder.</p> <p>Proposed: Mrs Christine Gill Seconded: Mr David Mezbourian</p> <p>On a show of hands, all were in favour with none against.</p>
<p>7. To elect three parishioners to the St Lawrence Sports & Community Centre Management Committee.</p>
<p>The Connétable thanked Procureur Bruce Harrison and Mr Michael Orpin for their service to the St Lawrence Sports & Community Centre Management Committee. She then asked for nominations for Parishioners to serve on the St Lawrence Sports and Community Centre Management Committee.</p> <p>Mr Norman Laverack was proposed by Mr Graham Buckland and seconded by Mrs Christine Gill.</p> <p>Mrs Marion Hibbeard was proposed by Mrs Jenny Cartwright and seconded by Mr Adrian Renouf.</p> <p>Mrs Pat Sabey was proposed by Procureur Steve Linney and seconded by Mr John Emmanuel.</p> <p>As there were no further nominations the Connétable thanked them for standing and declared them to have been duly elected for a one-year term.</p>
<p>8. The Connétable thanked everyone for attending.</p>
<p>Meeting Closed:</p>
<p>9. There being no further business the Connétable declared the meeting closed at 8.05pm.</p>

Signed:.....

Date.....

Deidre Mezbourian, Connétable
President of the Assembly