



ST. CHARLES PARISH

PAUL J. HOGAN, PE
COUNCILMAN, DISTRICT IV

October 6, 2010

Mr. James D. "Buddy" Caldwell
Louisiana Attorney General
P.O. Box 94005
Baton Rouge, LA 70804

Dear Mr. Caldwell:

At the Monday, October 4th Parish Council Meeting, the Parish Council failed to adopt the attached Council Rule prohibiting and/or limiting the use of certain electronic devices during the Meetings. Several on the Council have indicated that they do not want to take away the ability of citizens who cannot attend Council or Committee Meetings to participate by email and/or text messaging.

As a result, I wish to place a public service announcement at my expense. The announcement is intended to inform the public that the Council, by failing to adopt the proposed Council Rule, has in effect adopted a policy allowing for the public to participate in the public meetings from home or elsewhere via emails and text messages.

Please advise as to whether or not I can place the attached announcement.

Sincerely,

PAUL J. HOGAN, PE
COUNCILMAN, DISTRICT IV

PJH/BJT294:ag

attachments

Office

St. Charles Parish
P.O. Box 302
Hahnville, LA 70057
(985) 783-5000
Fax: (985) 783-2067
<http://www.stcharlesparish-la.gov>

Residence

222 Down The Bayou Road
P.O. Box 250
Des Allemands, LA 70030
Phone: (985) 306-0085
Fax: (985) 306-0285
Cell: (504) 615-4862
Email: phogan@st-charles.la.us

2010-0285

**INTRODUCED BY: PAUL J. HOGAN, PE, COUNCILMAN, DISTRICT IV
CAROLYN K. SCHEXNAYDRE, COUNCILWOMAN-AT-LARGE, DIVISION A
TERRY AUTHEMENT, COUNCILMAN-AT-LARGE, DIVISION B**

A resolution to amend the Parish Council Rules by adding Rule 40. Use of Electronic Equipment during Parish Council Meetings or Committee Meetings.

- WHEREAS,** as Elected Officials, our constituents expect and deserve that our full attention be given to the items listed in the Agenda; and,
- WHEREAS,** since this Council began in January 2008, its Chairman has requested the turning off or silencing such devices at the beginning of the Meetings for the purpose of the Council being able to conduct its business without distraction from such devices; and,
- WHEREAS,** the use of electronic devices by a Councilmember(s) during a Meeting is a disservice and disrespectful to those we serve and to fellow Councilmembers; and,
- WHEREAS,** the use of electronic devices by Councilmember(s) in the past has proven to be a distraction to adjacent Councilmember(s); and,
- WHEREAS,** the use of electronic devices by a Councilmember during a Meeting takes away from that Councilmember's ability and that of adjacent Members to completely concentrate on the discussion at hand; and,
- WHEREAS,** Council Meetings occur just twice a month requiring our full attention and concentration on the Agenda and should be conducted free from the distraction due to electronic devices; and,
- WHEREAS,** the possibility and the act of some Councilmembers being able to multi-task (to use electronic devices during Council Meetings on business not at hand and while having complete concentration on the business at hand) during a Meeting is rude, disrespectful, and a disservice to the citizens and to fellow Councilmembers; and,
- WHEREAS,** the use of this technology at Meetings, which can be used for collusion, conversation, discussion, and scheming between Councilmembers, and between Councilmembers and non-councilmembers should be denounced by all Councilmembers; and,
- WHEREAS,** the use of this technology at Meetings by Councilmembers should be unconditionally restricted by this Council so as to not lose the public's trust in the Council in performing its duties fairly and impartially.

THE ST. CHARLES PARISH COUNCIL HEREBY RESOLVES TO AMEND THE COUNCIL RULES BY ADDING RULE 40. AS FOLLOWS:

Rule 40.

While official Parish Council Meetings or Committee Meetings are in progress, all Councilmember's shall refrain from reading or sending e-mails and text messaging from computers, cellular phones, or any other electronic devices while present in the Meetings; and shall refrain from searching or visiting the internet during the Meetings unless disclosure is first made that a search is being conducted related to the issues presently under consideration or discussion.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, THAT WE THE MEMBERS OF THE ST. CHARLES PARISH COUNCIL, do hereby amend the Parish Council Rules by adding Rule 40. Use of Electronic Equipment during Parish Council Meetings or Committee Meetings.

The foregoing resolution having been submitted to a vote, the vote thereon was as follows:

YEAS: SCHEXNAYDRE, HOGAN, AUTHEMENT

NAYS: RAYMOND, BENEDETTO, COCHRAN, LAMBERT, NUSS

ABSENT: TASTET

**PROPOSED RESOLUTION FAILED FOR LACK OF A FAVORABLE MAJORITY
ON OCTOBER 4 2010**

FROM THE OFFICE OF
COUNCILMAN PAUL J. HOGAN, P.E.
DISTRICT IV

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

RE: PUBLIC COMMENT DURING FORMAL MEETINGS

This notice is being provided as a public service announcement to advise the citizens of St. Charles Parish that technology exists which allows for the contacting of Council members during Council and Committee meetings by e-mailing and/or text messaging. Should citizens be unable to attend these meetings, citizens can participate in the discussion by sending your comments, concerns, and/or suggestions to the Council during the meetings using this technology to the e-mail addresses and phone numbers below:

E-MAIL ADDRESS

CELL PHONE NO.

<u>cschexnaydre@stcharlesgov.net</u>	504-915-4133
<u>tauthement@stcharlesgov.net</u>	504-915-4093
<u>braymond@stcharlesgov.net</u>	504-915-4109
<u>stastet@stcharlesgov.net</u>	504-231-0069
<u>wbendetto@stcharlesgov.net</u>	504-382-7492
<u>phogan@stcharlesgov.net</u>	504-615-4862
<u>lcochran@stcharlesgov.net</u>	504-415-3630
<u>mlambert@stcharlesgov.net</u>	504-273-3563
<u>dnuss@stcharlesgov.net</u>	504-915-4062