

PUBLIC HEARING REPORT

JULY 8, 2026
FRANKLIN, LOUISIANA
5:45 P.M.

The St. Mary Parish Council held a Public Hearing on this date with Chairperson Gwendolyn L. Hidalgo presiding and the following members present: Rev. Craig Mathews, J Ina, Rodney Olander, David W. Hill, Patrick Hebert, Jr., Mark Duhon, and Dean Adams. Absent were Leslie Rulf, Jr., James “Jimmy” Davis, Kristi Prejeant Rink, M.D., and Chief Administrative Officer, Paul Governale.

The purpose of the Public Hearing was to receive written and/or oral comments relative to the following Ordinances:

An Ordinance proposing an amendment to Section 8-01 of the Home Rule Charter for St. Mary Parish adopted February 1983.

An ordinance proposing an amendment to Section 2-07 of the Home Rule Charter for St. Mary Parish.

There were no written and/or oral comments were received regarding the above ordinances.

Rev. Mathews stated that he is optimistic about the future of St. Mary Parish and commended the Home Rule Charter Revision Commission for its tremendous work in developing and submitting its recommendations. He stated that the Charter is in need of revision; however, he and citizens of the Parish have expressed concerns regarding the structure of the proposed revisions being presented on the ballot as one single package rather than separate proposals.

Mr. Ina discussed the two current minority districts of the 11 member Council, stating that they are not adequately represented. He recommended creating three minority districts, while acknowledging that they will not meet the 33 percent. He also stated that he feels that every Council Member should have the opportunity to serve as Council Chairperson.

Discussion was had relative to the timeline for placing these proposed ordinances on the ballot and its cost to the Parish.

There being no further business, Mr. Olander moved for adjournment. Mr. Hebert seconded the motion, which carried.

Lisa C. Morgan, Clerk

Gwendolyn L. Hidalgo, Chairperson