

A message from the desk of Mayor Landreneau

August 23, 2020

Dear Citizens of Washington:

In January 2020, I was appointed by Governor John Bel Edwards as Mayor of Washington to lead our town through the financial crisis that we are still presently experiencing. The Town was listed on the non-compliant list making it ineligible to apply for grants or loans and had difficulty meeting payroll. In the past 7 months, I have been successful in getting Washington back in compliance with state requirements. The Town is now eligible for state financial assistance. Hard, but necessary decisions were made when dealing with budget cuts, salary adjustments and staff reductions. Washington is now meeting payroll and paying creditors.

Washington has a volunteer workforce assisting with office chores, cutting grass, and organizing the cemetery functions. The St. Landry Healthcare Clinic will open its office the first week of October in the Washington Community Center. An anonymous donor was secured to 100% fund hiring of a professional lawn service to maintain the three historic Washington Cemeteries. The Town of Washington Cemetery Foundation has been established to provide long-term maintenance of those cemeteries.

The Town successfully negotiated with the insurance company to provide the necessary coverage for all of Washington's property and equipment saving the town approximately 40% in premium costs annually. The communications services were consolidated resulting in a tremendous monthly savings. A utility rate study was completed and now the utility system is no longer operating at a loss.

The computers and software are now up to date in town hall. Soon residents will be able to pay bills and do other financial transactions with the town online.

In the last few weeks, we received a grant that provided fifty-four (54) vouchers for some of our citizens to buy groceries during these difficult times.

There is still much to do before our beloved Town of Washington can regain its independent financial status and become the viable, prosperous community it should be. There are many challenges ahead, but together we can make Washington a better place for all. Your comments and suggestions are welcomed and would be very much appreciated.

Sincerely,
Dwight Landreneau, Mayor
Town of Washington