



Parish of Ascension

OFFICE OF THE PARISH PRESIDENT

TOMMY MARTINEZ
Parish President

Ascension Parish President, Council Sworn In

**Contact: Lester Kenyon (225) 621-5753; E-mail: lkenyon@apgov.us
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Jan. 9, 2012**

DONALDSONVILLE – Ascension Parish President Tommy Martinez and members of the 2012-2016 Ascension Parish Council each took their oaths of office on Jan. 2 signaling the start of an administration that President Martinez said will continue its focus on the growing infrastructure needs in the parish.

Former – 23rd Judicial District Court Judge Pegram Mire administered the swearing in of President Martinez while 23rd Judicial District Court Judge Alvin Turner, Jr. oversaw the council members' collective oath of office.

The new parish council consists of Oliver Joseph – District 1, Kent Schexnaydre – District 2, Travis Turner – District 3, Daniel “Doc” Satterlee – District 4, Dempsey Lambert – District 5, Randy Clouatre – District 6, Chris Loar – District 7, Teri Casso – District 8, Todd Lambert – District 9, Bryan Melancon – District 10 and Benny Johnson – District 11. Council members Turner, Satterlee, Casso and Melancon are serving their first terms on the parish council.

“One of the things that the past four years brought about was a spirit of cooperation and we certainly want to continue that,” President Martinez told the packed Donaldsonville courtroom.

“Ascension Parish is the fastest growing parish in the state of Louisiana at this time and with that comes needs,” President Martinez said. “I’m sure when all of you (council members) went out on the streets and campaigned, the number one thing that you

#

probably heard was infrastructure, infrastructure and more infrastructure. We need roads, we need sewer, we need just about everything because we couldn't keep up with the rapid growth after Hurricanes Katrina and Gustav. When people got here they decided to stay."

When he was first elected in 1994, President Martinez said Ascension Parish had approximately 58,000 residents. Presently, about 120,000 residents live in Ascension Parish, he said.

"We've doubled in size and that means we've doubled in demands," he said.

President Martinez said he will continue working closely with the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development on a comprehensive transportation plan for Ascension Parish that will not include a loop. He said Parish Councilman Chris Loar and Parish Councilman Benny Johnson have played integral parts during past meetings with DOTD.

"Basically what DOTD has proposed to us is for Ascension Parish to take over 119 miles of state roads in the parish. Sixty-one percent of the roads in Ascension Parish are now state roads and some of those roads really shouldn't be state roads," President Martinez said. "They should be local roads."

President Martinez said, in turn, those roads will be brought up to a good condition and DOTD will then provide up to \$60 million over a 10-year period for intersection improvements throughout the parish.

He said in the meantime, he plans to work with the parish council this year to develop a parish wide transportation plan to place on the November ballot for voters to consider. He said those road projects will be identified in the proposition.

President Martinez said the parish is getting pressure from the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to develop a comprehensive sanitary sewer plan.

"We are close to doing that and have a commitment from DEQ for a \$17 million loan at .9 percent to get our sewer program off the ground," President Martinez said. "It's not going to happen overnight. It will take at least a 30-year bill out. But we have to get started."

#

President Martinez again referred to a spirit of cooperation as being integral in implementing projects and he commended past parish councils and drainage boards for addressing flooding concerns.

“Flooding used to be a major problem in Ascension Parish but we’ve done a lot of work in the past 30 years and I salute past councils and drainage boards for getting that done,” he said.



Ascension Parish President Tommy Martinez takes the oath of office for his fourth term as parish president of Ascension Parish. Former- 23rd Judicial District Judge Pegram Mire is shown administering the oath while President Martinez’ wife, Theresa, and Parish Councilman Todd Lambert and Benny Johnson look on.

#