

# MEET THE COUNCIL



**“With cooperation and common sense, great things will happen with this council.”**

- Cindy Wale,  
Chairwoman of  
Livingston Parish  
Council

“I’m excited that we have such a diverse group of people serving on the parish council this year. They are well-educated and, since the election, they all have been doing their homework – reading ordinances and contracts, meeting with the engineers, architects and others,” said Cindy Wale, the newly-elected president of the Livingston Parish Council and the representative of District 4.

“Everyone on the council brings unique gifts from their own areas of expertise, so we have a wealth of knowledge among them that we can tap,” she continued. “I believe we will have a good working relationship, and having respect for each other is the key. As the chair, I would never try to silence another council member.”

“We don’t want to fight another four years, and the people showed by their vote that they don’t want to see more fighting. I know we won’t all agree on everything – and that’s the way it should be; we should bring diverse ideas and opinions to the table and work out a solution that’s best for the people of Livingston Parish.”

Wale, 50, was elected chairwoman of the new parish council at the beginning of their first meeting January 12. She made history as the first woman to ever serve on the Livingston Parish council when she was elected in 2007, and she is now the first woman to head the parish governing body.

Wale said of her election as chair that she felt like it was “the right time for it to happen - the right time for me personally, and the right time for a woman to serve.”

She is joined on the council by two newly-elected women, Joan Landry and Sonya Collins. Both Landry and Collins cite Wale as their inspiration for running for office.

“I’m determined that we, as a council won’t say ‘We’ve done it like this in the past so we’ll just keep on doing it,’” Wale asserted. “Those days are over; this is a new beginning. We need to reeducated ourselves on our duties. The role of the council is not to go out and direct projects or handle issues that belong to drainage or recreation or other boards. We’re going to follow what is laid out in the home rule charter for the council to do on the legislative side and for the parish president to do on the administrative side. We’re going to do it right this time.”

For 2012, she would also like to see the parish get a master plan, saying, “We have the funds to do it; we need to confer with the planning commission and what the contract says.”

Wale recalled times in the past four years when she was discouraged by being held back by other council members, “but then remembered the people of this parish who believed in me and wanted me to keep fighting. I’m glad now that I persevered.”

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**“It’s the goal for the council to do one thing, and that is to leave the parish a little better than you found it. If we do that we will be successful.”**

-Marshall Harris, Vice-Chair

Marshall Harris, 55, District 3, is the longest-serving member on the current Livingston Parish Council. Elected in 1995, his service began in 1996, the first year under the newly-adopted Home Rule Charter. He has served four terms (16 years) and was one of only three council incumbents returned to office. He has previously served as council chairman and is the current vice-chair.

Harris delivered the opening and closing remarks for the installation of the new council January 9 and noted, “Since the home rule charter was established, the parish has sworn in 45 councilmen and women and three parish presidents. Our system of free elections works and that is why we gather here today.”

He read a poem, “The Man in the Mirror,” given to him by a friend when he was first elected which he felt was appropriate for the times. The opening and closing passages of the poem are, “When you get what you want ... and the world makes you king for a day, just go to a mirror and look at yourself, and see what that man has to say ... You may fool the whole world down the pathway of years, and get pats on the back as you pass, but your final reward will be heartaches and tears if you’ve cheated the man in the glass.”

Harris commented on the outlook for 2012 saying, “I’m excited about this new



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