

Press Information: Acadia Parish Sexually Oriented Business Ordinance

ARTICLE VII OF CHAPTER TEN OF THE CODE OF ORDINANCES OF THE ACADIA PARISH POLICE JURY TO BE ENTITLED “SEXUALLY ORIENTED BUSINESSES”

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Introduced November 2024

Language of the proposed ordinance: <https://appj.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/Ordinance-Sexually-Oriented-Businesses.pdf>

Contact Information

National Coalition for Sexual Freedom

<https://ncsfreedom.org/>
Tess@NCSFreedom.org
602-851-1590

Douglas Brown

The Douglas Brown Law Firm, LLC
dbrown@dougbrownlaw.com
985- 310-6900

NCSF Mission Statement

The NCSF is committed to creating a political, legal and social environment in the US that advances equal rights for consenting adults who engage in alternative sexual and relationship expressions. The NCSF aims to advance the rights of, and advocate for consenting adults in the BDSM-Leather-Fetish, Swing, and Polyamory Communities. We pursue our vision through direct services, education, advocacy, and outreach, in conjunction with our partners, to directly benefit these communities.

Some history

This proposed Ordinance was written in direct response to a private 501 (c)7 membership club being built in Acadia Parish. The club did everything right, spoke to every relevant department, and made sure they had everyone's buy-in and nothing would stop them from building their club. Permits had been issued, and the Police Jury had agreed to allow the club to be built. In response to construction beginning, this Ordinance was introduced.

This ordinance effectively bans this private club entirely. It is retaliatory and written in a way to not restrict the existing adult businesses in Acadia Parish.

This club is private, and by invitation only. The permits included a high fence and no signage to identify what exists there. No local advertising would be done, and discretion is and always has been the goal.

While most Acadia Parish residents have been neutral, a vocal minority has been loudly protesting purely based on moral grounds.

These kinds of events are already happening in Acadia Parish, and this ordinance merely succeeds in denying people a safe space to practice these constitutionally protected activities.

Issues with the ordinance and process

Adverse Secondary Effects

The justification for the opposition to this business is based on "Adverse Secondary Effects" "*WHEREAS, there is convincing documented evidence that sexually oriented businesses as a category of establishments have deleterious secondary effects and are often associated with crime and adverse effects on surrounding properties;*"

As evidenced in the ordinance in SECTION 10-242: Purpose, Findings, & Rationale.

In subheading "*B) Findings. Based on evidence of the adverse secondary effects of adult uses presented in hearings and in reports made available to the Police Jury, and on findings, interpretations, and narrowing constructions incorporated in:*"...

Every single citation in this section relates to gentlemen's clubs which are open to the public in highly populated urban areas. There are no studies or challenges mentioned regarding a private membership club in a rural area.

There are zero studies or statistics where private lifestyle clubs have brought crime to an area, or posed a health or safety risk. Often where cities choose to allow those businesses is in an industrial or manufacturing zone, and when comparing the before and after, there

has been no difference in crime, or a slight decrease because of the stability and security brought to the area.

Clubs like these have rules that all members must adhere to, and behavioral standards that are enforced, including that all activity is clearly consensual and the law is followed. This important education provides benefits for local citizens both at the club and beyond in their personal relationships.

These kinds of Ordinances are an affront to free trade, personal freedom, and privacy rights.

Constitutional Right to Gather in Private

This issue is grounded in the constitutional protection of freedom of association. Prohibiting a private club where people can associate just because a loud minority of people object to their personal choices on moral grounds is unconstitutional.

This is further supported by *Lawrence v. Texas* where deference must be made to private choices where they are not directly affecting anyone else.

It's important to not enact more government regulation against people because of who they associate with, and the content of their speech—in other words, the expression in private of their beliefs. Many people need safe and private spaces to gather without public or government intrusion so they can meet with their peers and get support from like-minded individuals.

Over-taxing and over-regulating private clubs can only aim to overburden the financial stability of the club and make it harder for marginalized groups to gather in private. It also overburdens the regulatory ability of the policy jury, squandering tax dollars, and benefiting no one.

The state of Louisiana already has enforceable laws on the books to keep people safe and to keep private activities behind closed doors. In a time where we are all concerned about government being intrusive in people's lives—for example, there are people who want to tax churches now—Acadia Parish doesn't need another layer of government.

Just because it's not your cup of tea doesn't mean local authorities should stop other people from making their own legal, private choices.

In Support of Private Membership Clubs

Fantasies LS and clubs like them, are private members-only, alternative lifestyle clubs that provide a safe meeting place for its members. This is a private center where like-minded adults can learn more about consent and healthy relationships.

Many towns in the U.S. have private membership clubs like Fantasies, and they maintain good relations with the local police with no issues arising from their operation in the neighborhood.

Not a Sexually Oriented Business

Fantasies is not a sexually oriented business because all of the social activities are participated in by the members themselves. The club does not employ staff or hire contractors to provide entertainment or performances like a sexually oriented business.

The Acadia Parish Police Jurors serve the entirety of Acadia Parish, including the large percentages of adults in the area who want to access the membership services that Fantasies LS provides.

Like any club or organization, they work to keep the area clean and safe and address any issues quickly because this is their community.

The club is being built on the back of four acres of land with privacy fencing and discreet signage, which is fitting for a private social members club of this kind.

Statement from Tess Zachary of the National Coalition for Sexual Freedom

Given the stigma that oftentimes exists towards open conversations about sexual health, it is no surprise that communities which celebrate diverse expressions of human sexuality and desire are often misunderstood.

This private membership club deserves your protection. In addition to the constitutionally protected freedom of expression that should be afforded to all people in Acadia Parish, the opposition consists of a small group of people who want to tell other people how to live based on their personal religious beliefs. While their beliefs are valid and right for them, they should not be applied to anyone else.

The Ordinance cited research about Adverse Secondary Effects that does not apply even tangentially to Acadia parish or this private social club, and in order for the research to apply it must directly relate to the issue, which this research does not. I'm flabbergasted at how this group of reasonable people can choose to cite resources that are willfully misapplying inappropriate data. Especially when there are better resources available that relate specifically to the club in question, and the practices of those this club serves.

This sort of moral policing disguised as lawmaking is a dangerous and slippery slope for the financial well-being of your parish and citizens who need their tax dollars to be spent on important issues.

- This kind of Ordinance cost the city of City of Doraville \$267,000 in a single attorney for a single lawsuit, and Floyd County, GA paid \$189,149.80 just in a bill to an attorney to fight a lawsuit.

Despite the loud voices, I know that most people in Acadia Parish don't care about this issue and wouldn't be concerned about this nondescript private club that would have quietly existed alongside their neighbors without disturbance.

NCSF received hundreds of communications from the people of this parish asking how to get through to you that they aren't interested in telling people how to live or what to do. You are all reasonable and well-meaning people, and I struggle to understand why you appear to be so unwilling to hear any argument on this issue.

The speed and lack of thoughtful consideration on this matter is concerning when you haven't considered the serious financial repercussions of what you're taking on, and the direct restriction of liberty should concern everyone.

Statement of Doug Brown, attorney with the NCSF

Statement from Woodhull Freedom Foundation

We are writing from the Woodhull Freedom Foundation, a national human rights organization that works to protect our fundamental human right to sexual freedom. We strongly support Fantasies LS and its endeavor to open a new private club in Acadia Parish.

It has come to our attention that the Police Jury is considering enacting a Sexually Oriented Business Law in response to opposition from a vocal minority. We urge you to reconsider this course of action, as it poses significant threats to free trade, personal freedom, and privacy rights.

The right to gather in private is a fundamental constitutional protection under the freedom of association. Prohibiting a private club based on moral objections to personal choices is unconstitutional. This principle is reinforced by the landmark case of *Lawrence v. Texas*, which established that deference must be given to private decisions that do not affect others.

Furthermore, the Universal Human Declaration of Human Rights protects the right to privacy. Article 12 states, “No one shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence...” Community members deserve a space to gather in private. Fantasies LS is attempting to create that very space.

Fantasies LS, like other similar establishments, is a private, members-only club that provides a safe meeting place for consenting adults interested in alternative lifestyles. These clubs often maintain positive relationships with local law enforcement and have not been shown to increase crime rates in their vicinity. In fact, they frequently operate in industrial or manufacturing zones without any noticeable impact on local crime statistics.

Fantasies LS should not be classified as a sexually oriented business, as it does not employ staff or contractors to provide entertainment or performances. It is a private social club, and the members' interactions are private and consensual. It is crucial to remember that personal moral objections do not constitute valid legal grounds for limiting the rights of adults to gather in private. The state of Louisiana already has enforceable laws to ensure public safety and maintain privacy. Adding another layer of regulation is unnecessary and potentially harmful to personal freedoms.

We strongly urge you to vote against designating clubs like Fantasies LS as Sexually Oriented Businesses. This decision would protect constitutional and human rights, support local businesses, and maintain the principles of personal freedom that are fundamental to our society.

Sincerely,

Ricci Joy Levy
President & CEO
Woodhull Freedom Foundation

Statement from OPEN (Organization for Polyamory and Ethical Non-monogamy)

Dear Members of the Acadia Parish Police Jury:

I am writing on behalf of OPEN (Organization for Polyamory and Ethical Non-monogamy), a national nonprofit organization dedicated to advancing rights and acceptance for diverse relationship structures. Our organization works closely with communities across the United States to promote understanding and protect the fundamental rights of individuals to form consensual relationships and build supportive communities.

We have been made aware of recent discussions regarding the proposed classification of private membership clubs in Acadia Parish under sexually oriented business regulations. As an organization that has conducted extensive research on relationship diversity in America, we feel compelled to provide important context for your deliberations.

Based on comprehensive demographic research, approximately one in five American adults will participate in some form of consensual non-monogamy during their lifetime. These are your neighbors, colleagues, and community members – people from all walks of life who have chosen to explore relationship structures that work for them. Private membership clubs serve as vital community spaces where these individuals can gather safely, build supportive relationships, and access educational resources about consent, communication, and relationship skills.

Our 2024 Community Survey of over 4,500 adults found that social stigma and lack of access to community spaces represent significant barriers for individuals seeking to connect with others who share their values and relationship choices. Private membership clubs help address this need by providing safe, discrete spaces for community building and education. These venues operate successfully in many communities across the United States, maintaining positive relationships with local authorities and contributing to their local economies without increasing crime or causing community disruption.

The constitutional right to freedom of association protects the ability of consenting adults to gather privately with others who share their beliefs and values. Imposing burdensome regulations on private membership clubs based on moral objections to their members' personal choices raises serious constitutional concerns and creates a troubling precedent for government overreach into private activities.

These clubs are responsible business members of their communities, typically operating with strict behavioral standards, clear consent protocols, and discrete facilities that respect community standards. They contribute to local economies through business partnerships, property improvements, and increased revenue for surrounding businesses.

We respectfully urge you to consider both the constitutional implications and practical impact of additional regulation. The state of Louisiana already has sufficient laws to ensure public safety and community standards. Adding another layer of regulation would not serve a compelling government interest while potentially infringing on fundamental rights of association and privacy.

Our organization would be happy to provide additional information about how similar venues operate successfully in other communities across the country. We can be reached via the contact info provided below.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of this important matter.

Sincerely,

Brett Chamberlin
Executive Director
OPEN (Organization for Polyamory and Ethical Non-monogamy)
brett@open-love.org
(603) 978-9096

Acadia Parish Sexually Oriented Business Ordinance Statements

Below are a few of the statements we received that gave us consent to use their names.

As long as it is not affecting anyone's way of life why does it matter what is done on private property we are not asking for them to do what we do just a place for us to gather and be friends in our own way-Mark Hebert, Crowley, LA Acadia

I've never heard of someone being injured, threatened or killed at a lifestyle club. Worry about what really matters people! Joni Horton St. Martinville LA

I do not oppose anything Lifestyle/Swingers related. Because of the lifestyle I've learned more about myself and have opened up more. People in the lifestyle are the most genuine, loyal, trustworthy, & honest people around. No where can you go and not be judged by someone if not everyone, but when you're around the lifestyle/swingers, you can be yourself and not be judged. Michael Sambola Ponchatoula-Tangipahoa Parish, Louisiana

The ordinance violates the 1st and 4th Amendments by restricting free speech, right to gather, and privacy.

Many of those supporting the Ordinance at the meeting based on religious feelings, not facts. No religious group was there for my sons and I when my wife died, but the lifestyle community was. Many, like myself, are civil servants and deserve the same rights of expression in a safe, judgment-free environment just as those they protect do.

We do not allow prostitution, nor illegal substances at any of our gatherings, and any hint of that is dealt with substances for the safety and security of patrons.

Furthermore, revenue would be brought to the parish.

Feelings are not facts, and feelings have no place in a court of law.

Jake Beckstead, Leesville, LA

I am a lifestyle participant of Thibodaux, Louisiana. We have been active in this lifestyle for nearly two years and have been to the previously established business of Trinity and Jasens multiple times. The only other lifestyle club I'm aware of in the state is Colletes in New Orleans.

These kinds of laws only serve to discriminate. This ordinance cites adverse secondary effects from strip clubs in big cities to punish this private club that isn't even operating yet. There are zero statistics where private lifestyle clubs BROUGHT crime to an area.

Never at any of the lifestyle oriented events we've attended whether at a private members only club or at someone personal residence have I ever witnessed any sort of criminal activity.

In America, we have a right to gather with who we want in private, and this private, invitation-only club is being regulated with no benefit to anyone. The kinds of restrictions being put on people who aren't harming anyone else, are unjustified, and serve no public purpose. We have a right to gather and express ourselves just as much as those who are trying to push us out.

The state of Louisiana already has enforceable laws on the books to keep people safe and to keep private activities behind closed doors.

Fantasies LS and clubs like them, are private members-only, alternative lifestyle clubs that provide a safe meeting place for its members. This is a private center where like-minded adults can learn more about consent and healthy relationships.

Fantasies has rules that all members must adhere to, and behavioral standards that are enforced, including that all activity is clearly consensual and the law is followed. This important education provides benefits for local citizens both at the club and beyond in their personal relationships.

The Acadia Parish Police Jurors serve the entirety of Acadia Parish, including the large percentages of adults who want to access the membership services that Fantasies LS provides. On behalf of those citizens, we urge you to please vote against designating clubs like Fantasies as Sexually Oriented Businesses.

I encourage you to rethink your voting on this ordinance.

Thank you for your time.

Faith Gros, Thibodaux, Louisiana

Hi Team,

I am writing to express my enthusiastic support for opening a Lifestyle Club in Acadian Parish (Fantasies LS Club). Please consider this email as my personal request and statement of purpose in favor of the club's establishment.

Thank you for considering my support.

Best regards,
Munna , Acadia Parish

If they wanna open a swinger's club let them. Saying no is like saying no to a gay bar. I'm a straight man and not a swinger but have been to both kinds of clubs and it's always a good environment. The ppl arr usually very nice and respectful of ur beliefs. It's their lifestyle and a place they can hang with people that are like them just like football fans go to a sports bar. If you ageanst what they do don't go to the club. If you ageanst it for religious reasons ,just remember Jesus protected the prostitute and his Disciples worth thugs. " may the one who never sinned cast the first stone" What they do with there life is up to them. It don't make it wrong just because it don't line up with everyone's views. Tyler Venable, Church Point, LA

To Whom it may concern,

I am writing this letter on behalf of Fantasies LS club. In support of their freedoms and beliefs as I share them too. You may think I am just another voice in the crowd, but I assure you I have earned my rights to speak out when I see our rights as free citizens and basic human rights are infringed on.

I am a 47yo man and I live in southern Louisiana, and what gives me my rights to speak out is what I have done in my past. I joined the US Army right out of high school in 1996. I have been deployed 7 times, I spent over 5 years in Iraq or other war zones. I have been stabbed, shot at, and my vehicle blown up several times, I was laying on the side of the road dead during a fire fight. I spent a total of 17 years in the army and now I am a 90% disabled vet. I suffer from several things the worst being PTSD.

The lifestyle as you see it is not the same as I see it and unless you know firsthand what lifestyle is, you can't judge us. To me lifestyle is friendship. My PTSD doesn't make me shy it makes me mistrust strangers or strange settings. I struggle to make friends. Bars or clubs are to crowded or loud to talk. So, I started joining lifestyle groups. The friendships and great times have helped me with my PTSD. I now throw lifestyle parties at my house once a month. I don't advertise it and its just friends getting together. We swim, tell old war stories, Play games and just have an overall great time.

The whole point of this is to tell you that the lifestyle is about friendships at least to me. The whole sexual side of the swinger lifestyle is just that sex. A normal everyday thing we all do. I love my freedoms I have fought for, and I am going to fight for my freedom to express myself and beliefs. I hope this letter helps in that fight. Please try to see this from our view. You are trying to disrupt our rights and freedoms.

Thank You for listening and your support.

AARON ROMINE

To whom this may concern,

The purpose of this email is to inform & bring more to light what everyone assumes or hears about via word of mouth as opposed to getting facts or actually encountering the way we as individuals do in our past time as a community of individuals in this thing we call the lifestyle.

We are not a bunch of drug crazed sexual deviants nor are we a cult that gathers in the masses to worship sexual beings. In fact, we are all like minded individuals that have certain things in common that like to get together & experience things with in a safe manner without judgement, all while having a good time and getting to socialize with other people that have never ever met or probably never would have if it wasn't for the safe havens we go to in order to let ourselves be able to do so. We are your family members, we are your next door neighbors, we are the people you see walking down the street with our kids living the family, we are the people that serve & protect you, and we are the people that have served for this countries right to live freely within a manner that does not & will not cause any harm nor mess with anyone else's way of living.

I myself have been in this thing called the lifestyle for around 8-9 years now & I've never had any issues within this community. If anything, I've found my people & continue to grow on what I consider to be my own personal family. And I call it a community because that's exactly what it is. We help one another out in times of need, we hangout at one another's houses having cookouts while letting the kiddos play together, and we stan by one another in order to make each other that much more stronger in this world we all live in. Within my 8-9 years in the community, I can honestly say I've found myself & I actually continue to learn more about myself each passing year with the people I meet & hangout with in our safe haven. It's definitely helped me grow more as an individual & see that there's more to life than just what society wants or prefers us to live in our everyday lives.

And we also are very accepting people & let all types of individuals come within our community & treat them in a respectful manner. Like I said before, we are just wanting to live our lives without judgement and/or without people feeling the need to look down upon our way of living much like the rest of society does with other certain types of individuals in this world.

I can continue to go on & on with this for awhile because I do feel that we live in a world where no matter what you do or say, there will always be someone out there trying to make you/us conform to what they feel is right or a better way of living as not to upset the masses. Because what I've learned is that people fear or become frightened by what they don't know or understand. So instead of trying to understand it or learn more about it, they'd much rather shun us all while passing judgement causing them to get upset or angry or outraged. We've been like this since the beginning of time & it's how most of us react

whenever it comes to something out of what's considered to be the norm in society. So get informed, get your facts, try to educate yourselves more on our community, and help us have a safe space to live the way we want to live....freely!

Thank you,

Jason Palombo

I am writing in hopes that this may shed some light on a very misunderstood topic. I am a member of the controversial “Lifestyle Community”, aka swingers club/pineapple party. You name it, we’ve been called it. Folks think this is just a drug filled sex club promoting bad behavior.

That couldn’t be farther from what it actually is. It is a community filled with love and support, no judgement. A place where you can truly be yourself without fear of judgement in a world full of hate. It’s a place that you are not asked to be watered down by the opinions of others. I attend these parties and do not engage in sex at these parties. I attended a lifestyle club/party just last weekend and did not see one single sex act occur in the five hours I was there. This type of club is the same environment and set up that a few of our friends are attempting to build in Crowley. Does sex happen there, yes. But does sex happen at regular house parties and even at regular bars, yes it does. It’s no different. No one is forcing this lifestyle on anyone in the community. It’s done discreetly and not advertised or flaunted. It’s simply a safe place for like minded individuals to gather to celebrate the freedom to be what makes us who we are.

It’s no different than businesses in other towns that have been successfully ran with the same type of environment. These clubs have existed for years. It does not bring additional crime. It does bring additional revenue to your local businesses when my friends visit your area and spend their money just like anyone else in your community. I was passing a high school football game the other night and saw females walking around wearing less than what some of my friends do at these parties and clubs. Are we to ban those because there are children present there? Maybe we should ban Catholic Churches because priests have sexually assaulted children? At least in the lifestyle community, children aren’t present and things are done safely with consent. These are people that develop deep loving friendships and/or relationships. Some take family vacations together. We see the same people over and over at these parties, we know them, they’re not strangers. I have friends in the lifestyle from attorneys, doctors, nurses, teachers, architects, and even many of your police officers.

My point is this, it’s easy to make a judgement until you’ve actually seen what the lifestyle is. It’s actually a community of love and support with deeper connections. It isn’t about going to a club and having sex. Just because someone doesn’t agree with it, does not make

it wrong. It's freedom of speech and expression. It's time to move with the times and understand not everyone fits in a standard box, and that's ok.

Respectfully,

Amber Gaudin

To Whom It May Concern

My letter is regarding Fantasies LS Club. I have been in the lifestyle off and on since 2009. The lifestyle isn't about sex, it is a community of likeminded people who come together with no judgement. We, my husband and I, have made better friends in the lifestyle than out of the lifestyle. At any time, we can reach out and say, "I need..." and immediately we would have a handful of people asking how they can help.

We can have cookouts, go to dinner, go fishing, bowling or any other activity and nothing ever happen. Sex isn't expected at all, for any reason. It's about being with friends and a community that doesn't judge you for dressing sexy, showing cleavage and short skirts...and this is where the club comes in to play. A private club where likeminded people come together and have a great time. If you go to a regular night club, you can't dress in skimpy, sexy clothing, you won't be allowed in, or you'll be judged and mocked. At a LS club, you walk in street clothes and then change into the skimpy and sexy. **YOU ARE NOT JUDGED.** You aren't mocked or laughed at because you want to wear. Speaking as a woman, we want to feel comfortable and at a LS club we can and do!

We are all normal, every day people. We live in every neighborhood in every city. In every restaurant, grocery store and believe it or not, even sitting next to you on the church pee. You just don't know it. Why? Because we are discreet, we don't want our personal lives out there, just like everyone else.

As a whole, we aren't coming for you, we aren't trying to lure you in and bring you to the dark side. We just like to party and and have a little extra bonuses along the way.

Thank you,

I'm writing in regards to the purposed ordinance against the fantasies club. I think this a direct violation of our rights as consenting adults to have a place to meet like minded people.

We've been in the lifestyle for almost ten years now and made some great friends along the way. We've attended several clubs and were a host couple at two of them. In all of our time we never had any issues like what some of the residents are considered with. We always had a zero tolerance on drugs. If you were caught with them you were immediately banned from the club. If you look hard enough you can find drugs on just about every street corner and any bar or anywhere else you might go. There was never any criminal activity at any of the clubs as well. I understand that lots of people have opinions against the club but they are just that. Opinions. If they don't like it, don't go. It's that simple. But to make an ordinance against the club is wrong. Then what comes next? An ordinance against anybody having a swingers party at their own home? Then again it would be another violation of our rights. I'm very much against this ordinance and I thank you for your time.

Once again someone is trying to infringe upon the rights of consenting adults. It's time for the government to stay out of people's personal lives. This freedom to express ones self does not violate any state or local laws. If anything, it may help the economy of that area by bringing people there who will spend money while they are there which also helps other businesses thrive. Wake up people. This has nothing to do with crime. That's a cop out excuse and a poor one that can't be backed up by any stats. Ralph Stone, Oakland, MD

This is a place for non-judgmental people be themselves. Jason Duncan Bridge City, TX

As a concerned member of the lifestyle community, I stand firmly against the proposed ordinance affecting sexually oriented businesses in Acadia Parish. This ordinance threatens not just local livelihoods but also the essential rights and freedoms of consenting adults to express their desires openly and without stigma.

Every adult should have the autonomy to make choices about their lives, relationships, and businesses. Attempts to regulate consensual adult activities infringe upon personal freedoms and contribute to an unjust marginalization of our community.

Let's work together to keep our community that is rooted in inclusivity, respect, and understanding while supporting local businesses that operate legally and ethically. I urge all stakeholders to reconsider this ordinance and instead focus on creating a community that celebrates diversity and personal choice. Together, we can create an environment where everyone's rights are respected and upheld.

Kiley George

Cleveland, Ohio

Kileyg1991@gmail.com

Statement from Mandy Salley COO from The Woodhull Freedom Foundation

“Acadia Parish in Louisiana has a proposed ordinance that actually declares that casual sexual liaisons are unlawful. Why? To stop a private club from opening. And we're saying “Nonsense” to both the accusation and the ordinance. SCOTUS had the final word in Lawrence v. TX - we have a right to privacy, whether someone in New Orleans likes it or not!”-Mandy Salley