

MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 8, 2023  
VERMILION ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT  
REGULAR MEETING

President Patrick Duhon called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM. The meeting was held at the Vermilion Parish Government Office Complex, 407 Charity Street, Abbeville, La.

Mr. Joshua Anderson led the Pledge of Allegiance before Mr. Duhon requested a moment of silence.

The following members were present at the meeting: Mr. Ruben Rivera, Mr. Patrick Duhon, Mr. Richard Guilbeaux, Ms. Claire Broussard, Ms. Linda Vincent, Ms. Kristin Vincent, Ms. Anne T. Falgout, Ms. Kristy Doucet-Touchet, Ms. Nikki Vidos, and Mr. Joshua Anderson

The following members were absent: Mr. Dexter Callahan, Mr. Elliot Broussard, Ms. Anita Dupuis, Mr. Jacob Landry, and Ms. Megan Landry-Lalande

The following guests were present: Ms. Kayla Link, VEDA, Ms. Shari Cormier, VEDA, and Ms. Lynn Guillory

PUBLIC COMMENTS: There were no public comments regarding any of the items on the agenda.

MINUTES: The minutes of the October 11, 2023, meeting were approved as written on a motion made by Mr. Ruben Rivera. Ms. Claire Broussard duly seconded the motion, and it was unanimously carried.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Ms. Nikki Vidos gave the Treasurer's Report. The board was provided with a list of invoices and expenses totaling \$2,491.25. Mr. Ben Rivera motioned the board to accept the Treasurer's Report and pay the invoices. Ms. Claire Broussard duly seconded the motion, and it was unanimously carried.

Ms. Kristy Doucet-Touchet and Ms. Anne T. Falgout entered the meeting.

Ms. Shari Cormier presented the proposed 2023 budget amendment to the board. She explained that \$19,000.00 was removed from Director's Salary and added to Consulting Expenses, \$200.00 was removed from Travel, Meals & Lodging and added to Newspaper Advertising Requirements and \$4,800.00 was removed from Dues, Publications, Subscriptions and Education and added to IT Costs. She noted that the proposed changes do not alter the original budget total. She also noted that VEDA's income total was adjusted to \$84,000.00. Mr. Ben Rivera motioned the board to approve the proposed amendment to the 2023 budget. Ms. Nikki Vidos duly seconded the motion, and it was unanimously carried.

Ms. Cormier then presented VEDD's proposed 2024 budget to the board. She noted changes that were made from the previous budget. Mr. Ruben Rivera motioned the board to accept the 2023 budget as presented. Mr. Richard Guilbeaux duly seconded the motion, and it was unanimously carried.

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT: VEDD's new Economic Development Liaison, Kayla Link, introduced herself to the board. She informed the board that having already attended meetings at the Town of Gueydan and the Abbeville Harbor and Terminal District, she would be attending the other stakeholder meetings and would be contacting their respective board members to visit with them before the meetings take place.

Ms. Nikki Vidos provided the board with a list of deliverables and benchmarks that was developed to help guide Ms. Link. She noted that the list is expected to change as VEDD moves forward. Also noted was that updates on organizational goals will begin in January.

OLD BUSINESS: There was no old business.

NEW BUSINESS: Ms. Cormier informed the board that the state legislature has amended Louisiana's Open Meetings Law to accommodate people with disabilities. She noted that VEDD is required to draft a procedure for participation in Open Meetings by those with ADA recognized disabilities. She presented the board with a proposed procedure and request form. After a brief discussion Mr. Ruben Rivera motioned the board to table the issue until both could be reviewed by legal counsel. Ms. Claire Broussard duly seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

Ms. Cormier informed the board that VEDD was asked to write a letter of support for Crawfish Haven/Mrs. Rose's Bed and Breakfast in consideration for the Louey Award. She provided a copy of the letter to the board. Mr. Ruben Rivera motioned the board to approve the letter of support. Ms. Anne T. Falgout duly seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

COMMITTEE REPORTS: Ms. Nikki Vidos gave the report for the Transition Committee. She noted that the committee managed two grant assistance requests, a meeting with the Delta Regional Authority, a meeting with LED, a media request which was passed along and a request for a letter of support.

Ms. Vidos informed the board that two of the three Pathways Forward college tours have been completed. She provided the board with copies of the Pathways Forward newsletter describing the events as well as thanking VEDD for our donation and support.

Ms. Claire Broussard gave the update for the Workforce Development Committee. She noted meetings with Mr. Lonnie Richard from the V. P. School Board and their plan to bring together businesses to discuss pathways to internships and apprenticeships for credits toward graduation in the Tech Ready Program.

Ms. Nikki Vidos informed the board that VEDD will be hosting a State of Vermilion Workforce event at the Abbeville Library on January 30, 2024. The event will bring together key stakeholders, leaders, and business owners throughout the parish to discuss how best to move the parish forward.

Ms. Shari Cormier gave the report for the Sustainable Funding Committee. She informed the board that the parcel fee proposition was approved by the State Bond Commission and that the certificate has been received. She noted that the next step would be posting the required paperwork in the Abbeville Meridional at the end of December.

Mr. Ruben Rivera gave the update on the Hometown Revitalization Project for the Strategic Planning Committee. He informed the board that after stakeholder and community input, the committee has decided on specific projects in Kaplan, Abbeville, and Erath, giving a short description of each project to the board. Kristin Vincent motioned the board to have the committee move forward with the described plan and present the plan to the Police Jury. Ms. Kristy Doucet-Touchet duly seconded the motion, and it was unanimously carried.

Ms. Nikki Vidos informed the board that she has spoken to contacts with LED, Acadiana Planning Commission, and the National Restaurant Association to get direction on moving forward with the issues hindering Vermilion's shrimping industry and will call a meeting with the Twin Parish Port.

Ms. Nikki Vidos noted that she has spoken to LED about the continuing the work on the LDRC program and we will be able to move forward with the survey results already collected.

Ms. Anne T. Falgout gave the update for the Communications Committee. She presented the board with a site plan for the new website and asked the board for their input. She noted that they are currently working on a question-and-answer type article as an introduction for Ms. Link. She also

noted that Ms. Cormier will continue to keep track of events throughout the parish that board members could participate in.

There was no update for the Business and Industry Committee.

Mr. Patrick Duhon asked the board to prepare for an economic round table discussion at the December meeting. He asked the board members to share ideas.

Mr. Duhon asked the board to please coordinate with the office on their availability for a board retreat in 2024.

BOARD MEMBER UPDATES: The board members spoke about the areas they represent and shared things happening in their communities.

NEXT MEETING: The next meeting of the District will be at 5:30pm on Wednesday, December 13, 2023. The location of the meeting may be changed due to the holiday.

ADJOURN: Upon motion by Ms. Anne T. Falgout, duly seconded by Mr. Ruben Rivera and unanimously carried, there being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

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Ms. Anne T. Falgout  
Secretary