

MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER 21, 2022  
VERMILION ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT  
REGULAR MEETING

President Ruben Rivera called the meeting to order at 12:00 PM. The meeting was held at the Vermilion Parish Government Office Complex, 407 Charity Street, Abbeville, La.

Mr. Patrick Duhon led the Pledge of Allegiance before Mr. Rivera requested a moment of silence.

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

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

The following guests were present: Ms. Victoria Sagrera Bourque, VEDD, Ms. Shari Cormier, VEDD, and Ms. Lynn Guillory, Ms. Charlene Beckett, and Ms. Ali Miller

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

MINUTES: The minutes of the November 9, 2022, meeting were approved as written on a motion made by Ms. Anne T. Falgout. Ms. Nikki Vidos duly seconded the motion, and it was unanimously carried by the board.

Ms. Nikki Vidos motion the board to amend the agenda to allow for the discussion of item 8A before the Treasurer's Report. Mr. Patrick Duhon duly seconded the motion, and it was unanimously carried.

Ms. Victoria Sagrera Bourque informed the board of the invitation from Representative Ryan Bourriaque that would have two VEDD representatives accompany him during Capitol Hill meetings in Washington, DC to represent Vermilion Parish during his District 47 updates. She noted that the second VEDD member would be Mr. Patrick Duhon who will be paying his own travel costs. The estimated cost for Ms. Bourque to attend would be \$1,486.28. Ms. Tammy Gordon motion the board to allow Ms. Bourque to accompany Representative Bourriaque on the Washington, DC trip and to have VEDD pay her expenses. Ms. Anne T. Falgout duly seconded the motion, and it was unanimously carried.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Mr. Ruben Rivera gave the Treasurer's Report. The board was provided with a list of invoices and expenses totaling \$998.87. Mr. Richard Guilbeaux motioned the board to accept the Treasurer's Report and to pay the invoices. Ms. Tammy Gordon duly seconded the motion, and it was unanimously carried.

Ms. Shari Cormier presented the proposed 2022 budget amendment to the board. She noted that \$1,000.00 was removed from Director's Salary and added to Dues, Publications, Subscriptions, Education (\$600.00) and Office Supplies and Equipment (\$400.00) to cover deficits in those categories. She also noted that VEDA's income total was adjusted to \$88,000.00. Mr. Richard Guilbeaux motioned the board to approve the proposed amendment to the 2022 budget. Mr. Patrick Duhon duly seconded the motion, and it was unanimously carried.

ADMINISTRATORS REPORT: Ms. Victoria S. Bourque provided the board with a review of the accomplishments made by the VEDD office in November. These included: working with 7 business prospects/projects to meet their specific requests and 1 business visit. She started preparations for a grant education workshop to be held in conjunction with Congressman Higgins' office, a City of Abbeville job fair, and another parish-wide job fair. She assisted a New York film crew by discussing crawfish production and Cajun culture. She also organized and held a Small Business Saturday

Scavenger Hunt with 30 businesses throughout Vermilion Parish and promoted Vermilion Parish's seasonings, spices, and sauces at Vermilion Chamber of Commerce's Taste of Vermillion event.

OLD BUSINESS: Ms. Bourque informed the board that the date of Stakeholder Dinner has been moved to Thursday, February 9, 2023. She noted that Save-the-Date emails will be sent out at the end of December with formal invitations being mailed the second week of January 2023.

Ms. Bourque showed the board the shirts that were purchased from Manuel Screen Printing and informed the board that the online sales have not yet been set up as requested in November. She asked about having a Merchandise Committee meeting to evaluate how to move forward. Mr. Guilbeaux suggested the Mr. Rivera and Mr. Duhon evaluate the existing committees and VEDD's needs for 2023. Ms. Vidos noted a possible need for promotions to be addressed within the committee evaluations.

Mr. Rivera informed the board that four board members are interested in attending the LIDEA Basic Economic Development course in New Orleans from February 28, 2023 – March 3, 2023, along with Ms. Bourque. He noted that the registration fee for the 4-day course is \$600.00 per person and lodging cost is estimated to be about \$900.00 per person. He also informed the board that VEDD's CPA has suggested that VEDD set a policy for any reimbursements to board members, as any approval at this time will set a precedent for the future. Ms. Falgout noted the need to add some sort of deliverable with regards to the completion of the course, as in reports to the board or a commitment to serve on a committee, for the board members attending. Ms. Anne T. Falgout motioned the board to allow the Executive Committee to draft a policy for board travel and reimbursements as it relates to educational opportunities to be brought to the board for approval. Mr. Patrick Duhon duly seconded the motion, and it was unanimously carried. Ms. Falgout then motioned the board to set a budget not to exceed \$3,000.00 for fees to attend the LIDEA Basic Economic Development course for Ms. Bourque and up to four board members. Mr. Patrick Duhon duly seconded the motion, and it was unanimously carried. Ms. Falgout motioned the board to set a max budget of \$2,000.00 for reimbursement of board members hotel costs, provided they receive a copy of the policy and sign it. Mr. Patrick Duhon duly seconded the motion and the motion failed. Ms. Falgout then motioned the board to pay Ms. Bourque's full expense and allow a budget up to \$2,000 with a max of up to \$500.00 per person for reimbursement for four board members hotel expenses in New Orleans provided the board members receive a copy of the policy, sign it, and turn in receipts and certificate of completion of the course prior to reimbursement. Mr. Patrick Duhon duly seconded the motion, and it was unanimously carried.

NEW BUSINESS: Ms. Cormier presented the board with a list VEDA's board meeting dates for 2023. She noted that VEDA is required to post the meeting dates in the Abbeville Meridional at the beginning of every year.

Mr. Rivera asked the board to allow the Executive Committee to speak to the Police Jury and area legislators about changing our legislation to include video poker revenue as a future income source for the organization. Mr. Patrick Duhon motioned the board to allow the Executive Committee to contact the area legislators and Police Jury in order to investigate this opportunity for possible funding in the future. Mr. Richard Guilbeaux duly seconded the motion, and it was unanimously carried.

Mr. Rivera spoke to the board members about reporting to their representing entities about VEDD and becoming a contact for the community. He also challenged the board members to join one of VEDD's committees.

COMMITTEE REPORTS: Ms. Cormier provided the board with an updated funding report.

Ms. Nikki Vidos updated the board on the Sustainable Funding Committee. She informed that the committee would like to start discussions about putting a parcel fee on the ballot for the fall 2023 or spring 2024 election. She asked Ms. Cormier to do the necessary notifications as per the Louisiana Public Meetings Law requirements to allow for discussions to begin at VEDD's February meeting.

Mr. Rivera tabled the update from the Workforce Development Committee.

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

Ms. Cormier noted that Ms. Anita Dupuis' term as representative for the Town of Gueydan will end in January and she is awaiting notification of the Mayor of Gueydan's appointment. She also asked the board members who have not completed their yearly ethics course to please do so.

NEXT MEETING: The next meeting of the District will be at 5:30pm on Wednesday, January 11, 2023, at the Vermilion Parish Government Office Complex.

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

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Ms. Anne T. Falgout  
Secretary