

MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 14, 2024
VERMILION ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT
REGULAR MEETING

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

Mr. Ben Rivera 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. Richard Guilbeaux, Ms. Anita Dupuis, Ms. Claire Broussard, Ms. Kristin Vincent, Ms. Anne T. Falgout, Ms. Nikki Vidos, and Mr. Patrick Duhon

The following members were absent: Ms. Linda Vincent, Mr. Joshua Anderson, Mr. Elliot Broussard, Ms. Kristy Doucet-Touchet, Ms. Megan Landry-Lalande and Mr. Jacob Landry

The following guests were present: Ms. Kayla Link, VEDA, and 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 January 10, 2024, meeting were approved as written on a motion made by Mr. Ben Rivera. Ms. Nikki Vidos 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 \$1,486.85. Ms. Anne Falgout 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. Shari Cormier presented the 2024 insurance policy renewal quotes to the board. Mr. Richard Guilbeaux motioned the board to approve the renewal of the three insurance policies at the total cost of \$3,055.93. Mr. Ben Rivera duly seconded the motion, and it was unanimously carried.

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT: Ms. Kayla Link presented the board with her January Administrative Report. She noted that she completed 5 visits with existing businesses and had 2 business inquiries. She met with Ms. Stacey Mire about the Rails to Trails program, attended the APC Grant Meeting with area mayors, worked with officials to organize town hall meetings for Maurice, and presented to both the Rotary Club and Les Curieux.

OLD BUSINESS: Ms. Nikki Vidos spoke about that the Grant Opportunity Breakfast, hosted along with the City of Abbeville and the Acadiana Planning Commission on January 11, 2024. She noted that all of Vermilion Parish's mayors were in attendance for the meeting.

Ms. Link spoke about the Rails to Trails Program and the meeting with Ms. Stacy Mire. She noted that the program's first step is to find an organization that can take ownership of the abandoned rails at the time they are released by the railway. She informed the board that Ms. Mire plans to speak to the board at the March meeting.

Ms. Link updated the board on the Maurice Strategic Planning event. She noted that sponsorships have been found to cover the cost for the event that will be held in April.

NEW BUSINESS: Ms. Cormier informed the board that legal counsel has reviewed and approved the wording of the proposed procedure and form that was drafted to meet the required changes of the Open Meetings Law. Ms. Anne Falgout motioned the board to accept the procedure and form. Mr. Ben Rivera duly seconded the motion and it was unanimously carried.

Ms. Nikki Vidos informed the board that she attended the LIDEA Basic Economic Development Course and presented the board with a summary of the course. Mr. Ben Rivera asked if the board would consider reimbursing Ms. Vidos for the course fee. She was asked to turn in a reimbursement request for the March meeting.

Ms. Link informed the board of her plan to host a business training event in April and presented the board with a quote from Ashley Boustany. The quote for \$280 included the cost of speaking fees and materials for a presentation on the benefits of AI for small businesses. Ms. Nikki Vidos motioned the board to approve a \$500.00 budget to cover the cost of the speaker and any refreshments. Mr. Ben Rivera duly seconded the motion, and it was unanimously carried.

COMMITTEE REPORTS: Ms. Nikki Vidos informed the board that VEDD and the Nehemiah Project were approved to attend the New Growth Innovation Network Course focusing on diversity, equity, and inclusion. She noted that the workshop includes 5 online courses.

Ms. Claire Broussard gave the update for the Workforce Development Committee. She noted that the State of the Workforce meeting will be rescheduled to March. She also noted that they met with Abbeville General, and they have offered to be a host site for the healthcare industry workforce event.

Ms. Kayla Link led the report on the Sustainable Funding Committee. Ms. Link thanked Mr. Duhon and Mr. Guilbeaux for their help with the parcel fee promotion and Mr. Patrick Duhon presented the board with a flyer describing the parcel fee and its importance to Vermilion Parish.

Ms. Nikki Vidos informed the board that the Strategic Planning Committee is working with Stacey Duvic with LED to determine if the LDRC program can be relaunched.

Ms. Vidos gave the update on the Hometown Revitalization Project. She informed the board that they have not yet received any feedback on the application that was submitted.

Ms. Anne T. Falgout gave the update for the Communications and Promotions Committee. She noted that the VEDD office has been working on website content. She also noted that the list of local upcoming events has been updated and urged the board members to attend, if possible.

Mr. Ben Rivera gave the update for the Business and Industry Committee. He noted that they submitted a list of businesses for Ms. Link to reach out to.

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

NEXT MEETING: The next meeting will be held at 5:30pm on Wednesday, March 13, 2024.

ADJOURN: Upon motion by Mr. Ben Rivera, duly seconded by Ms. Claire Broussard and unanimously carried, there being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Ms. Anne T. Falgout
Secretary