

MINUTES OF THE JULY 1, 2020
VERMILION ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT
REGULAR MEETING

President Ruben Rivera called the meeting to order at 12:04 PM. The meeting was held via teleconference with access to the general public per guidelines issued by the Governor's office.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mr. Elliot Broussard.

Mr. Ruben Rivera requested a moment of silence.

The following members were present at the meeting.

Mr. Richard Guilbeaux, Mr. Ruben Rivera, Mr. Elliot Broussard, Ms. Tammy Gordon, Mr. Dexter Callahan, Mr. Gerrod Brasseur, Ms. Megan Landry-Lalande and Mr. Patrick Duhon

The following members were absent:

Mr. Jason Picard, Mr. Jacob Landry, Mr. Carlton Campbell, Ms. Roslyn White, Mr. Aidan Broussard, Ms. Anita Dupuis and Mr. Jeremy Lartigue

The following guests were present:

Ms. Anne T. Falgout, VEDD and Ms. Shari Cormier, VEDD

PUBLIC COMMENTS

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

MINUTES

The minutes of the June 3, 2020 meeting were approved as written on a motion made by Mr. Patrick Duhon duly seconded by Ms. Megan Landry-Lalande, and unanimously carried by the board.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Ms. Anne T. Falgout gave the Treasurer's Report. The board was provided with a list of the invoices and expenses totaling \$9,913.63. Upon motion by Mr. Dexter Callahan, duly seconded by Mr. Richard Guilbeaux and unanimously carried, the invoices were approved for payment. Ms. Falgout noted that the grant reimbursement from the USDA is expected in July.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ms. Anne T. Falgout provided the board with a list of accomplishments made by the VEDD office in the month of June. These included: Assisting 2 job seekers with their re-entry into the job market, working with 2 projects/prospects to get them the information they need, answering 9 inquiries from existing businesses, and working with 3 entrepreneurs interested in starting a business in Vermilion. She also conducted outreach to members of the black business community to get insight on how to improve outreach and diversification efforts and assisted in the application of two Delta Regional Authority SEDAP grants with Twin Parish Port and Acadiana Planning Commission to bring more economic development opportunities to Vermilion.

OLD BUSINESS

Ms. Falgout provided the board with a report detailing VEDD's COVID-19 response through June 30, 2020. The report noted that two surveys addressing business owners' concerns have been completed throughout the Acadiana area with 106 Vermilion Parish businesses participating and a third survey is

now being conducted. Ms. Falgout also generated 100+ posts about businesses adapting, program eligibility and availability, links to resources, links to newsletters and calls to action inviting businesses to reach out. She sent out 30 COVID related newsletters to 480 +/- recipients and co-hosted 13 business webinars. Ms. Falgout noted that the COVID response has adapted into new services being created by the economic development community.

Ms. Falgout informed the board that because it is in line with another of their projects, the Twin Parish Port is applying for the SEDAP grant. As was discussed at the last meeting these funds will be used for equipment and supplies to outfit a commercial kitchen/incubator/food hub facility. She noted that VEDD will be listed as consultancy partners who will help with the attraction of facility users and retention, expansion, and recruitment project management. They are expecting a decision in late August. Ms. Falgout also informed the board that VEDD is also listed as a partner in Acadiana Planning Commission's \$100,000 grant proposal. They have included a \$25,000 request to complete a target industry study to expand recruitment strategies and resources for Opportunity Zones in Acadiana. VEDD will help with the Abbeville Opportunity Zone prospectus and lead a subcommittee to manage the study process.

Ms. Falgout informed the board that she has not received a financial breakdown from Prospect Skin needed to move forward with the grant process. Ms. Falgout suggested that the client be sent a certified letter along with a paper application and a time limit for completion. After discussing and agreeing to an extension, Mr. Richard Guilbeaux motioned the board to have Ms. Falgout send the client a certified letter with specific guidelines and a July 29, 2020 deadline for return, so the board can take action at the August meeting. Ms. Megan Landry-Lalande duly seconded the motion and it was unanimously carried. Mr. Guilbeaux agreed to review the letter before it is sent to the prospect.

Ms. Falgout informed the board that VEDD's contract with Site Location Partnership will expire on July 9, 2020. She noted that because of the COVID-19 crisis they were not able to carry out many of the deliverables in the contract. She suggested allowing the contract to end and await the final reports before making a decision about renewing.

Ms. Falgout informed the board that the stakeholder correspondence letters were sent out as was directed at the last meeting. She also noted that the date of the letter was changed from June 8, 2020 to June 10, 2020.

NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Ms. Falgout provided an update on the progress of the Sustainable Funding Committee recommendation discussed at the last meeting. She informed the board that One Acadiana is assisting with Economic Industry Study and it should be ready in a few weeks and an architect has been found to complete the rendering based on the results of the study. She also addressed an inquiry about the possibility of moving the parcel fee election to next spring because of the COVID-19 crisis. She noted that the election cost for a November election will be \$10,000, while a spring election would cost VEDD at least \$50,000. The board showed no interest in moving the election date.

BOARD MEMBER UPDATES

No updates were provided.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the District will be at 6:00pm on Wednesday, August 5, 2020 at the Vermilion Parish Government Office Complex.

ADJOURN

Upon motion by Ms. Megan Landry-Lalande, duly seconded by Mr. Patrick Duhon and unanimously carried, there being no further business the meeting was adjourned.

Ms. Megan Landry-Lalande
Secretary