

MINUTES OF THE AUGUST 5, 2020
VERMILION ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT
REGULAR MEETING

President Ruben Rivera called the meeting to order at 12:08 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. Gerrod Brasseux, Ms. Megan Landry-Lalande, Mr. Jason Picard, Mr. Jacob Landry, Mr. Carlton Campbell, and Mr. Patrick Duhon

The following members were absent:

Ms. Roslyn White, Mr. Aidan Broussard, Ms. Anita Dupuis, Mr. Dexter Callahan, 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 July 1, 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

Mr. Ruben Rivera gave the Treasurer's Report. The board was provided with a list of the invoices and expenses totaling \$468.10. Upon motion by Mr. Richard Guilbeaux, duly seconded by Mr. Elliot Broussard and unanimously carried, the invoices were approved for payment.

Mr. Richard Guilbeaux motioned the board to transfer the \$15,000.00 grant reimbursement, which was received in July, from the Cattle/Beef Grant account into VEDD's operating account. Mr. Carlton Campbell duly seconded the motion and it was unanimously carried.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ms. Anne T. Falgout provided the board with a list of accomplishments made by the VEDD office in the month of July. These included: Sending 21 new business owners postcards introducing VEDD and offering assistance, answering 8 inquiries from existing businesses, and working with 1 entrepreneur interested in starting a business in Vermilion. She coordinated an event with Conversation Starters on "Race in Vermilion Parish" to improve communication and work on community-led solutions to equality and inclusion. She also worked with officials updating the Regional Infrastructure Visioning Report to add emphasis to future project ideas, such as rural broadband and the importance of Highway 13, as it is our access point to the interstate and is in disrepair.

OLD BUSINESS

Ms. Falgout provided the board with a report detailing VEDD's COVID-19 response through July 31, 2020. The report noted that the VEDD office reached out to over 500 businesses and were able to provide information related to the Main Street Recovery Grant application process and eligibility information to 147 businesses. She also worked with One Acadiana and local providers to locate discount plans for internet connectivity in Vermilion as part of the "Link & Learn" initiative.

Ms. Falgout informed the board that as directed a letter and application was sent to Prospect Skin via certified mail on July 6, 2020 but was never delivered. After a general discussion, Mr. Elliot Broussard motioned the board to send the client another letter with updated dates and timelines. The completed packet will now be due by 10:00 AM on August 25, 2020. Ms. Tammy Gordon duly seconded the motion and it was passed with opposition from Mr. Richard Guilbeaux and Ms. Megan Landry-Lalande.

NEW BUSINESS

Ms. Falgout informed the board that the stakeholder invoices will be going out in August and that they will be contacted individually regarding delivery to their supporting entity.

Ms. Falgout informed the board that she has been working with Dr. Carrie Castille of the Farm Services Agency of the USDA concerning the desire for custom beef solution in the New Orleans Restaurant market and they will be bringing a group of cattle producers/processors together to discuss the possibility of providing local beef. Ms. Falgout noted that Dr. Castille is encouraging VEDD to align with a producer that may want to do custom processing. She also noted that they discussed Project Graze who is interested in expanding their operations but would need to have a feasibility study to begin the process. Mr. Jacob Landry motioned the board to contribute up to \$5,000.00 to do a Beef Processing Plant Feasibility Study. Mr. Patrick Duhon duly seconded the motion and it was unanimously carried.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Ms. Falgout informed the board that VEDD has received the official certificate from the State Bond Commission allowing us to go forward with the election. She noted that the next step would be notifying the local agencies. She noted that she has been scheduled to speak at several of the local municipality meetings to discuss the parcel fee proposition. Ms. Falgout informed the board that the Economic Impact Study has been completed and an architect has agreed to do the rendering. She also informed the board that she has received a public records request from the Vermilion Chamber with questions concerning the parcel fee and will be soliciting feedback from the board. Mr. Richard Guilbeaux suggested a short video explanation of the parcel fee that could be used during city council meetings and meetings of local organizations. Mr. Ruben Rivera asked that an update on the possible video be added to the September agenda.

BOARD MEMBER UPDATES

Mr. Jacob Landry expressed his gratitude for the response and information during this COVID crisis. He noted that Ms. Falgout has done a great job at getting the information out and this has put an emphasis on why we need economic development.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the District will be at 6:00pm on Wednesday, September 2, 2020 at the Vermilion Parish Government Office Complex, pending the Governor's decision to move the state into Phase 3.

ADJOURN

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

Ms. Megan Landry-Lalande
Secretary