

MINUTES OF THE MAY 5, 2021
VERMILION ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT
REGULAR MEETING

President Ruben Rivera called the meeting to order at 6:11 PM. The meeting was held at the Vermilion Parish Government Office Complex, 407 Charity Street, Abbeville, La. and via teleconference 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. Jeremy Lartigue, Mr. Jason Picard, Mr. Elliot Broussard, Mr. Patrick Duhon, Mr. Dexter Callahan and Ms. Anita Dupuis

The following members were absent:

Ms. Megan Landry-Lalande, Mr. Jacob Landry, Ms. Roslyn White, Ms. Tammy Gordon, Mr. Carlton Campbell, Mr. Aidan Broussard, and Mr. Gerrod Brasseux

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 April 7, 2021 meeting were approved as written on a motion made by Mr. Richard Guilbeaux. The motion was duly seconded by Mr. Patrick Duhon, 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 \$792.54. Mr. Richard Guilbeaux motioned the board to accept the Treasurer's Report and pay the invoices. Mr. Patrick Duhon duly seconded the motion, and it was unanimously carried.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ms. Anne T. Falgout provided the board with a review of the accomplishments made by the VEDD office in April. These included: conducting 1 business visitation, answering 5 inquiries from existing businesses, consulting with 3 pre-venture requests, and working with 3 business prospects/projects to meet their specific requests. She also connected Big Brothers/Big Sisters with large employers in the parish and the Chamber, provided locals with SeaGrant's Climate Adaptation Project funds and American Rescue Plan Act information, explored Vermilion's sewer capacity limitations and assisted Kaplan with their AARP grant submission. Ms. Falgout noted that the week-long morning news segments she organized with KADN's Al Hebert and local businesses/attractions aired and everyone was pleased with the outcome.

OLD BUSINESS

Ms. Falgout informed the board that, as directed, she contacted the USDA and they have submitted a request for an extension on our behalf. Ms. Falgout also contacted Calvin Woodruff and he has prepared a demand letter to Paul Fitzpatrick asking him to either complete the Cattle/Beef study in the next 90 days or return the deposit paid by VEDD. She noted that she is awaiting their responses.

Ms. Falgout presented the board with the cost of upgrading VEDD's phone/internet service. She noted that the office requested pricing from KAPTEL, Cox Communications, and AT&T. She informed the board that AT&T was not able to provide internet service that would fit our needs of 50Mbps. Ms. Falgout recommended to the board that VEDD accept the new contract with KAPTEL at a \$20 per month savings. Mr. Richard Guilbeaux motioned the board to continue service with KAPTEL under the proposed agreement. Mr. Dexter Callahan duly seconded the motion, and it was unanimously carried.

NEW BUSINESS

Ms. Falgout informed the board that she would like VEDD to participate in a Community Competitive Index assessment with LED. The index which is used to measure our community against others in the state and across the nation. Ms. Falgout asked that the board participate in the process and recommended inviting other relevant community members to participate. Mr. Rivera asked that time be reserved at a public space and offer a call-in option for those who wish to participate. He noted that if 8 or more board members RSVP a special meeting would need to be called.

Ms. Falgout proposed that VEDD investigate Vermilion's wastewater treatment capacity and pursue possible grant funding to get an assessment completed. Because water and sewer infrastructure are crucial to food and beverage manufacturing, a target industry, the aim is to identify potential projects that could alleviate infrastructure concerns in business attraction and retention efforts. She informed the board that VEDD's Police Jury appointments have recommended that she bring this issue to the Police Jury, water districts, municipalities, and their engineers. Mr. Richard Guilbeaux motioned the board to have Ms. Falgout address the Police Jury Public Works Committee to explain our position and ask for their cooperation. Mr. Patrick Duhon duly seconded the motion, and it was unanimously carried.

Ms. Falgout informed the board that she would like to begin working on another job fair. She noted that she has spoken to the businesses who have participated in the past and the majority were interested in an in-person event. The board asked Ms. Falgout to move forward with plans for the job fair.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Ms. Falgout informed the board that she is currently working on grouping the police jury members by geography, as each part of the parish may have different concerns and that she would like to speak to Mr. Dane Hebert about who to prioritize before scheduling the meetings.

BOARD MEMBER UPDATES

The board members each spoke about the areas they represent and shared things happening in their communities. Police Juror Jason Picard mention that the Police Jury meetings are being rescheduled starting in June and suggested we coordinate our meeting times to not conflict.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the District will be at 6:00pm on Wednesday, June 2, 2021 at the Vermilion Parish Government Office Complex.

ADJOURN

Upon motion by Mr. Dexter Callahan, duly seconded by Mr. Patrick Duhon and unanimously carried, there being no further business the meeting was adjourned.

Ms. Megan Landry-Lalande
Secretary