

MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 11, 2023
VERMILION ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT
REGULAR MEETING

President Ruben Rivera called the meeting to order at 5:37 PM. The meeting was held at the Vermilion Parish Government Office Complex, 407 Charity Street, Abbeville, La.

Mr. Elliot Broussard 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, Ms. Nikki Vidos, Mr. Joshua Anderson, Ms. Tammy Gordon, Ms. Anita Dupuis, Mr. Elliot Broussard, Ms. Megan Landry-Lalande, and Ms. Kristy Doucet-Touchet

The following members were absent: Mr. Jacob Landry, Mr. Dexter Callahan, Ms. Claire Broussard, Ms. Anne T. Falgout, Ms. Linda Vincent, and Mr. Patrick Duhon

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

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

Mr. Ruben Rivera informed the board that Ms. Anita Dupuis has been appointed by the Town of Gueydan to serve another term on the VEDD board. Ms. Dupuis' second term will begin on January 7, 2023, and end on January 7, 2027.

MINUTES: The minutes of the December 21, 2022, meeting were approved as written on a motion made by Mr. Richard Guilbeaux. Ms. Tammy Gordan duly seconded the motion, and it was unanimously carried by the board.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Mr. Ruben Rivera gave the Treasurer's Report. The board was provided with a list of invoices and expenses totaling \$441.85. Mr. Richard Guilbeaux motioned the board to accept the Treasurer's Report and to pay the invoices. Mr. Elliot Broussard 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 December. These included: working with 8 business prospects/projects to meet their specific requests, holding 1 business event, and conducting 4 business visitations. Ms. Bourque assisted Acadian Contractors and Broussard Brothers with their career fair (20 attendees). She also assisted in the planning of the City of Abbeville's Career Fair to be held in January and continued planning a grant writing workshop to be held in conjunction with Congressman Higgins' office.

OLD BUSINESS: Ms. Bourque updated the board on the plans for the Stakeholder Dinner that will be held on Thursday, February 9, 2023. She noted that the event will begin with networking at 5:30 pm with programming beginning at 6:00 pm. Invitations to the event will go out in the coming weeks.

Ms. Bourque informed the board that because the shirts could not be added to Manuel Screen Printing's website before the holidays the Merchandise Committee has decided to change the colors of the shirts to a Mardi Gras theme and start the sales in mid-January.

Mr. Rivera read the potential change in VEDD's legislation that would allow VEDD to receive a portion of any future video poker funds and asked Mr. Guilbeaux to contact VEDD's attorney, Mr. Calvin Woodruff, for his legal opinion.

NEW BUSINESS: Mr. Rivera asked that the board member reimbursement policy be tabled until the February meeting. He noted that the LIDEA Basic Economic Development course that Ms. Bourque and four of the board members had planned to attend has sold out, so he would like to have the policy reviewed by VEDD's CPA. The board also discussed holding a board retreat that would cover the basic economic development principles, the role of the board member and strategic planning for the organization. He asked for feedback from the board. After a general discussion of dates and times, Ms. Cormier was asked to survey the board for available dates through the end of March.

Mr. Rivera informed the board that he and Mr. Patrick Duhon have reviewed VEDD's current committees in an effort to make the board more functional, to make the board meetings more organized and to get more meaningful and measurable work accomplished. He listed the committees and the changes that were made, as well as three new committees that he would like to be added. He noted that a list of committees, along with descriptions of each, would be sent to the board. He asked that everyone on the board consider serving on at least one committee.

Mr. Rivera informed the board that on February 1, 2023, he, and Ms. Bourque, along with a representative from Louisiana Economic Development, will be presenting a LDRC Parish-wide Economic Development Plan to the Vermilion Parish Police Jury. This program is designed to develop a sustainable community and economic development plan for infrastructure, education, workforce development and communications. Ms. Nikki Vidos gave the board information about the process involved in completing the program.

Ms. Cormier presented the board with an invoice from LIDEA for their annual membership dues. She noted that LIDEA is no longer offering the discounted rate when paying the conference fee with the membership. Ms. Tammy Gordon motioned the board to renew the membership and pay the \$250.00 invoice. Ms. Megan Landry-Lalande duly seconded the motion, and it was unanimously carried.

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

Ms. Cormier informed the board that the postings and notifications required to discuss VEDA's funding at the public meeting on February 8, 2023, were completed within the required time limits. Mr. Rivera then announced the details of the public meeting notification to the board members and guests who were present.

Ms. Bourque informed the board that the Workforce Development Committee met with Lonnie Richard with the Vermilion Parish School Board and toured the Career Campus located at Abbeville High School. She noted they discussed the needs of the business industry and how that can be integrated into the curriculum.

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

NEXT MEETING: The next meeting of the District will be at 5:30pm on Wednesday, February 8, 2023, at the Vermilion Parish Government Office Complex.

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

Ms. Anne T. Falgout
Secretary