

MINUTES OF OCTOBER 11, 2023
VERMILION ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT
REGULAR MEETING

President Ruben Rivera called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM. The meeting was held at the Vermilion Parish Government Office Complex, 407 Charity Street, Abbeville, La.

Mr. Patrick Duhon 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. Patrick Duhon, Mr. Richard Guilbeaux, Ms. Claire Broussard, Ms. Linda Vincent, Ms. Kristin Vincent, Ms. Anne T. Falgout, Ms. Kristy Doucet-Touchet, Ms. Anita Dupuis, Ms. Nikki Vidos, and Mr. Elliot Broussard

The following members were absent: Mr. Dexter Callahan, Mr. Joshua Anderson, Mr. Jacob Landry, and Ms. Megan Landry-Lalande

The following guests were present: Ms. Shari Cormier, VEDA, Ms. Lynn Guillory, Mr. Bruce Sonnier

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

ANNUAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ELECTIONS: Mr. Ruben Rivera nominated Mr. Patrick Duhon to serve as president. Ms. Anne T. Falgout seconded the nomination. Ms. Anne T. Falgout nominated Ms. Anita Dupuis to serve as vice-president. Ms. Kristy Doucet-Touchet seconded the nomination. Ms. Claire Broussard nominated Ms. Nikki Vidos to serve as Treasurer. Mr. Ruben Rivera seconded the nomination. Mr. Ruben Rivera nominated Ms. Anne T. Falgout to continue in her role as Secretary. Ms. Nikki Vidos seconded the nomination. There being no other nominations, Ms. Claire Broussard motioned the board to close nominations. Ms. Nikki Vidos duly seconded the motion, and it was unanimously carried. Mr. Richard Guilbeaux then motioned the board to accept the slate of officers as presented. Ms. Claire Broussard duly seconded the motion, and it was unanimously carried. Mr. Patrick Duhon will serve as President, Ms. Anita Dupuis will service as Vice President, Ms. Nikki Vidos will serve as Treasurer and Ms. Anne T. Falgout will serve as Secretary.

Mr. Patrick Duhon then took over the role of president.

Ms. Cormier was asked to contact Vermilion Bank about having the signers changed on the bank accounts.

MINUTES: The minutes of the September 25, 2023, meeting were approved as written on a motion made by Mr. Ruben Rivera. Mr. Elliot Broussard 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 \$894.39. Ms. Anne T. Falgout motioned the board to accept the Treasurer's Report. Mr. Ruben River duly seconded the motion, and it was unanimously carried. Mr. Elliot Broussard then motioned the board to pay the invoices submitted for payment. Mr. Ruben Rivera duly seconded the motion, and it was unanimously carried.

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT: This was discussed under Transition Committee updates.

OLD BUSINESS: Mr. Rivera informed the board that the revised list of projects for the Vermilion Parish Police Jury's Hometown Revitalization Program has been prioritized and will be returned to Mr. Keith Roy. He noted that they will be waiting to hear from the Police Jury about how they want to move forward.

NEW BUSINESS: Ms. Cormier reminded the board that she was asked by Louisiana Entergy Export Partners Coalition (LEEP) for VEDD's support by allowing them to display the VEDD logo on their website. She noted that the matter was tabled at the last meeting until the board members could review the organization's information. Ms. Kristin Vincent motioned the board to acknowledge and support the LEEP Coalition's request. Mr. Ruben Rivera duly seconded the motion, and it was unanimously carried.

Ms. Cormier presented the board with pricing for polo style shirts with the VEDD logo. It was decided that the board members would purchase their own shirts. Ms. Anne Falgout motioned the board to allow VEDD to pay the one-time digitizing fee of \$30.00. Mr. Ruben Rivera duly seconded the motion, and it was unanimously carried.

Ms. Nikki Vidos spoke about VEDD board members attending events being held in our parish. She noted that Ms. Cormier included a list of events being held through the end of the year in the meeting booklets and she asked everyone to please inform Ms. Cormier of any additional events.

Ms. Claire Broussard asked the board to consider supporting the Abbeville Cajun Christmas Celebration on December 9, 2023. She stated that VEDD could assist in any way they feel is appropriate. Ms. Anne Falgout motioned the board to support the Christmas parade and participate. Mr. Ruben Rivera duly seconded the motion, and it was unanimously carried.

COMMITTEE REPORTS: Ms. Anne Falgout informed the board of the Transition Committee's recommendation to hire Ms. Kayla Link as a consultant for a 5-month period at \$8,000 per month. She reviewed Ms. Link's knowledge and experience in the economic development field as well as her experience with promoting elections. Mr. Ruben Rivera motioned the board to accept the Transition Committee's recommendation and move forward with the contract for Ms. Link. Mr. Richard Guilbeaux duly seconded the motion, and it was unanimously carried.

Ms. Vidos updated the board on requests from the business community that the Transition Committee has managed in the past month. She noted that they received one grant assistance request and attended two meetings. She noted work being done with The Nehemiah Projects of Acadiana.

Ms. Vidos also informed the board that she met with One Acadiana to discuss previous meetings with Mr. Wendel Verret with the Twin Parish Port in order to continue discussions regarding the shrimp industry in Vermilion Parish. She noted that she will be arranging future meetings.

Ms. Vidos informed the board that there is a delegation from Lafayette that will be attending the Young, Smart and Local Conference in New Orleans. She noted that it would be beneficial to have someone from VEDD attend. Ms. Claire Broussard noted that she would like to attend.

There was no report from the Executive Committee.

Ms. Claire Broussard gave the report on the Workforce Development Committee. She spoke about work being done with the Nehemiah Project and informed the board that she and Mr. Richard Guilbeaux will be meeting with Mr. Lonnie Richard with the Vermilion Parish School Board sometime in the next month.

Ms. Vidos informed the board that the Nehemiah Project of Acadiana will be taking students on tours of three colleges in the next months. She asked the board to consider sponsoring snacks on the buses for the students. Mr. Ruben Rivera motioned the board to donate snacks to the college tours and authorize Ms. Vidos to use VEDD's name as the donor. Ms. Claire Broussard duly seconded the motion, and it was unanimously carried.

Ms. Nikki Vidos gave the update for the Sustainable Funding Committee. She noted that the application that the VEDD office submitted was in order and will be presented at the State Bond Commission meeting on October 19, 2023.

Ms. Nikki Vidos gave the report from the Strategic Planning Committee. She informed the board that One Acadiana and Louisiana Economic Development will hold a Small Business Summit on October 24, 2023. She noted that the registration fee was \$20.00 and suggested VEDD offer small businesses in the parish an opportunity to attend. Ms. Vidos motioned the board to offer ten scholarships to local businesses to attend the summit. Mr. Ben Rivera dully seconded the motion, and it was unanimously carried. Ms. Vidos was also authorized to use any mechanism she needed to reach out to the community about the scholarships.

Ms. Anne T. Falgout gave the report for the Communications and Promotions Committee. She noted that she has been discussing our website requirements with Billy Hobbs with Between Public Relations whose quote came in well below the \$5,000.00 budget approved by the board.

Ms. Kristy Doucet-Touchet gave the update for the Business and Industry Development Committee. She noted that the committee's focus is infrastructure and is currently researching new market tax credits and different types of grants.

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, November 8, 2023.

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

Ms. Anne T. Falgout
Secretary