

Good Afternoon,

To the Committee, Stakeholders, and citizens of St. John the Baptist Parish I would like to thank everyone who is in attendance today for our monthly Economic Development Committee meeting. Our Parish has wrapped up the Mardi Gras festivities. This Mardi Gras season was in my opinion the best one yet simply because it was spent with friends who are becoming like family here in the River Region.

Our department participated in the 69th Washington D.C. Mardi Gras. The Annual River Region Economic Development Initiative (RREDI) breakfast was packed. The breakfast is the collaboration between the Port of South Louisiana, St. Charles, St. James, and St. John parishes. Lt. Governor Nungesser, our Congressmen as well as Senators all spoke and shared their insights on the importance of the River Region. Various elected officials outside of our parishes were also in attendance. We continue to hear positive feedback from the breakfast.

While in D.C. We met with several elected officials and federal agency representatives concerning economic development initiatives here in St. John. The main focus for the engagement with the officials was to share the importance for the support of our Levee project to protect our parish. Every contact and business made while there has received a note of thanks for the opportunity to meet with them.

I accepted the invitation to come participate at the "African American Read-In" program at the John L. Ory Communication Magnet Elementary School. We have some great kids here in the St. John the Baptist Parish School System. The students and I had an amazing conversation surrounding race relations and its impact on Economic Development. They had so much to add to the conversation based off the subject matter.

Attended the GNO Inc Annual Luncheon. The slogan for this year's event was "GNO Global". The event highlighted the major accomplishments of the region.

Attended the Rotary Club of LaPlace weekly meeting. Enjoyed the fellowship with businesses and civic community leaders.

We are crafting a RFP (Request for Proposal) for the parish wide Area Trade Marketing Study. This will assist us in identifying what we do not know as it relates to consumer analytics. Retailers are using data to make key decisions in site selection locations. There are web-based data programs that can tell us where our residents are going to make purchases. What are they purchasing and what disposable income they possess in order to make purchases. The RFP is in the review stage. Once the review is complete we will bring the RFP before the Parish Council.

I met with Penny Freeman, Campus Administrator of South Central Technical College -Reserve Campus, D'Wan Nunnery owner of The Frying Station, and Myra Alexis-Valentine, Grants Administrator of St. John. We discussed the opportunity to place a food truck on the Technical College campus. This month we will witness the students and staff members on the campus receive food services. We are excited to have facilitated this conversation and once the paperwork is completed we will have those services offered to the students.

February 15th & 16th, we hosted informational sessions for both the Homebuyers and Small Business Grant and Loan programs. We held workshops at the St. John Community Center in LaPlace and the Council on Aging Senior Center in Edgard. The application intake period starts today March 6, 2017 and will end on March 31, 2017. If you have any questions please contact Myra Alexis-Valentine at (985) 652-9569.

Queen Sugar (the hit Oprah TV show) has returned and started filming season two (16 episodes) through August and will be utilizing St. John Parish again throughout this time.

Today, **Monday, March 6**, they will be filming in Edgard until 8 or 9 pm at:

- Johnson Road at LA 18
- LA 640 between LA 18 and LA 3127
- Woodville Rd at LA 18/ Woodville Cemetery

There will be no road closures associated with the current filming however the above mentioned areas will experience intermittent traffic control for 3-4 minutes. If traffic backs up, the Sheriff's Office detail will keep it flowing.

On **Tuesday, March 7**,

- crews will mostly be filming at St. Joseph's Plantation
- however filming will take place at "Violets House" at 4315 LA 18 in Edgard.
- There could be some additional traffic control in this area and neighbors were informed of the filming via door hangers.

The Base Camp and Crew Parking while they are in our Parish will take place at the St. John the Baptist Parish Church and near the Veterans Memorial Bridge and will not inhabit motorists or residents. Queen Sugar will then move to New Orleans however we do anticipate their return as they film through the summer.

Spoke at the neighborhood meeting hosted by industry at the DuPont PERO house. Some of our Economic Development stakeholder community members were present. It was well attended. Special thanks to Assessor Lucien Gauff for his assistance during the presentation.

Our website is continuing to evolve. We are now working weekly to finalize initial review. We will take committee photos for this site and will add to the site. We are getting closer to the first viewing however we want to make sure the initial view is substantive..

We met with Emily Arata with Oschner Hospital. Alexander Carter and Laverne Toombs were present for a meeting to discuss Economic Incentives that Oschner could assist the community in developing the area near the new hospital. We are still reviewing how they may be able to assist us any further.

Attended the Planning and Zoning Administrative hearing. A new strip mall is in the planning phase in LaPlace. More information to come as we continue to assist in the development.

Welcome signs and banners are being addressed. We have been working closely with Newton Savoie for a light permit and landscaping permit for the welcome sign on Hwy 5. We are also working on the landscaping permit for the Belle Terre welcome sign. We are now looking into possibly replacing the welcome signs on Hwy. 61 coming from St. Charles Parish. We are also working on the sign on the West Bank coming from Vacherie. We are in the process of ordering welcome banners to be hung throughout the parish in efforts to continue beautifying the area.

We will continue to work on other efforts to grow the economic viability of our parish. If you have any ideas that you would like to share, please do not hesitate to contact me at any time.

Kind Regards,

Jerry W. Jones Jr.

St. John the Baptist Parish

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