



6/12/2017



# June Director of Economic Development Report

*St. John the Baptist Parish*



Jerry W. Jones Jr., Director

June 12, 2017

Greetings,

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 (EDC) meeting. **National Economic Development Week** was a huge success! We can now turn our attention towards a re-cap of a National Economic Development Week meeting. This was the first year St. John Parish Department of Economic Development participated in this celebration of Economic Development. The response to the week of events was extremely positive. I would like to once again say thanks to all of our partners for their assistance with such a huge endeavor. We welcome future collaborations that mirror any of our events during that particular week.

Attended the **Rotary Club of LaPlace** meeting. I have received confirmation and attended my first meeting as an official member of the Rotary Club of LaPlace. Once again, I would like to thank our Great Assessor Lucien Gauff III for the initial invitation to attend the meetings. He has been of great help in my capacity as director.

I would like to thank Myra Valentine, **Grant** Administrator and her support staff for all of their due diligence with our **CDBG Small Business Grant & Loan Program!** Cullen and his staff at South Central Planning and Development Corporation also worked very hard to ensure our small businesses received every opportunity to receive these funds.

During our previous EDC meeting we launched our new **website**. This site will continue to evolve.

We attended the **Port of South Louisiana** Dedication Ceremony May 23, 2017 ribbon-cutting ceremony that marked the official opening of the expansion to warehouse #19 at Globalplex Intermodal Terminal. The \$9.6 million expansion, which created 22 new jobs while retaining 19, was funded in part (approximately 90%) by LA DOTD's **Port Construction and Development Priority Program**. The 77,520 square-foot annex, which was designed to store and process bulk commodities, consists of a 14" thick pile-supported concrete floor with a load capacity of 2,160 pounds per square foot, a metal frame designed to resist up to 136 MPH hurricane-force winds, and a pitched metal roof deck 67'10" in height overall and 36' eaves. Its six bays have a storage capacity of 106,000 cubic feet each for a total storage capacity of approximately 45,000 tons of material. Connected to the existing 35,000 square foot warehouse #19, the Port of South Louisiana planned this extension based on the needs of BARTON International.

On Thursday, May 25, 2017, we held the Spring 2017 Kauffman **FastTrac** Graduation ceremony at the South Central Louisiana Technical College Reserve Campus. This event was well attended and really set the foundation for many of our graduates as they go on to become

stronger businesses. We are already starting to develop conversations on ways to grow the next component of FastTrac that assist the older businesses with continuing to grow.

Met with Livability Magazine who is doing the **St. John Livability Economic Development Magazine**. This is an Economic Development data driven magazine that will highlight editorial pieces on positive stories about the parish. Education, Small Business Development, Developments on the Levee, the Port and how it is a major contributor to not only St. John but the country as well.

We will hold a Ribbon Cutting/ Grand Opening for **Greater You Counseling Center** on June 2, 2017 Greater You Counseling Center is a private agency responsible for assuring the delivery of community based mental health, mental retardation, substance abuse and/or behavioral health services to individuals with those disabilities. We welcome them to the community and look forward to working with them.

**IEDC Economic Future Forum** will be held on June 4-6, 2017 in Little Rock, Arkansas. Peggy Joseph-Chair, Denise Burrell and myself will be in attendance. The Economic Future Forum will help equip our department with the latest knowledge in emerging trends for a competitive business environment. This is our opportunity to learn about how we can maximize the existing industries, prepare for opportunities in emerging fields, and foster the next generation of great entrepreneurs.

We have already started our discussions on **2017 Andouille Festival**. Our next meeting will be held on June 15, 2017 at 2:30 p.m. We are beginning to schedule committee meetings and taking the necessary steps to ensure the festival is a success. More information will come as we began to hold more meetings concerning this event.

Queen Sugar Premieres on June 20 – 21. "**Queen Sugar**" tells the story of the estranged Bordelon siblings in Louisiana. At the center of the family are Nova, a journalist and activist; Charley, the wife and manager of an NBA player; and formerly incarcerated father Ralph Angel, who is searching for redemption. Following a tragedy in the family, the siblings must put their complicated lives aside so that they can come together to run the families' struggling sugar cane farm. Also involved in the farm are Aunt Violet and family friend Remy Newell. This is a show that is currently being filmed in our parish.

**4<sup>th</sup> of July Luncheon & Fireworks Celebration** planning is underway. Our festivities will be held on July 3, 2017. We anticipate a nice family friendly time and look forward to seeing everyone out there.

We will be hosting the **Delta Regional Authority (DRA)** on July 6-7, 2017 at the St. John Community Center. DRA has a grant to develop competitive communities. The program is titled Economically Competitive and Resilient Communities. This program host workshops across the 8-state footprint of DRA. The **Economic Development and Economic Resiliency Training** were scheduled to only occur in Pineville and Ruston. Citing there was no scheduled site along the I-10 corridor, we reached out to them to serve as a host. They are excited to come

in and provide the workshops on both July 6-7, 2017. These intensive boot-camp courses will help prepare local elected officials, community leaders, and economic development practitioners to support economic development and disaster resilience activities in our community. This event will be mostly subsidized by the grant fund they have secured to provide this training. Our sole contribution from our department is **advertising the event** to all of the aforementioned along the **I-10 corridor**. We are going to provide the invitees with hotel and restaurant information, as well. Our department is already laying out the logistics and making preparation to inform our hotels and restaurants in our parish about this opportunity. The DRA staff is responsible for booking the trainers and they also contribute to the cost of the food for the two days.

We will continue to work on other efforts to grow the **economic** viability of our parish. Thank you all for continuously sharing your ideas. I truly appreciate them. It is important we highlight what contributing advantages economic development has on **St. John the Baptist Parish**. If you have any other ideas that you would like to share please do not hesitate to contact me at any time.

Kind Regards,

*Jerry W. Jones, Jr.*

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