



9/11/17

September Director of Economic Development Report

St. John the Baptist Parish

Jerry W. Jones Jr., Director

September 11, 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. The **St. John the Baptist Parish 44th Andouille Festival** is already in the planning phase. We have held meetings discussing how we desire to move the festival forward in preparation for a record crowd. Last year we estimated 25,000 in attendance and this year we anticipate 30,000. According to our Facebook reviews, our 43rd Andouille Festival was truly something special. I received positive feedback from so many people and look forward to making this year better! Last year the festival was highlighted on several media outlets throughout southeast Louisiana. This year we see the opportunities to take the festival to the next level. Recently the festival sponsored the **2017 MEAC/SWAC Challenge** pre-game show in Baton Rouge. This pregame show reaches the greater New Orleans/Baton Rouge markets and is carried on 106.5 ESPN Radio. The next committee meeting will be held on Friday, September 15, 2017 from 9:00am -11:00am.

The Andouille Festival Arts and Craft Vendor application process is now closed. The committee met and finalized the selection of vendors. All of our **Food & Arts and Crafts Vendors** have received certified letters notifying them.

We met with the **Port of South Louisiana Executive Regional Airport** staff and developed the 2017 Andouille Festival Fly-In for the festival. We have a logo and created a flyer that we have sent to all of the recreation flight magazines. Last year our collaboration yielded 10 people to fly-in and attend the festival. We are confident more will come this year.

This year we will have the **RTC/Buddy's Home Furnishing Fan Zone** under the Lagniappe Tent at the festival. This tent will have large screen TV's and projection screens from Friday-Saturday. All of the major football games will be highlighted in this tent during **Friday and Saturday**. On Sunday, the Lagniappe Tent will host the **Gospel Celebration**.

Our most recent sponsorship totals both pledged and received are: **\$69,800.00**. Our goal for Sponsorships is **\$100,000.00**. We are well on our way to **surpassing** this amount!

Attended the **Rotary Club of LaPlace** monthly meeting. Our meeting highlighted areas we believe we can grow the community and chapter. Our Superintendent of public schools spoke at the last meeting highlighting the growth of the public school system.

Attended the **Pin Oak Terminals** Ribbon Cutting Ceremony at the **Belle Terre Country Club**. As the terminal project develops, it will create more than **70 new on-site jobs** encompassing full-time company and contractor jobs, with 30 of those positions already filled. Those new jobs will have an average annual salary of more than **\$60,000**, plus benefits. Louisiana **Economic Development** estimates the project will result in an additional 81 new

indirect jobs, for a total of more than 150 jobs in the **Southeast Region** and surrounding areas. At peak construction, the project generated more than 440 additional construction jobs. Thank you **Pin Oak Terminals** for choosing **St. John Parish**!

Attended the monthly **South Central Planning and Development Commission** Bank Meeting. We are identifying plans on offering more **Small Business Loans** to qualified applicants within St. John! More information will be rolling out soon in regards to this program.

Industry Career Day planning efforts are continuing to develop. The library has now connected with both the Community College and Chamber of Commerce. We continue to have planning sessions in order to make this day special. This is an awesome opportunity to take students from our school system and assist in opening their minds to options in the **workforce**. Our next meeting is scheduled for tomorrow. The team is working diligently on this event.

Met with **Jeb Bruneau**, Business Development Manager for **Advantous Consulting LLC**. With the changes made to incentives on the state level, I would like for our businesses to receive good information that will help them grow their business, continue creating jobs and grow the Parish tax base. We will be scheduling one on one meetings with businesses throughout the parish along with Advantous. We are looking for **businesses** that will qualify for the incentives on the state level. This is a great opportunity for the businesses within our Parish.

We were excited to attend the **Louisiana Board of Commerce and Industry** monthly meeting in Baton Rouge, and see **Pin Oak Terminals** receive confirmation on their **Quality Jobs** incentives application. Way to Geaux Pin Oak!

Coordinated the **Delta Leadership Network** Louisiana State Lunch in Baton Rouge, along with my co-advisory committee member. **Dr. Shawn Wilson**, Secretary of Louisiana DOTD was an amazing guest speaker!! Thank you for your excellent insight about transportation and why involving people at the local level matters.

Met with both Monique Duronselet, owner of **ZoraChristina Restaurant** and TJ Qutob, owner of **Petra Restaurant**. We are identifying restaurants that need either assistance with taking their businesses to the next level, or just simply need to see me (the Director) to discuss **ideas** they may have for their **business**. I enjoyed meeting with both business owners and look forward to further assisting them.

Ochsner Medical Complex held their Grand Opening VIP Event & Ribbon Cutting on Monday, September 8, 2017 at 5:30 p.m. Ochsner Health System formally opened its free-standing emergency medical facility Tuesday (Aug. 8) in LaPlace, nearly three years after buying the former River Parishes Hospital in St. John the Baptist Parish. The **\$12 million new facility** houses a 24-hour emergency department that includes 13 beds, hospital officials said. The facility, **Ochsner Medical Complex-River Parishes**, replaces services once offered at the River Parishes Hospital campus, according to a hospital news release. Ochsner bought that

106-bed facility in 2014 and announced that it would construct an outpatient center in a new location.

In addition to the emergency room services, the **new 20,000-square-foot** medical complex on Airline Highway near Tiffany Drive also includes a laboratory, radiology services and a center for stroke intervention. The new medical facility is "part of a **\$30 million investment** and three-year commitment by **Ochsner** to St. John the Baptist Parish," according to a hospital news release.

Ochsner officials have said the former River Parishes Hospital would be converted into an 82-bed inpatient behavioral health center. That **facility** is projected to open in 2018.

Attended **Rainbow Luxury Imports** Grand Opening and Ribbon Cutting event held, Tuesday, August 22, 2017 at 9:30 AM-10:30 AM. This location will sell or have access to all of the "**higher end**" make and model vehicles. Stop by and check them out!

Met with Eliza Eugene of **EME Consulting Group** and discussed Small Business Outreaches within the Parish. Ms. Eugene was able to inform me of some of the **businesses** she felt could desire a small business loan and suggested ways we could make a **positive** impact on the businesses within the parish. We will now begin to have a monthly meeting to ensure our lines of communication stay open to continue building our **Small Business** program in the Parish. Great job Ms. Eugene!

Louisiana Calling is a program that serves as an opportunity to achieve career and financial success. We all have a calling and we are focused on helping every one of us find our path.

Our first priority with **Louisiana Calling** is making sure everyone recognizes the many opportunities available in Louisiana, right here, right now. Louisiana Calling's multi-year public messaging campaign, resources and strategic partnerships will help Louisianans to discover and learn about the many **pathways** to career and financial success.

Our second priority is connecting Louisiana's citizens to those opportunities to develop the high-value skills for short- and long-term success. By partnering with organizations like **Jump Start**, or colleges and universities, technical institutes and private training facilities, Louisiana Calling is doing just that.

Our **newsletter** is in the review phase and will be submitted for a final design. We will begin distribution upon final approval and print out. We work collaboratively with the St. John the Baptist Parish Library through JoAnn Proctor. We receive 300 newsletters called "**Bookmarks**" from them and now share them along with our newsletter.

We are continuing to work on scheduling meetings with **Retail** Shop owners, and **Commercial** Real Estate Agents. We would like to hear from them on how to best assist them with growing our commercial sector. Also, we will address debris and trash that may be visible on their properties. We look forward to working with them and assisting in addressing their

concerns. We would like to build a consensus with them in efforts to get up-to-date information on **available** properties.

LA SAFE—Louisiana’s Strategic Adaptations for Future Environments. LA SAFE is a planning process to develop a common vision with coastal residents intended to guide parish-specific decision-making in coming decades relative to projected flood risks. The Louisiana Office of Community Development’s **Disaster Recovery Unit**, in partnership with the Foundation for Louisiana’s Coastal Resilience Leverage Fund and the elected leadership of the parish, is coordinating the LA SAFE planning initiative. The planning process is a key step in the implementation of LA SAFE, a \$40 million initiative funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Once plans are developed, the LA SAFE team will use the balance of funds to invest in proposed programs and projects. LA SAFE is a **community-focused** resilience and adaptation policy framework complementing the state’s Coastal Master Plan. GNO Inc. and our department are collaborating in an effort to hold a meeting with some of the business leaders within the parish. We are in the **planning** phase of this meeting. More information will come within the next few days.

UPDATE: We hosted the St. John the Baptist Parish La SAFE **Business Roundtable** facilitated by GNO Inc. This gave our small businesses an opportunity to speak on the concepts of small business and resiliency. We are grateful to **GNO Inc.** and our businesses that attended and participated in this endeavor. More meetings like this will follow to assist in building the **relationship** between the Parish and our business community.

The **Planning and Zoning and Economic Development** Departments have teamed up and applied for this DRA grant. This endeavor will continue to build upon the creation of our new **Cultural District Coalition**: a new community partnership aimed at spurring revitalization of the Parish’s historic and culturally significant areas. Serving both a communicative and advisory role, members of the coalition will consist of local stakeholders, community leaders, and staff from several Parish Departments. The Coalition will meet quarterly to develop a strategy to promote four proposed cultural districts located in **LaPlace, Reserve, Garyville and River Road on the West bank.**

The **Fairfield Inn & Suites LaPlace** is still under construction and we are excited about the impact it will have on our community once the construction is complete. Our department stands ready to support this development.

Please visit our new website. This site will continue to evolve. Once again please review our website at **www.OpportunityStJohn.com**. Moving forward we will update the site to include available properties in St. John.

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 have designed the front of the magazine and also the language that highlights the Parish.

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,

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