

**St. John the Baptist Parish
Economic Development Committee**

Minutes of Regular Meeting
Monday, November 6, 2017

ATTENDANCE:

Present:

Peggy Joseph
Elizabeth Joseph
James Oubre, Jr.
Evin Stein
Robert Taylor
Tomy Acosta

Absent:

Michelle Jenkins
Kali Jenkins

Staff:

Natalie Robottom
Jerry Jones
Denise Burrell
Terri Abadie

Guest:

Jo Banner
Lois Frank
Mala Taylor
Wayne Aucoin
Linda Pruhomme
Wayne Vicknair
Ali Vicknair
Rena Jackson
Larry Sorapur
Lucien Gauff
Marvin Perrilloux
Kim Fontenot
Yasmaine Magee

I. Call to Order

Chairwoman Peggy Joseph called meeting to order at 12:04 p.m.

II. Roll Call

Seven (6) Committee members were present. (3) Absent. Quorum was met.

III. Prayer and Pledge

Elizabeth Joseph led prayer. Evin Stein led pledge of Allegiance.

IV. Public Comments

(Meeting open for public comments (3) Minutes)

Lois Frank, St. John Parish resident, commended Jerry Jones and the Andouille Committee and the parish on doing an excellent job on the Andouille Festival. Ms. Frank stated there are a few things which need to be tweaked such as not having the festival on the same weekend as the local high schools' homecoming football game. Overall, did a good job.

V. Approval of Minutes

Motion from Tomy Acosta and seconded by James Oubre, Jr. to adopt the minutes of the September 11th and October 9th meetings.

VI. Director's Report

Monthly EDC Update - Jerry Jones, Director

- The 44th Annual Andouille Festival welcomed more than **20,000** guests over the three-day weekend. This year's events included The **Dang Douille** Eating Contest, The Andouille Gumbo **Cook-Off**, The Annual Andouille Run, The Gospel Tent and the first-ever RTC/Buddy's Home Furnishings Football **Fan Zone**. The festival kicked off on Friday evening with \$1 Night, a **fundraiser** to benefit hurricane relief.
- On Saturday, festival goers attended the Andouille Gumbo Cook-Off and the Dang Douille Eating Competition. For the second year in a row, **Larry Zeno**, an independent entrant, won first place in the Andouille Gumbo Cook-Off. The Dang Douille Eating Competition winner, **Chad Duhe**, unseated the winner of three straight years, **Chris Cancienne**, who won second place this year. **Jason Montegut** placed third.
- The 39th Annual Andouille Run kicked off Sunday, the closing day of the festival. **Dr. Michael Acuri and Jennifer Palerno** placed first for men and women in the 5 mile **Andouille** run. Following the run, festival goers enjoyed music on the main stage as well as the Gospel Tent. The Children's Tent featured music, **performances**, and arts & crafts for young festival goers throughout the weekend.
- I would like to thank everyone who participated in the festival. I would like to make special recognition of East St. John High School student leaders who spent their weekend assisting the Lions Club of LaPlace. Austin Scioneaux and his colleagues did an exceptional job and I think it

speaks to the hard work their parents, families, Parish Superintendent of Schools and his staff. Each of us played a part in highlighting the Parish and its most valuable resource; the people!

- This year we set a goal that we would raise **\$100,000.00** for our festival from sponsors. This was a \$40,000.00 jump from the 2016 goal. What we received in sponsorships for **2017** was amazing.

Sponsorships	\$72,500.00
Grants	\$16,050.00
Gumbo/Dang Douille	\$ 1,200.00
Gospel Tent	\$ 2,500.00
Andouille Run	\$ 2,000.00
Media Sponsorships	\$12,517.00
In-Kind Sponsorships	\$15,155.29
Total	\$121,922.29

- We are excited to announce that we have exceeded the sponsorship goals! Special thanks to my staff and Myra Valentine, SJBPA **Grants** Administrator!
- **Industry Career Day 2017** was hosted by St. John the Baptist Parish Library and the South Central Louisiana Technical College-Reserve campus. The event was held on October 19, 2017 at both the **library** and Technical College. The library connected with both the Technical College and Chamber of Commerce. This was an awesome opportunity to take students from our public and private school system and assist in opening their minds to options in the **workforce**. To state that this event was a success would be an understatement!

Updates:

- LADOTD approved the permit for the Hwy 51 sign. We are working with Craig Carman at Nice Signs. Upon the completion we will fully landscape this sign.
- Both Administration as well as Councilmembers have called complaining about this for some time. I spoke with the LaPlace Shopping Center owner Harry. He has expressed his displeasure with what he stated were honest efforts to patch up the parking lot of the shopping center. He is looking at an alternative option as it relates to the renovation of the parking lot. The Popeye's parking area was recently redone. The Church's parking area however is absolutely unsightly. I have made several visits and phone calls to the store. Church's is in the process of resurfacing their parking area.
- Visit new website at www.OpportunityStJohn.com

VII. Old Business

Economic Development Committee (EDC) By-Laws Revisions - Natalie Robottom, Parish President

- Expressed the importance of completing the Ethics Training for Public Servants
- Provided clarity of the revisions to the EDC By-Laws
 - Statuary guidelines regarding Economic Development Committee name change;
 - By-laws changes conflict with the charter – requested changes to budget should be recommended in advance by the Budget Preparation/Draft in June;
 - Confer with the Economic Development (ED) Director with requests
 - Easier to include on the front end rather than amending afterward.
 - Make sure revisions are documented properly
 - Stipend – time and travel eligibility;
 - Number of meetings per week/month; reconsider scheduling committee meetings before your meetings.
- Tomy Acosta...
 - Requested the circulation of findings of the actual statute that created the EDC name
 - Inquired of the \$2,500 line item account
 - Questioned: How does the committee spend the line item?
- Parish President informed of the following:

- The EDC cannot use the money;
- The Advisory Board cannot control spending;
- Budget for projects and board retreat workshops go under the travel/ training line item. Retrieve information of interested workshops and/or projects and submit to the ED Director;
- Decide on priority and make recommendations;
- Clarified positions and responsibilities.
- Jerry Jones...
 - Article 5 Section 1 – should have been taken out. Proposing for it to be removed.
- Robert Taylor
 - Article 3 section 2 – ...member does not have resided in the district...must reside in the parish and a registered voter.
 - Questioned will not every district be represented?
 - Informed that typically a councilperson chooses persons from their district and that all EDC members are to represent the business community parish wide.
- Tomy Acosta motioned to send the bylaws to the Parish Council for approval minus the redaction for the meeting every week. Elizabeth Joseph seconded. All were in favor.

VIII. New Business

- St. John Center Policies and Procedure Review Committee (3 members needed)
 - Peggy Joseph, Chairperson appointed Tomy Acosta, Elizabeth Joseph, Robert Taylor and Kali Jenkins.
- Strategic Goals and Objectives Committee (3 members needed)
 - Peggy Joseph, Chairperson appointed Evin Stein, Michelle Jenkins, and James Oubre.
- Announced/ welcomed District I EDC Appointee, Tyler Lewis by Councilman Kurt Becnel.
- Elizabeth Joseph – suggested the creation of a Welcome Packet for new EDC members.

IX. Community Partners Update

- **EME Consulting Group**
 - We received a request on behalf of Eliza Eugene, President, to cancel and nullify the current contract that is between EME Consulting Group and the Parish;
 - In the process of identifying the Outreach to Small Business.
- **Energy Louisiana** – Absent (concurrent meeting)
 - James Oubre: New employees being hired are being trained at SCLTC – Reserve Campus
- **Louisiana Small Business Development Center (LSBDC)** – Wayne Aucoin
 - Fall 2017 - FastTrac Program 20 students.
 - Last class - November 16, 2017
 - Graduation day – November 30, 2017
 - Lunch & Learn scheduled November 14 & December 5, 2017
 - Last Lunch & Learn on Food Business has 10 attendees
- **Port of South Louisiana** – Linda Pruhomme
 - Taking bids on an extension to the Executive Regional Airport and runway expansion;
 - Completing a new roof of a building in Port complex;
 - Waiting for the Legislature to convene for money for the projects of 2018;
 - Once that happens, the Port will know how much money they will have from the state to match to complete some of the projects at Globalplex Terminal
 - Dedicated a new hanger last week.
- **River Parishes Tourist Commission** – Jo Banner
 - Attended a seminar called the E-Tourism Summit and discussed...
 - different ways to promote tourism and travel;
 - the new emerging trends and how to continue to sell the area (not just a day trip);

- How to keep them longer?
 - Airbnb accommodations;
 - Promoting the River Parishes to their social media and their families;
 - Importance of millennials.
 - Megan Ryburn is in London at the World Travel Market Show
 - Meeting with different tour operators and media from around the globe;
 - They send people to us, we house them or we put them on a FAM trip
 - We work with them to get more media and people booking to stay here.
 - We work with transportation bus companies and tours
 - FIT Far and Independent Travelers connected.
 - New Zealand and Australia like a lot of adventures.
 - Swamp Tour, AirBoat, Bike Trails...
 - **River Region Chamber of Commerce (RRCC)** – Chassity McComack – Absent
 - RRCC A Festive and Thankful Fete – Nov. 9th at 5:30pm – Firemen's Federal Credit Union, 1901 LA Hwy 3125, Lutcher, LA
 - Sincerest thanks to the parish administration and staff for their cooperation and collaboration with the local Chamber. The Board retreat is scheduled for Dec. 7th, at which time the 2018 program of work will be devised. We look forward to a greater partnership with you all to strengthen sustainability of businesses of all sizes.
 - **South Central Louisiana Technical College (SCL)** - Penelope Freeman (Absent)
 - James Oubre shared Ms. Freeman is very busy with the merging take place with River Parishes Community College (RPCC).
 - **South Central Planning and Development Commission (SCPDC)** - Absent
 - **St. John Business Association** – Absent
 - **St. John Community Center & Sound Stage** – Jo Banner
 - Sound Stage Inquiries
 - Andouille Festival – October 13, 14, & 15
 - Private & Public Event Inquiries
 - Sheriff's Office Teen Event Nov 8th
 - Entergy Training Workshop
 - Weddings (2) for 2018
 - Netflix production
 - **St. John the Baptist Parish School Board** - Absent
 - **Workforce Investment Board** - Absent

X. Announcements

- Divine Hands Preschool and Learning – Thursday, Nov 16th 12:00-1:00pm
- Introduction of local business in attendance
 - Advanced Marketing and Promotions (AMP) – Wayne Vicknair
 - San Francisco Plantation – Kim Fontenot
 1. Dec 1 – 17 any resident of St. John Parish can take a tour at a discounted price
 2. Preparing for Frisco Festival - March 3rd and 4th, 2018
- Marvin Perrilloux – Bylaws are highlight to see the changes
 - Looking to see a decrease in the rental cost of the Community Center by years end
 - Concerts – to include the Sheriff's Office for discussion as they provide the security.
- Assessor Lucien Gauff – inventory tax (commercial side), research economic development that caters to the millennials such as condos that are close to business, restaurants, and entertainment. Work in conjunction with the Parish Council.

I. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made by Tomy Acosta and seconded by Evin Stein. Meeting was adjourned at 1:25 p.m.