

Louisiana Seafood Promotion and Marketing Board

Minutes from an Open Forum

April 20, 2016

2:00 p.m.

Capitol Park Welcome Center

702 N. River Road, Baton Rouge, LA 70802

Meeting called to order by Chairman Pete Tortorich at 2:04 PM.

Roll call by Administrative Assistant Jordan Buras.

Present: Guy Laigast, Chief of Staff Chef Tenney Flynn Mayor Sherbin Collette Chef Peter Scalfani Kristen Baumer Pete Tortorich Barry Wall Chalin Delaune	Absent: Troy Parria Daniel Edgar Sal Sunseri David Maginnis Jakov Jurisic Larry Avery
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Chairman Tortorich then asked for an introduction of guests:

Julie Samson, Office of the Lt. Governor

Ben Mitchell, Wildlife & Fisheries

Scott Couvillon, Trumpet Advertising

Theresa Overby, Miles Media

Vito Zuppardo, Miles Media

Caitlin Switzer, The Ehrhardt Group

John Fallon, Audubon Nature Institute

Doug Daigle, LA Hypoxia Working Group,

Acy Cooper, Shrimp Task Force

Marla Cooper

There was no adoption of the agenda due to no quorum.

The minutes from the February 10, 2016 meeting were not adopted due to no quorum.

Guy Laigast, Lt. Governor's Chief of Staff, welcomed everyone and on behalf of the Lt. Governor invited them to Plaquemines Parish night at the Pentagon Barracks.

Chairman Tortorich started the Executive Committee reported by stating his thoughts on the Seafood Expo North America. He believed our presence was very successful and we were able to generate some good leads. Mr. Tortorich expressed his positive thoughts on the Legislative reception and recognized Chef Peter Scalfani of Ruffino's, Chef Tenney Flynn of GW Fins and Chalin Delaune of Tommy's Fish House for their participation in the event.

Chairman Tortorich then introduced Julie Samson to review the Board Financials. Mrs. Samson described the State budget and stated there is a lag time. She then talked about collections from the Task Forces. Mrs. Samson then moved to the expenditures by category and the travel numbers will go up substantially as we get into the time of year of out of state events. She talked about the BP Foundation where the BP funds are tracked. As April 11, 2016, the account balance is at \$7.3 million, this year's

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marketing plan totaled \$2.7 million and approximately \$1 million has been spent. It is approximated the Board will spend \$2 million for the year leaving approximately \$6.3 million in the account. She then stated the Activity by Vendor and Transaction by Date are the same report, just listed differently.

Chef Peter Sclafani asked if we were anticipating any Task Force money. Executive Director, Karen Profita, stated that we are trying to get in front of the Task Forces, we expect them to donate and possibly increase donations.

Mrs. Profita asked Mrs. Samson to elaborate on the financial reports. Mrs. Samson stated that all vendors we have used can be found on the Activity by Vendor report and the other has each transaction by date. She state that everything is done by a CPA firm and dates back to the start of the Board.

Chairman Tortorich asked for the new Board members to introduce themselves. Mr. Kristen Baumer, Paul Piazza and Son's Seafood, is the president of the domestic seafood processor. They are located in South Louisiana. Mr. Barry Wall, Wall's Alligator Farms, is here to represent the alligator industry.

Chairman Tortorich then asked for everyone on the Board to introduce themselves to the new Board members.

Mr. Tortorich asked for someone to volunteer for the Education Committee. Mrs. Profita stated an email will go out to let everyone know what is involved and if anyone would like to volunteer.

Chairman Tortorich then asked for Chef Tenney Flynn, Chairman of the Marketing Committee, to brief everyone on the last Marketing Committee meeting.

Chef Flynn began by talking about the Boards presence at the Fisheries Forward Summit. He then moved to the Chef Jeff Challenge which we sponsored for \$2,500. Chef Flynn then talked about the Seafood Expo North America where we generated 18 viable leads. He stated, Lt. Governor Nungesser was able to attend and get exposure. He and Mrs. Profita stated we are going to save money with the new booth configuration and that is estimated at \$25,000 per show.

Kristen Baumer, asked how we spent on our presence in Boston. Mrs. Profita, replied with \$140,000 including travel expenses. Our revenue was \$20,500. She expects the expenses to drop next year. Mrs. Profita stated that the Lt. Governor asked to get feedback on the booth and is it worth our attending? Chairman Tortorich stated that it is something hard to measure and Kristen Baumer agreed. Mr. Baumer did state that the SENA show is the best show to be a part of. There was discussion on how much it cost for an individual company to go to a show like this.

Mrs. Profita asked for feedback on the SENA show. Mr. Tortorich stated it would be better if we can get more Louisiana vendors in the booth. Mr. Baumer stated it is a better show to be a part of.

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Mr. Guy Laigast, Chief of Staff, recommended that we try to establish a Louisiana area at the SENA show. Mr. Baumer, stated this could be complicated with doing business right next to your competitors. There was further discussion about the creating a Louisiana section at the show. Mr. Tortorich, said that we need to make it a point to have each species represented. Mrs. Profita stated that the booth space is offered to the industry first then to Board members. She then asked for input on having the chef cooking in the kitchen during the show. There were responses stating how it does attract people to the booth. Mrs. Profita expressed how the chef could prepare the exhibitors seafood during the show to present the exhibitors species. Mr. Baumer asked if there was anything others were doing that we currently are not. Mrs. Profita elaborated on some things that others were doing but that what we are doing is best for our presence. There was further discussion on presence at the show.

Chief of Staff, Guy Laigast, stated anywhere seafood is, tourism should have a presence as well. Mr. Laigast said it will help cross promote Louisiana.

Chef Peter Sclafani recommended doing a thumb drive with seafood suppliers as a giveaway. This was a favorable idea.

There was further discussion on the booth at the expo shows and how to get other Louisiana companies in the same area.

Mr. Baumer recommended trying to get a meeting space for our exhibitors. There was further discussion about providing meeting space.

Chef Flynn asked for a comparison on the SENA show in Boston to NRA show in Chicago. Mrs. Profita explained that the SENA show is for large scale deals and NRA show is restaurant buyers and people with small chains. We get more leads from the NRA show in Chicago.

Chef Flynn then moved onto the success of the Legislative Reception. Then he stated we will have a booth at the Associated Grocers show and thanked Pete Tortorich for his contribution. Chef Flynn gave the dates of the upcoming NRA show in Chicago, May 21-24. Mrs. Profita added that American Shrimp Processors Association was invited to be a co-exhibitor. She shared that Cody and Samantha Carroll will be cooking with us in the booth.

Chef Flynn informed everyone of our upcoming LASCO competition. He stated there will be 11 chefs with 6 cities represented.

He proceeded to the Woodlands event that is part of a deal with Texas Monthly. Mrs. Profita explained the deal that was made as part of a media buy using the Deepwater Horizon Grant. The details were negotiated by Trumpet and we were able to work in our presence at the Woodlands event.

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Chef Flynn, then discussed the GASCO competition, stating the NOAA funds may not be present. The cost could be paid for completely by the Board. Mr. Laigast, Chief of Staff, informed everyone that the deal is not dead yet and the Lt. Governor is still working on getting some funds.

Chef Flynn, asks Mrs. Profita to give an explanation to the Board about the Nola's Backyard event. Mrs. Profita states it is a \$10,000 sponsorship and there are about 20 people from hotel and restaurant chains that tour. It helps get great interaction and exposure with these industries. She mentioned one visitor is currently in negotiations with an attendee.

He proceeded to give an overview of the Atlanta Food and Wine Festival, presented in the Marketing Committee meeting by Misty Shaw. The original proposal was \$40,000 and the Committee countered with \$22,000 plus seafood and the offer was accepted.

Chairman Pete Tortorich asked Chalin Delaune to give his information about the Legislative Committee. Mr. Delaune discussed the TTIP and possible trade negotiation with the EU. He stated how Europe has higher regulations on imported goods and if this could change some it would help with trade to the EU. He hosted a visit of international media to shine positive light on our seafood industry. He talked about how in the beginning the visitor's opinions of our product were not high but after the visit, some opinions were changed for the better. We will have to make adjustments to fit other countries standards to be able to ship to other countries. He then talked about Senator Charles Boustany's protecting legislation being signed into law. Finally he discussed the FDA and how they have the right to refuse Malaysian imports without searching.

Executive Director Profita, then addressed the Board and informed them that Assistant Director Lisa Manda had retired. Mrs. Profita proceeded by giving the Board an overview of upcoming events.

Each of the advertising agencies (Trumpet, Miles and Ehrhardt) prepared a one sheet. Mrs. Profita briefly explained what each company does for the Board and what the data indicators show. She then talked about the return of the Truck Wrap program and talks about how we have a few companies interested. Mr. Delaune asked about our involvement in Bayou Country Superfest. Mrs. Profita states that we will be providing seafood and are looking into serving performers.

Mrs. Profita explained to the Board, at the next meeting we will be presented with the preliminary findings on the Seafood Innovation Center. Mr. Delaune commented that this will be a great resource to help the seafood industry.

Next, Chairman Tortorich introduce Mr. Doug Daigle to present on the Hypoxic Zone. Mr. Daigle gave the Board a brief synopsis of hypoxic zone in the Gulf of Mexico. He then asked for the Boards support the efforts. Chairman Tortorich declared the proposal be placed on hold until a quorum was formed. Mrs. Profita stated she will facilitate any questions.

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Chairman Tortorich then opened the floor for public comments.

Mr. Acy Cooper, with the Shrimp Task Force, began to discuss House Bill 420 that will affect the "Authentic Louisiana" program criteria. He gave a brief overview of how this will affect small seafood fisherman. He asked the Board to give their thoughts. Mr. Guy Laigast asked where the bill stands. Mrs. Julie Samson stated it is in the Senate Natural Resources. Mr. Delaune and Mr. Baurmer weighed in on their thoughts about how it can affect the Louisiana seafood industry. Mr. Baumer stated how his company promotes Gulf shrimp instead of Louisiana. Mr. Cooper expressed his opinion on the policing and how we can make changes to trucking. Chef Peter Sclafani asked if there could be different tiers to the program. He also stated there are issues with getting the product all year around. There was further discussion on the authentic program. Also, there was further discussion on the problems the lie with not making changes to the program. Mayor Sherbin Collette commented that there could be more policing on the imports and that will have a greater impact. Mrs. Marla Cooper gave her opinion of the bill and how it affects all seafood.

Mrs. Profita invited Mr. Ben Mitchell of Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries to give his position. He stated he understands both sides. He also said we need to have more conversations with the larger processors that can get Louisiana seafood out into the entire market place. The department will serve whichever way if the bill is passed or declined. There was further discussion on the effects of the bill if it is passed and Mr. Scott Couvillon with Trumpet Advertising gave his opinion on the bill. He stated it is all in how authentic is defined.

Mrs. Profita thanked everyone for a great discussion.

Chairman Pete Tortorich made the motion to adjourn the meeting at 3:52 pm.