

LaBIC Board Meeting Minutes

August 12, 2015

1:00 – 2:00 pm

Alexandria, Louisiana

Chairman Rusovich called the meeting to order.

Rebecca Normand called the roll. The following committee members were in attendance:

1. Greg Rusovich
2. Steven Grissom
3. Sherri LeBas
4. Steve Windham, representing Lt. Governor Jay Darden
5. Benjy Rayburn, representing Commissioner Mike Strain
6. Marion Fox
7. Randy Robb
8. Rick Ranson
9. Don Sanders
10. Robert Scafidel
11. Michael Tarantino

The following board members were absent:

1. Chett Chiasson
2. John Fay
3. Dan Feibus
4. Jay Hardman
5. Dominik Knoll
6. Gary LaGrange
7. John Manno
8. Walter Sanchez
9. Sandy Sanders
10. Brad Terral

Recent resignations of two board members were announced: Joel Chaisson and Felicia Manuel.

A quorum was declared.

Chairman Rusovich thanked Rick Ranson and CLEDA (Central Louisiana Economic Development Authority) for sponsoring the meeting. Mr. Ranson and Jon Grafton, Executive Director, England Airpark, discussed the advantages of Central Louisiana and its progress. Some of the successes touted included the location of Proctor and Gamble and international connections such as CEMEX, pellets produced in Central Louisiana being exported to Germany and the recent announcement of a Lithuanian company. The impact of the base closing in 1992 was discussed as was the work toward a new megasite. It was mentioned that Alexandria is the location of a commerce workshop on state grants.

Chairman Greg Rusovich asked if anyone would like to make a motion to approve the minutes. Robert Scafidel made a motion “to approve the minutes of the 6th and 7th board meetings as submitted.” The motion was seconded by Marion Fox. Hearing no discussion, a vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

Secretary Grissom started his opening comments with a notation on how important partnership efforts are in attracting investors and how great partners such as CLEDLA, give Louisiana a competitive advantage. The State is excited about the new megasite.

Secretary Grissom reported that the overall economy for Louisiana is good as evidenced by year-over-year growth of the labor force. This growth helps to rank Louisiana as one of the top states in the nation for economic development as recognized by its top 10 rankings by many independent sources. It was noted that Lake Charles is one of the fastest growing regions in the country. Louisiana is a strong exporting state and has strong linkages with international efforts. There is currently a great project pipeline. Secretary Grissom thanked the board for their service.

Chairman Rusovich commented on the increased activities of the Office of International Commerce and the actions of LED's global representatives. He commented that the consistent results measures are demonstrating success as we continue to take the Louisiana message abroad. He noted upcoming marketing activities in Japan, China, India, Korea and the United Kingdom.

Chairman Rusovich further commented on the natural progression of the LaBIC board and referenced the Internal Management Rules as a way to provide increased focus and structure to the board. The subcommittees are being realigned with the board priorities of increased international trade and foreign direct investment.

OIC Executive Director Kathe Falls provided an update for the Office of International Commerce. Ms. Falls discussed staff changes including the addition of Sheba Person-Whitley who is responsible for cargo/trade analysis and the redevelopment of LED's export promotion program, change of the international representation in Mexico, and the addition of Rebecca Normand as OIC's administrative assistant.

Ms. Falls discussed the FY'15 results of LED's international representatives as well as the agency's international announcements and demonstrated the importance of international economic development to the state.

She listed four priorities for FY'16:

- Increase awareness of Louisiana as FDI location in strategic international markets and the importance of FDI within Louisiana.
- Global trade analysis to increase bulk cargo in Louisiana's deep water ports
- Better engage members of the Louisiana Board of International Commerce
- Automotive initiative.

Each priority was discussed and specific examples were provided of how these will be accomplished.

Steve Windham asked that OIC leverage tourism promotion with international trade and foreign direct investment and asked if tourism was included in the legislation creating LaBIC.

Michael Tarantino asked about the role of the international reps in calling on the headquarters of existing international investors in Louisiana. Secretary Grissom discussed the role of the BERG (Business Expansion & Retention Group) and agreed to further consider the suggestion.

Chairman Rusovich asked for the subcommittees to report on their meetings.

Rick Ranson reported that the LaBIC Review (formerly "Project Governance") reviewed a draft of the process that will be used to evaluate projects. Subcommittee suggestions will be incorporated into the proposed process. The subcommittee expects to have the process completed for the board by the December board meeting.

Sheba Person-Whitley reported on behalf of the Cargo Task Force. She said that her research of trade flows through each of Louisiana's deep water ports and a recommendation on how these ports can leverage this data to increased bulk should be completed within 60 days. She has visited three of the six ports and will visit the remaining ports within 45 days.

Don Sanders and William Marshal reported on behalf of the Budget & Finance subcommittee. This subcommittee is the first to complete its assignment of a list of potential funding sources for applicants of LaBIC approved projects. The list includes grants from 9 federal, 5 state, and 1 private organization. The list should be useful as applicants seeking funding for their projects.

The subcommittee also discussed the transitioning to the new Global Insights subcommittee.

Chairman Rusovich then discussed administrative matters for the board.

Chairman Rusovich requested a motion "to adopt the Internal Management Rules document as submitted." Steve Windham made the motion. The motion was seconded by Sherri LaBas. Chairman Rusovich called for discussion. Chairman Rusovich said that the intention is to elect vacation positions at the December LaBIC meeting. During discussion it was agreed that attendance at the LaBIC meetings has been dwindling. Under the proposed Internal Management Rules document board members not in attendance at two or more meetings will be placed under review. It was agreed that "review" would include Chairman Rusovich and Kathe Falls contacting the organization that nominated the board member to ask that organization to either encourage active participation or ask for a resignation so that we can have a board of fully-engaged members. Hearing no further discussion, Chairman Rusovich asked for the vote. The motion passed unanimously.

Board members were encouraged to complete the "Board Member Survey" which will be used by LED in better leveraging board members with its activities.

A request was made to call for nominations for the chair of the newly created Global Insight Subcommittee. Randy Robb made a motion "to nominate Don Sanders as subcommittee chair for the Global Insights subcommittee, effective close of the meeting." Marion Fox seconded the motion. Hearing no discussion or other nominations, the motion passed with a unanimous vote. Don Sanders accepted the position.

Chairman Rusovich asked for public comments. Hearing none, his closing remarks thanked the board for their participation.

Chairman Rusovich requested a motion "to adjourn the meeting." Steve Windham made the motion. Sherri LaBas seconded the motion.