

Iberia Economic Development Authority
Regular Meeting Minutes
Thursday – June 25, 2020

Board of Commissioners of the Iberia Economic Development Authority
met on Thursday – June 25, 2020 at 7:30 a.m. at
101 Burke Street, New Iberia, LA 70560

Cecil Hymel called the meeting to order and called for the roll.

Members Present: Roy Pontiff, Cecil Hymel, Damon Migues

Members Absent: Fran Henderson, Jody Suire

Others Present: Michael Tarantino, Evelyn Ducote, Matt Landry, Parish President Richard (via telephone), Councilman Paul Landry, Mitchell Whitaker with Cox Business, Jeff Simon

With there being no public comments, Mr. Hymel asked the commissioners to review the minutes of the regular May 2020 meeting. On a motion by Roy Pontiff, seconded by Damon Migues, the minutes were unanimously approved. Mr. Hymel asked the commissioners to review the May 2020 financials. On a motion by Roy Pontiff, seconded by Damon Migues, the financials were unanimously approved.

Mr. Hymel asked Mr. Tarantino to proceed with his business park funding and economic development updates. Mr. Tarantino reported the following:

1) Reported that the Parish's Airport Access Road project was ready to move forward, and thanked Parish President Richard and the Iberia Parish Council for their support of the project to keep it moving forward. 2) Reported that work on the utility connections to Progress Point was moving forward, and noted he has a meeting with Lawco after this meeting for an update from them on the waterline project. 3) Asked Matt Landry with Berard Habetz to give a short update on the work he is doing on the sewer design. Mr. Landry noted we needed to coordinate construction activities with Lawco, ARA, Iberia Parish Government (IPG) and the Sewer District with respect to their Airport Access Road project. 4) Mr. Hymel brought up that he thought we needed to get with IPG and the ARA to discuss signage, street lighting, landscaping and other aesthetic measures since when the access road is completed it will serve as a gateway to Iberia Parish, as well as the Acadiana Regional Airport. Parish President Richard thought that was a good idea, since location visibility from Highway 90 is very important for both the access road and Progress Point.

Mr. Tarantino stated that he had been approached by a land company regarding a possible mineral lease on Progress Point property. He stated the lease would not contain any surface rights, just an underground mineral lease. Mr. Tarantino said he would contact the company and ask them to submit a formal proposal to the Authority for consideration.

Mr. Tarantino continued with his economic development update, and reviewed the economic indicators. 1) Discussion was held on the employment numbers and the effect the lockdown had on employment. Noted that we needed to actively discuss diversifying our local economy. 2) Mike thanked IPG and the IPC for including him in the ongoing USDA rural infrastructure development committee, noting it was an important for growing infrastructure, like rural broadband, in the parish. Parish President Richard that the expansion of rural broadband services was a very important issue, and the Acadiana Planning Commission was also working on broadband expansion efforts. 3) Provided a short review of the status of the SMART Act working its way through the US Senate. Parish President Richard noted that NACO is supporting the bill, which would provide additional dollars to local governments to help support their COVID-19 mitigation efforts. 5) Noted IDF's COVID-19 Resources webpage is still being actively monitored and expanded, and we continue to work with regional partners to provide timely information.

Parish president Richard and Councilman Landry both stated that they thought that the IDF and IEDA were doing a great job, and complimented Mike and Evelyn on their efforts. Councilman Landry stated that he was embarrassed by the \$2500.00 yearly contribution Parish Government makes toward economic development. Mr. Hymel thanked him for acknowledging that economic development efforts for Iberia Parish were very underfunded and noted he wanted to discuss the matter further with the Administration and Parish Council to see if everyone could come up with a way to better fund economic development.

Mr. Mitchell Whitaker with Cox Business noted that Cox was very excited about the development of Progress Point. Noted Cox would be interested in exploring options to see if Cox could service the park with high-speed internet and fiber services.

On a motion by Roy Pontiff, seconded by Damon Miguez, and unanimously approved, the meeting was adjourned. The next regular meeting is scheduled for Thursday, July 23, 2020 at 7:30 AM. The meeting will be held at the IDF Offices.