

# LOUISIANA TAX FREE SHOPPING COMMISSION

## Commission Meeting

### MINUTES

Friday April 30, 2021

Baton Rouge, LA

10:45 A.M.

Meeting held via Zoom

Commission Members Present via Zoom: Kevin Richard, Louisiana Department of Revenue; Doug Bourgeois, Office of the Lt. Governor, Laura Lapeze, State Treasurer's Office

LTFS Staff Present: Deepa Woods Program Administrator, LTFS; Amy Hemphill, Accountant

1. **Call to Order**  
Kevin Richard called the meeting to order at 10:50 A.M. and read the zoom public meeting instructions.
2. **Approval of Minutes of LTFS Meeting held on August 18, 2020**  
Motion to approve the minutes of the August 18, 2020 commission meeting made by Laura Lapeze and seconded by Doug Bourgeois.
3. Kevin Richard gave an update on the state of the program. The Riverwalk location is open part-time and the airport is not yet open. The program is experiencing staffing issues. LTFS currently has three part-time employees: Deepa Woods, Amy Hemphill, and Gwendolyn Stewart. Two part-time employees have left LTFS in recent months. Melissa Rivera left LTFS in October of 2020 and Delsi Huertes left in February of 2021. Deepa Woods was hired on 3/1/2021 as the Program Administrator. Deepa chimed in on her attempts to hire staff. Since March 1<sup>st</sup>, there have been 117 candidates who applied for positions, she has attempted to schedule over 40 interviews and she has interviewed 19 individuals. One prospective applicant is scheduled to start work on 5/17 and another is pending. Kevin and Deepa continue to work with OTS for a new software system.
4. **Financial Statement Discussion**  
Kevin went over the customer activity reports and the year to date profit and loss statement. Amy Hemphill provided an update on the account balances in the operating account and the refund account. Due to software issues, we have not billed the parishes nor the state for refunds issued since last fall. Staff is still working on a fix. Doug gave an update on international travel. Louisiana does not yet have direct international flights although international travel is improving. The Asian market continues to be slow. Louisiana is seeing travel from Mexico, a major market. We are in a better position than we have been over the last 12 months.

5. **Action Items**

Motion made by Doug Bourgeois to table the approval of the FY 2021-22 budget pending additional financial information from the May reports. Motion seconded by Laura Lapeze.

Motion made to add an action item to the agenda for the transfer of \$100,000 from the refund account to the operating account by Laura Lapeze. Motion seconded by Doug Bourgeois.

Motion made by Doug Bourgeois to reimburse LDR for payroll expenses paid by LDR on behalf of LTFS in the amount of \$153,306.43. Motion seconded by Laura Lapeze.

6. **Other Discussion Items**

Kevin mentioned the Legislative Auditor is currently auditing the program and that he is fielding questions from the auditor. He will give an update of any findings upon completion of the review.

7. **Adjournment**

Motion to adjourn made by Doug Bourgeois. Seconded by Laura Lapeze. Meeting ended at 11:19 a.m.