

# LOUISIANA TAX FREE SHOPPING COMMISSION

## Commission Meeting

### MINUTES

Tuesday July 21, 2020

Baton Rouge, LA

10:00 A.M.

Zoom Meeting URL: <https://ldr.zoom.us/j/95502150209>

Conference Call Number (215) 446-3657

Password 9058256

Commission Members Present via Zoom: Kevin Richard, Chairman – representing the Secretary of Revenue; Laura Lapeze representing the Louisiana State Treasurer; Thomas Spiers, representing the World Trade Center; Doug Bourgeois representing the Lieutenant Governor and Julie Stokes representing the Governor of Louisiana. Five of five commissioners present representing a quorum.

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

Kevin Richard called the meeting to order at 10:03 A.M.

2. **APPROVAL OF LTFS MEETING MINUTES (JULY 21,2020)**

Motion to approve the minutes of the June 30<sup>th</sup> meeting made by Laura Lapeze, motioned seconded by Tom Spiers.

3. **FINANCIAL STATEMENT DISCUSSION**

A discussion centered around the profit and loss statement for the fiscal year and the profit and loss statement for the month of June 2020. Denise Thevenot discussed her expense mitigation efforts that includes the discontinuance of aircards at certain refund centers and reduction of phone lines. Laura Lapeze asked about the location of the salaries in the June financial statements. The salaries were picked up by LTFS in July of 2020 and therefore were not in the June statement. Two customers sought refunds in the two weeks since we began staffing the Riverwalk and the Airport.

Denise mentioned that we did not have a current contract in place for Tanger and that it expired in June of 2020. She also mentioned that in her discussions with LDR's General Counsel that the program was no longer able to charge retail stores for the vouchers books used by them. Motion made by Julie Stokes to move to executive session, motion seconded by Doug Bourgeois.

4. **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Chairman began the discussion explaining the previously discussed options regarding the classified employees. Those previously discussed options included employees splitting duties between LDR and LTFS. Kevin also discussed how the

employees came to be permanent classified employees. Round table discussion continued around the state of LTFS finances, a brief recap of how the program and the options available to save the program all while retaining the employees. Options available included:

**Option 1**

- 100% Layoff of LTFS staff
- Functions absorbed by LDR
- Position descriptions for LDR employees will be updated to include 10% LTFS refund center duties

**Option 2**

- Targeted Layoff / LTFS remains separate from LDR
- Only permanent LTFS staff in refund center positions remain
- If a reduction in staff is approved, most tenured employees have seniority

**Option 3**

- Business as usual / No Layoff
- LTFS remains separate from LDR

In addition to these options, the commissioners also discussed an mail-in program, hiring a third party contractor to run the program and utilizing a part-time workforce to run the program (WAE's).

Action Items: The Chairman was asked to reach out to Civil Service to see if they would approve of a part-time workforce utilizing existing employees. It was also agreed upon to meet in the near future to follow up with the transferring of funds from the refund account to the operating account.

**ADJOURN**

On a motion made by Ms. Stokes and seconded by Ms. Lapeze. The meeting adjourned at 11:18 A.M.