**LOWER 9th WARD ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT**

**Monthly Board Meeting Minutes**

**January 15, 2025**

**5:30 PM to 7:00 PM**

**Andrew P. Sanchez & Copelin-Byrd Multi-Service Center**

**1616 Fats Domino Ave, New Orleans, LA. 70117 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Minutes**

**Call to Order-5:37 p.m.**

**Roll Call**- Commissioners Present- O. Tucker, W. Waiters, Y. Martin, R. Davis,

 J. Morris, K. Henry, L. Tate, W. Calhoun

 K. Parker, S. Mosgrove.

 Commissioners Absent- L. Waters. 10 present, 1absent.

 Quorum Established

**Approval of Agenda-**

Motion by Comm’r Tucker 2nd by Comm’r Mosgrove. 10 yeas, No nays. Motion Pass

 **Approval of Oct. 16 and December 18, 2024 Minutes.**

Comm’r Henry said that she had not the receive the Oct. 16, 2024 minutes. After further discussion she did not recognize the sender and sent the minutes to spam.

Comm’r Davis asked that all emails be sent from L9EDD account.

She stated the minute were not correct, that her review of the audio did not contain a reference to the example given in paragraph 10 under the By-laws Committee report. Motion by Comm’r Davis to approve Oct. 16, 2024 minutes with the necessary corrections 2nd by Comm’r Parker. 7yeas -W. Waiters, R. Davis,

J. Morris, L. Tate, W. Calhoun, K. Parker, S. Mosgrove,

3Nays-Y. Martin, O. Tucker, K. Henry Motion Pass.

**Approval of Dec.18, 2024** Motion by Comm’r Davis 2nd by Comm’r Tate

Comm’r Morris asked that word not be placed before received in the first sentence of the treasurer’s report. Secretary Calhoun that the change had been made, and the corrected minutes of Oct.16 and Dec. 18 will be sent within 10 days.

Yays- W. Waiters, R. Davis, J. Morris, L. Tate, W. Calhoun, K. Henry, O.Tucker

Nays-Y. Morris

Abstentions-K. Parker, S. Mosgrove. Motion Pass

Next Order of Business

1. **Chairman’s Report**

 CEA Projects Budget

The chairman directed the board to attachment B in the board’s packet given at the beginning of the meeting. He explained that the attachment is part of the Cooperative Endeavor Agreement (CEA). Which contains the projects and the requested funding for those projects. It is submitted to the Louisiana Department of Treasury for approval. He further stated our Current bank balance of $56,033.33. He spoke about of current and future indebtedness. Accountant-$3,000, Ms. Adams we are 2 months in the arrear with our administrative assistant-$1800, a projected salary of $3600, Tekrema $7500, CSED $6500 Board Insurance $1,146.00 Board training $2900, Board Retreat $3600. Total projected disbursement of $25,926. which leave a projected balance of $30,087.25. Secretary Calhoun asked Chair if He may speak. He explained the funding timeline. The monies identified for projects/programs in attachment B must be expended by June 30, 2025. He said this is the predicament we were in last year. Comm’r Henry interjected that we were not in any predicament, the chair asked her not to over talk the person that has the floor, she said Comm’r Calhoun did not ask for the floor. The chair said he did. And if she would hold her comments until he finished. Comm’r Calhoun continue to state that any monies that has not spent on the projects must be returned to the state. As of today we have six months to expend those monies on the state approved projects, to identify the vendors for those projects. He said these if Comm’r Morris asked for the floor to. She stated that she did an analysis of the plan and what we have spent. and cited the programs and projected budget listed on page 13 of attachment B of the CEA. She said the Youth Development Program was budgeted at $23,000, the two programs we have voted to fund is for $28,500.00 and we are over budget by $5500 dollars. For the Community Revitalization we budgeted $45000 and have spent $25000, which means we have $40,000 unallocated. She continued to say she is not talking about money in the bank but funds that are allocated but are not spent and does not correlate with what is in the bank. Her analysis from July to December 31, 2024, from Bank statements. That she had to get on her own because the person that was handling that did not give her the correct information to access the bank. The chair asked at the December executive committee meeting was she not given the information and shown how to access the banking account. Comm’r Morris said she was speaking.

She continued with her analysis of programs and their projected budget from attachment B. She stated, there should be more money than what’s in the bank. She asked the question “Where are the funds?” If we have not spent them, if we have where are the Mou’s and invoices to support it. Comm’r Henry said we don’t have all of the documentation that was in the CEA binder. That there was a board meeting in which changes to this original projected budget were made. She asked “where is the binder? Comm’r Calhoun said “that is a good question, he thought they were houses at 1235 Deslonde office. she had been asking for the binder so that she can give an accurate report, The chair said he has the books and will turn them over to Comm’r Morris within Ten days. Comm’r Morris also said she had not received the check book. Comm’r Parker asked was there a reason for her not to have the check book. He said no and gave Comm’r Morris the check book. Comm’r Davis motion that the executive committee meet to reconcile our Financial. Comm’r Mosgrove 2nd for further discussion. He said he is hesitant to support the motion, but he would like more discussion on the board improvement reconciliation. Discussion between the board members concerning the issues of reconciliation of finance, and transitional power, why the treasurer had not received the binder with Comm’r Davis, Mosgrove , Martin, and Henry.

Comm’r Tucker called for a point of order, that the discussion should be germaine to the motion. Comm’r Davis withdrew his motion. Discussion continued on the status of Tekrema and CSED programs. The chair asked Comm’r Morris for a time frame to complete her report, she said 30 days, only because of the parameters, chair asked what parameters. The parameters that Comm’r Calhoun spoke about at the executive committee meeting when he said that we need to have these monies spent by March 1st, she heard tonight that we have until June 30, 2025.to expend the funds. And she was confused. Comm’r Calhoun explained that any funding that had not expended by June 30, 2025 must be returned to the State. He stated that we have not received funding since 21-22 legislative session, in a conversation with Sen. Bouie we did not received funding because we had not spent the money we had. Comm’r Henry interjected to say Sen. Bouie said to her we did not receive funding because we did not submit a proposal for funding. Comm’r Morris said base on those parameters

**Board Members compliance status**

(Ethic, Confidentially and Financial Disclosure.)

The Chair reminded the commissioners that have not completed their Ethics, Confidentiality and Financial Disclosure to complete as soon as possible..

1. **Old Business**

Board Retreat Status:

Comm’r Morris said that the RFP had been posted with a closed date of the 17th. She was preparing evaluation criteria and hope to send it out to the board for review. She asked for input on date, time. The board agreed to March 8, 2025 from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm

1. **Board Committee Reports**
2. Capital Outlay No Report was asked for.
3. Strategic Planning

Committee Chairman Comm’r Mosgrove began by thanking the board for allowing him to present at the August meeting, even though we did not have a quorum. The strategic planning committee consisted of one board member and 3 community members; they have met 6 times latest being Monday, January 12, 2025, their goal is not to create a strategic plan but use the Rural Urban Design Assistance Team (RUDAT) plan of 2018. The strategic plan will focus on six recommendations and the resources to support them. The committee takeaways were:

(1) revitalization of N. Claiborne, St. Claude, portion of Fats Domino and Tupelo. The focus is on the attraction and retention of business development in those areas. Identifying businesses the community needs

revitalization also include beautification infrastructure improvements, such as street repairs, functioning streetlights, trimming of trees, signage updates, determining what small businesses needs are. Identify other organizations in the area such as Sankofa and partner with them.

(2) Invest in a market analysis. The committee recognized the market study being conducted by Mr. Boone for NORA and thinks his work is sufficient and will benefit the commission a good job. And the board does need to pursue a market study.

(3) Invest in Maritime industry job training. A 2018 report said that maritime jobs connected to the port, will dramatically increase over the next 20 years. Starting salaries will be between 55 and $75,000 a year. The Commission should invest in training, transportation, and home ownership to residents interest interested in the maritime industry. The port has Peer program funded by the Federal Government. They are not recognizing old time work along the edges of the Lower 9th ward but connecting them to port jobs down inViolet. Transportation was included to make sure lower nine residents can get to and fro, guarding against Lower nine residents moving to Violet.

(4) Invest in Marketing the lower Ninth Ward. The program designed is to Highlight the many positive and potentials of the lower ninth Ward

To retain and attract residents, and businesses. This recommendation includes small investments in Community ambassadors, the Chamber of Commerce, These are examples of marketing strategies we can used to market the Lower 9.to people of the real estate and investment world.

(5) Invest in assets that engage our youth in meaningful ways, he said, this is a key phrase for the committee. There are few resources in the neighborhood for community youth.the committee stress there are few activities that connect, inform, educate and or inspire young people. Although details were not discussed, the general view is activities that build healthy fun, friendships and camaraderie. Opportunities to learn skills, hobbies.

(6) Investments into cultural and historical assets. To promote the lower nine involvement and contribution in music, civil rights and ecology. By doing so we provide a sense of community. This will help to attract and retain residents and businesses to the lower nine. Explore secondary benefit of tourism it should enhance the lower nine and not devalue it.

We want value added tourism that does not distract from the lower Ninth Ward but add resources to the cultural of the lower 9. The cultural as defined by residents of the lower Ninth Ward. These are the six recommendations from the strategic planning committee.

Comm’r Tucker motion to continue with the six recommendations from Strategic Planning Committee and to report their findings to the board .

2nd by Comm’r Morris. The chair restated the motion. Called for question on the motion hearing none, he asked for public comment. A community member Lou Ann White asked was the Strategic Planning committee apart of the Commission. Comm’r Mosgrove explained that it is and the meeting are posted with time and location on the state and L9EDD website. Community member William Peck commented on Landscaping must be ongoing process. He further stated as a small business owner he has not had anyone from L9EDD approach him. Community member R. Johnson asked how she can be notified when the RFP come out. The chair said it will be posted on the State and L9EDD websites Comm’r Henry said she will send out flyers so that the information

Community Comments were closed.

The chair called for the vote 10 yeas No nays motion pass.

1. **Finance Committee Report**

Comm’r Morris said we had an Extensive discussion on the finances during the chairman report under CEA Projects and that should suffice.

1. **New Business**

 Executive Session (Notice of Removal)

Comm’r Tucker became acting Chairman, He explained the executive session process as defined in Revised Statute 42:16. To the public. He gave approximate time for the Executive Session and then ask the public to leave. He called for a motion to go into Executive Session. Motion by Comm’r Morris 2nd by Comm’r Henry

10 yeas, No nays. Motion Pass.

Acting Chair Tucker asked that all recordings' devices be turned off.

The executive session concluded and the public was invited to return to the meetings.

The chair asked for a motion to remove the William Waiters as Chairman of the L9EDD. Motion by Comm’r Henry 2nd by Comm’r Parker to remove the chairman Waiters. Call for question, hearing none, He called for the vote. A Yes vote is for removal, A No vote is for William Waiters to remain as chairman –

W. Waiters (No) R. Davis, (No) L. Tate (No) W. Calhoun (No)

K. Henry (Yes), O.Tucker (Yes) J. Morris (Yes) Y. Morris (Yes) K. Parker (Yes) S. Mosgrove.(Yes). Motion failed to get 2/3 vote. William Waiters remains as Chairman.

1. **Announcements**
2. **Public Comments**

Community member Cynthia Guillemett commented that we should find a way to work together.

1. **Adjournment**

**Meeting**

**Lower Ninth Ward Economic Development Commissioners**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Appointing Entity Title/Name** | **Commissioner Appointed** | **Present/ Absent** |
| Mayor LaToya Cantrell  | Yvonne Martin | P |
| Mayor LaToya Cantrell | Stephen Mosgrove | P |
| City Council Oliver Thomas | Mr. Otis Tucker  | P |
| City Council Oliver Thomas | Dr. Kendall Parker | P |
| State Representative Candance Newell | Mr. Randolph Davis | P |
| State Representative Candance Newell | Ms. Keisha Henry   | P |
| State Senator Joe Bouie | Ms. Jean Morris  | P |
| State Senator Joe Bouie | Mr. William Waiters | P |
| Lower Ninth Ward Neighborhood Association  | Ms. Leona Tate   | P |
| Table Connect Group  | Rev. Willie Calhoun  | P |
| Table Connect Group  | Mr. Leon Waters | A |

For more information, please contact

William P. Waiters, L9EDD Chairperson

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