**Houma Restoration District**

**Board Meeting**

**April 4, 2023**

**Commissioners:**

Noah Lirette Jason Underwood Kevin Champagne

Daniel Babin Tom Hassell Sondra Corbitt – absent

Nick Hebert-absent Kevin Faulk Bryan Bunn

**Others Present:**

Sarah Oliver Anne Picou Jules Hebert

Rep. Tanner Magee Chris Pulaski Shantell Abshire

Trey Lottinger Chief Travis Theriot Cohen Guidry

Mart Black Brian Marceaux Chris Domangue

Tessa Hartley

The meeting began at 11:03 am

Public to address. None

CSRS, Sarah Oliver presented the 1st phase of the master plan to the board.

Rep. Tanner Magee

* Spoke about tax credits. Tax credits for historic state credits tend to weigh heavily in New Orleans. Currently, 80% is fulfilled in New Orleans.
* New Orleans developers scoop up most of the tax credits, not leaving much for other communities.
* New Bill would provide 50/50 to allow others a chance at the tax credits.
* $300 million is set aside for the program.

Jason Underwood:

* Ask for consideration when tax credits expires after ten years that the new taxes would be staggered over five years to allow the property owner to adjust to the larger tax expense.
* Build up incrementally over five years.
* State helped with design from the Secretary of Interior with tax credits program.

Discussion to have office personnel help with finding grants.

Formally adopt complete streets for the parish.

* Bryan Bunn asked why the parish hadn’t adopted complete streets.
* Jules Hebert: DOTD didn’t allow.
* Chris Pulaski: We first need a parish ordinance.
* Tanner Magee: A formal letter will acknowledge your desire.
* Tanner Magee: Devise an alternative route for the 18-wheelers.
* Funding to new truck route and bypass downtown Houma.
* Complete Streets
  + Dedicated lanes for vehicles, bikes
  + Crosswalks
  + Bulb outs
* Jules Hebert: Discuss housing downtown; suggested contacting Kelli Cunningham for grant opportunities.
* Kevin Faulk asked if someone from the board could look at the property (Landry’s Furniture)

New Business:

Jules Hebert introduced himself, grew up downtown, and shared his law firm’s history.

Spoke about being hired by the commission to speak on the commission’s behalf to Gary Landry, the owner of Landry’s Furniture Store.

Jules: property was assessed by tax roll as $160,000; the building needs to be appraised. Suggested hiring Ken Rembert and Charles Butts to survey and appraise the property.

Tanner has spoken to Noah and Gordy has spoken to Bryan about potentially purchasing Landry’s Furniture Store.

Discuss phase 1, Environmental Study, and utilize Earl Eues as the environmental company to assess the property. Other firms mentioned South Central Planning or Brown Fields funds.

Shantelle Abshire, Gary Landry’s realtor expressed that the current property asking price is $365,000.

Discussion about purchasing the property and turning it into green space. Tom Hassell, preserve the walls of the Landry’s furniture store.

Rep. Tanner Magee spoke to the committee about the state’s surplus—infrastructure-one time- project funding.

If the commission purchases the Landry Building, Tanner will ask for funds to reimburse the commission for the sale of the building.

Discussions:

Landry’s Furniture Store 7802 Main Street, property size 13,500 square feet, parking lot, and commissioner’s site visit.

Noah Lirette: could take $1 million to bring the building back into commerce.

Discuss a grocery store with an apartment on top.

Bryan Bunn: Contact a developer to build out the site for commerce and create an RFP.

Governmental purchasing procedures.

Appraisal/survey discussion and possible appraisal costs are $3,500-$5,000.

Jules would like permission to speak to the property owner, Gary Landry, and report to the commission. If it gets to negotiations, negotiate for the commission.

Jules recommended utilizing Ken Rembert as the historical data land surveyor.

Rep. Tanner Magee would replenish the funds in session if the property were to be purchased.

The parish wants to reduce blight/Tanner action.

The commission would agree as needed to have Jules Hebert and the firm speak on behalf of the commission as needed. Michelle Neil is the on-staff attorney for the commission.

Motion by Bryan Bunn to allow Jules Hebert to speak to the owner Gary Landry to engage in conversation about the sale of Landry’s Furniture Store and to use Jules Hebert as needed, seconded by Kevin Faulk. Discussion – Property owner typically pays for the appraisal; if the buyer wants to entertain a secondary appraisal, the parties usually meet in the middle, all in favor, yea. Motion passes. No nays. The motion passed at 1:25 pm.

Bryan Bunn read the letter from Councilwoman, and Chair, Jessica Domangue in favor of the above conversation to negotiate to purchase Landry’s Furniture Store. She asked that her letter be included in the minutes.

Motion to accept the special meeting minutes on March 21st by Kevin Champagne, seconded by Bryan Bunn, no discussion, motion passes. No nays.

Motion to accept the regular meeting minutes on March 7th meeting by Kevin Faulk, seconded by Kevin Champagne, no discussion, motion passes. No nays.

Chief Theriot with HPD:

Parking meters, highway safety, and bike patrol from Lafayette Street to Grand Caillou Road discussion. Mental health, crisis, and opioid treatment centers.

Noah Lirette: HRD should be receiving the 1-million-dollar check from the state this month.

No bank has been chosen to write checks; two signatures will be required.

Motion to Adjourn by Kevin Champagne, seconded by Bryan Bunn.

Meeting adjourned at 2:45p.m.

Chair:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Secretary:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_