



**JEDCO Board of Commissioners**  
**May 21, 2026 @ 8:30 A.M.**  
**JEDCO Administration Building**  
**700 Churchill Parkway, Avondale, LA 70094**

**MINUTES**

**Call to Order:** 8:30 a.m.

**Attended:** Chairman Jim Martin, Mickal Adler, Roxanne Arocha, Jimmy Baum, Darren Chifici, Billy Douglass, Teresa Lawrence, Mike O'Connor, Paula Polito, Stephen Robinson, Gene Sausse, Melisa Simeon, Lynda Nugent Smith, Bob Stevens, and Shondra Williams

**Absent:** Joe Ewell, Josline Frank, Mayra Pineda, Melissa O'Neal, Joe Riccobono, and Teri Tucker

**Staff:** Jerry Bologna, Annalisa Kelly, Scott Rojas, Penny Weeks, and Jennifer Wollfarth

**Attorney:** Reed Smith – Jefferson Parish

**Guest:** Philip Sherman – Adams and Reese  
Michael Hecht – GNO, Inc.  
Michelle Treschwig – Kushner Lagraize LLC  
Clay Tufts – Jefferson Parish

**I. Call to Order – Chairman Jim Martin**

Chairman Martin requested a motion to amend the agenda to include approval of an extension to the agreement between Adams & Reese LLP and JEDCO regarding the rendering of lobbying, legislative and other governmental relations services to JEDCO. Chairman Martin stated this will be discussed under Unfinished and New Business.

Billy Douglass motioned, seconded by Paula Polito, to approve amending the agenda. The motion passed unanimously

- **Approval of Board absences for today, May 21, 2026** – Bob Stevens motioned, seconded by Teresa Lawrence, to excuse Teri Tucker, Joe Riccobono, Joe Ewell and Josline Frank. The motion passed unanimously.

- **Approval of minutes for April 30, 2026** – Stephen Robinson motioned, seconded by Mickal Adler, to approve the minutes. The motion passed unanimously.
- **Presentation – Michael Hecht, President and CEO – GNO, Inc.**  
Mr. Hecht’s presentation included business environment highlights – Public Policy, Quality of Life, Workforce & Talent and Catalytic Assets. Mr. Hecht stated that the top four economic engines for the GNO Region include Energy/Energy Independence & Resilience, Defense/Defense & Shipbuilding, Aerospace/Aerospace Manufacturing, and Trade/Supply Chain & Advanced Manufacturing.

## II. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

## III. Unfinished and New Business

- **Approval of 2025 Financial Audit Report – Jennifer Wollfarth**  
Prior to today’s meeting, Commissioners were provided with an electronic version of the 2025 JEDCO Financial Audit Report. The document included component units for Forward Jefferson Corporation and JEDCO Development Corporation. Ms. Wollfarth introduced Ms. Michelle Treschwig, CPA Auditor with Kushner Lagraize LLC. Ms. Treschwig presented an overview of the audit and stated that there were no material weaknesses or deficiencies reported in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards and considers this to be a very clean audit.

Following discussion, Mickal Adler motioned, seconded by Lynda Nugent Smith, to approve the report as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

- **A resolution approving Amendments to PILOT Lease with Avondale Global Gateway LLC – Jerry Bologna**  
JEDCO received a written request dated March 25, 2026 from Matthew Mancheski, President & CFO of AGG, for an amendment to the lease agreement. The requested amendment would reduce the lease’s annual Targeted Employment requirement beginning in 2026 and in each year thereafter to the end of the lease term in 2038 by an annual average of 74%.

The requested amendment would significantly reduce the employment numbers without making any other changes to the lease agreement. Despite the positive momentum from AGG by adding a significant amount of capital improvements and returning commercial activity to the site, JEDCO staff feels strongly that to protect the parish’s interests, if Targeted Employment numbers are reduced, there must also be a reduction in the benefit that the PILOT arrangement provides to AGG. JEDCO staff and AGG leadership worked together to develop a mutually agreed-upon alternative amendment proposal that recognizes the current stage of the

site's development and AGG's more realistic job creation trajectory while satisfying JEDCO's concern of an uneven ratio of jobs to tax savings, and adds some protection for the parish in the event of a sale and assignment of the lease to a different user.

The JEDCO PILOT Advisory Committee met on May 19, 2026 to review the proposal and made a unanimous recommendation to approve the amendments to the PILOT Agreement which are outlined in the resolution presented today.

Bob Stevens motioned, seconded by Paula Polito, to approve the resolution amending the PILOT Agreement. The motion passed unanimously.

- **A resolution approving the formation of a 501(c)3 supporting organization; a category of 501(c)(3) public charity established for the express purpose of supporting another tax-exempt organization, and authorizing the preparation and filing of the necessary organizational documents and tax-exemption application, and designating the individuals who will serve on the initial governing board of the new entity – Jerry Bologna**

JEDCO desires to form a nonprofit organization intended to qualify as an organization described in Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code as a supporting organization organized to support JEDCO and to serve as a vehicle for raising private donations on JEDCO's behalf. The proposed supporting organization would enable JEDCO to receive, manage, and invest charitable funds through a separate legal entity while retaining public charity status, house certain programs, assets, or liabilities apart from JEDCO, and engage donors who may prefer to contribute to a dedicated fund or entity.

Approval of the resolution will allow JEDCO to prepare, execute, deliver and file all organizational documents necessary to form the supporting organization.

Mickal Adler motioned, seconded by Gene Sausse, to approve the resolution. The motion passed unanimously.

- **Approve JEDCO's Chief Financial Officer to authorize use of the JEDCO credit card, approve new vendors, and authorize payments of expenditures in the absence of the President and CEO between May 28, 2026 and June 12, 2026 – Jerry Bologna**

Paula Polito motioned to approve, seconded by Billy Douglass. The motion passed unanimously.

- **Approval of an extension to the agreement between Adams & Reese LLP and JEDCO regarding the rendering of lobbying, legislative and other governmental relations services to JEDCO – Jerry Bologna**

The Chairman asked for public comments on this item – there were no public comments.

In April 2025, JEDCO engaged with Adams and Reese to provide JEDCO with governmental relations assistance before the U.S. House of Representatives, the U.S. Senate, and other Federal Agencies to secure Community Project Funding for a Food and Beverage Incubator at Churchill Park. Due to the government shutdown in 2025, the agreement was extended an additional six months – through March 31, 2026.

JEDCO is requesting Board approval to extend the agreement for another six months, at an amount not to exceed \$49,500. This extension will allow Adams and Reese to continue providing JEDCO with assistance in securing necessary award documents for the Community Project Funding.

Stephen Robinson motioned, seconded by Bob Stevens, to approve the extension to the agreement with Adams and Reese. The motion passed unanimously.

#### **IV. Financial Report – Jennifer Wollfarth**

Ms. Wollfarth presented the monthly financial reports which included budget-to-actual comparisons for January, February, and March 2026. Included were reports for the general fund, EDGE, Forward Jefferson Corporation, JEDCO Development Corporation, and the loan funds. Each fund details actual expenses for the respective month and year-to-date totals comparing these amounts to the approved budget for the year 2026.

#### **V. President and CEO Report – Jerry Bologna**

- The new and improved JEDCO website went live last week. This was a massive undertaking given the amount of data required to complete the effort.
- The loan closing for the PILOT Agreement for The Francis is scheduled early next week. JEDCO staff will work with Mr. Lauricella's team to help coordinate the official groundbreaking.
- Mr. Bologna and JEDCO's Development Manager, Bryson Senter, held several meetings with prospective donors, who expressed great interest in funding the Food and Beverage Incubator at various levels.
- Mr. Bologna expressed appreciation for those Commissioners who contributed during GiveNOLA Day. This year JEDCO raised more than \$5,000 in support of JEDCO's mission.
- On behalf of JEDCO, Mr. Bologna submitted a letter of support to the State of Louisiana – Joint Legislative Committee on the Budget for the Omni New Orleans, the planned headquarters hotel at the New Orleans Ernest N. Morial Convention Center. The proposed hotel project would benefit not only New Orleans, but the entire region.

**VI. Other Updates or Comments from the JEDCO Board of Commissioners**

Ms. Lynda Nugent Smith announced that the City of Gretna will host Jefferson Parish's celebration of our country's 250<sup>th</sup> birthday on June 14 from 12:00 PM to 9:00 PM. The community event features a parade, live music, and a nighttime drone show.

**VII. Adjournment** – Mickal Adler motioned, seconded by Lynda Nugent Smith, to adjourn the meeting.



**Robert Stevens, JEDCO Secretary**