



**BioDistrict New Orleans  
Board of Commissioners Meeting  
Tuesday, April 30, 2019  
2 p.m. – 3 p.m.**

**Location: New Orleans Business Alliance  
1250 Poydras Street, Suite 2150  
New Orleans, LA 70113**

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**Commissioners Present:** Gene D'Amour, Alison Bordelon, Andy Kopplin, Blake J. Stanfill, Harold Gaspard, Sharon Courtney, Michael Pernici, Lowry Curley  
Michael Hecht attended via phone  
Nicole Honoree attended on behalf of Larry Hollier

**Commissioners Absent:** Donna G. Klein, Roger Ogden

**Other Guests:** Paul Richard (Latter & Blum), Bonita Robertson (Greater New Orleans Foundation), Barbara Waiters (Downtown Development District)

**New Orleans Business Alliance Staff:** Sally Lindsay, Dominique Flugence, Jeanette Weiland, Nolan Marshall

- I. Call to Order  
The Second Quarter BioDistrict Board Meeting of 2019 was called to order at 2:06pm.
- II. Roll Call  
Ms. Sally Lindsay performed a roll call of the Board Commissioners at 2:07pm. Quorum was present.
- III. Adopt Agenda for Board Meeting  
Board Commissioners adopted the agenda for the current Board meeting. No comments were made regarding the agenda.
- IV. Introduction of Guest(s)  
Chairperson D'Amour had several guests introduce themselves, including Paul Richard (Latter & Blum), Bonita Robertson (Greater New Orleans Foundation), Barbara Waiters (Downtown Development District).
- V. Call for Public Input Cards on Agenda Items  
No public input cards were collected.
- VI. Adoption of BioDistrict Minutes  
The minutes from the first quarter BioDistrict Board of Commissioners Meeting, held on February 20, 2019, were adopted. Commissioner Gaspard moved and Commissioner

Kopplin seconded at 2:09pm.

VII. Financial Report – Ms. Dominique Flugence

Since the last Board meeting, there were \$1,200 in accounting fees; the BioDistrict Board had \$6,214.57 in accounts.

VIII. Chairperson's Report:

Chairperson D'Amour began with an update on a Civil District Court Appeal from 2016. Per the BioDistrict's legal counsel, Chairperson D'Amour did not expect the appeal to affect the financial stability of the BioDistrict Board.

Next, Chairperson D'Amour provided an update on the New Orleans BioInnovation Center. He stated that funding for the BioInnovation Center was critical. Commissioner Curley agreed. Chairperson D'Amour mentioned that Secretary Don Pierson of Louisiana Economic Development (LED) recently met with the BioInnovation Center board of directors recognized the importance and significance of the Center. LED is committed to help financially stabilize the organization. Chairperson D'Amour said that Tulane University, Louisiana State University, and Xavier were also investing. He applauded Tulane University for also providing maintenance and security services.

An update was also provided on the Louisiana Cancer Research Center. There had been conversations between the Louisiana Cancer Research Center, Senator Cassidy, and Governor John Bel Edwards. The Governor expressed interest in supporting the Louisiana Cancer Research Center. Chairperson D'Amour expressed optimism that Louisiana Cancer Research Center was within five years of attaining National Cancer Institute Designation, which would be a major win for the ecosystem.

Finally, Chairperson D'Amour noted that the Board needed to recruit new members. The two Community Representative Board positions were vacant. In addition, the Governor had one vacancy to fill, and a second vacancy to fill when Commissioner Klein terms out on June 20, 2019 (before the next Board Meeting). One of the two vacancies that the Governor fills must be filled by a person of color. Chairperson D'Amour emphasized that striving for diversity is critically important.

IX. Strategic Planning Committee

Commissioner Stanfill presented the latest draft of the BioDistrict Planning Committee Report. Some of the key items are outlined below:

**“VISION:** Inclusive economic development for the city of New Orleans and, thereby, the Greater New Orleans Region and Louisiana

**MISSION:** To be an economic catalyst for the creation and attraction of advanced biotechnology companies, particularly to Bio District New Orleans

**GOALS/PRIORITIES (in order of priority)**

**#1. Creation and maintenance of an ongoing and flexible strategic plan** that has measurable goals and strategies and timelines to achieve these goals.

**#2. Development of an economically sustainable Bio District with effective systems** to support the creation, operations and retention of advanced biotech businesses.

**#3. Facilitation of a world class bioinnovation district** with outstanding infrastructure including walkable, bikeable internal connections, external connections with the CBD and appropriate proportions of mixed-use, affordable residential, and commercial real estate and urban parks.”

Commissioner Stanfill said that the committee was open for feedback. He emphasized that getting started on the strategic plan is integral to organizational success. Ms. Nicole Honoree (who attended on behalf of Commissioner Hollier) noted that the New Orleans BioInnovation Center was also developing a strategic plan in the next 80 days. She said that this was a unique opportunity to align multiple organizations with similar missions and visions to develop complementary strategic plans and really move the ecosystem forward. Commissioner Courtney agreed, stating that there are many tools invested in the area, if alignment can occur, there would be great growth.

Commissioner Kopplin asked about what the committee meant by a ‘flexible’ strategic plan in the first goal. Commissioner Stanfill said that they wanted the plan to be adaptable and nimble in order to respond to the shifting landscape or shifting priorities. Chairperson D’Amour noted that we could build on previous plans; he also said that New Orleans has been accomplishing goals set out in previous plans, including greater advocacy and more technology transfer.

Commissioner Kopplin said that Committee Report positioned the BioDistrict Board “as an advisor to City officials and developers,” but said the Board may desire to be an implementors in addition to an advisor. He encouraged the Board to think about what it would take to make the BioDistrict’s anchor institutions more successful in their place-based goals in terms of physical assets. He also highlighted the networked governance element that Bruce Katz spoke about at the “Geography of Innovation” presentation from October, 2018; identifying key entities and individuals to thoughtfully move the ecosystem forward would be essential to its success.

#### X. Election of Officers

Chairperson D’Amour said the suggestion was raised that the Board delay electing new officers till the third quarter BioDistrict Board Meeting because of the current Board vacancies and the ongoing legislative session. Chairperson D’Amour said, on the other hand, it could be advantageous to have a new Chair in place to guide the process of filling vacancies. He also posed the idea of a subcommittee to determine who should fill the gaps.

Commissioner Kopplin said many of the individuals who left the Board recently were people of color; he emphasized the need to have greater representation going forward. Commissioner Courtney said we should appoint members who fill gaps in our strategic plan; for example, the Board might benefit from an experienced urban planner.

Commissioner Gaspard said that he was eager to move forward with the election of officers at the current meeting, saying that permanent leadership was essential to moving the strategic plan forward. Ms. Honoree (representing Commissioner Hollier) agreed, underscoring that any new Board members were unlikely to take on an officer position, so it

would make more sense to have leadership in place when the Board fills the vacancies. Commissioner Courtney agreed; she also applauded Chairperson D'Amour's efforts to keep the momentum of the Board moving forward over his tenure.

Chairperson D'Amour made a motion to move forward with elections, which was moved by Commissioner Gaspard and seconded by Commissioner Courtney. A majority of the Board affirmed; there were no noted objections.

Chairperson D'Amour nominated Commissioner Stanfill for Vice Chair. Commissioner Hecht nominated Commissioner Kopplin for Chair and Commissioner Bordelon for Secretary-Treasurer. Commissioner Gaspard moved the slate forward, and Commissioner Courtney seconded the motion. The vote was affirmed by a majority of the Board, with no noted objections.

XI. Update on the Spirit of Charity Initiative – Commissioner Andy Kopplin

Commissioner Kopplin began by thanking Chairperson D'Amour for his many years of leadership. He emphasized that through tumultuous times, Chairperson D'Amour showed leadership and a strong commitment to the mission of the BioDistrict. Without his guidance, the Board would not be in the position it was in. The Board applauded Chairperson D'Amour.

Chairperson D'Amour thanked the Board. He said he was committed to the BioDistrict because wants to see the New Orleans economy grow and advance.

Commissioner Kopplin said that his vision could be attained through coordination; he had already seen progress occurring, noting that Tulane had moved more graduate programming Downtown, Delgado established their nursing program within the District, and that Ms. Weiland was providing key leadership on incentives. Commissioner Kopplin thanked the New Orleans Business Alliance for working with the BioDistrict to position it for success. He said he hoped to take the great foundation of the Board and move it forward based on the vision that Chairperson D'Amour has established.

Commissioner Kopplin then provided an update on the Spirit of Charity initiative. He said his team continued to work with Jim Richardson of Louisiana State University and Mark Quinn of Xavier University on the tax increment financing analysis. He said the report would look at the overall BioDistrict area (including the Spirit of Charity). He said the report would also look at the Claiborne Cultural Innovation District, as well as the first two blocks on the downtown side of Loyola to examine if those additions could be beneficial. He pointed out Ms. Bonita Robertson, who was supporting the work. Commissioner Kopplin said that the report would be ready by the end of May and that it would be shared with anchor institutions, the legislature, the BioDistrict Board, and other stakeholders.

Commissioner Kopplin said he would like the TIF District to be as big as the legislature would support. However, if it was narrow and restrained to the Spirit of Charity District, then there was a plan in motion to advance placemaking, workforce development, housing improvements, homeless services, transit, green spaces, and more. He said investing in placemaking could be transformational.

In addition, Commissioner Kopplin was working with Greater New Orleans, Inc. on their opportunity zones prospectus to include the Spirit of Charity District. Finally, he noted that 1532 Partners was about halfway through its 180-day due diligence period; they were on track to complete the due diligence within that timeframe and hopefully would not require an extension.

Commissioner Pernici asked if the prospectus was aimed primarily at infrastructure improvements. Commissioner Kopplin said yes, in addition to a robust economic strategy. He emphasized that improvements were needed beyond the façade: workforce development training was essential, as was research funding. He also pointed out that the TIF could be utilized for research money; for example, Arizona State received state dollars for research because the state recognized the university as a major economic driver for the economy. Commissioner Kopplin said that place-based components might be the first place to start because investment would follow environmental improvements. Commissioner Courtney said that early wins would be essential for gaining momentum, and physical infrastructure is a good place to start. She said recruiting talent is easier when you have more retail and safer streets.

Ms. Nicole Honoree said that the city could also levy a tax to fund research; she said Shreveport leveraged a research tax and that it was being renewed. Commissioner Kopplin said that dedicated funding is important, because institutions with consistent funding grow consistently and outperform.

**Xi. New Orleans Business Alliance Update – Ms. Jeanette Weiland**

Ms. Jeanette Weiland said that she was recently in Baton Rouge supporting legislation improving the Research and Development tax credits. She said that there had been some back and forth, but she felt the Angel Investor Incentives would move forward. House Bill 480 (which encapsulated the incentives legislation) was deferred, but remained in the queue. She asked Commissioner Pernici for an update, but he said that he was unsure about what Louisiana Economic Development had determined. Ms. Weiland said that incentive adjustments would move forward slowly but steadily.

Commissioner Curley asked about the proposed changes on the Research and Development incentives, but Ms. Weiland said the terms were changing constantly. She said transferability was an element that they were targeting. Mr. Nolan Marshall underscored that the proposal was morphing constantly and that they were hoping to get Louisiana Economic Development on Board.

Ms. Weiland invited the BioDistrict Board to the upcoming MedCity INVEST: Population Health Conference on May 22, 2019. Local talent would be featured, including Dr. Richard Milani of Ochsner, Dr. Tim Harlan of the Goldring Center for Culinary Medicine, and Dr. Jennifer Avegno of the New Orleans Health Department.

Ms. Weiland also spoke about the 2019 BIO International Convention. Commissioner Curley shared the exciting news that his proposal had been accepted by the Conference; AxoSim's "nerve on a chip" technology would be showcased alongside animal testing alternative technologies. He also had an exciting business development update that he looked forward to sharing soon. Ms. Weiland said that the Tuesday evening of BIO, the New Orleans

coalition would host a VIP Cocktail Reception with the goal of spreading the word that Louisiana was open for business.

Ms. Honoree said that the combined power of the partnering organizations was immense. Last year, LSU and Tulane had over 100 meetings in four days; people were amazed that the organizations were working together to build up and diversify their research capacities.

Ms. Weiland invited the Board to attend, or to forward additional guests to her. She said that elected officials would also be a great addition to the reception, as public officials help the event gain more visibility.

Ms. Sally Lindsay provided an update regarding New Orleans Health Innovators Challenge (NOLAHI), stating that all of the finalists from the New Orleans Health Innovators Challenge had been making tangible progress with local partners. The winners of the Ochsner and Blue Cross Challenge were both in continued talks with Ochsner and Blue Cross leadership and the companies had plans to grow their connection and commitment to the city. Ms. Weiland lauded Ms. Lindsay's business attraction efforts. Chairperson D'Amour also thanked her for her work in organizing the BioDistrict Board over the last few years.

XI Other Old Business

Chairperson D'Amour asked Commissioner Kopplin if he thought a subcommittee was needed in order to determine candidates to fill the Board vacancies. Commissioner Kopplin thought it would best be handled by the Executive Committee and that he welcomed the Board to email nominations and ideas. He thought that Senator Peterson, who was the original author of the BioDistrict, would have some ideas and would be consulted, as would Representative Duplessis. He again emphasized diversity as a guiding principle.

XII. New Business

No New Business was presented.

XIII. Public Comment(s)

No public comments were submitted.

XIV. Adjournment

The second quarter BioDistrict Board Meeting of 2019 was adjourned at 3:07pm.