



**BioDistrict New Orleans
Board of Commissioners Meeting Minutes
January 8, 2025 | 2:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.**

Location: Greater New Orleans Foundation, 919 St. Charles Ave, New Orleans, LA 70130

I Call to Order

The BioDistrict Board Meeting was called to order by Chairperson, Andy Kopplin at 2:40 pm.

II Board Member Roll Call

Commissioners Present: Emily Arata, Arnel Cosey, Charlotte Parent, Andy Kopplin, Kaneisha Akinpelumi, Nicole Honoree, Michael Hecht, Sharon Courtney

Commissioners Present via Zoom: N/A

Commissioners Absent: Blake Stanfill, Lowry Curley, Judith Dangerfield, Larissa Littleton-Steib, Gregorie Tillery, Josh Fleig

Quorum: Present

III Introduction of Guest(s)

Rene Pastorek (DDD), Tyler Correa (DDD), Kris Khalil (NOBIC), Sharonda Williams (Counsel to BioDistrict), Jody Deffes[virtual] (NOLABA Director Accounting), Andreas Pashos (NOLABA Sr Dir Partnerships), Ronald Carrere (XULA), Jason Neville (Lafitte Greenway), Taylor Wartberg (GNOF), Dr Jeff Ambrose Jr (The 3rd Line NOLA), Artra McNeil (The 3rd Line NOLA)

IV Adoption of Previous Board Meeting Minutes

Mr. Kopplin requested the approval of the minutes from the previous BioDistrict board meeting on December 5, 2024. Ms. Parent motioned for approval, and Mr. Hecht seconded. There was no discussion or public comment and the motion was unanimously approved.

V Financial Report by NOLABA

Mr. Deffes reported that the current balance in the BioDistrict account was \$1,566.00.

VI Chairperson's Report

a. Update on New Orleans Business Alliance (NOLABA) closure and related issues for the BioDistrict

Mr. Kopplin reminded the board that the New Orleans Business Alliance Board voted to dissolve the organization in December. NOLABA had been handling administrative and financial matters for the BioDistrict for years, and as the board does not have any employees, a new service provider would be needed. In addition, BioDistrict files held by NOLABA had been moved and are now stored at the GNOF office. Mr. Kopplin also plans to open up a PO Box to serve as a mailing address for future needs.

b. Authorization for Chair to sign \$7500 per month contract with AAAM LLC, former staff of NOLABA, to provide support for BioDistrict in place of support we previously received from NOLABA

Mr. Kopplin presented the board with the proposal to have Mr. Pashos continue to support the BioDistrict with administrative and financial management as a contractor. Mr. Kopplin shared the resume of Mr. Pashos with the board and highlighted his years of experience in project management, workforce development, economic development, Quickbooks accounting and grant management. Mr. Pashos has existing relationships with key BioDistrict entities, the city and LED as well as deep knowledge of local BIO programming.

Mr. Kopplin requested authorization to sign a six month contract with a shorter notice period for \$7,500/month. Ms. Parent motioned for approval, and Ms. Arata seconded. There was no discussion or public comment and the motion was unanimously approved.

c. Update on City and State Budget processes for receiving economic development district funding

Mr. Kopplin noted that funding was en route to the BioDistrict bank account by NOLABA. The city sent the funds to NOLABA erroneously, and now NOLABA is sending them to the BioDistrict, and they're expected to appear in the account by the end of the day.

d. Authorization for Chair to prepare and release requests for proposals for legal, public affairs, placemaking/public realm guidelines, higher education research alignment and communications/branding services

Mr. Kopplin explained the need for the BioDistrict to seek external support in various aspects of the strategic plan. The first step would be to develop RFPs to acquire those services consistent with the strategic plan. Mr. Kopplin would like to work with Mr. Pashos to release these RFPs, however no hiring or future steps will be taken without

further board approval. Ms. Arata motioned for approval, and Ms. Courtney seconded. There was no discussion or public comment and the motion was unanimously approved.

e. Update from Downtown Development District on landscaping and tree canopy work

Mr. Kopplin thanked the DDD for their partnership in this effort and invited the DDD to share an update on the work.

Mr. Pastorek of the DDD shared that the work began in December and was on schedule and looked fantastic. He mentioned that he considered the effort a great success, and that DDD remains a very strong proponent of the BioDistrict. There will also soon be banners put up in the Downtown portion of the BioDistrict to highlight the district. Mr. Hecht thanked the BioDistrict and the DDD for this partnership which is part of a big team effort to make the City and the BioDistrict look great for Super Bowl.

**VII Executive Session: Pending Litigation and Threatened Litigation (La. C.E. Art. 506)
*Kinney v. The BioDistrict New Orleans, Orleans Parish Civil District Court No. 2022-11481***

An Executive Session did not take place.

VIII Consideration of approving any recommendations from BioDistrict Counsel regarding pending litigation

There were no recommendations by BioDistrict Counsel.

IX New Business

There was no discussion or public comment.

X Partner Updates

Mr. Kopplin brought up the upcoming celebration of Xavier University of Louisiana achieving their centennial marking 100 years since the school's inception. Ms. Akinpelumi invited the attendees to the celebration and would send a flyer to be sent out by Mr. Pashos.

Ms. Honoree congratulated Ms. Courtney on her retirement from Tulane after an exceptional thirty year's of service to the school and the community, mentioning that the city would not look like what it does today if it was not for her contributions. Mr. Kopplin agreed and said that the BioDistrict would also not be as successful and set up for impact in the near future without Ms. Courtney's extraordinary contributions. Numerous other board members agreed. Ms. Courtney thanked everyone for the remarks, and mentioned the joy and fulfillment she received from serving on the BioDistrict board, and the high expectations she has for its future.

Ms. Parent thanked Mr. Kopplin and GNOF for their work setting up the survivor's fund after the New Year's terrorist attack in New Orleans. Ms. Parent touted the quickness and efficiency with which GNOF responded to support the community, and noted the extraordinary work of health care professionals from the City's EMS as well as from LCMC and Ochsner hospitals. Numerous other board members agreed. Mr. Kopplin appreciated the gratitude, and emphasized that the responsiveness of the emergency medical professionals treating the victims highlighted the quality of the healthcare facilities within the BioDistrict and the larger New Orleans region.

XI Public Comment(s)

There was no discussion or public comment.

XII Adjournment

Mr. Kopplin moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Ms. Parent. The chair called for discussion and public comments, of which there were none, and the motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 3:15pm.
