

Louisiana Board of International Commerce

Meeting Minutes
Thursday, October 19, 2023
10:00am – Noon

BRAC
564 Laurel St
Baton Rouge, LA 70801

Call to Order

Chairman Rusovich

Roll Call

Jeanét Cazenave

IN ATTENDANCE

Jay Hardman
Kevin Melton*
Kate MacArthur
Eric Kalivoda
Brandy Christian

Nestor J. Navarro
Gregory Rusovich
Don Sanders
Brenda Stelly
Phil Jones (Renee Lapeyrolerie)

Tom Spiers
Paul Matthews
Nicholas Cole (Mike Strain)
Don Pierson

**via Zoom*

Welcome

Anne Trappey
BRAC Interim CEO

Ms. Trappey welcomed the committee to BRAC and spoke a little about the current transition at BRAC.

Chairman Rusovich acknowledged and welcomed the international representatives. Each representative had the opportunity to introduce himself or herself. The international representatives present were:

Young Ho – South Korea
Yushan Lu – China

Nadine Garfields - UK

Henry Loewndahl – CEO of Wavteq Group Unlimited

Geert Hovens – Germany, Switzerland, and Austria

Gloria Garcia – CEO of Global BMT - Mexico

Masao Kumori – President/CEO of KWBS Marketing and Trading Co., Ltd. - Japan

Declaration of Quorum

Chairman Rusovich

Approval of Minutes from April 27, 2023 Board Meeting

Chairman Rusovich

Chairman Rusovich asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the April 2023 board meeting. Moved by Eric Kalivoda, second by Jay Hardman. Chairman Rusovich opened the floor to discuss the minutes. The board adopted the minutes without opposition.

Introductory Remarks

Chairman Rusovich

Chairman Rusovich spoke highly of Dr. Bee's masterplan and thanked the board for their input in creating the masterplan. He also thanked Sec. Pierson for his leadership, which segued into Sec. Pierson's department report.

Department Report

Secretary Pierson

Sec. Pierson spoke on important elements that transformed the state, which included capital investment growth, the adoption of energy policy, the certified sites program, the success of Fast Start, and the important operations of the Ports internationally.

Planning, Operations, and Staff Reports

Larry Collins

Mr. Collins provided a briefing of the OIC team and international representative's reports.

- International Representatives

- Wavteq

Henry Loewendahl

Mr. Loewendahl gave a look into LED international wins in Germany, Austria, Switzerland, China, Japan, and Korea. He noted there were some struggles during and coming out of the pandemic. Nonetheless, there is an increase in activity and increase in job creation. There are plans to attract more foreign investments, especially in renewable energy and technology.

- Global BMT

Gloria Garcia

Ms. Garcia provided an overview of FDI's in the Latin American market, explained how expanding investments to Latin American creates job and other opportunities for the locals. She also described how the export/import of goods and services in Latin America are beneficial to the US and Louisiana.

- STEP Grant & Trade Shows/Missions

Jessica Steverson

\$450,000 – awarded in September for a 2-year program

\$500,000 – currently under management from last year's program

- FY21 Program

- Closed out at \$500,000

- Funds were able to assist approximately 20 companies to exhibit at Offshore Europe, Defense Equipment Security International, ADIPEC, Deepwater and Shallow Mexico.

- EDA Grant Leads & Project Pipeline

Courtney Maciasz

Received \$2.4 million EDA Grant; \$400,000 went to OIC. Virtual meetings that would lead to in person meetings. Over 110 meetings were held with international prospects from the UAE, India, China, UK, Germany, and Canada with sectors in renewable energy, food technology, aerospace technology, software development, and artificial intelligence. Four in person visits have happened with continuing conversation of interest.

- Diplomatic Outreach Activity

Larry Collins

Since the last board meeting, there have been 13 interactions with different countries. All of these communications included the Governor.

- **Ongoing Activities/Missions** Larry Collins
 Nine international missions have been completed with companies and economic developers. It was noted that Brenda Stelly has participated in some of these missions. In addition, Harrison led a delegation to Ireland with the World Trade Center and Canada.

Master Plan Introduction

Ben Fontenot

Master Plan

Dr. Ed Bee

Dr. Bee gave a 30-minute, final draft presentation of the Master Plan, which covered three areas:

- **Recap of prior finds**
 - Major drop in Louisiana imports since 2012, mostly in crude oil, due to domestic production.
 - Major jump in Louisiana exports, particularly in refined products and energy.
 - Target industries identified in the 2012 plan, were the major sources of FDI export and employment growth in the state within the last decade.
 - Louisiana FDI performance has been among the best of any US state in the last decade. Louisiana has the highest concentration of FDI capex per capita; number 1 out of 50 states.
- **Reading of Master Plan Vision Statement**
- **Plan goals and strategies**
 - *Goals*
 - Louisiana public ports have consistent funding that fully supports maritime development opportunities and port transportation connectivity.
 - Louisiana has robust and stable funding for the infrastructure investments needed to support trade and FDI within the following realms
 - Louisiana offers a quality of life that is comparable or superior to those in leading maritime states.
 - LABIC has a stable and consistent system for prioritizing state investments in maritime projects that enjoys widespread political, administrative and public support within Louisiana.
 - Louisiana has a consistent and predictable regulatory environment and business climate.
 - LED maintains an efficient and effective program for trade and FDI investment.
 - *Strategic Goals*
 - LABIC has a stable and consistent system for prioritizing state investments in maritime projects that enjoys widespread political, administrative and public support within Louisiana.
 - LED maintains an efficient and effective program for trade and FDI investment.
 - *Advocacy Goals*
 - LABIC will inform political and economic development actors of the critical importance of enhanced and stable maritime and infrastructure funding, improved quality of life, and stable and consistent regulatory and business climate on FDI and global trade development in Louisiana.

Board Comments

Some areas of discussion regarding the master plan:

Dr. Kalivoda

- Navigation channels should be included
- Sub-committee prioritizing investments
- Small ports not being cut off
- Bio fuels

Paul Matthews

- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion for smaller ports with emphasis on our people, quality of life, and jobs in those communities

Jay Hardman

- Pointed out on page 24 of the draft version of the LABIC Comprehensive Dev Plan, in response to Dr. Kalivoda's comment on a subcommittee prioritizing port projects.

Brandy Christian

- Refining and advocating for port prioritization. Challenges of market analysis and working together.

Dr. Bee

- More funding is required as vessel sizes, port/channel requirements, and terminals have grown.

Phil Jones

- Pointed out that there were four attempts in the past to establish a commission to oversee all ports. Consultants have recommended a port authority to decide who does what. He noted this would be a challenge as our ports are too autonomous. He suggested maybe there should be some meet in the middle, work with LED, and offer opportunities to the ports to see what the best fit is for that particular company.

Nester Navarro

- We need to bring direct imports to New Orleans and not depend on other ports.

Brandy Christian

- We need import distribution centers

Board Approval of Master Plan

Approval of Master Plan moved by Dr. Kalivoda, second by Jay Hardman

Action item mentioned by Sec. Pierson:

- Release of a letter from the chairman on the availability of comprehensive document to the public

Public Comments

Chairman Rusovich

None

Closing Remarks & Adjourn

Chairman Rusovich