

Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of the Bayou Vermilion District  
Held at Zoom Vermilionville, 300 Fisher Road Lafayette Louisiana  
4:30 pm, May 27, 2020

**Call to Order** was given by President Minyard. The meeting was called at 4:30 pm.

**Pledge of Allegiance**

**Roll Call:** Given by the Secretary: Commissioners Robert Minyard, Thomas Michot, Catherine Comeaux, Ray Landry, Benjamin Richard, and Calvin Leger, were present. Commissioner Don McConnell, Kristie Cornell and Jennifer Farr were absent. There was a quorum.

**Approval of Minutes:** **MOTION:** (R. Landry/C. Leger) Motion to accept the minutes from the April 22, 2020 regular meeting. All were in favor. Motion carried.

**Introduction of Guest(s):** Guest: There were no guest. Staff: CEO Cheramie, Millicent Norbert, and Kim Fournet were present. Staff on Zoom: Wesley Davis, Anne Mahoney, Maegan Smith and Brady McKellar.

**Public Comment(s):** There were no public comments at this time.

**President's Report:** President Minyard reported that there was a Marketing/Public Relations and Bayou Ops meeting to discuss instilling confidence in the public to have visitors return. The committees also discussed the breaking ground for Water Quality Lab. President will let Commissioner Landry report more during the committee reports. President Minyard informed the board that there is an architect/construction meeting every Tuesday morning in the parking lot for updates.

**CEO's Report:** Copies of CEO Cheramie's report and coordinators reports (on file) were e-mailed to the commissioners. CEO reviewed his report. The restaurant and gift shop opened to the public on March 19<sup>th</sup>. The village is also open but the houses are closed. Visitors can tour the village at a reduced rate. Governor Edwards will speak to the public on June 1<sup>st</sup> as to what phase Louisiana will be entering. If Phase 2 goes into effect, artisans may return to the houses sometime in June. Vermilionville is still looking into having sit down concerts until dancing is permitted. A reporter with the Advocate interviewed CEO Cheramie concerning the new lab. Earlier this month, CEO sent out the completed Strategic Plan (for the board to review) that Anne Mahoney submitted to the American Alliance of Museums for accreditation. The board will need to vote on accepting this later in the meeting. The Folk Roots kid camp has been cancelled this year. Vermilionville's camps are scheduled for July only. The Boat Parade is scheduled for September 26<sup>th</sup>. LCG has closed many entities, perhaps BVD can incorporate some of these entities' activities. One main interest is the Nature Station. Emile Ancelet and Wesley Davis are researching many opportunities. BVD needs to push the staycation idea to help encourage people to come visit. Many hand sanitizing stations have been put up around Vermilionville. The numbers for April were down with the closing of the museum and no revenue due to COVID-19. Several employees are working on grants to help subsidize the lack of revenue, as BVD is not eligible for Payment Protection Program.

**Marketing/Public Relations:** Commissioner Landry reported that he and commissioners Minyard and Leger met with Curtis Willingham and CEO Cheramie to discuss the concerns with reopening Vermilionville and how to increase tourism. The

commissioners had many ideas and suggestions. Reminding the public that the river is a wonderful place for recreation and fun, such as boating and canoeing. Building a new boat dock at Vermilionville, and even a marina. Most of these ideas take time and money but the first step is to discuss and plan. The commissioners will look over the 1984 Master Plan to help them understand the original intention of Vermilionville and continue to improve the Vermilionville experience.

**Finance/Capital/Budget:** The committee did not meet. The finances were reviewed earlier in the meeting. The financial analysis comparison for the month ending April 2020 and April 2019 was available for the commissioners' review. The financials are also emailed to the commissioners. CEO Cheramie had previously given the April numbers.

**Operations/Bayou/Maintenance:** As reported earlier, the Water Quality Lab construction has started. This building and equipment will help the Water Quality personnel test more samples of the river, not to mention the ability to test water quality for other entities for a price. Commissioner Leger asked Curtis Willingham to keep a log with pictures, detailing the progress of the work on the building. This way, BVD can show the taxpayers how their money is being spent. The committee would like to look into building not only a dock near the restaurant but also a picnic area, if possible. Commissioner Landry wants to promote the La Cuisine de Maman Restaurant at Vermilionville, it is one of the best restaurants in the country.

**Environmental:** The committee did not meet.

**Programming/Education/Grants:** The committee did not meet.

**Curatorial/Acquisitions:** The committee did not meet.

**New Business: MOTION:** (T, Michot/C. Comeaux) Motion to approve the Strategic Plan sent to AAM for accreditation by Anne Mahoney, April 24, 2020 and signed by CEO Cheramie, April 24, 2020 and to authorize President Minyard to sign said document tonight. All were in favor. Motion carried.

**Adjournment: MOTION:** (T. Michot/B. Richard) Motion to adjourn. All were in favor. Motion carried.

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Robert Minyard, President

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Catherine Comeaux, Secretary