

Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of the Bayou Vermilion District
Held by ZOOM at Vermilionville, 300 Fisher Road Lafayette Louisiana
4:30 pm, October 28, 2020

Call to Order was given by President Michot. The meeting was called at 4:30 pm. The BVD meeting is on ZOOM because of COVID-19. Adhering to Governor's Proclamation, following mandate and guidance.

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call: Given by the Secretary: Commissioners Thomas Michot, Calvin Leger, David Eaton, Holden Hoggatt, Don McConnell, Kristie Cornell, and Jason Sullivan were on Zoom.

Commissioner Mark Wiltz was absent. There was a quorum.

Approval of Minutes: **MOTION:** to accept the minutes, as written, from September 23, 2020 regular meeting. All were in favor. Motion carried.

Introduction of Guest(s): Guests: Christine Dunn with WMDDH, Bryan Joubert and Deidre Stock with KSC, Katie Easter with KATC, Ray Landry and Rodney Richard. Staff: CEO Cheramie, Leigh Dupuy, Jay Steiner, Stuart Keller, Kayla Guidry, Charissa Helluin, and Kim Fournet.

Public Comment(s): Ray Landry and Rodney Richard asked to speak at the end of the meeting.

Presentation of December 31, 2019 Audit Report: Ms. Dunn distributed a copy of the December 31, 2019, audit report and a required letter addressed to the Board. Ms. Dunn reported that there were no errors found in the accounting records. There were no disagreements with management and no compliance findings. About the audit report: the firm had an unmodified opinion, which means that everything is in order. Ms. Dunn presented several statements concerning the operations of the Bayou Vermilion District that ensure it is in compliance. General Fund revenues are mostly ad valorem driven. In regard to Vermilionville revenues, BVD is working very hard to keep the revenues as high as possible and being proactive on making necessary changes to help with revenues and expenditures. Wright, Moore, DeHart, Dupuis and Hutchinson, LLC will submit the audit report to the Legislative Auditor. Deidre Stock and Bryan Joubert explained what KSC did for BVD. The firm issues payable and payroll checks, reconciles the 7 Iberia Bank statements, monthly financials, and budget comparisons, bookkeeps the worker's comp, retirement, payroll taxes, issues W-2s and 1099s at the end of the year. KSC does not verify the payment requests from BVD/VV staff. The independent audit by WMDDH does the verifying. President Michot asked if a second independent audit was still necessary. Commissioner Eaton pointed out that there was \$11,500 in the office equipment/computer account that could be used. Commissioner Eaton wants to know where the money comes in and how it is spent. The finance committee will meet before the November meeting to discuss the 2020 and 2021 budgets.

President's Report:

A. Board Orientation

All board members should have read the board handbook with an orientation packet signature page. Every member needs to read through all the material, sign the page and returned signed page to President Michot. Commissioner Leger questioned the policy of signing off and adhering to the handbook that was written by staff for the board. It was explained that the handbook was written for the accreditation process and staff did not create it.

The members should schedule a walk through VV and BVD property. The boat tour is Friday October 30, at 1:00pm.

Commissioner Eaton made a point of order. Staff is making derogative comments to the board on the Zoom chat. This is a fire able offense as stated in the Employee Handbook. President Michot asked staff to please follow the rules in the employee handbook.

B. Officer Elections Announcement

Commissioner Comeaux was not reappointed, and Commissioner Farr resigned, leaving the Vice President and the Secretary positions open. **MOTION:** (D. Eaton/H. Hoggatt) to open nominations for Vice President. All were in favor. Commissioner Eaton nominated Mark Wiltz for Vice President. Commissioner H. Hoggatt seconded the nomination. There were no other nominations. **MOTION:** (D. Eaton/H. Hoggatt) to close the nominations and vote. All were in favor. Commissioner Mark Wiltz is Vice President. **MOTION:** (D. Eaton/H. Hoggatt) to open nominations for Secretary. All were in favor. Commissioner K. Cornell nominated herself for the position. Commissioner D. McConnell seconded the nomination. **MOTION:** (D. McConnell/H. Hoggatt) to close the nominations and vote. All were in favor. Commissioner K. Cornell is Secretary.

C. By-Laws Update

The work is continuing on the by-laws update.

D. Vermilionville Living History Museum Foundation Liaison Rotation Schedule

Commissioner Cornell attended the last VLHMF meeting. The Foundation would like the boards to represent the diversity of the community.

E. Committee Meetings

President Michot and CEO Cheramie should be notified of any committee meetings so they can be properly posted.

CEO Report:

Copies of CEO Cheramie's report and coordinators reports (on file) were e-mailed to the commissioners. CEO reviewed his report.

A. Hurricane Delta

There was minimal damage from the Village and Bayou Ops property. Several trees are down at Southside Park. CEO is in touch with FEMA to help with the clean-up of the park.

Commissioner Eaton reported that FEMA is helping with the removal of trees in the river. CEO Cheramie will look into this. CEO Cheramie is still working with FEMA from the 2016 flood.

B. Watershed Building Update

We are still looking at cost estimates to connect the main water line to the new building, which will be an additional cost. First estimates were calculated on what the existing plans said was subsurface, but once they began digging, the pipe they found were not what was on the plans. Commissioner Leger asked about change orders for the hand dryers and partitions in the bathrooms.

C. Boat Parade Wrap-Up

The Boat Parade was better attended than expected with the COVID restrictions.

D. Sunday Reopening

Sunday, October 18th was our first Sunday being open since March. We had a Sunday Concert and Buffet. There was no dancing, and the buffet was not self-serve. Commissioner Leger

would like the Jams on Saturday to stay Cajun and have other genres offered at other times and possibly other places.

E. 2020-21 Budgets Updates

In light of concerns expressed by the chair of the finance committee, I have paused my meetings with my directors until further notice. The Finance Committee will meet before the November meeting.

Committee Reports

Marketing/Public Relations: The committee did meet. Commissioner Leger reported that it was a good meeting. The board members and staff discussed their upcoming goals. The committee is planning to meet every month.

Finance/Capital/Budget: The committee did not meet. The financial analysis comparison for the month ending September 2020 and September 2019 and the financials were emailed to the commissioners. CEO Cheramie made note of September's revenues and expenses.

Environmental/Bayou Ops: The committee did meet. Commissioners Sullivan and Leger discussed with Curtis Willingham and Tom Melancon about their departments. Commissioner Sullivan would like to expand the crew, purchase another boat and grappler, and possible pay raises for the Bayou Ops crew.

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

Curatorial/Acquisitions: The committee did not meet.

Executive: The committee did not meet.

New Business:

A. CEO Duties

Commissioner Leger suggested splitting the two entities, Vermilionville and BVD, with a CEO for each. Keep more tax money for the cleaning and improving of the river. President Michot would like to meet with CEO to discuss this suggestion.

MOTION: (D. Eaton/C/. Leger) to separate the BVD and Vermilion funds.

Commissioner Eaton asked to defer this motion until after the audit. Motion was withdrawn.

Commissioner Eaton saw a staff member pointing at him. Jay Steiner explained that this is what he thought was going to happen, moving funds from Vermilionville. Mr. Steiner then quietly said the new commissioners were going to fire all of us. Commissioner Eaton took exception to this statement.

Commissioner Eaton would like to follow the money. Cleaning the river is the main objective. The biggest issue with the river is fecal matter, especially after a rain. The board would like to work with local government to help enforce the septic tank issues.

B. VLHMF Role

The Foundation is a non-profit which helps Vermilionville and now BVD with grants and donations.

C. Watershed Building Signage

Commissioner Leger would like it to be BVD Administrative and Waters Quality Building. This will be discussed.

MOTION: (D. Eaton/H. Hoggatt) to use funds from the Office Equipment account in the amount of \$11,500, to fund the second independent audit.

President Michot confirmed the cost would not exceed \$11,500.

Vote was called.

Yeas: 5 Thomas Michot, David Eaton, Holden Hoggatt, Calvin Leger, and Jason Sullivan

Nays: 2 Don McConnell and Kristie Cornell

Abstain: 0

Absent: 1 Mark Wiltz

Motion carried.

Rodney Richard informed the board that he is a former commissioner. The Village does need to bring in more money and help support itself, it cannot continue on tax-payer money. Ninety percent of the issues brought tonight should have been discussed in committee and presented to the board, not airing dirty laundry to the public. The board needs to work as a family and keep emotions in check. Mr. Richard lives on the river and agrees that it is serious need of attention with serious money. But it has improved.

Public Comments included support of Vermilionville, clean the river, have special events, bring in more donations. CEO Cherie explained that Vermilionville has Old Time Christmas, Boat Parade, and Cultural Days to name a few. One guest Jeremy Doucet ran into the meeting to remind the public of the artisans, a dying breed that needs to be celebrated at Vermilionville.

Adjournment: MOTION: (D. Eaton/H. Hoggatt) Motion to adjourn. All were in favor. Motion carried.

Thomas Michot, President

Kristie Cornell, Secretary