

Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of the Bayou Vermilion District

Held by ZOOM at Vermilionville, 300 Fisher Road Lafayette Louisiana
4:30 pm, February 24, 2021

Call to Order was given by President Michot. The meeting was called at 4:32 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, Jason Sullivan, Holden Hoggatt, Calvin Leger, David Eaton, and Phyllis Mouton were on ZOOM. Commissioner Kristie Cornell was absent. There was a quorum.

Approval of Minutes: President Michot asked if there were any questions, changes, or issues with the minutes as written, there were not. **MOTION:** (D. Eaton/P. Mouton) to accept the minutes, as written, from the January 27, 2021 meeting. All were in favor. Motion carried.

Commissioners Mark Wiltz and Don McConnell joined the meeting by ZOOM.

Introduction of Guest(s): Guests: Ryan Goudelocke, BVD attorney, Kyle Patton, Larry and Chey, Galaxy S9, Claire Taylor, RPF, C, AMRobinson, Deb Simeral, Greg Guidroz, Phebe Hayes, Deb Waldman, and 561280 joined by ZOOM. Staff: CEO David Cheramie, Charissa Helluin, and Kim Fournet were present. Millicent Norbert, Brady McKellar, and Anne Mahoney joined by ZOOM.

Public Comment(s): Kyle Patton, with Bayou Vermilion Preservation Association, expressed his and Amber Robinson's desire to work more closely with BVD. There were no other public comments at this time. It was noted later in the meeting the board does not have entertain public comments during the entire meeting. Public comments are necessary during the public comment section and before the board votes on a motion.

President's Report:

A. Oath of Office

All 8 commissioners present took the oath of office and will send the required paperwork to Mr. Goudelocke for notarizing.

B. Executive Committee Report

The committee, Tommy Michot, Mark Wiltz, and Calvin Leger met February 17, 2021. Minutes will be posted as soon as available.

C. Open Meeting Law

Ryan Goudelocke had a power point presentation for the board. The presentation went over open meeting laws and current changes due to COVID-19. The information covered went from how to notify the public about meetings to how to have an executive session. The presentation is available upon request.

D. Foundation Meeting Liaison Report

Commissioner Mouton was the liaison for their February meeting. Ms. Mouton reviewed her report. The procedure to account for all artifacts, ownership, and value is being properly followed. The Foundation is planning a fund-raising event for April 2022. The VLHMF meets every 2 months.

CEO Report:

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

A. Pinhook Bridge

The Pinhook Bridge Project of putting some kind of design on the counterweights of the bridge is very significant. The bank of the river is the original site of the first incarnation of Lafayette. This is an opportunity to draw attention to the importance of the bayou and the founding of Lafayette.

B. North Landing Boat Launch

CEO Cheramie signed the Cooperative Endeavor Agreement with the LDOT for removal of silt from the boat landing and is waiting for a scheduling of time for the work to be done.

C. Harvest Host

Commissioner Leger inquired about adding some RV connections in the BVD parking lot. At this time, it would seem the LCG has strengthened its ordinance against new RV Parks in the parish. BVD has been hosting many RVers from Harvest Host. This is a tight knit group that has spread the word about BVD's excellent treatment of RVers.

D. Task Force

The Task Force met February 22, 2021. The committee discussed the current values of the houses in Vermilionville, including the contents (artifacts). The Task Force will work to get all the correct numbers necessary for the insurance company. The committee will also be reviewing the MOU between BVD and the VLHMF. For riverbank restoration, Emile Ancelet and Dr. Habib suggested planting cypress trees, sweet gum trees, and willow trees along the banks. The committee will meet 2 more times before the March 24th BVD board meeting, where they are to present a report.

E. Board Member Orientation

The board was sent an orientation checklist along with this month's board reports. The board can access Google Drive for more documents concerning orientation. The commissioners would also like to participate in tours of the village, watershed, and the river and having workshops and seminars. Mr. Goudelocke will look into the rules and regulations for these.

F. Watershed Building

The Watershed Building is on schedule to be completed by March 31, 2021. Commissioner Leger asked if there was a timeline for the supplying, outfitting the building. CEO Cheramie replied that the grant for this is not available but will be applied for as soon as it is available. The building will be operational as soon as possible. Commissioner Sullivan reported that most of the work left to finish is cosmetic.

CEO Cheramie reported that Louisiana, Mississippi, and Rhode Island are the only three states in the country without a 100-mile continuous hiking trail. Louisiana has many miles of trails but not continuous. It may be possible to connect many of these trails.

Commissioner Leger inquired about the possibility of taking over the Nature Station. CEO Cheramie pointed out that at this time with the Watershed Building expenses, and BVD's financial situation, that adding 47 acres would be quite a financial and physical undertaking.

Committee Reports

Marketing/Public Relations: The committee met February 11, 2021. Commissioner Leger asked, "what have we done to promote Vermilionville?". Commission Mouton recommended joining local organizations to network and market. Chris Benoit found someone to make Vermilionville branded souvenirs in the gift shop. Millicent Norbert offered a Valentine's Day

package and Mardi Gras activities, but the inclement weather cancelled the events. Charissa Helluin is working on membership and the volunteer programs. Brady McKellar is working on programming and musical events, village operations, interpretation and historical accuracy for artisans, and village tours. Both Ms. Helluin and Mr. McKellar have taken over the Communications responsibilities to save the organization approximately \$50,000, this year.

Finance/Capital: The committee did not meet but will meet in March.

Environmental/Bayou Ops: The committee met February 23, 2021. The topics covered were working with St. Landry Parish to help clean the bayou. Ampol clean-up with sediment at North Landing. Band-a-long repairs to the basket, possibly purchasing a new basket and keeping the old one for backup. Material has been ordered for the repair of the dock at Vermilionville. Erosion control along the river. Wilderness first aid training. LA Trail.org, improving the North Property and creating a 100-mile trail. Boat engine repair. Is it better to spend \$14,000, repairing 30-year engines or spend approximately \$26,000, for new ones? Code enforcement, how to get more strength/more “teeth” from LCG ordinances.

Education/Programming/Grants: The committee did not meet this month but will soon. Commissioner Hoggatt is still focusing on grants for BVD. Programming and Education are going well.

Curatorial/Acquisitions: The committee did not meet. Anne Mahoney had nothing to add to her monthly report. The committee plans to meet in March.

Executive: The committee met and was discussed earlier.

Discussion Items

A. North Property Development

Greg Guidroz, former BVD Bayou Education and Recreation Director, spoke about the history of the North Property. After the purchase of the property, Greg Guidroz had the opportunity to secure a matching fund grant for \$90,000, with BVD investing \$207,000. BVD had to have a drawing of the development of the property. Check with Corps of Engineers to determine if it was wetlands. Check to determine if it was a Native Americans artifact site. Michael Domingue of the Office of Culture, Recreation, and Tourism wanted to develop the property with dock and concrete walkway. Mr. Guidroz left BVD for another position, leaving the project in limbo. Emile Ancelet has been in touch with Michael Domingue and they both agree the grant needs to be rethought entirely. Commissioner Leger would like to see some development on the property. BVD could get grants to help. Not monetary grants but service grants.

B. Community Service Workers

Commissioner Hoggatt, newly appointed Assistant District Attorney, reported that judges in Lafayette are having more people on probation, thus more people are looking for community service hours. BVD may be able to use some of these people. Charissa Helluin is in charge of community workers and volunteers, she will be prepared for an influx of applicants.

C. CPA and CEO designation, use, and presentation of line items and monthly financial reports

Commissioner Eaton will hold this item until the March meeting. Mr. Eaton is suggesting that BVD transfer all necessary funds needed by Vermilionville for the year be transferred altogether instead of monthly.

D. Expanded use of Kolder, Slaven and Associates for management consultation in addition to bookkeeping

The proposal from KS&A was shared with the board.

MOTION: To accept Kolder, Slaven and Associates management consultation proposal. Motion by Phyllis Mouton. Motion not seconded. Motion failed. There was concern over the cost per month of \$850.00, and the timeframe. President Michot will ask Deidre Stock to address these issues.

Commissioner Don McConnell left the meeting at 6:33.

E. Procedure for use of counsel

Attorney Ryan Goudelocke would like a gate keeper for communication between the board members and himself. The board should give some guidelines on this procedure. Mr. Goudelocke will meet with any board member as long as he and the board member report back to the entire board.

MOTION: (P. Mouton/J. Sullivan) The protocol for contacting attorney, Ryan Goudelocke. The Executive Committee is the considered the gate keeper. Issues are brought to the executive committee. The committee review issues to insure they are standard BVD business matters. The President will advise Ryan Goudelocke. Mr. Goudelocke will report to the entire board of his findings. There were no public comments. The vote was: yeas 6; nays 0; recusal 0; absent 3. The motion was accepted

F. Executive session: discussion of “character, professional competence, or physical or mental health” of persons, LSA-R.S. 42:17(A)(1): Complaint concerning implementation of BVD Covid-19 policy

MOTION: (C. Leger/D. Eaton) for the BVD board to go into executive session.

There were no public comments.

The vote was: yeas 6; nays 0; recusal 0; absent 3. The motion was accepted. The board went into executive session at 6:56 pm.

The board returned at 7:19 pm.

MOTION: (C. Leger/D. Eaton) The board will

1) Give a written reprimand to the employee (CEO) Dr. David Cheramie that will be placed in their personnel file

2) Ask that the (CEO) Dr. David Cheramie do the following to mitigate the violation, and to report back to the board when the mitigation measures have been completed, with appropriate documentation as to when and how they were accomplished:

a. Update the BVD COVID policy per the latest CDC guidelines

b. Communicate to all staff the very specific requirements that are outlined in our policy, including the parts about employee privacy, and state that we expect the COVID policy to be strictly adhered to.

c. Invite staff to air any concerns that they may have relative to the COVID policy, and make sure that all staff are well aware of the policy.

3) Require the (CEO) Dr. David Cheramie to transmit a written apology to the employee whose privacy was breached, and to their spouse.

The vote was: yeas 6; nays 0; recusal 0; absent 3. The motion was accepted.

Adjournment: **MOTION:** (D. Eaton/P. Mouton) Motion to adjourn. All were in favor. Motion carried.

Thomas Michot, President

Calvin Leger, Secretary

