Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of the Bayou Vermilion District

Held by ZOOM at Vermilionville, 300 Fisher Road Lafayette Louisiana

4:30 pm, January 27, 2021

**Due to technical difficulties, both audio and video,**

**portions of the meeting were not cohesive or intelligible**

**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, Kristie Cornell, Jason Sullivan, Holden Hoggatt, Mark Wiltz, Calvin Leger, David Eaton, and Phyllis Mouton were on ZOOM. 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/H. Hoggatt) to accept the minutes, as written, from December 16, 2020 meetings. All were in favor. Motion carried.

Commissioner Don McConnell joined the meeting by ZOOM.

**Introduction of Guest(s)**: Guests: Ryan Goudelocke, with the firm of Caraway LeBlanc, LLC. Staff: CEO David Cheramie and Kim Fournet were present. Millicent Norbert, Brady McKellar, Melanie Harrington, Anne Mahoney, Melissa Bastien, Curtis Willingham, Emile Ancelet, Kayla Guidry joined by ZOOM.

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

**President’s Report:**

A. Introduction of new board member

President Michot introduced Phyllis Mouton, serving the unexpired term of Jennifer Farr, appointed by Lafayette City Council.

B. Task Force

The first meeting went well, with a spirit of cooperation. The task force has received most of the documents that were requested to help complete their objectives. The committee will be meeting over the next two 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

Emile Ancelet has restarted negotiations with Robert Dafford concerning the painting of a mural on the counterweights on the Pinhook Bridge. Warren Abadie with LCG, in the Traffic, Roads, and Bridges division of the Public Works Department has contact Mr. Dafford to discuss the same. CEO Cheramie will be contacting Mr. Abadie to discuss working together on this project. The Pinhook Bridge area is where a trading post was established as the original settlement of what has become Lafayette.

B. Evangeline Thruway Redevelopment Team

The ETRT met in-person for the first time in about a year. The team is working on wayfinding and signage.

CEO Cheramie was unable to discuss the following items with the board due to technical difficulties.

**Committee Reports**

**Ma**r**keting/Public Relations**: The committee did meet. Charissa Helluin and Brady McKellar are going through the existing advertising/social media and streamlining it, to get the most bang for BVD’s advertising dollar. They committee would like to receive as much PSA as possible. Millicent Norbert is working on virtual events for Carnival Season and Valentine’s

Day. Ms. Norbert is also promoting BVD for next season. Chris Benoit has added a few new consignment vendors.

**Finance/Capital**: The committee did not meet this month. Commissioner Eaton reported that he had just received some work he had requested from Deidre Stock. The committee will be meeting before the next board meeting to discuss the information he received.

The financial analysis comparison for the month ending October 2020 and October 2019 and the financials were emailed to the commissioners.

**Environmental/Bayou Ops**: The committee met December 15, 2020. The seven topics on his goal list were covered and will send out the minutes to the board next week.

**Education/Programming/Grants**: The committee did not meet. Commissioner Hoggatt has been gathering information about grants/historic grants and will send out this information next week.

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

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

**Discussion Items**

A. 2020 Budget

As covered in the committee report, Commissioner Eaton had hoped to have the final numbers for 2020. This will be discussed next month. Commissioner Eaton spoke with BVD’s insurance agent Charlie Babineaux with Dwight Andrus Insurance, concerning the value of the artifacts, which belong to the foundation, on display in the Vermilionville village. The BVD board and the VLHMF board should have an agreed and signed contract with an agreed upon dollar amount for said artifacts, in the event of a devasting catastrophe. Each house in the village would have the appropriate value to cover the building and its contents. Anne Mahoney, curator, cannot prescribe to an arbitrary number being assigned to the artifacts. An appraisal should take place. Randy Haynie, foundation member, acknowledged that would be ideal but this is just an agreed upon estimate between BVD and VLHMF for insurance purposes. A loan document between BVD and VLHMF with a list of artifacts with estimated value should be drawn up and approved by both boards.

B. Accounting

Commissioner Eaton would like the financials in a more timely manner. Perhaps when all accounting is changed over to Quick Books this will happen. Commissioner Eaton also pointed out that the BVD budget is a line-item budget. When the budget was approved, it meant that the monies in each line-item can be used only for that line item. If money needs to be moved from one line item to another, the board must vote on this change. The finance committee will meet next week to discuss these issues and the expansion of CPA services.

C. Economic development, infrastructure, and advertising to promote business along the bayou

Commissioner Eaton has been talking with Dave Dixon about development on the river. At this time there is no actual construction on the riverbanks. The main concern is with development along the canals that feed into the Vermilion. The community needs to understand the effect any construction has on the river.

BVD could possibly help restaurants, located along the river, understand the value of building a dock so boaters could boat up to the restaurant.

**New Business**

A. Consideration of Legal Counsel for BVD

The letter of engagement between BVD and Ryan Goudelocke was sent out to the board for their review. The commissioners agreed that anyone should just go pell-mell to the attorney. Perhaps the executive committee or selected commissioners could be the conduit to communicate with the attorney.

**MOTION**: (D. Eaton/M. Wiltz) to activate the letter of engagement with Ryan Goudelocke. Commissioner P. Mouton did not receive the letter and was not sure to the purpose of hiring an attorney. Call for a vote. The vote was yeas: 8; recusal 1, nays 0. The motion was accepted.

President Michot asked for Mr. Goudelocke to give the board and staff a refresher course in the Open Meetings protocol.

B. Consideration of CPA services for BVD

This item was discussed under the Accounting heading and will be addressed next month.

Commissioner C. Leger asked about the future use of the current Water Shed building. At last month’s meeting John Broussard reminded the board that it was voted on to make the building an African American/Creole Culture display. Anne Mahoney informed the board that all the houses in the village represent all the cultures mentioned in Vermilionville’s Mission Statement. No house is dedicated to only one culture.

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

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Thomas Michot, President Calvin Leger, Secretary