

Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of the Bayou Vermilion District

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

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, Kristie Cornell, Don McConnell, David Eaton, Jason Sullivan, Phyllis Mouton, and Holden Hoggatt were present 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. Minutes from February 24, 2021 meeting were accepted as written.

Commissioner Mark Wiltz joined the meeting by ZOOM.

Guest(s): Guests: Ryan Goude Locke, BVD attorney, Deidre Stock, BVD CPA, Michael Martin, Rachel Goudeaux, Kelia Bingham, C, J.M, Phebe Hayes, Deborah Simeral, RPF, by ZOOM. Staff: CEO David Cheramie, Charissa Helluin, Kim Fournet, Millicent Norbert, Brady McKellar, Anne Mahoney, Melanie Harrington, and Kayla Guidry joined by ZOOM.

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

President's Report:

A. Kolder Slaven Service Contract

Board members wanted a time frame for the contract. Deidre Stock informed the board that it would take about 1 year to change software, assist with the budget, comparing private to government, get better percentage of income to expenses, reformatting the budget and educating staff to the new budget. The monthly fee is \$850.00, several commissioners questioned what budget item would cover this cost. Most agreed that professional accounting help could save money in the future. The finance committee will work to find what budget item would pay for the service contract.

B. VLHMF Grant Application

Emile Ancelet and other staff have applied for the Lamar Family Foundation Grant. The grant could be worth \$350,000. Any monies received will go toward outfitting the Watershed Building. Commissioner Hoggatt and his committee are working to find any grants that apply to BVD. Commissioner Sullivan will use the Bayou Ops wish list to help with the grant search.

CEO Report:

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

A. GOHSEP/FEMA Updates

BVD is in the final stages of the final closeout on the last of project worksheets (PW) relating the 2016 flood. Once we it is closed out, which should occur next week, BVD will be able to turn to the Office of Community Development for the supplemental 10% for which BVD is qualified.

B. Watershed Building Update

Lynn Guidry is working on the “punch-list” which consists of the final details that need to be taken care of before the property is turned over to BVD.

C. North Landing Update

The DODT has removed over 700 cubic yards of accumulated silt from the North Landing Boat Launch. It is now open to the public. Going forward, BVD will need to implement new strategies to keep the launch passable such as the installation of the silt diversion system.

D. Dredge the Vermilion Town Hall Meeting in Milton

It was explained to the numerous concerned citizens present that this was the beginning stages of doing a study about the benefits of making a detention pond on the land across from Coulee Isle des Cannes. This coulee is one of the major contributories to the bayou. The officials in attendance emphasized the fact that the land was not being bought nor expropriated by the parish but were only seeking to prevent any development on the land until it can be determined whether or not a detention pond on that site would be feasible from an engineering and economic standpoint. Officials stated that this one project is not a one-shot silver bullet approach to the problem but part of an array of other projects that taken together could alleviate the problem.

E. Civic Club Presentation

CEO Cheramie made presentations about BVD and Vermilionville to the Rotary Club of Lafayette and the Kiwanis Club of Acadiana. The presentations were well received by both clubs. The attendees were complimentary of BVD’s work and expressed their support for us.

F. Le Gombo Francophone

CEO Cheramie did a Zoom meeting with the French Consul, Vincent Sciama, and several other people involved in the promotion of Louisiana French culture and language in the state. Plans are to have regular meetings over Zoom to discuss and coordinate their efforts.

G. Task Force Update and Report

Grant writing, grants, and monies available for BVD were discussed. Revising the MOU was also covered.

Committee Reports

Marketing/Public Relations: The committee did meet. Revenues have picked up in all departments. Harvest Host is going strong. Hospitality has added a few new events. Summer Camp is being organized. Communications is working on freeing up money from some advertising to be better used.

Finance/Capital: The committee met, most of the meeting was addressing the short fall at this time. The monthly expenses and revenues will be monitored more closely. Deidre Stock was asked to draw up an analysis of how long Vermilionville can continue to do business at this rate. Ms. Sock also suggested that \$40,000.00 be transferred into the Vermilionville Operating account to cover the bills coming due. Line Items monies in the budget must be approved by finance committee followed by the entire board before they are repurposed to cover other expenses. Discussion of hiring freeze recommendation by Holden Hoggatt to not include part time workers.

Environmental/Bayou Ops/Maintenance: There was no meeting.

Education/Programming/Grants: The committee did meet. The following items were discussed:

To pursue acquisition of potential funds from Lafayette Consolidated Government.

To investigate and pursue potential eligibility for federal funds from State of Louisiana.

To identify potential Donors, particularly for needs which cannot be funded with restricted funds.

To identify Bayou Operations wish list.

Curatorial/Acquisitions: The committee will meet March 29, 2021.

Discussion Items

A. Executive Committee Report

1. Bilingual Ordinance

The bilingual ordinances were discussed in an Executive Committee meeting.

MOTION: (C. Leger/D. Eaton) to introduce the Bilingual Ordinances. Ordinance 2021-5 rev. 4 and Ordinance 2021-6 rev. 1, for discussion and voting. The only public comment was from Anne Mahoney to say that all the signs in village are in French/English, not Cajun French. The ordinances were read.

Ordinance 2021-5 rev. 4

An Ordinance Directing That Activities of the Bayou Vermilion District be Conducted Bilingually

The Bayou Vermilion District, and all of its operations and establishments, shall conduct all business in language(s) representative of the inhabitants of the Bayou Vermilion corridor and/or Vermilionville from the time of that settlement's establishment to 1890, including but not limited to Cajun French and English.

Ordinance 2021-6 rev. 1

An Ordinance Directing That Signage Within the Jurisdiction of the Bayou Vermilion District be Constructed Bilingually

All signage be it public or private within the Vermillion Bayou corridor but limited to boundaries Lafayette Parish Louisiana and under the jurisdiction of the Bayou Vermilion District, shall upon the occurrence of the need for its replacement adhere to a minimum requirement of presentation in language(s) representative of the inhabitants of the Bayou Vermilion corridor and/or Vermilionville from the time of that settlement's establishment to 1890, including at least Cajun French and English.

Commissioner Hoggatt asked if there would be an added cost to making bilingual signs, no was the answer.

The vote was yeas 9, nays 0. The motion carried. These ordinances will be voted on at the April 28, 2021 meeting.

2. Curator Task Force Recommendations

Commissioner Eaton called for a Point of Order, stating the Task Force decided not to address any personal recommendations presented at the Task Force meeting.

3. VLHMF MOU Revisions

The red line MOU revision was sent to the BVD board and the members of the Foundation, to give everyone an opportunity to make notes and suggestions. Updating the MOU was on the Task Force agenda.

4. BVD Role in the Environmental Permit Review Process (C. Gilbert)

Kelia Bingham and Rachel Goudeaux will have a presentation later in the meeting.

5. Hiring Freeze

Commissioner Eaton would like any decision to replace a fulltime employee or add a new fulltime employee be discussed with the board. Parttime employees are excluded from this freeze.

MOTION: (C. Leger/E. Eaton) to have a six- month hiring freeze for fulltime workers. In the event any fulltime position becomes vacant the board would be notified and vote to replace that employee. The only public comment was from Phebe Hayes asking if the board would prevent CEO Cheramie from choosing whom the CEO wanted. No was the answer. No other public comments. The vote was yeas 9, nays 0. The motion carried.

There are three items that need to be added to the agenda.

MOTION: (H. Hoggatt/P. Mouton) to add to the agenda moving \$40,000.00 from the General Fund into the Vermilionville Operating account. No public comments. The vote was yeas 9, nays 0. The motion carried.

MOTION: (D. McConnell/H. Hoggatt) to move \$40,000.00 from the General Fund into the Vermilionville Operating account. No public comments. The vote was yeas 9, nays 0. The motion carried.

MOTION: (C. Leger/H. Hoggatt) to add to the agenda, the Kolder, Slaven and Associates service contract. No public comments. The vote was yeas 9, nays 0. The motion carried.

MOTION: (C. Leger/H. Hoggatt) to discuss and vote on the Kolder, Slaven and Associates service contract for one year at \$850.00 per month. No public comments. The vote was yeas 9, nays 0. The motion carried.

MOTION: (H. Hoggatt/P. Mouton) to add to the agenda the Earth Day Proclamation.

No public comments. The vote was yeas 9, nays 0. The motion carried.

President Michot read the proclamation.

MOTION: (M. Wiltz/C. Leger) that The Bayou Vermilion District Commission does hereby recognize the month of April as **EARTH MONTH** and accepts the proclamation. No public comments. The vote was yeas 9, nays 0. The motion carried.

B. Guest Speaker from Acadiana Planning Commission (APC) About the Louisiana Watershed Initiative (LWI)

Kelia Bingham with APC and Rachel Goudeaux with LWI had a power point presentation discussing watershed. Working on preventing flooding instead of reacting to it. Outreach to engage the public. Working together for sustainability and resilience.

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

Thomas Michot, President

Calvin Leger, Secretary