



**BATON ROUGE NORTH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT
REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, September 15, 2022 at 12pm**

Attendees:

Dr. James Gilmore, Chairman
Tasha Clarke-Amar, Vice Chairperson
Eugene Johnson, Board Member
William Pizzalotta, Board Member
Stephanie Cargile, Treasurer

Board Staff:

April Hawthorne, Executive Director
Nikita Parker, Executive Assistant
Melvin Davis, Board CPA
Board Attorney – NahShon Route, Esq.

Absent:

Dr. Leroy Davis, Board Member
Gary Chambers, Board Member
Terra Williams, Board Member

A quorum was established for this meeting at 12:39 pm.

I. Call to Order

The Chairman called the meeting to order and welcomed all in attendance.

II. Roll Call

Three (3) board members were present at roll; three (3) others joined during the meeting. Terra Barrow, Stephanie Cargile, and Gary Chambers arrived. Total of 6 Board Commissioners present.

III. Public Comment

Two public comments were received. Both noted their interest in serving the community. Dr. Rev. Andrew Kuyoro and Ms. Tanesha Flowers

IV. Approval of Minutes

William Pizzolotta moved to approve the minutes of the May 19, 2022, June 16, 2022 and August 11, 2022 meetings as presented. Seconded by Stephanie Cargile. Motion carried.

V. Partners Reports

i. Lem Dial (Terracon)

- a. Proposal from Terracon to assist with Brownfield grant writing at no cost to BRNEDD. Applications are due by the end of November. A request for qualifications and a request for proposal would be included as part of the process. If approved, funding is allocated over a 5-year period.



ii. Christel Slaughter (SSA Consulting)

a. Ms. Slaughter updated the Board regarding ongoing work on the 2022-2027 strategic plan. The plan should have clearly defined goals and deliverables, metrics to assess performance, mechanisms for accountability. Work is underway to further refine the strategic goals.

b. Marketing and communications were identified as key areas of opportunity to tell the organization's story and create brand awareness, in support of broader organizational goals.

c. A suggestion was made that a community meeting be held in advance of Board approval of the plan, to gather feedback and secure buy-in.

Action #1: Consultant to work with ED to develop plan, consulting with the Board via email for input on key items as required. Draft plan to be brought forward to the Board for review and approval.

VI. Financial Reports

i. May, June, July & August 2022 Financial Reports

a. Mr. Davis walked the Board through the Financial Statements for August 2022, noting that the reports for May, June and July were provided to the Board in advance.

b. As of August 31, 2022, cash in the bank totalled \$606,129.89 and the total fund balance was \$607,296.61.

c. The Façade Grant Program has a balance of \$114,995.25.

d. Terra Williams moved to accept the Financial Reports for May, June, July and August 2022. Seconded by Tasha Clarke-Amar. Motion carried.

ii. Fiscal Policy Update (Budget, Procurement and Travel)

a. Mr. Davis highlighted issues for resolution pertaining to approval authority in existing policies on budget, procurement, and travel. A proposal was made that further discussion on the policies be deferred to the Finance Committee, with recommendations brought forward to the Board for approval.

Action #2: Mr. Davis to send email to Finance Committee, in advance of meeting, outlining policy areas to be addressed. Outcome of the work includes development of a financial procedures and policy manual for BRNEDD.

VII. Chairman Report

i. Nomination of Board Secretary William Pizzolotta moved to nominate Eugene Johnson as the new Board Secretary. Seconded by Terra Williams. Motion carried.

ii. Developer Recommendation



a. In accordance with current Bylaws, a call for nominations to fill the vacant developer position on the Board was executed by the Executive Committee. Nominations were open from September 1-9, 2022. Six (6) applications were received and reviewed by the Executive. A recommendation was brought forward to appoint Tyrone Legette to the position.

b. No public comments received.

c. Dr. James Gilmore moved that Tyrone Legette be appointed to the Board as the new community developer. Seconded by Terra Williams. Motion Carried.

iii. Personnel Committee Recommendation

a. A system is needed to conduct Executive Director performance evaluations.

b. Board attorney and CPA are up for contract renewal.

Action #3: Personnel Committee to develop an evaluation tool for use in the assessment of the Executive Director. Dr. Gilmore to send previous tool to the Personnel Committee chair for reference.

Action #4: Executive Committee to review contracts for the Board Attorney and CPA respectively. Recommendation to be brought forward to the Board for approval before year end.

iv. By-Laws Committee Recommendation

Action #5: Dr. Johnson to work with Board attorney and other Board Directors as needed to review BRNEDD Bylaws to ensure compliance with recent legislative changes. Board approval required for any proposed amendments.

v. Amendment Recommendation to ACT 119 CEA

a. Though public feedback regarding the façade grant program has been positive, a desire for a more focused target area has been identified as an opportunity to magnify the impact of the program. Potential areas for consideration include the airport corridor.

b. Gary Chambers moved to authorize the Executive Director to amend the application to allow use of funds for a more focused area of façade improvements. Seconded by Dr. Gilmore. Motion carried.

Action # 6: Committee to explore potential target areas and bring forward recommendations to the Board. Options to be reviewed by legal counsel.

vi. Approval of \$50K to EBRPSS Pathways to Success Program

a. Tasha Clark-Amar moved to amend the agenda to include approval of contract with EBRPSS. Seconded by William Pizzalotta. Motion carried.



- b. The Chairman spoke to the committee regarding the proposed partnership with EBRPSS on their Pathways to Bright Futures Program. \$50,000 would be provided to EBRPSS to provide students with job training and development in the culinary arts, including the creation of a commercial kitchen for project-based learning.
- c. The Board agreed on the need to identify opportunities to connect local businesses with the program.
- d. A public comment was received suggesting that the funds be used for student scholarship to attend culinary school. Dr. Gilmore replied that option was not feasible at this time due to the constricted timeline within which to use the funds, as well as prohibitive costs of such programs.
- e. Gary Chambers moved to approve provision of \$50,000 to the EBRPSS Pathways to Success Program for culinary arts training initiative. Seconded by Stephanie Cargill. Motion carried.
- f. Gilmore moved to approve a conditional acceptance of the CEA, with delegated authority to General Counsel to accept the agreement and negotiate other terms with EBRPSS on behalf of the Board. Seconded by Amar. Motion carried.

VIII. Executive Director Report

- a. Façade and Signage Improvement Program Update
 - i. Façade and signage improvements have been issued to over 30 applicants for a total of \$102,050.
- b. Recommendations to rescind or extend FSIP applicants
 - i. A recommendation was brought forward to rescind grants to 12 FSIP applicants due to failure to meet program requirements, including provision of proper receipts and documentation. This will result in \$62,000 in program funds coming available, which can be re-allocated to eight (8) applicants currently wait-listed. Program funds must be utilized by December 31, 2022.
 - ii. Tasha Clark-Amar moved to rescind 12 recipient grant awards as proposed and allow funds to be utilized by the eight (8) waitlist applicants. Any grantee that has exhausted their funds and submitted all receipts and documents would be allowed to access any additional funds left over. Seconded by Gary Chambers. Motion carried.
- c. Personal Financial Disclosure
 - i. The Executive Director reminded the Board to submit outstanding disclosures.
- d. Ethics Certification due on December 31, 2022.

Action #7: Directors to submit a copy of their ethics certification to the ED.

IX. New Business

- a. Gary Chambers moved that the Executive Assistant be made a full-time employee of the district, retroactive to August 15, 2022. Seconded by Stephanie Cargile. Motion carried.



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b. Gary Chambers moved to approve sponsorships in the amount of \$2,000 for Southern University 20th Annual Gala on the Bluff and \$3,000 for Supreme Solutions. Seconded by Tasha Amar-Clarke. Motion carried.

c. Need for increased marketing and advertising budget allocation to support efforts to build the organization's brand and raise awareness.

X. Old Business

None.

XI. Announcements

Next Board Meeting: Thursday, October 20, 2022.

XII. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 2:15pm.