

**St. Tammany Parish Development District  
Board of Commissioners Meeting  
Minutes June 16, 2022**

President Mayer called the meeting to order at 11:03 am and thanked staff for the lunch provided. Quorum was established by Commissioners present. Guests introduced themselves to the group.

**Present:** Scott Day, Mimi G. Dossett, Al Hamauei, Marty Mayer, Eric Schouest, Mike Tillman

**Absent:** Joan Coffman, Mike Gambrell, Bruce Javery, Bill Newton, Dr. William Wainwright

**Staff:** Chris Masingill, Jolie Bernard, Sharon DeLong, Keith Espadron, Elizabeth Lee, Ashley Llewellyn, Kate Moore, Jake Nickens, Todd Whalley

**Counsel:** Mark Balkin, Hardy Carey Chautin & Balkin

**Guests:** Kathleen Wilkin, Small Business Advocate; Mary Bellisario of Lacombe; Elliot Metzger of Covington; Rob Furman, Griffin & Furman, LLC

**PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD**

No public comment on any agenda item.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

With one correction to remove 'Zoom Meeting' from the minutes title, Al Hamauei, seconded by Eric Schouest, moved to approve the consent agenda items, which consisted of May Board of Commissioner minutes and May YTD financial statements for all accounts. All were in favor. Motion passed.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**2021 Financial Audit & Act 774 Audit Reports**

Masingill introduced Rob Furman of Griffin & Furman, LLC, who conducted both audits. Furman detailed the 2021 financial audit, which resulted in an unqualified (clear) opinion with no significant deficiencies or material weaknesses. The Act 774 audit resulted in the State Agreed Upon Procedures chosen for this audit were performed without exception. Both audits and the Governance letter by Griffin & Furman will be emailed to Commissioners. To allow Commissioners time to digest audit data, Masingill noted final audits can be approved at the July meeting. President Mayer polled the group for any objection to approval of the audits today. Being none, Mike Tillman, seconded by Eric Schouest, motioned to approve the audit reports as presented by Furman.

**Proposed Budget for THRIVE 2023**

Masingill provided a brief history of the *THRIVE2023* strategic plan investor partnership program and presented the proposed budget for 2022 with a review of the current investments in the program. Mayer noted the importance of private funding to augment public funding received from the state, and he asked each Commissioner to assist by giving two or three referrals of private sector companies/organizations that may be a good fit for the *THRIVE2023* investor partnership program. A discussion of the types of private sector companies to refer and value propositions ensued. Mimi G. Dossett, seconded by Scott Day, motioned to approve the budget as presented. All were in favor. Motion passed.

**OLD BUSINESS**

President Mayer commented on the Community Logistics meeting held in May regarding the Wadsworth property and noted the successful outcome for economic development and St. Tammany Parish.

**EXECUTIVE UPDATE**

**Organizational Update**

Masingill congratulated Jolie Bernard, a recent recipient of the *Crown Me* Image Award, which was given to nine well-deserving women across the state. Bernard added the focus of the *Crown Me* organization is to help improve the futures of young women and girls with an emphasis on social justice.

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Masingill announced Jake Nickens will begin transitioning to a new position with Summit Credit later this summer. He added that the ability to provide valuable business and technical services is essential to success in the economic development industry and the services STC provides is unique for local economic development organizations. To ensure a smooth transition, a MOU is planned for Jake's assistance including onboarding and training of the new staff member who will lead these efforts moving forward, as well as providing additional support for current and future projects. Masingill and Commissioners voiced individual congratulations to Jake. Nickens noted he had received much during his tenure with STC and hoped the exchange had been mutually beneficial.

**Executive Update**

Masingill stated the team will be working to set benchmarks for next year and begin repositioning *THRIVE2023* for future strategic planning purposes during the month of July.

Masingill relayed information from the recent IEDC Economic Future Forum in Richardson, TX. The three-day conference focused on economic policy and trends. With hurricane season upon us, an essential part of planning is preparedness, and the economic development industry is a critical element in the initial response to any disaster.

Masingill will join GNO, Inc., regional, and state leaders at an upcoming Winds of Change Block Island Business Summit in Rhode Island. The Summit features a wind farm tour, meetings with RI Secretary of Commerce, University of Rhode Island, and Port of Providence. He will follow up with a presentation in July.

Masingill reminded the board about the upcoming Chamber Legislative Luncheon on June 21. He also added an economic development policy update on HB724, which will allocate \$8 million in funding resources for local site preparation. He is engaging with local officials to see how STC can participate in the program.

Masingill reported that due to increasing levels of Hotel/Motel tax collections by the state, may be the potential of additional income for the organization. He extended gratitude to Donna O'Daniels of the Tourist Commission for leading this effort from a local level.

**Government Stakeholder Engagement**

Masingill congratulated Elizabeth Lee on her efforts in the process of recertifying Slidell as a Development Ready Community. Each community's plan includes strategies to address education, workforce development, infrastructure, leadership, and marketing/communications. The completed application and plans were submitted and approved by LED. The City of Slidell will receive on-going coaching and professional guidance during the community assessment and facilitation of the strategic planning process, as well as a "Roadmap to Readiness," clearly describing the process, resources, and deliverables. Upcoming plans include coordinating a ceremony this summer where LED Sec. Pierson will present Mayor Cromer with the Pelican in Slidell.

**Economic Development Update**

**Wadsworth Logistics Corridor**

With the Parish Council's unanimous approval to rezone the property for Advanced Manufacturing & Logistics uses, the process of site preparation and LED site certification has begun to make the site turn-key ready.

**Recruitment Project Pipeline**

Twenty-four current projects in the pipeline

**Project Food** – still engaging but no decision yet

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**Project Slugger** – A marine transportation industry company interested in relocating corporate headquarters to the Greater New Orleans region. Staff is currently preparing to submit three sites for current and future needs on June 17. Project expected to create \$55 million capital investment and to relocate 250 jobs with a total annual payroll of over \$20 million.

Potential Micro-PILOT projects

**Project Shore**

\$1.8 million Capex

Manufacturing start-up that purchased name and assets from a defunct company to create twenty new full-time jobs

**Project Siren**

\$1.7 million Capex

Bottle manufacturer conducting major equipment upgrades to retain ten existing staff as well create three new jobs

**Strategic Initiatives**

Graduate Research Fellowship

Abigail Chascin is the new 2022 Graduate Research Fellow will begin work June 24. She is a student in the Master of Public Administration program at LSU and has a background in research and analysis. Abigail will add capacity to our research efforts and will assist with our economic publications. The press announcement will be posted Friday, June 24.

Northshore Healthscape

The second quarter meeting of the St. Tammany Healthcare Leadership Roundtable virtual meeting was held in May. The robust dialogue centered around workforce and talent, specifically those students who graduated from area programs this spring, engaging the marketing and communications representatives from each organization for a collaborative meeting this summer, and mental and behavioral health needs and ongoing initiatives. The initial data and research components conducted by Vision First Advisors has begun and stakeholder engagement sessions will be conducted in late July/August.

Masingill stated he and Ashley Llewellyn are engaged with additional healthcare entities who have expressed interest in joining Northshore Healthscape as funding partners. To date, \$130,000 has been pledged to this effort from our previously announced key stakeholders.

Entrepreneurship

Masingill reported STC has met consistently with regional leaders in the entrepreneurship and venture capital arena to best understand how we can participate in and enhance the entrepreneurial ecosystem. We have met with the New Orleans Start Up Fund, NOLA Angel Network, and Idea Village and submitted a letter of support for the New Orleans Start Up Fund as they pursue a competitive grant opportunity. Chevron committed funds to St. Tammany Corporation through the Northshore Community Foundation for enhancing the entrepreneurship ecosystem in St. Tammany. Additional updates will be shared in the coming months as this initiative evolves.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Next meeting Thursday, July 21 | Hornbeck Offshore Corporate Offices | 103 Northpark Blvd, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor Training Room | *Confirmed***

**ADJOURN**

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Scott Day, seconded by Eric Schouest, motioned to adjourn the meeting at 12:43 pm. All were in favor. Motion passed.

Minutes reviewed and submitted by the STC Staff.