

**St. Tammany Parish Development District
Board of Commissioners Meeting
Minutes | August 18, 2022**

Present: Scott Day, Mimi G. Dossett, Mike Gambrell, Al Hamauei, Marty Mayer, Bill Newton, Eric Schouest, Dr. William Wainwright

Absent: Joan Coffman, Bruce Javery, Mike Tillman

Staff: Chris Masingill, Jolie Bernard, Sharon DeLong, Keith Espadron, Elizabeth Lee, Ashley Llewellyn, Todd Whalley, and Fellow Abigail Chascin

Counsel: Mark Balkin, Hardy Carey Chautin & Balkin

Guests: Jon Atkinson, CEO, Idea Village; Kathleen Wilkin, Small Business Advocate

President Mayer called the meeting to order at 11:03 a.m. Quorum was established by Commissioners present. Guests introduced themselves to the group. Slidell Mayor Greg Cromer stopped by to welcome the group and thanked the board and CEO for being such a great partner in economic development.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

No public comment on any agenda item.

CONSENT AGENDA

With no corrections, the Consent Agenda, which consisted of July 21 Board of Commissioner Minutes, July Financial Statements, July 20 Finance Committee Minutes, and August 11 Nominating Committee minutes, was approved. *Al Hamauei, seconded by Mike Gambrell, moved to approve the consent agenda. All were in favor. Motion passed.*

NEW BUSINESS

Recommendations from the Nominating Committee

President Mayer stated the Nominating Committee, which consists of himself as Chairman, Mike Tillman, Chris Masingill, Parish President Mike Cooper, and his appointee, Carrie Calvin, met on August 11 and approved the following recommendations:

- Eric Schouest for a first full term beginning Jan 1, 2023 – Dec 31, 2025
- Marty Mayer – renewing for a second term Jan 1, 2023 – Dec 31, 2025
- Dr. Will Wainwright– renewing for a second term Jan 1, 2023 – Dec 31, 2025

Mike Gambrell, seconded by Mimi Dossett, motioned to approve Dr. William Wainwright as a nominee to the Board of Commissioners for the term stated above. All were in favor. Dr. Wainwright abstained from the vote. Motion passed.

Mike Gambrell, seconded by Scott Day, motioned to approve Eric Schouest as a nominee to the Board of Commissioners for the term stated above. All were in favor. Eric Schouest abstained from the vote. Motion passed.

Dr. Will Wainwright, seconded by Mike Gambrell, motioned to approve Marty Mayer as a nominee to the Board of Commissioners for the term stated above. All were in favor. Marty Mayer abstained from the vote. Motion passed.

Masingill noted new Parish Council standard operating procedure requires nominees to appear in person at the Parish Council meeting at which the nominees and terms will be presented for final approval. Nominees will be updated on the meeting date at which they are to appear.

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Memorandum of Understanding | Sumit Credit

Masingill noted as Jake Nickens has transitioned to Sumit Credit, they have agreed to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with STC that allows for consulting, training, and project financing coordination. Masingill noted as STC has been the only EDO in the region with this level of financial technical assistance services available on staff, he is aggressively seeking a replacement for this position.

Dr. Wainwright, seconded by Eric Schouest, motioned to approve the MOU. All were in favor. Motion passed.

Griffin & Furman Letter of Engagement – 2022 Audit

Masingill stated the letter of engagement with Griffin & Furman, LLC contained a few adjustments. DeLong detailed the fee for the audit services will be \$9,725, and our fee for the state-wide agreed upon procedures will be \$2,500. As these procedures are subject to revision by the Louisiana Legislative Auditor, which may, if revisions deem, result in an increase in the number of procedures required, costs may increase slightly. Griffin & Furman agreed to consult with management if/when the revisions become known. Mayer asked about the difference in working with this firm and a firm formerly contracted to conduct these audits, to which DeLong replied the biggest difference was the cost.

Mike Gambrell, seconded by Mimi Dossett, motioned to approve the engagement letter. All were in favor. Motion passed.

Startup Northshore Initiative

Masingill reported a significant update on entrepreneurship focused programming and initiatives by introducing Startup Northshore. The goal of Startup Northshore is to launch a three-year entrepreneurial ecosystem pilot program to foster innovation, productivity, and business formation on the Northshore through strategic partnerships with recognized entities in the entrepreneurship landscape to deliver first-class programming for entrepreneurs and second stage companies. Intentional engagement of entrepreneurs and small businesses is a key tactic area outlined in *THRIVE2023*: St. Tammany's 5-year Economic Development Strategic Plan. A handout was distributed detailing the proposed pilot program, which included a first-year budget of \$180,000, including a \$100,000 fundraising goal for year one.

The first facet of the Startup Northshore initiative is a partnership between St. Tammany Corporation and The Idea Village grounded in *IDEAinstitute Northshore*. Masingill introduced Jon Atkinson, CEO of The Idea Village in New Orleans, who shared information about *IDEAinstitute*, a 10-week idea-stage accelerator program that introduces innovative entrepreneurs and potential startup founders to the tools they need to turn an idea into a scalable venture. This partnership represents a key step in St. Tammany Corporation's strategic priority of engaging in dynamic relationships with respected thought leaders to enhance the entrepreneurial ecosystem in St. Tammany and the broader region. Ultimately, The Idea Village envisions a hub-and-spoke network that brings world-class startup resources to all communities within our region and connects and provides value to all regional entrepreneurs. St. Tammany Corporation is the first "spoke" partner of this approach. The fall 2022 cohort is currently accepting applications and the program will begin the first week in September. Atkinson fielded questions by Commissioners.

Scott Day, seconded by Mimi Dossett, motioned to authorize the partnership with The Idea Village, create a specific bank account for the broader Startup Northshore initiative, and approve the \$180,000 first year budget for the Startup Northshore 3-year pilot program. All were in favor. Motion passed.

OLD BUSINESS - None

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EXECUTIVE UPDATE

With no question on the activity report, Masingill reported on his attendance at the Logistics Development Forum in Beaver Creek, Colorado, which confirmed the District's focus and determination on creating the logistics corridor is solid. He has identified a few locations around the country for future site visits to best understand how St. Tammany can implement these proven best practices locally.

Masingill, Ashley Llewellyn, and Elizabeth Lee recently attended the Southern Economic Development Council Annual Conference in San Antonio, Texas. Llewellyn moderated a panel about workforce development, and Lee provided communications support to the SEDC staff. The speakers and panelists at the conference included Jessica Breaux of Amazon. Key takeaways from the conference included that product development is crucial for future success, and workforce and talent and land and sites remain the two greatest items of consideration for site selection and company expansion, relocation, and attraction decisions.

Wadsworth Corridor: Masingill stated CEAs were in process for the LED site certification program, as well as one that lays out the District's involvement and engagement in the development process.

He also reported on Modifications to the AML zoning ordinance on the agenda at the Parish's next Planning and Zoning Committee meeting. St. Tammany Parish Councilman Jake Airey is proposing changes to the ordinance that narrow the scope of acceptable uses within the AML zone, clarify square footage allowances, and put additional permitting requirements in place for the more intense uses allowed in the zone to ensure maximum evaluation and consideration.

The economic development team is currently involved with 25 projects which are in various stages of development.

Masingill stated we are in the process of producing the 2023 budget, and as current officer terms will expire December 31, 2022, anyone interested in an officer position should contact him or President Mayer.

Mayer stated Parish President Mike Cooper volunteered to give a presentation to the Board with an update on infrastructure, broadband, and other projects that affect economic development. A time and date in October will soon be confirmed.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Next Meeting - 11 a.m. – 1 p.m. Thursday, September 15 | Hornbeck Offshore Corporate Offices – Covington | *Confirmed*

ADJOURN

Dr. Wainwright, seconded by Bill Newton, motioned to adjourn the meeting. All were in favor. Motion passed.

Minutes reviewed and submitted by the STC Staff.