

**St. Tammany Parish Development District
Board of Commissioners Meeting
Minutes | July 18, 2024**

Present: Elder Brown III, Joan Coffman, Mimi G. Dossett, Mike Gambrell, Albert M. Hamauei, Ross Lagarde, Paul Myers IV, Dr. William Wainwright

Absent: Bruce Javery, Louis Ochoa, Eric Schouest

Staff: Chris Masingill, Timothy Billiot, Kyle Buckley, Vincenzo Caronna, Sharon DeLong, Keith Espadron, Ashley Llewellyn, Kate Moore, Todd Whalley, Gabbi Brown-Fellow, Ben Seiden-Grad Fellow, D Polk-ERC Fellow

Counsel: Mark Balkin | Hardy Carey Chautin & Balkin; Phil Sherman | Adams & Reese

Guests: Kathleen Wilkins, Suzanne Torregano | Tri-Parish Works; Jake Nickens | Sumit Credits; Robbie Rapp | Project Plainview

President Wainwright called the meeting to order at 3:03 p.m. Commissioners present established quorum.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

No public comment on any agenda item.

CONSENT AGENDA

With no modifications, the Consent Agenda, which consisted of the June BOC Meeting Minutes, Financial Statements-all accounts, and the Relocation Construction Contract was approved. *Ross Lagarde, seconded by Joan Coffman, motioned to approve the consent agenda as presented. All were in favor. Motion passed.*

NEW BUSINESS

Resolution: Disposal of Surplus Property (Furnishings)

Masingill noted the resolution, and the attached surplus list indicated current office furnishings that will not be moved to the new location. DeLong stated the items will be listed as one lot on GovDeals.com, an affiliate of LAMATS.net. A public notice will be posted soon noting all details of how interested parties can participate in the online auction. *Al Hamauei, seconded by Mike Gambrell, motioned to approve the resolution. All were in favor. A roll call vote was taken. All Commissioners present were in favor. Motion passed.*

Resolution: Preliminary Approval for Project Plainview

Kyle Buckley detailed components of Project Plainview, which consists of a marine engine and equipment company considering an expansion at their local facility to increase their capacity for production. The project's capital expenditure is estimated at \$7 million for the construction of a 25,000-square-foot facility and the creation of 11 new, full-time jobs. As per protocol, St. Tammany Corporation recently commissioned a third-party economic impact analysis of the project. The study found that the new investment will yield a Benefit-Cost Ratio of 2.12 to 1. The company would create significant economic impact in St. Tammany Parish by expanding their current footprint and employing a highly skilled workforce. To secure the new investment, support the existing operations, and create new jobs for the parish, the company has requested St. Tammany Parish Development District consider a Payment-in-Lieu-of-Taxes (PILOT). Robbie Rapp, representative of Project Plainview, fielded questions by Commissioners. Having reviewed the project at its July 16 meeting, Mike Gambrell noted the Finance Committee recommended approval for the project. *Mike Gambrell, seconded by Elder Brown, motioned for preliminary approval of the project A roll call vote was taken. All Commissioners present voted in favor of the resolution. Motion passed.*

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Resolution: Amendment to Lease for Project Red Owl

Kyle Buckley detailed components of the lease amendment for Project Red Owl, which consists of the construction of a high-end 55,000 square foot grocery store to be the anchor tenant for a new 10+ acre shopping center in Slidell. The project capex is estimated at \$18.5 million, resulting in the creation of an estimated 70 new jobs with a total annual payroll of \$3.2 million. The PILOT had unique terms in that the maximum total tax savings were set to match the cost of a traffic light or roundabout adjacent to the site. With these terms, St. Tammany Corporation commissioned a third-party economic impact analysis of the project. The study found that the new investment will yield a Benefit-Cost Ratio of 8.65 to 1. Under these conditions, the Board of Commissioners granted the project final approval for a PILOT in 2023. In the months following approval, Parish engineers commissioned a traffic study which warranted a substantial increase in costs for the traffic light or roundabout to accommodate for the projected traffic increase in the area. In response to the increased cost, the company has requested consideration for an increase in the maximum total tax savings to offset a portion of the new project costs. With all other variables held equal, the updated Benefit-Cost Ratio is 6.78 to 1. Mike Saucier, representative of Project Red Owl, fielded questions from Commissioners. Having reviewed the project at its July 16 meeting, Mike Gambrell noted the Finance Committee recommended approval for the project. *Mimi Dossett, seconded by Paul Myers, motioned for approval of the amendment to the lease. A roll call vote was taken. All Commissioners present voted in favor of the resolution. Motion passed.*

Resolution: Amending to the Rooms To Go Trust Indenture and Bond (2008)

Rooms To Go, a leading furniture retailer, established a wholesale and distribution facility in 2008 under the historic PILOT Program of the St. Tammany Parish Development District. The facility's construction was supported by a bond issue, which includes a clause mandating early repayment on November 1, 2025. Rooms To Go has consistently met all program requirements and remains in good standing. Recently, the company engaged in negotiations with their banking partner to extend the mandatory redemption date of the bonds from November 1, 2025, to November 1, 2032. This negotiation is primarily between Rooms To Go and their bank, with the proposed extension reflecting an agreement between the two parties. The extension does not affect any other terms of the bond issue, including the maturity schedule, interest rate, PILOT terms, or district fees. Having reviewed the project at its July 16 meeting, Mike Gambrell noted the Finance Committee recommended approval for the amendment. *Mike Gambrell, seconded by Ross Lagarde, motioned for approval of the amendments to the Trust Indenture and Bond. A roll call vote was taken. All Commissioners present voted in favor of the resolution. Motion passed.*

CO.STARTERS/FINSYNC Contract | LED Grant

Ashley Llewellyn stated the original EDA grant from 2023 had been extended through December 31, 2024, allowing the District to administer additional programming. As the board has previously approved the grant budget, Llewellyn requested approval for a contract with CO.STARTERS for up to \$15,000 for trainer engagement and education and entrepreneurial development training for the five-parish region. *After a brief discussion, Joan Coffman, seconded by Mike Gambrell, motioned to approve the contract up to \$15,000. All were in favor. Motion passed.*

FY 23/24 Budget Adjustment | Northshore Healthscape

Masingill noted that due to an invoice received that needed to be paid within the fiscal year, a slight adjustment to the budget was required to include the expense. *Mike Gambrell, seconded by Paul Myers, motioned to approve the Northshore Healthscape amended budget. All were in favor. A roll call vote was taken. Motion passed.*

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OLD BUSINESS – None

EXECUTIVE UPDATE

Staff Updates

With no questions on the activity report, Masingill noted the title change for Sharon DeLong to Director of Finance and Administration. He also announced that Gabbi Brown had accepted a full-time position with STC as the Special Assistant for Administration and Strategic Initiatives.

Llewellyn introduced Suzanne Torregano, the new Executive Director for Tri-Parish Works, noting that Melissa Kirsch will soon be retiring. Torregano expressed her excitement for expanding the services offered by the Workforce Development Board.

Strategic Initiatives

Masingill commented on the ongoing development of the new strategic plan. Llewellyn provided a detailed report out of the accomplishments and impacts of the four components of the THRIVE 2023 plan, which are Organizational, Business Development, Cross Cutting Strategies, and Marketing & Communications. She concluded that THRIVE 2023 was the organization's north star and 85% of its tactics and strategies were implemented. She shared that the upcoming strategic plan would build upon these foundational successes with an increased level of intentionality and focus.

Masingill also announced the intention to create and implement the organization's first business marketing and attraction plan. He noted that Julie Curtain with DCI will be onsite for a presentation at the August meeting.

Office Relocation

Masingill detailed plans thus far of the office relocation plan. He led the group through a PowerPoint presentation of photos and renderings of the appearance of the new facility interiors. He concluded by offering a walk-through for Commissioners during the mid-construction phase.

Economic Development Update

Masingill noted that Project Skywalker has \$100M in contracts with the potential of an award up to \$24 Billion in 2027. He commented that the project requires assistance with transportation issues. A workforce needs assessment meeting with LED took place on July 2, 2024.

LED Update

Masingill stated that since Governor Landry signed the Executive Order for revisions to the ITEP incentive program, the entire program is under review. Members of staff have participated in all the Rules Committee meetings and collaborated with our economic development partners in Tangipahoa and St. Bernard on recommendations, with two sets of recommendations submitted. The new draft rules are expected in August.

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 5:14 pm on a motion by Elder Brown, seconded by Paul Myers. All were in favor. Motion passed.

Minutes reviewed and submitted by the STC Staff.