

**St. John the Baptist Parish
Economic Development Committee
Minutes of Regular Meeting
Monday, May 6, 2019**

ATTENDANCE:

Present:

Michelle Jenkins
Kim Fontenot
Elizabeth R. Joseph
Evin Stein
Tyler Lewis
Peggy Joseph
Kali J. Price
Robert Taylor
James Oubre, Jr.

Staff:

Laverne Toombs
Terri Abadie

Guest:

Darrell Johnson Jr. Stacey Scott
Wayne Aucoin Phyllis Madere
Ali Vicknair Shannon Magee
Mary Elise Schlesinger
Rena Jackson Lawrence Lawes
Travia Bell Yasmaine Magee
Dolores Montz Casey Weber
Buddy Boe Denise Burrell
Terry McKnight

Call to Order

Chairwoman Michelle Jenkins called meeting to order at 12:08 p.m.

Roll Call

Nine (9) Committee members were present. Quorum was met.

Opening Prayer / Pledge of Allegiance

Peggy Joseph led prayer. Robert Taylor led Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comments (3) Minutes – No Public Comments

Adoption of Minutes from April 1, 2019 Meeting

Motion from Peggy Joseph and seconded by Tyler Lewis to adopt the April 1, 2019 meeting minutes. The motion passed with 9 yeas

Director's Report – Laverne Toombs (see report)

Old Business – No Old Business

New Business

- **Rachelle Matherne**, Director, Professional & Continuing Studies, Loyola University, Laverne stated she was unavailable to attend and will present at a later meeting.
- **Darrell Johnson Jr., LED Louisiana Economic Development**, LaVerne Toombs gave Mr. Johnson and Mr. John Mathews a great big Thank You to the both for being a great asset to our parish. Mr. Johnson thanks Mrs. LaVerna and says how great the Fast Trac Program is thriving and helping the Small Businesses in the Parish. He then begins his presentation on Small Business Overview, flyer is attached. Ms. Jenkins thanks Mr. Johnson for a great presentation.
- **Business Talk**
 - Dolores Montz & Casey Weber wit Vera Pro, we are a provider of IT sales and service, specializing in K-12 and managed IT services for small-medium sized businesses and government agencies. We have been in business since 2013, and we currently have 44 employees. Many of our employees, including our Director of Operations of Technology (Joshua Jones), Business Development and Special Projects (Dolores Montz) and our Network Administrator (Brent Cavalier) are from St. John Parish.

We decided to branch out to LaPlace for a few reasons. First and foremost, we see enormous potential for growing a customer base in the area due to the number of businesses currently operating in the River Parishes, and particularly St. John Parish. Second, our location is central to New Orleans, Baton Rouge, the North Shore and everywhere in between. Being so close to I-10 on Belle Terre Blvd. is a true asset in accessibility for our employees and customers. Our final consideration for choosing our location was our desire to support the community we are from. We are particularly interested in focusing on the River Parishes, Ascension Parish and Tangipahoa Parish.

Community Partners' Update

- **Entergy Louisiana** – Absent
- **Louisiana Small Business Development Center** – Wayne Aucoin
 - Lunch and Learn Workshops
 - May 7th - 9:00am - 2:00pm
 - May 14th - 9:00am - 2:00pm
 - Building Your Business Culture (2-part series)
 - June 5th - 9:00am – Noon
 - QuickBooks for Managers
 - FastTrac 10 Week Program
 - Started March 14th - 5:30pm – 8:30pm
 - May 8th – Networking Event At 6:00 pm at Petra Restaurant in conjunction with the Business Association
 - May 16th Session 9
 - May 23rd Session 10

Wayne introduced two People from Fast Trac, one who previously graduated and one that is in the program presently Ms. Trivia Bell who is presently in the program. She has been working in technology for about 17 yrs and she will be providing contracts for government work and she is interested in providing testing for hemp related projects. She is enjoying the Fast Trac Program and her company name is Viable Technologies. The second guest is Terry McKnight who is a past graduate from Fat Trac, she owns Terry's Candles Home Décor & Gifts she is excited to talk about the support she received and still receives from Wayne to help with the growth of her business. Her candles are now in two locations and working on a third and is excited to let everyone know how much Mr. Wayne and the Fast Trac program has helped her.

- **Port of South Louisiana** – Absent
- **River Parishes Community College (RPCC)** – James Oubre the college will be having their 2019 Graduation on May 14, 2019 at the Lamar Dixon in Gonzales
- **River Parish Tourist Commission (RPTC) & St. John Community Center & Soundstage** – Buddy Boe report included
- **River Parishes Workforce Development** – Absent
- **River Region Chamber of Commerce** – Stacey Scott report included
- **South Central Planning & Development Commission** – Absent
- **St. John Business Association** – Phyllis Madere this Wednesday is the Business Association meeting @ Petra @ 6:00 pm the guest speaker will be Peter Strasser
- **St. John the Baptist Parish School Board** – Shannon Magee
 - May 10th Honor Roll Ceremony @ New Wine 10 am – 12 am
 - May 18th WSJ Highschool Graduation 10 am – 12 pm
 - May 22nd ESJ Highschool Graduation @ Lake Pontchartrain 6pm – 8pm
 - June 3rd- July 3 Jump Start Summer Program @ ESJ
 - Would like to announce we are partnering with Delgado Community College for dual enrollment under Pro Start

Announcements

- Michell Jenkins acknowledges Parish President Natalie Robottom and asks her for a few words.
- Parish President Natalie Robottom greets everyone, thanks them for being there and the service they are doing. She is glad to see that there is a full house and it is great to here about all the events that are happening. Also, very glad to hear the testimonials for the

Fast Trac Program. This is a wonderful program and it has proven to be a very helpful tool for the upcoming small businesses. She reminds everyone that she would appreciate their support of the Fast Trac contract with Xzavier, that is coming before the Council and she is encouraging everyone to contact their Council Member in support of renewing this contract. She again thanks everyone for being here and wishes everyone a good afternoon.

- LaVerne Toombs lets everyone know there are some refreshments outside for everyone.

Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made by Tyler Lewis and seconded by James Oubre Jr. Meeting was adjourned at 1:08 pm.



5/1/19

May Director of Economic Development Report

St. John the Baptist Parish

May 1, 2019

Greetings,

To the Committee, Stakeholders, and citizens of **St. John the Baptist Parish**, I would like to thank everyone who is in attendance today for our monthly Economic Development Committee (EDC) meeting.

We once again are participating in the **Cleanest City Contest**, we entered LaPlace, Reserve, Garyville, Wallace, Edgard and Pleasure Bend and received District Awards for Pleasure Bend, Wallace, Edgard, Garyville and Reserve advancing them for State Judging, the Judging was done Thursday, April 25th and Pleasure Bend is 2nd place, Wallace is 5th place, Edgard is 3rd place, Garyville is 3rd place, and Reserve is 5th place.

FastTrac Spring 2019 classes began Thursday, March 14 and will go through till Thursday, May 23, 2019

Easter in the Parks was held on April 13. We have once again partnered with Celebration Church of LaPlace and West St. John Civic Association to host the events on the East Bank and West Bank of the River. The turnout for these events were great. Everyone had a lot of fun and the weather held out to make this event a success.

St. John Economic Development Week This is the kick off for the week, May 6-11. May 6th starts with the EDC Meeting, our second event will be May 8th-at the Business Association Meeting held at Petra's and finally May 10th- The Port of South Louisiana will have a Breakfast at the airport and we will have a ribbon cutting for the new flight training school, Southern Aviators. Everyone is invited.

2019 Lantern Award recipient is Marathon Petroleum a ceremony will be held May 21, 2019 from 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM at the Governor's Mansion

Sings and Strings has been rescheduled for May 19 due to a rain out

Andouille Festival Meeting is scheduled for May 8, 2019. Also, we have received 4 sponsorships so far totaling 3500.00

LASAFE an engineering firm has been selected and we are negotiating a contract. *Marathon needs to be completed by 2022*

CAFA - *we have spoken so*

The Dollar General on the West Bank Has opened and a ribbon cutting was done on Wednesday, April 17th.

The Waffle House has begun their construction and progress is being made. *need to contact*

The Hotel *w* *about ribbon cutting*

Up Coming Events: May 7th & May 14th Workshop- Building Your Business Culture 9:00 am – 2:00 pm (a two part series), May 8th- Business Association Meeting at Petra's @ 6:00 pm, May 10th Port of South Louisiana Meet & Greet Breakfast and Ribbon Cutting for Southern Aviators Flight Training School 8:30 am, June 5th Workshop QuickBooks for Managers 9:00 am – Noon, July 3rd Veterans Luncheon @ REGALA Gym @ 11:00 am and Fireworks on the River @ 9:00 pm

Warmest Regards,

LaVern Jacobs

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ST. JOHN

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Celebrate Economic Development Week
Economic development in St. John the Baptist Parish is a set of programs and policies that aid in the creation, retention and expansion of jobs; the development of a stable tax base; and the enhancement of wealth.

National Economic Development Week **May 6 - 10, 2019**

Monday, May 6, 2019 • 12:00 Noon
**Economic Development Committee Meeting/
National Economic Development Week Kick Off**
Location: St. John Parish Council Chambers
1811 West Airline Highway, LaPlace, LA
(Light refreshments will be served)

Wednesday, May 8, 2019 • 6:00 p.m.
St. John Parish Business Association Meeting
Petra Restaurant
1036 West Airline Highway, Ste. 101, LaPlace, LA
Speaker: Peter Strasser,
US Attorney for Eastern District of Louisiana

Friday, May 10, 2019 • 8:30 a.m.
Port of South Louisiana Business Meet and
Greet Breakfast
Port of South Louisiana Regional Airport
355 Airport Road, Reserve, LA



Natalie Robottom
 Parish President

Laverne Toombs
 Chief Administrative Officer

St. John the Baptist Parish
2019 Calendar of Events
 (2nd Quarter)

May 4	Household Hazardous Material Collection Day
May 6	Economic Development Committee Meeting National ED Week Kick- off
May 7 & 14	Building Your Business Culture Workshop 2-part session
May 8	Business Association Meeting In conjunction w/ National ED Week
May 10	Port of South LA Meet & Greet Breakfast Ribbon Cutting for Southern Aviators Flight Training
May 19	Sings & Strings Festival
June 5	Workshop QuickBooks for Managers
July 3	Veterans Luncheon
July 3	Fireworks on the River

(T) = Tentative
(TBD) = To Be Determined

SMALL BUSINESS OVERVIEW

PROGRAM NAME	BENEFIT	ELIGIBILITY (NOT COMPREHENSIVE)
SMALL AND EMERGING BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM	Provides developmental assistance including entrepreneurial training, marketing, computer skills, accounting, business planning, legal and industry specific assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 51% of the company must be owned by a Louisiana resident, whose personal net worth cannot exceed \$400,000 Business' net worth at the time of application may not exceed \$1.5 million
HUDSON INITIATIVE	Provides small businesses with greater potential for access to state procurement and public contract opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Must be certified by LED, a Louisiana resident and have fewer than 50 full-time employees
VETERAN INITIATIVE	Provides veteran-owned and disabled, service oriented veteran-owned small businesses with greater potential for access to state procurement and public contract opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Must be at least 51% owned by a veteran or disabled, service-oriented veteran Must be certified by LED, a Louisiana resident and have fewer than 50 full-time employees
BONDING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM	Provides bond guarantees up to 25 percent or \$100,000, whichever is less, for qualifying contractors requiring surety bonds for private or public jobs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business must be certified in the Small and Emerging Business Development Program
LOUISIANA CONTRACTORS ACCREDITATION INSTITUTE	Provides business training focusing on expanding understanding of the construction industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Must have the intent to start or currently have an established construction based Louisiana business
MENTOR-PROTÉGÉ RECOGNITION PROGRAM	Connects Louisiana-based small and emerging businesses to technical and developmental assistance provided by large mentor companies from various sectors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protégé Business must be certified in the Small and Emerging Business Development Program
ECONOMIC GARDENING INITIATIVE	Provides customized business intelligence through an assigned team of highly-skilled researchers in the specialized fields of market research, geographic information systems (GIS), and digital marketing to accelerate growth and help companies export their innovations to external markets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Must have annual revenue between \$600,000 and \$50 million Must have at least five employees but not more than 99 employees Must demonstrate growth in annual revenue and/or jobs in two of the last five years
CEO ROUNDTABLES	Provides peer-to-peer learning that gives executives the opportunity to discuss business practices and management strategies with other executives who deal with similar growth challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Should typically have annual revenue between \$600,000 and \$50 million Should typically have at least five but not more than 100 employees



RIVER PARISHES

TOURIST COMMISSION

St. John the Baptist Parish May 2019

- I. Operations
 - i. Ribbon Cutting
 - ii. Staff – Deputy Director of Operations
 - iii. River Region Cruise Terminal
 - iv. Public Records Requests – 22 (33 inquires)
 - v. 2019/2020 Budget
 - vi. Occupancy – Feb 2019 up 10%, highest in State
 - vii. Collections – up nearly 50% across region
 - viii. Destination Survey – Summer 2019
 - ix. Destination Strategic Plan – Fall 2019

- II. Sales
 - i. Impact since Jan 1st \$319,000
 - ii. IPW – June 2019

- III. St John Center
 - i. 10 events booked so far this year
 - ii. Website – working with Parish on new website

- IV. River Parishes Film Commission
 - i. Two films so far this year at Center, one filming now on Westbank

- V. Community Development
 - i. Ambassador Program – to be launched Fall 2019
 - ii. Marketing Grant Program – new program to be launched late summer
 - iii. Chamber Partnership

- VI. Promotion
 - i. River Reel Videos – Swamps, Rougarou, Bonfire released
 - ii. Digital – ads made for each video for target audiences
 - iii. Marketing Plan 2019/2020

- VII. Communications
 - i. Reporters – Nedra McDaniel, Jan Shroder, Eke Knall (April)
Barbara Barrielle, Kathryn Gignac (May)

- VIII. Next Meeting – May 8th at 4:30pm



RIVER REEL
— SERIES —



**Update to
St. John Parish Economic Development
May 6, 2019**

ORGANIZATIONAL:

- 15 Year Gala being planned to be held in St. John Parish – Tentative date: June 21, 2019
- Updated Chamber Member Directory and Community Profile is available. Visit the Chamber office to get copies to place in your business.
- SBDC workshop planned for May 9th at the Chamber office; seating available.

NETWORKING:

- Regional Networking opportunity was held with other chambers –April 4th, 5 pm.
- Annual Crawfish Boil held May 2, 2019 at Lucher Park Pavilion. Ticket prices remain the same, with exception of purchase after 4/15/19. Will increase to \$50/pp. Adding kid activities due to the setup of the pavilion to encourage more families to participate.
- Chamber Connections Lunch scheduled for May 29, 11:30 am at Cypress Lakes Country Club in Destrehan.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT:

- Meetings will take place every other month. Next meeting will be May 21, 9 am at RPCC in Reserve. Panel discussion between business and schools' systems is being planned in the coming months. Updates on La. Calling marketing efforts will also be given.

ADVOCACY:

- RRCC signed onto a Federal letter funding support for early childhood care and education.
- Participated in Chamber Day at the Legislature May 1. 40 Chambers from around the state attended.
- A Rep from each of the 3 parish's administration are encouraged to attend monthly Public Policy mtgs to help keep us up to speed on how current legislation is affecting businesses. Next meeting is tomorrow morning at 8 am, at ABC Bayou in St. Rose.
- Candidate forums will be held this year for the Parish President elections.

Keep abreast of additional updates on our website at www.riverregionchamber.org.