

**Central St. Landry Economic Development District**  
**Board Meeting**  
**Meeting Date and Time: January 13, 2022 @ 8:30 am**  
**Meeting Place: 5367 I-49 S. Service Road, Opelousas LA**

**AGENDA**

- ❖ Public Comment
- ❖ Welcome
- ❖ Pledge
- ❖ Roll Call
- ❖ Approval of the December 2021 Board Meeting Minutes
  
- ❖ Financial Report – John S. Dowling
  
- ❖ Committee Reports
  - Land Use
  - Marketing and Communications
  
- ❖ Old Business
  - Joint Commission CEA Amendment Update
  - SLED Administrative Support Implementation Update
  - Sewer Project Update
  - Lighting Projects Update
  - Vegetation Maintenance/Litter Abatement Update
  - Retail Strategies Update
  
- ❖ New Business
  - Crossroads Market Feasibility Proposal

The following members were present in person: Frank “Buddy” Helton, Senic Batiste, Ammy Taylor, Dr. Derek Metoyer,

The following members were present virtually: Yvonne Normand, Tina Vidrine

The following members were absent: Pride Doran

The following non-voting members were present in person: Bill Rodier (CEO of SLED), Janece Riser (SLED),

The following non-voting members were present virtually: none

The following non-voting members were absent: Julius Alsandor (Mayor), Jessie Bellard (Parish President), and Dexter Brown (Parish Council Chairman)

The following guests were present in person: William Jarrell

The following guests were present in virtually: William Turley (Retail Strategies), Susan Sieger (Crossroads)

It was determined that a quorum was present.

Chairman Helton opened the meeting at 8:37 am.

A motion was made by Dr. Derek Metoyer and seconded by Senic Batiste to amend the agenda to add Retail Strategies Update. Motion Carried without objection.

Approval of December 13, 2021, Regular Meeting Minutes: Following a review of December 13, 2021, regular board meeting minutes, a motion was made by Senic Batiste and seconded by Ammy Taylor to accept minutes as submitted. Motion carried without objection.

Financial Report: Chairman Buddy Helton presented the December 2021 Financial Report. The audit trails were encouraging considering the Stage building and other parcels have not been filled. He also gave an overview of 2020 vs 2021 financials.

### **Committee Reports:**

Land Use Report: Yvonne Normand advised that the Opelousas Sunrise Rotary Club is researching possibilities to assist in the need for transportation for adults for education and employment in St. Landry Parish. The Rotary Club's President, Tom Mire, has met with the Parish President as well as individuals with the Community Action Agency in reference to their buses jurisdiction to see if their use could be expanded to uses for education to help with transportation for T. H. Harris. Tom Mire has also met with Bruce Gaudin. Mr. Gaudin has previously researched this issue extensively.

Bill Rodier advised that due to the holidays and Katrina King accepting her new position at the Leadership Institute of Acadiana, there hasn't been any meetings with the Midway Corridor. Rachel Godeaux and Kade Jones are now working with us on this project.

Bill Rodier also informed the board that he and Frank "Buddy" Helton from CSLEDD have been in conversation with LUS Fiber in regard to internet along the corridor. LUS has committed to coming up through Church Point into Eunice to Ville Platte. LUS also has plans to come up I-49 into Carencro. Bill is requesting they come down I-49 to St. Landry Parish Line and he'll work on getting it down I-49 to Hwy 190 and through downtown Opelousas. LUS has applied for the GUMBO grant which helps fund getting fiber to underserved areas to assist in this extension.

Communications Report: Ammy Taylor spoke about the upcoming Marketing and Communications plans to send out a monthly newsletter that includes information from the meeting minutes from CSLEDD, Downtown Development, and SLED. The topics covered in the newsletter will serve as content feed for social media. The first in depth article from Golden Shovel will roll out this month. It is about Entrepreneurship in St. Landry Parish. The next in dept article will be about the different economic development entities in St. Landry Parish and how they collaborate to support economic growth within the parish. They should receive a response in a few months.

The Chamber of Commerce along with St. Landry Economic Development will host a Small Business Summit held at the Civic Center on April 27<sup>th</sup>. The Summit will be a day long informal event where local business owners and Entrepreneurs can gather information on all aspects of business ownership. Sponsorship information is not yet available however Taylor will gather sponsorship information once it's released to share with the board. Ammy suggests that CSLEDD sponsors a booth as this is a prime location to tell the CSLEDD story.

Senic Batiste, Taylor Lormand, and Ammy Taylor have a meeting scheduled for Thursday to gather information on the expansion of the district. Bill Rodier reminded the board to continue communicating with ODDD regarding the expansion of the district as they are expanding their district.

### **Old Business:**

- *Joint Commission CEA Amendment Update:* Chairman Helton advised that he has not received a response from Philip Sherman regarding the CEA amendments. It is progressing but a little slower than originally planned. They are also adding a section in the CEA and possibly adding into the by-laws that zoom meetings will be accepted as a part of the quorum and will count in voting. The only concern is that people become less engaged with the board.
- *SLED Administrative Support Implementation Update:* Chairman Helton advised the board that things are moving along smoothly. The communications area has had some action. Buddy and Janece Riser are working together to ensure all of Buddy's processes are properly documented and moving forward on the transition with her taking on more of Buddy's duties.

Bill Rodier advised that the interviews for both the Administrative Assistant position and the Project Coordinator position were beginning and is hopeful that the committee will complete interviews mid-January. Senic Batiste, as a member of the interviewing committee was able to give a little insight on the process. Bill Rodier explained that after the Administrative Assistant position is filled and properly trained, Janece will fully transition into her position as the primary contact on CSLEDD's projects. Taylor Lormand will remain in the communications role.

### *Sewer Project Update:*

- William Jarrell gave an update on the sewer project. He advised everything except the tertiary filter has been installed. The site piping has been installed. The property is approximately 95% shaped; no stone has been placed. The access road has been placed.
- Entergy has staked out their pole locations for the overhead electric lines. The layout and conflicts with utilities are going well. The only thing Entergy is requiring is for the limbs from ground to sky cut. William has been advised that it would be less expense and can be done quicker if that task was handed off to another company. He is waiting for a call back with pricing.
- Completion date is tentatively end of 1<sup>st</sup> quarter.

### *I-49 Lighting Project Update:*

- I-49 Project is still waiting for material for Harry Guilbeau at the interchange of Hwy 182. Entergy is still dealing with restoration from Hurricane Ida. The brackets that were on backorder came in however the wrong part was ordered. The correct part has been ordered but they are also on backorder.
- Judson Walsh project is in the works. DOTD has been surveying all the interchanges.

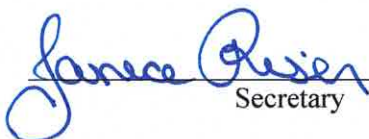
Vegetation Maintenance/Litter Abatement Update: Chairman Helton reported that he and Janece Riser will meet with Richard LeBeouf next week to get ideas on what can be do to combat litter, educate the public, and enforcement. Buddy has also been in touch with Nick Chachere to clean the underpass areas. Mr. Chachere will wait until the end of sugar cane harvesting season to send the crews out. A question was posed if the board wants to clean the other areas of the embankment as it was done in the front of the SLED office. The board decided to accept quotes.

Buddy and Janece will be engaging the state Burns vegetation and litter abatement cycles are on schedule and moving well. There may be one more cut for this year. The remaining action FY 2021 will be liter abatement. William Jarrell will investigate if the new contract has been signed with Burns. Buddy will be meeting with Richard LeBeouf in reference to litter. Chairman Helton also stated that he and Janece will be working on the mulching and fertilizing permit so that it will be ready the 1<sup>st</sup> part of Spring when AOK is ready to proceed.

Retail Strategy Update: William Turley advised that his company had just returned from Vegas and will be traveling the early part of the year but at this time he wanted to go over industry trends that have surfaced since dealing with Covid. The top three topics on their radar are labor shortage, supply chain issues, and inflation. He will be travelling to Opelousas over the next couple of weeks to go over things happening not only in Opelousas but specifically in the district.

Crossroads Market Feasibility: Chairman Helton explained the need for an updated market feasibility report prior to look for funding mechanisms for the Multi-use Equine Facility. Susan Sieger with Crossroads explained their process and their areas of concern. She stated this report will not be a full study like the previous report but rather an update showing the changes in the utilization, any new market opportunities, and update the financial proforma and economic impact. Bill Rodier expressed to Susan Sieger that CSLEDD wishes to receive an honest update even if it's not favorable. CSLEDD needs all the information to make a sustainable decision. After a discussion, a motion to accept the proposal submitted by Crossroad to update the market feasibility report and engage Crossroads was made by Senic Batiste and seconded by Dr. Derek Metoyer. Motion carried without objection.

There being no further business, a motion was made by Scenic Batiste and seconded by Dr. Derek Metoyer to adjourn at 11:04 am. Motion carried without objection.

  
Secretary

  
Chairman