

Central St. Landry Economic Development District

**Board Meeting**

**Meeting Date and Time: October 12, 2023 @ 8:30 am**  
**Meeting Place: 5367 I-49 S. Service Road, Opelousas LA**

**AGENDA**

- ❖ Welcome
- ❖ Pledge
- ❖ Roll Call
- ❖ CSLEDD Business Recognition Program – Little Silo Co.
- ❖ Approval of the September 14, 2023, Board Meeting Minutes
- ❖ Financial Report
- ❖ Old Business
  - Réserve Naturelle de la Paroisse de Saint Landry - Update
  - Equine Sales Facility Consideration - Update
  - Grass Cutting and Litter Abatement - Update
  - Sewer Capital Outlay - Update
  - Retail Strategies Monthly - Update
  - I-49 Midway Corridor Project - Update
  - DOTD Regional I-49 Meeting - Update

The following members were present in person: Chairman Buddy Helton, Senic Batiste, Yvonne Normand, Rod Sias, Tina Vidrine

The following members were absent: Ammy Taylor, Dr. Derek Metoyer

The following non-voting members were present virtually:

The following non-voting members were present in person: Teresa Reaves (SLED), Brittany Cretchain (SLED), Janece Riser (SLED)

The following non-voting members were absent: Jessie Bellard (Parish President), and Jerry Red Jr. (Parish Council Chairman)

The following guests were present in person: Ms. Kelsey David, Ms. Cilicia Savoy (St Landry Parish Government), Martin McLendon (St Landry Parish Government), William Jarrell (Morgan Goudeau), Bobby Ardoin (St Landry Now), Landry – The - Horse (St Landry Chamber of Commerce)

The following guests were present virtually: Ms. Lyndsey Bailey (Retail Strategies) , Kade Jones, Ron Rona

It was determined that a quorum was present.

Chairman Helton recognized the guests, thanked everyone for their time, and opened the meeting at 8:34 AM.

CSLEDD Business of the Month – Little Silo Co.: Chairman Helton introduced Kelsey David owner of Little Silo, Co. and gave a brief bio of her business. Little Silo Co. is a Children's Boutique located at 1511 Commerce Boulevard, in Opelousas Louisiana. It started as an in-home embroidery business and has grown into a beautiful children's boutique. They offer something for everyone's budget, and even offer some hand made things from local artisans.

Approval of the September 14, 2023, Minutes: Chairman Helton asked if anyone had any changes or corrections to the September minutes. A motion was made by Ms. Yvonne Normand to accept the September 14th Meeting Minutes as submitted. The motion was seconded by Mr. Senic Batiste. Motion carried without objection.

Financial Report: Ms. Tina Vidrine gave the financial report. She stated that the board has 8.3% of the budget Unused. She reported that there is a Budget Meeting on November 4<sup>th</sup> to go through the budget for next year. Chairman Helton commented that the tax collection for September is up 8% from this month last year, and year to date is up 10% over last year. Chairman Helton estimates that the tax collections should be up 12 to 13% for the year.

#### **Old Business:**

Réserve Naturelle de la Paroisse de Saint Landry – Update: Chairman Helton gave an update stating that last month the board approved moving forward with costs of hosting the public input meeting. There was no meeting about it however because the board was waiting to see if the property was still going to be available, as there was a possibility that it may have been sold to another buyer. It was recently verified that Mr. Monica was indeed going to sell to the board so now there can be a meeting coordinated with Land Architecture and the church hopefully before Thanksgiving.

Equine Sales Facility Consideration - Update: Chairman Helton gave an update on the purchase of the Equine Sales Facility. The probable sale is in the sixty-day Due Diligence phase. At that point we must let them know yes, we are buying it or no we are not. If we are, it then goes to the title attorney. Our Due Diligence committee has met twice so far. Mr. Rod Sias gave a report regarding the committee meetings that have been held. The committee is looking over all the expenses seen, and unforeseen. Mr. Sias mentioned that, for example, they discussed the stove because it is working correctly now but it's an older piece of equipment and what if it needs to be replaced within the next five years. He said they carefully tried to capture all the costs of any situation that could come up. He discussed the budget that the facility uses and then what the actual budget might be going forward. Mr. Sias said that the committee has a good understanding of the expenses and is now working on what the events and income could look like. The facility currently has about 30 events planned per year and that income does cover the expenses. Conversation ensued. Mr. Senic Batiste said that he did some personal research and presented the board with the questions that he wanted them to consider. Mr. Rod Sias said that the committee covered about 80% of what was on the list from Mr. Batiste, and that it was a good list. The board discussed that no matter what, now is the time to move forward with the appraisal and inspection. There were questions and discussion.

Grass Cutting and Litter Abatement: Chairman Helton gave a report regarding the grass cutting bids for the property on Harry Guilbeau Road adjacent to Equine Sales. We received two bids to cut the 24 acres property and we can get a couple more if the board chooses. The first bid came from a company from Breaux Bridge called Magnolia Lawn Management. That bid was \$50.00 per acre for the 24-acre property once a month, but we are going to make the cut as needed rather than monthly. The Magnolia bid is based on twelve (12) cuttings per year, at \$1200 a cut. The second bid was from Mr. Michael LaComb. Mr. Lacombe bid \$30.00 per acre with brush cutting, for a total of \$720 per cut. Mr. Lacombe included that he is insured, and Chairman Helton said he is sure that Magnolia also has insurance, it just wasn't included in the packet. Chairman Helton said that it might be a good idea to have it burned later. A motion was made by Ms. Yvonne Normand to go with Mr. Michael LaComb for the first cutting to end this year at \$720.00. The motion was seconded by Mr. Senic Batiste. Motion carried without objection.

Chairman Buddy Helton stated that the litter abatement on the corridor is going fine. Due to the drought and lack of rain things weren't growing as fast so we foresee possibly one more cutting in October on the 16<sup>th</sup> as well as a litter abatement.

There was a bid opening on October 3<sup>rd</sup> for the 6-month contract for regular mowing and litter abatement. The contract was changed to six months and then 4 one-year renewals to go along with the state contracts. Mr. William Jarrell was present to discuss the bids received. On October 3<sup>rd</sup>, two bids were received. One low bid from Burns Maintenance Group, who is the previous contract vendor, was for \$136,700.00. Mr. Jarrell informed us there were some items in there such as tree removals that were included in the total but probably won't happen again so if you look at the annual cost it would be about \$134,000 if you did everything according to the schedule. The second bid is from Rotolo Consultants at \$208,526.07. Mr. Jarrell explained that the bid is for a unit price bid, so you only pay for the cycles you use. The contracts are for 19 cycles along 190 and 15 cycles on I-49 from Flagstation Road to just beyond 190 with litter and then 4 additional litter only cycles during the dormant months. A motion was made by Mr. Senic Batiste to go with the low bid, Burns Maintenance Group, of \$136,700 and allow Chairman Helton to sign that agreement and seconded by Ms. Tina Vidrine. Motion carried without objection.

Sewer Capital Outlay - Update: Mr. William Jarrell gave an update that almost everything with the sewer project is finished short of the generator which will be shipped sometime around the end of February. He stated that all the piping is in, the pump station is in, all the electrical controls and so forth are in. Mr. Jarrell also stated that the absence of the generator will not hold anything back as it's the back-up generator. The next thing is the power to the site and start up and testing. He also stated that there could be things with the pump station and dress up items. Chairman Helton asked if the board will be finished with the payout by year end, and Mr. Jarrell answered no, because the project will not be accepted until the power is installed and that may not be until November or longer. Chairman Helton reported that several homes are under construction at the Crowne Parc site, and if they need to go online with the sewer, the board is prepared to get the sewer pumped as needed until the new system is online. Conversation ensued.

Regarding the Capital Outlay, the CEA was signed by CSLED as it concerns the sewer and must be signed by SLED and returned to the state. Mr. Jarrell explained that once the state executes it, they will tell us that we can get started and submit our engineering agreement and then once that gets approved, we can begin our design for the upgrade of the wastewater plant to increase the capacity of the plant and then increase the capacity of the pump station. The capacity of the plant right now is 150,000 gallons a day and we want it to go up to 375,000 a

day. Originally it was originally 300,000 gallons per day but with the new Harry Guilbeau interchange growth now we are going down Harry Guilbeau Road and the City of Opelousas just passed a resolution and have agreed to accept the wastewater from the Harry Guilbeau expansion and the unincorporated areas. Mr. Jarrell said that there is a proposed school that will be located on the East side of I-49 and if we need more capacity and Chairman Helton added that it's a good thing to reach capacity, because that means that there is Economic Development happening. Mr. Jarrell went on to explain that the current outlay is to install gravity sewer along the north and south sides of Harry Guilbeau Road. Chairman Helton asked to back up to the East Side and wanted to know what that outlay amount was. Mr. Jarrell answered that the total project was \$3,393,780.00 and the capital outlay amount was \$1,700,000.00 so the required funding is going to be \$693,780.00. Mr. Batiste asked if that would accommodate the new school and Mr. Jarrell answered yes, plus it's going to be a while before they even build it and require a sewer. Ms. Tina Vidrine interjected that the school is only going to have grades K through 3rd to start. Conversation ensued. Ms. Vidrine asked how many homes will be built in the subdivision and the answer was 145 to begin and 215 is the final number. Chairman Helton asked for the report on the second Capital outlay request which is Harry Guilbeau and Mr. Jarrell reported that Harry Guilbeau has gravity sewer along the North and South Sides up to Hwy 182 and to the I-49 interchange with the Service Road. Mr. Jarrell reported that the estimated cost will be \$2,783,200.00 and we are requesting \$2,087,000.00 in state funds and the match amount will be \$695,800.00. That will also include two pump stations because of the design. Discussion ensued. Mr. Jarrell said the capital outlay request has been prepared and he is asking for permission to send it. Chairman Helton asked for a motion to allow him to authorize and sign on behalf of CSLED. The motion was made by Ms. Tina Vidrine and seconded by Ms. Yvonne Normand. Motion carried without objection.

Retail Strategies: Lyndsey Bailey reported that they are having an in-person event in Breaux Bridge to attract businesses and an industry expert panel. It was reported that they have had a lot of good feedback from national retailers in our community and they feel that the new companies coming in are giving us a big boost. They mentioned a national tea company is interested in coming to our area.

I-49 Midway Corridor Project - Update: Mr. Kade Jones from the Acadiana Planning Commission gave a report on the Planning Commission. He gave a general status update. Back in August the parish requested a Parish Planning Commission to be implemented to oversee the corridor. He said it was approved by the Parish. He explained that the commission will consist of five members of people throughout St Landry Parish, and he said that SLED will be appointing at least one member and possibly two. It's being advertised throughout the parish but has not received any applicants yet. Once that is established then the corridor will be ready to move forward. He explained the process being that the project must go before each community council twice. He explained that he is having a problem getting before Opelousas. There was an active discussion. Ms. Yvonne Norman asked what was the hold-up with Opelousas and she volunteered to help get the project on the City of Opelousas meeting agenda.

DOTD Regional I-49 Meeting – Update: Chairman Helton reported that this item is tabled until further notice.

**Adjourn:** A motion to adjourn was made by Yvonne Normand and seconded by Senic Batiste. The meeting was adjourned at 10:34 am.

Yvonne Lognion Normand  
Secretary: Yvonne Lognion Normand

Frank W Helton, Jr  
Chairman: Frank "Buddy" Helton