



Board of Commissioners Meeting Minutes

6 April 2015

Commissioners Present:

Steve Pettus, Chair
Kim Rosenberg, Vice Chair
Tony Marino, Treasurer (tardy)
Darryl Berger (tardy)
Jeremy DeBlieux
Brian Furness
Alfred Groos (tardy)
Sal Sunseri
Ted Young

Commissioners Absent:

Mia Matassa
Jim Oliver
Robert Watters

Guests:

Emily Remington, Executive Director

I. CALL TO ORDER: ROLL CALL: INTRODUCTION OF ATTENDEES

Steve Pettus called the meeting to order at 4:08pm. Emily Remington called the roll.

II. Approval of Minutes

Kim moved to approve the minutes. Jeremy seconded. Those in favor were Lary, Sal, Jeremy, Daryl, Ted, Brian, Steve, and Kim. No abstentions and no opposition.

III. Chairman's Comments

Steve noted that on May 15, Louisiana Board of Ethics. Steve informed attendees that Mia Matassa replaced Lori Herbert as the North Rampart Main Street's representative to the FQMD Board of Commissioners.

IV. Treasurer's Report

No report, as Tony was absent.

V. Ratification of Executive Director Hiring

Kim moved that Emily Remington be ratified as the Executive Director of the FQMD. Ted seconded. Those in favor were Lary, Sal, Al, Jeremy, Darryl, Ted, Brian, Steve, and Kim. No abstentions and no opposition.

VI. Presentation by B.B. St. Roman: Low Barrier Homeless Shelters

B.B. informed attendees that there are 2,000 homeless persons in New Orleans, down from 8-9,000 in the years after Katrina. Capacity of area shelters is only 350. It is \$10/night to stay at the Salvation Army. New Orleans Mission's policy is that a person can shelter for 21 days and then has to be out for 30 days before s/he can return. Ozanam Inn only has room for 60 people. BB noted that some people can't deal with getting in to shelters; they are either too handicapped, too mentally ill, or too drunk. BB said that gutter punks don't want traditional services; they want to be out there on the streets. Many of them receive money from their families. BB said she tries to help reasonable people who have experienced emotional or health tragedy. She tries to lift everyone up and connect people to resources. She noted that Mayor Landrieu has a Homeless Czar, and the latest workgroup decided that New Orleans needs a low barrier homeless shelter that has a mental health clinic. It would be a combined facility. BB stated that about two-thirds of homeless people are alcoholics, so a rehab/treatment center would also exist. BB said that more agencies are coming on board with this idea, including Odyssey House and the Metropolitan Center. Between all of the shelters in New Orleans, only 18 beds are free (no charge) in the whole city.

Low barrier homeless shelters offer 24/7 security in a warehouse or a field with covering. BB advocated for occupants to be able to have tents for occupants' privacy. BB stated that 24 hours/day is important so that people who are working night shifts have somewhere to go. BB said that, by her estimate, 70% of people turn their lives around when they get their own housing.

BB advocated for the low barrier homeless shelter to be in a location walkable from downtown. The Mayor's workgroup has been looking at Austin's shelter as a model. BB stated that the Seattle mayor is advocating for tents to be able to be used in their shelters, which allows occupants to keep their things in their own space. The City of New Orleans hasn't come up with alternatives or solutions. The Times-Picayune building was offered to be donated for the purpose of creating a homeless shelter. BB said that it is a huge space but cold and industrial feeling. She also noted the difficulty involved with getting to this location. She said that dogs will be accommodated in the low barrier shelter.

[Redacted] asked about whether children will be allowed. BB said the Salvation Army has 6 family rooms, but people can only stay for 90 days if they have \$10/day. Covenant House can provide shelter for families for one day. BB stated that the New Orleans Women's Shelter has been great at taking families for a few days.

Why are you pro-tent? BB stated that she believed tents in shelters are effective because people will have mental and physical space. Low barriers exist to just get people off the street. Counselors at the shelter would then connect people to services.

Darryl asked about the funding source for the low barrier homeless shelter. BB stated that the Salvation Army gets its funding from Salvation Army, and other organizations raise funds through their nonprofit status. The shelter will also need private funding.

Where will it be located? BB stated that she's got her eye on the former scrapmetal place next to the Home Depot near the intersection of Claiborne and Calliope.

What about gutter punks? BB stated she has less love for them. **Are there constitutional limits?** BB stated that they have to be enforced out. There are no "no loitering" or "no public inhabitation" laws in Louisiana.

VII. Presentation by Dominique Hawkins: Vieux Carre Commission [New Design Guidelines](#)

Rachel Robinson introduced Dominique Walters. Dominique said that she is a preservation architect. Dominique helps people retain historic properties. She was charged with updating the Vieux Carre Commission's 1986 guidelines to managing properties. She stated her belief that her updates provide further clarification on the guidelines. She said that the draft is available on a public website. It details how the VCC wants to regulate its own properties. She stated that there would be a public presentation at Bourbon Orleans at 6pm on Wednesday, April 8 in the St. Mary Salon.

Lary stated that most people assume there's a (one.) rule to follow. In certain cases, one building differs from another. Lary said when you buy a historic property, no one gives you a guidebook. Lary stated that the new guidelines are very exciting and terribly valuable. He said that Dominique had such a great sense of historic places in New Orleans and that the guidelines are great tour.

Kim questioned what Dominique had done. Dominique answered that the new guidelines are highly graphic and full of photographs. Dominique stated that the guidelines will also be available on the website, as the VCC cannot cover printing costs. The guidelines include chapters: an introduction of the process/how the VCC works; one that demystifies the code; building maintenance and how to look at a building, roofing, masonry, windows/doors, galleries, signs, lighting, paint; and security, which will be updated as technology updates.

Bob said that he hopes to see security cameras on lightposts, as he believes this is a public safety issue. Dominique said that she defers on lighting levels, as she is not a light designer. Rachel said there is a necessity to have balance between public and private lighting. In the long-term, this will include voluntary steps.

Rachel announced that on Monday, October 26, the VCC Foundation will hold its annual gala at Tableau. Darryl noted that funds raised at the gala and through membership drive these efforts.

VIII. Status of CEAs and related matters

Kim said that the CEA with the CVB and the City had been amended. Kim noted that the donation agreement with SDT had been executed. There is a CEA with the City for the French Quarter Patrols. FQMD has not yet received funding from the French Quarter Business League. Kim stated that many businesses will also provide funding for the Bourbon Patrol. She stated that she needed to execute a lease with the City for the FQMD office in the 8th District Precinct. Sal motioned to vote on the execution of this lease. Jeremy seconded. Those in favor were Lary, Sal, Al, Jeremy, Darryl, Ted, Brian, Steve, and Kim. No abstentions and no opposition.

Jeremy asked what was up with the French Quarter Business League. Kim stated that the CVB/City/FQMD cooperative endeavor had been forwarded to Robert Watters to take to Chris Young.

Kim stated there was some concern about whether the hotel assessment would crack down on Bourbon Street businesses.

IX. Report by Chairs, Infrastructure/Sanitation Committee (presentation attached)

X. Report by Chairs, Security Task Force/Enforcement (presentation attached)

Gail moved the Board to approve 2015 goals. Ted seconded. Those in favor were Lary, Tony, Sal, Al, Jeremy, Darryl, Ted, Brian, Steve, and Kim. No abstentions and no opposition.

XI. Report by Chair, Vision Task Force (presentation attached)

Kim made a motion to move the Vision Task Force to the Infrastructure Committee. The motion was not seconded and is deferred to May.

XII. Government Committee Report

Kim said that the Government Committee had met earlier that day for 90 minutes to discuss the sound ordinance that was introduced on March 12, 2015 by Councilmember Ramsey. Discussion ensued, and Steve suggested a committee be formed to talk about the ordinance. Carol Gniady suggested Department of Health input. Further discussion was tabled.

XIII. Discussion of Bylaws for the FQMD (Committee Structure, etc.)

A draft of the March minutes were distributed, along with a draft labeled "Committee Issues" (attached). Steve noted that there is a proposal about who is a member of a committee and who leads a committee. Membership and leadership require a nexus to FQMD. Susan Guillot said that Brian Furness has drafted proposed side-by-side bylaws issues. She stated that attendance requirements might make more Committees more viable, and they would protect the status of being Chair. Steve asked for issues to be identified so that they could be addressed. Steve said that, as he understood it, the issues were membership; attendance; information flow; and acceptability of Chair, Vice Chair, and Co-Chair.

XIV. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:04pm.