

French Quarter Management District

Monday, January 5, 2015

365 Canal Street, 20th floor, New Orleans, LA

Meeting Minutes

The following Board Members were in attendance: C.E. Adler, Darryl Berger, Brian Furness, Al Groos, Lori Herbert, Lary Hesdorffer, Jim Oliver, Steve Pettus, Kim Rosenberg, Sal Sunseri, Robert Watters

Absent were: Tony Marino, Ted Young

Guests: Robert Simms (Chair of Security Task Force), Gail Cavett (Chair of Infrastructure Committee), Sue Klein (Chair of Vision Task Force), Julie Tefaro, Stephen Perry, Officer Sheree Harper, Ann Kesler, Earline Torres, Beverly Fulk, Carolyn Goodwin

I. Meeting called to order by Steve Pettus

Steve Pettus welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the New Year, his first meeting as Chair.

II. Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the November, 2014 meeting were approved by unanimous vote. The minutes of the December, 2014 meeting were distributed for review.

III. Treasurer's report and related matters

There was no treasury report.

IV. Selection of 2015 Meeting Dates

Steve Pettus reviewed the 2015 meeting dates as follows: January 5th, February 2nd, March 2nd, April 6th, May 4th, June 1st, July 6th, August 3rd, September 7th, October 5th, November 2nd, December 7th. Discussion was had concerning whether or not to have an August meeting. It was decided that we should schedule the meeting because it could be cancelled later if necessary. A motion was made to accept the calendar dates as noted. The motion passed by unanimous consent.

V. Status of CEA with City and Related Matters

Steve Pettus gave an update on the status of the CEA with the city, explaining that it's currently in the hands of the Mayor. Kim Rosenberg said they had a meeting with Andy Kopplin regarding the Bourbon Patrol. Representatives from the FQBL, FQMD and NOCVB have requested that the city match what the FQBL will be donating for the Bourbon Patrol. It was proposed that the method for the match would be for the NOCVB to make a donation to the FQMD to match the FQBL amount. If that is done, there would be 8 Officers added per shift instead of 4 Officers.

VI. Status of new financing Resources for FQMD

Steve Pettus advised that the NOCVB has approved funding to the FQMD of \$75,000. per year for the next 2 years. It's expected that the NOTMC will approve the same amount in funding. Funding from these 2 sources will be a great start while we continue to look for revenue sources as we move forward. This funding will allow us to begin the search for an Executive Director. Stephen Perry advised the board that, because the NOTMC has specific meeting times and may not be able to immediately provide a definite commitment, the NOCVB will guarantee the contribution of the NOTMC. He explained that this guarantee would cover any time lapse period due to the NOTMC not being able to immediately commit and would also cover the full amount

if, for some unknown reason, the NOTMC did not commit. Grateful appreciation was expressed to Stephen Perry by the board.

Steve Pettus suggested that a search committee of two people, Al Groos and Ted Young, be established to review the process and put together suggestions, with the input of others, for the mechanics of a search for an Executive Director. The findings would be brought back to the board. Brian Furness pointed out that other organizations in the French Quarter had recently conducted searches for Executive Directors and suggested that the committee reach out to those organizations for input.

A motion was made to task two board members, Al Groos and Ted Young, with the responsibility of putting together the process for the search for an Executive Director. The motion passed by unanimous consent.

Darryl Berger expressed the importance of the pivotal moment for the FQMD as we finally take the step to hire an Executive Director and expressed thanks to the funding organizations.

A motion was made to amend the order of the agenda to allow Stephen Perry to address the Board of Commissioners. The motion passed by unanimous consent.

Stephen Perry related that his industry and the hotel industry very much believe in the FQMD and the balance it has to represent every angle and every point of view. He shared that his organization, as with most organizations, has been recently discussing the situation with criminal justice and how public safety is unfolding across the city. They feel like we just can't wait any longer and are pleased with the new efforts of the City to put money into recruiting. He reiterated that, unfortunately, even with full NOPD training classes, the City isn't making net gains in Officer number due to the high attrition level. The number of Officers staffed in the French Quarter is not enough with the environment we are currently dealing with and losing the State Police creates further worry. Stephen shared that a meeting is scheduled for Thursday of major criminal justice organizations, business leadership, and hospitality organizations to discuss options. The initial meeting will be an organizational meeting of groups that can bring funding to the table in hopes to further augment the patrols being coordinated through the FQMD with money donated by the FQBL. In addition to addressing Officer issues, they plan to address the lighting issue. Substantial monies have now been collected to help with sidewalk repairs, which have already begun, and to help with lighting repair. These repairs need to be done quickly. We all, including legislators, must bring resources and creative solutions to the table. Because of the symbolic importance, economic importance, and the historic importance of the French Quarter, Marigny, and the CBD, this is not just a municipal issue. It must be addressed on all levels. There should be a state role at some point.

VII. Infrastructure Committee Report

Gail Cavett reported that a sidewalk survey for DPW was completed by the committee in order to help guide DPW in their repair efforts. The committee has expended 140 man hours so far on the survey work with the following areas completed to date:

Area 1: Jackson Square Mall

Area 2: Bourbon Street

Area 3: Royal Street

Area 4: Chartres Street

The condition was assessed using a tripping risk scale, showing which areas are a major hazard in need of immediate repair, which are a hazard that needs repair, and which are a minor hazard that need repair, but are a lower priority.

Gail discussed a problem with the City definition of limousines. Recently the City made a revision to Sec 162-189 which changed the definition of limousines. 2 vehicles were added to the definition of limousines:

Luxury sprinter van with a capacity of not more than 12 including driver

Luxury min bus with a capacity of greater than 16, including the driver.

Although current laws regulate where buses 31' and under can travel, the law reads that "bus" shall be defined as any vehicle "excluding limousines". Some vehicles categorized as limousines are now much longer than when the law was written. The exclusion of limousines allows any vehicle calling itself a limousine into the French Quarter even though the mini bus limousine is longer than buses allowed in the French Quarter. The suggestion of the committee is to amend the City definition to omit the minibus limousine, thus making the amended definition of limousines consistent with bus size limitation laws.

A motion was made that the FQMD supports and authorizes Gail Cavett and members of the Infrastructure Committee to assist in seeing that an amendment be made to the current limousine size definitions. The motion was passed by unanimous consent.

Gail noted that the sidewalk repair on Bourbon Street has progressed very quickly. Monies had to be spent by the end of the year and the repairs were handled in an extremely efficient manner. The next street to be worked on will be Royal Street. Col. Jernigan sets the scope of work and has communicated with the FQMD infrastructure committee to establish priorities.

Stephen Perry asked whether it is believed that some of the sidewalk damages are caused inadvertently by liquor deliveries. Gail explained that those deliveries are a big part of the problem. Steve Pettus suggested that NOLA Patrol will hopefully be a big help with enforcement.

Stephen Perry noted that preparing for the upcoming tri-centennial celebration might be a good opportunity to establish a time line for infrastructure improvements to the French Quarter. Everyone agreed that having a deadline might help in establishing infrastructure goals and priorities.

Gail gave an update on the oversized truck situation in the French Quarter. She showed pictures of combination vehicles up to 70' on French Quarter streets and pointed out damages that they can cause. Gail met with the Director of the Port and his staff. They are now a willing partner and have started an education process for drivers, putting signs up, and supporting legislation of oversized vehicles in the French Quarter. Gail reviewed turning radius requirements for different sized vehicles and reiterated that the maximum size vehicle that can turn without the possibility of damages is 31' "Straight-line" trucks are defined as vehicles going straight in and straight out, with no turns, and are a maximum of 35' in length.

Gail showed video of street congestion during delivery times, where late afternoon is the busiest time for deliveries. Although early mornings would be the best time, most don't deliver at that time because they say that bars and restaurants aren't open to accept deliveries. Darryl Berger suggested that the committee work with business owners and managers to consider defined delivery times for the French Quarter. Steve Pettus noted that most restaurants require deliveries by 11am. Sue Klein noted that many bars are hosing sidewalks during the early hours and do have staff on site.

Robert Watters noted concern about presentations being made to City Officials and Councilmembers prior to having approval by the board. Steve Pettus suggested that committees present the information as data collected by the committee and explain that the issue is being considered by the FQMD as to what specific recommendations might be made.

Lary Hesdorffer discussed vibration issues and how vehicles, coupled with road conditions, affect buildings. The VCC made a recommendation to DPW and others regarding traffic and street management, asking for a comprehensive study to be done. Hopefully, the study will be done.

Discussion was had concerning how the Infrastructure Committee might best proceed in providing information to City leaders. A motion was made to authorize the Infrastructure Committee to provide information to Councilmember Ramsey and to other Councilmembers regarding prohibiting oversized commercial vehicles from operating in the French Quarter and to authorize Gail and other Infrastructure Committee members to make a presentation to the Council on 1/6/15. The motion was passed by unanimous consent.

VIII. Vision Task Force Report

Sue Klein reviewed the selection of goals request previously made to the FQMD Commissioners. She reported that there is a narrow window of opportunity if we decide to make recommendations concerning residential parking permits for the French Quarter. Discussion was had concerning different possibilities for parking permit solutions. Kim Rosenberg noted that there are more than 4,000 registered voters in the French Quarter and only approximately 600 designated RPP residential parking spaces.

Sue asked the board to consider designating a committee or committees to address issues identified by the Vision Task Force. Steve Pettus said he will bring the Vision Task Force suggestions to the individual committees.

IX. Security Task Force Report

Bob Simms reported that crimes against person increased dramatically in December. There were 27 robberies (10 armed), 42 assaults, and 4 sex crimes, adding up to a total of 73 crimes against person. There were 39 during the same period of time in 2013.

Bob reviewed the highlights and accomplishments of the security task force from 2012 to 2014:

- FQ wide Video Surveillance System feasibility study.
- Transformation of the 100 block of Bourbon, including lighting and parking changes.
- Facilitating \$30,000. of donations to 8th district NOPD, including scooters, ipads, hard drives.
- 100 block of Royal street initiatives, including parking changes, graffiti removal, additional signage, and improved lighting.
- Street lights surveys done continually with information communicated to DPW.
- Dusk to Dawn Initiative: campaign for residences and businesses to enhance City's Street lighting in the French Quarter.

Bob explained that the next meeting will be his last as Chair of the Security Task Force, but he will be happy to continue on the committee and help with the transition to a new Chair. There's approximately 8k left in the treasury from funds donated for Security Task Force projects.

X. Government Committee Report

Kim Rosenberg gave an update on the doorway nudity issue in the Bourbon Street Entertainment area. Recommendations from the Government committee have been sent to the FQBA and the FQBL. The committee is awaiting comments from the 2 groups.

Kim noted that the committee is also working on the Illegal short term rental problem and there is a loophole in the City law. It appears that the laws prohibit the advertising of short term rentals as opposed to the actual rental of the units. The committee will work on a solution to the problem.

The committee is also exploring solutions to the adhesive sticker problem caused by stickers handed out by tour groups. Although there is a graffiti ordinance prohibiting affixing stickers to buildings or to any type of infrastructure, there is no ordinance preventing the handing out of adhesive stickers.

Kim noted the need to get back to working on a sound ordinance in order to re-energize the city's work on the issue and especially on enforcement. A motion was made to begin to readdress the noise ordinance issue, with the participation of all interested parties. Discussion was had concerning whether or not the time was right to begin again to address the issue since many groups are still reviewing the issue. The motion was passed by a majority vote.

XI. New Business

Steve Pettus expressed concern over a few issues and made brief comments about how resolving the issues might be approached:

Time given to committee reports at meetings: Because some reports are long, it often causes other reports to be cut short due to time constraints. Because of time, important issues are sometimes not vetted properly and we need to solve the problem.

Procedure to air grievances: Perhaps consideration can be given by groups with grievances to look to their individual commissioners to be their voice and bring their comments to the board as opposed to so many emails being sent to all commissioners.

Committees taking minutes: If committees are called Citizen Advisory Groups, they're not required to take minutes. It should be considered that all committees and task forces become CAGs in order not to have such legal burdens. All committees need to send notices out well in advance so everyone interested can participate and every Commissioner should either be an Officer or co-chair a committee.

Consolidation of committees: Steve would like to consider consolidating the Government and Infrastructure committees and the Enforcement and Sanitation committees. This would bring us to 4 committees that could each meet every other month. If this is done, there would be 2 reports at each monthly meeting, allowing proper time to be given to their reports.

Geographically limiting committee selection: Steve feels that putting limits in place might inhibit the voice of some parties that have an interest in the French Quarter. He feels that we should be an inclusive organization, not exclusive.

There being no further business before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 2:10pm.

Submitted as a true copy of the minutes of the above meeting,

Lori Herbert,
Secretary