

**French Quarter Management District**  
**Security Task Force Meeting – 3pm on October 21, 2015**  
**Antoine’s Restaurant**

**Introduction of Attendees**

List of attendees provided at end of notes.

Bob announced that the scheduled guest speaker, Cpt. John Riles, Commander of Louisiana State Police FQ Troop, had been called last minute to attend to emergency business.

**2016 Plan – 8<sup>th</sup> District**

The longer-term (Jan 2016) plan to add more police in the 8th District includes:

- Creating a new, sustainable revenue source to pay for State Police dedicated to the Quarter through an Economic Development District quarter cent sales tax;
- Matching funding from the Hospitality Industry to pay for additional State Police
- Continuing the French Quarter Task Force, funded from the City’s portion of the CVB hotel self-assessment; and,
- Aggressively recruiting more officers until all patrol districts, including the 8th District, are adequately staffed for both violent crime deterrence, calls-for-service response and community policing

**“Quarter for the Quarter” Tax Vote**

Reminded attendees that the Economic Development District (EDD) taxing initiative would be voted on Saturday, October 24. Proposed tax of .2495%, would add only 25 cents to a \$100 purchase or service. Chart shown with additional information and example calculations. (Post meeting note: As you know the EDD tax passed overwhelmingly – thanks to all who got the word out etc. etc.)

**Election Day Events**

Emily Remington announced that on Oct 24 there would be an all-day open house with refreshments at 817 St. Philip. At 8:00 PM, poll results watching will begin at Tableau restaurant.

### **Additional Security Funding**

Bob pointed out that many people are unaware how much the hospitality industry has been contributing. In 2015 they provided \$3M for LSP, as well as providing food and accommodations for the troopers. They also funded \$.06M for FQ Task Force.

In 2016, \$2.5M comes from the EDD for troopers; hospitality industry will match with \$2.5M for LSP FQ Patrols. They will also fund FQ Task Force in the amount of \$0.9M.

Two charts were shown defining the LSP/FQTF/NOPD officer presence - every vehicle patrol and every foot patrol out each night, with their locations. By color-coding, this illustrated the impact if EDD were not passed and those patrols disappeared.

### **One Team – LSP/FQTF/NOPD**

Synergy is growing. Example video shown of all three policing groups responding simultaneously to a car break-in. Call had come in on the app, then relayed to all. Another video showed a young man continually throwing a skateboard at a crime camera in an effort to knock it out. Through joint efforts using previous knowledge, he was recognized and arrested.

### **Proposed NOPD Budget – Information from recent budget hearings**

Five years ago New Orleans force was 1540 strong – today it is down to less than 1100; goal is to build to 1600. Fifty-six new officers have graduated Police Academy this year, with 30 more graduating by end of year. Attrition is still out-pacing recruitment, so shortage is expected to continue.

NOPD continues putting more officers on the street, with initiatives such as creating the Violent Crime Task Force, moving 30 officers from desk jobs, allowing “unlimited” overtime, consolidating the 911 system, and creating alternate response programs.

\$10M has been invested in equipment, including purchasing 200 new vehicles;

### **2016 Budget Plan**

- 150 recruits for overall strength of 1,266 officers
- Aggressive overtime to flex size of department
- New License Plate Readers to help improve investigations (\$800K)
- New Police Academy
- 50 New Police cars
- \$140m in 2016 vs. \$130m in 2015

### **October Crime Stats**

Data shown for persons crimes for August (74) and September (62).

Maps showing what, where and when were shown for August and September - months that showed improvement.

### **FQ Crime Stats for 2014 vs. 2015**

Chart itemized type of offense, period Jan-June 2014 and period Jan-June 2015. Final column showed percentage of change - very impressive improvement

### **FQ Street Lights Update**

Bev Fulk reported on the current status of streetlights in the Quarter, saying it was the best she'd seen it since beginning her surveys in 2010. All categories (outages, damaged and missing) showed reduced problems since last assessment (May 2015), except missing lampposts. Cost of a new post is \$7,000. Comparison chart of Oct 2014 and Oct 2015 showed substantial improvement from one year ago. Optimistic that DPW will receive extra year-end funding from overage in another funding source.

	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>
Not Working	230	120
Damaged	19	9
Missing Posts	30	22
Missing Globes	9	15
	<b>288</b>	<b>166</b>

### **French Quarter Problem Blocks**

*700 block of Royal and Pirate's Alley area:* Mike Tilbury has been working with NOPD and Councilmember Nadine Ramsey to address the problems of vagrants, drunks and questionable “vendors” and “artists” creating an unwholesome atmosphere that starts on Thursday and builds through the weekend. Since that collaboration, the situation has quieted down somewhat. Mike also reports problems to QOL Officers and the Task Force via e-mail, and sometimes utilizes the app.

Mike told about a new twist on problem of vagrants purchasing alcohol at Rouses. They are not allowed inside to purchase alcohol; however, Rouses' employees are now buying it for them and handing it outside. Rouses' middle management have not been helpful – have given the response that they can't do anything in numerous discussions with residents. A letter was finally sent to the President of Rouses, which has brought

about some improvement. Officer Pierre said that some managers are working with her. Gail Cavett suggested that a Petition be drawn up, circulated and signed by Rouses' customers. Mike will work on that.

*100 block of Royal:* Many feel that the area around Unique Grocery is the worst block in the Quarter, especially on Fridays when paychecks are cashed there; drinking and harassing of pedestrians follows. Coleman Adler has hired security, and wants ATC (Alcohol Tobacco Controls) to place more restrictions on Unique's operations.

Note: The Mayor's 2016 Budget has allocated \$1.5M for a low-barrier shelter, proposing that the highway underpass area be walled in for that purpose. B.B. St. Roman wants to convince the Mayor that her vision, "Crescent City Village," is the better solution.

*800-1000 blocks of St. Louis:* Those blocks are zoned residential, except the corners. There are six bars between Bourbon and Burgundy, creating an incubator for prostitution and drugs. One bar manager told Jim Kitto, resident of that street, that he has never seen St. Louis this bad. Video shown of prostitution activity. Mike Roberts commented that ATC can pull a bar's license if they are promoting prostitution. St. Louis residents and businesses are extremely concerned over this problem, so Bob suggested to them that concerned residents and business owners should go onto ATC's website and file a complaint.

Jim asked Bob if NOPD still asks people sitting on house steps if they live there. Bob said yes, late night/early morning hours. However, NOPD officers need to be given reasons by the public why they should stop people. Jim stated he had found five used needles in his planter over the past six months, so feels its also a quality of life issue that the Task Force is thankfully addressing as well, although their original purpose was to deal with crime.

### **FQ Task Force – Permanent Shifts & Pay Tier**

Chart shown completely committed with names, days, times, etc., but officers are constantly getting pulled to cover an NOPD duty elsewhere. Other than that, attendance is at 95%. Another chart showed that over 7 months, 8400 calls have been responded to: ¼ came from app and ¼ from dispatch. The remaining 50% were self-initiated. The Polaris vehicles have driven over 30,000 miles in the Quarter; they will have to be replaced soon.

## **French Quarter Task Force in the News**

- French TV – filming completed; may not be a very positive report
- Huffington Post – airs end of Nov.
- N.O. Advocate – published
- Reel to Reel Productions – in the works
- NBC Nightly News – have been here twice, not sure about final form of presentation, perhaps part of a larger report but it will be positive

NBC reporter was also able to ride with an officer in Polaris, and serendipitously participated in an actual app call response. She interviewed Sidney, Bob, Bryan Drude and Chief Harrison. Next the reporter was taken to see the Mayor, who was pushed for time and NBC were 5 minutes late. Mayor Landrieu met with reporter, and confirmed that the Task Force is a success. Councilmember-at-Large Jason Williams has asked Bob if this model could work in other N.O. neighborhoods. Bob believes it could in a setting such as Magazine St., but not, for instance, in New Orleans East.

## **Extract from New Orleans Advocate Article**

(Entirety shown on screen.) They are able to obtain accurate information on Task Force calls, and wrote details of some, comparing 5 min response time for Task Force to 11 min response time for NOPD 8<sup>th</sup> District.

## **“Second Line for Safety” Fundraiser**

Bryan Drude, President of French Quarter Advocates, announced that the October 3rd event was a big success, raising \$5,000. Entire proceeds will be contributed to FQ Task Force. Photos of the event were shown.

## **FQ Task Force Additional Revenue Stream**

Bob talked about a group he’s working with that approached him about donating a percentage of their FQ sales to FQTF, in return for help promoting their product. The product is a hard-surface cleaning chemical that they believe out-performs other products. Antoine’s Restaurant has already used it in a pilot trial, reported it to be very good, and plan to purchase. The group plans to hold a lunch and information briefing for interested businesses in November.

Meeting adjourned.

**ATTENDEES:**

Members: Chairperson Bob Simms, Emily Remington, Bev Fulk, Mike Tilbury, Mike Roberts, Dwyre McComsey, Gail Cavett, Ann Kessler, Charles Davis

Guests: Bryan Drude, Jim Kitto, Officer Alicia Pierre, Brittany Mulla, Officer Robert Fuller, Sgt. Robert Hamilton,

**NEXT MEETING:** November 18, 2015 at 3 PM – Antoine's.

Notes compiled by Beverly Fulk and reviewed by Bob Simms.