

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Regular Meeting of Monday, July 10, 2017

**MINUTES**

(as approved at the Regular Meeting of September 11, 2017)

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| **Commissioners Present:** |  |  |
| Darryl Berger | Sue Klein | Kimberly Rosenberg |
| Steve Caputo | Nicholas Musso | David Speights |
| Jeremy DeBlieux | Jim Oliver | Robert Watters |
| Brian Furness (Arr. 2:20) |  |  |

Absent: Dennis Pearse, Christian Pendleton, Ted Young

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| **Committee Co-Chairs and Staff:** |  |  |
| Bob Simms, Security and Enforcement  Committee | Emily Remington, Executive Director | |
| Gail Cavett, Infrastructure Committee |  |  |

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| --- | --- |
| **Guests[[1]](#footnote-1) (Affiliation if listed)** |  |
| B. Mulla, French Quarter Business Association | Mary Hewes, VCC Foundation |
| Yvonne Beclet, Black and Blue | Mathew Schwarzman, Black and Blue |
| Beverly Fulk, FQMD Committees | Ellyn Davis, Louisiana Restaurant Association |
|  | Tony Marino, Black and Blue Project |
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# Call to Order, Roll Call, Introduction of Attendees

Chair Jim Oliver called the meeting to order at 2:00 pm. The roll was called and a quorum was present.

# Executive Session for consideration of matters related to the Executive Director

The Board voted unanimously (M1) to go into Executive Session to discuss matters related to the Executive Director. (Regular session resumed at approximately 2:35PM.)

\_\_\_. Change of Agenda

Commissioner Rosenberg’s motion (M2) to take up Agenda Item VI. “Presentation from ‘Black and Blue’ project” before Agenda Item III “Ratify motions of Executive Session” was approved unanimously.

VI. Presentation from “Black and Blue” project

Introduced by former FQMD Commissioner Tony Marino, “Black and Blue” Project Director Mathew Schwartzman presented a short video (link at Att. 2) and discussed the role of film and theater production in addressing crime, and in promoting a dialogue on race between the police and citizenry. The “Black and Blue” Project would build on this approach in New Orleans. The Project would hold a kickoff event at the Aché Cultural Center that would trace changes in police-community attitudes from the 1960s to the present.

The project, Mr. Schwartzman explained, was looking to the kickoff event to market the concept and stimulate sponsors and support for the $30,000 project. NOPD 8th District Sponsorship was priced at $1,000; tickets to the kick-off event were $10.

Chair Oliver said that information on the project would be distributed to the Commissioners.

# Ratify Motions of Executive Session

Chair Oliver recalled that the Board had not finished its consideration of changes to the FQMD Human Resources Policy and Procedures Manual (HRPPM). Commissioner Rosenberg noted further review of practices, especially in the Downtown Development District (DDD), and discussion in the Executive Session had resulted in agreement to put forward a motion on Personal Time Off (PTO) as follows:

... that the Employee Handbook be amended that henceforth (1) a full-time employee accrues 0.769 days of Personal Time Off (PTO) per pay period (20 days per calendar year): (2) an employee will be allowed to carryforward a maximum of five (5) days of unused PTO into the following year; and (3) a maximum of five (5) days of unused, accrued PTO will not be forfeited.

Commissioner Berger’s motion (M3) to adopt the amendment to the HRPPM was approved unanimously.

1. Chair Jim Oliver reminded members of the public wishing to address particular items to record their interest on the sign-up sheet.

The agenda (Att. 1) was noted.

# Approval of May Minutes

Commissioner Rosenberg’s Motion (M4) to approve the Minutes (Att. 3, as approved) of the May 1, 2017 regular meeting, amended as proposed by Commissioner Speights to insert “North” so that the name of the appointing organization read “North Rampart Street Main Street,” was approved unanimously.

1. Chairman’s Comments

Chair Jim Oliver commented as follows:

* *Update on the Status of the CEA (FQMD-City-Convention and Visitors Bureau Cooperative Endeavor Agreement)*. Chair Oliver reported that the CEA, incorporating the changes voted upon by the FQMD Board, was on the Mayor’s desk awaiting his signature. The only “blank” in the CEA was the baseline number of 8th District officers. He expressed the hope that the additional $100,000 would shortly become available to permit operations of the FQTF parking/traffic control program, which could not begin work until the money was received.
* *Sponsorship Possibility.* Chair Oliver noted the “Black and Blue” project sponsorship possibility, and that FQMD’s accrued funds could show an excess of about $40,000. He proposed to put the project sponsorship possibility on the September agenda, opining that FQMD should not be a source of funds to sustain activity but could consider project funding that is feasible to monitor.
* *NOTMC Funding Commitment.* Chair Oliver noted that the New Orleans Tourism and Marketing Corporation (NOTMC) had not yet re-committed to provide $75,000 per year. He expected that the NOTMC would indeed re-commit.
* *FQMD 2017 Officer Positions.* Chair Oliver noted that all current FQMD officers were term-limited and asked for expressions of interest. Candidates would be announced in September.
* *Commissioner Change.* Commissioner Dennis Pearse had taken a position with the Hotel Roosevelt outside the French Quarter and was thus ineligible to serve on the FQMD Board. The Greater New Orleans Hotel and Lodging Association (GNOHLA) had not yet appointed a replacement.
* *Guests.* Guests were introduced.

1. Executive Director’s Report

Executive Director Remington reported that:

* *Audit report*. The audit report (Louisiana Compliance Questionnaire for Audit Engagements of Governmental Agencies) has been completed. The recommendation that expenditures be categorized will be adopted.
* *Insurance*. ED Remington reported that she was examining options for coverages and prices and would provide quotes at the September meeting.
* *Bourbon Street Infrastructure*. ED Remington stated that she would continue to monitor the Bourbon Street work.
* *Traffic Study*. The City’s recently-released traffic study recommended against closure of Bourbon and Royal Streets.
* *DDD taxes*. ED Remington said that the City has not provided an accounting of income or expenditures relevant to the Louisiana State Trooper French Quarter patrol, but an unreleased report had been provided to Deputy Mayor Ryan Berni. She noted that the number of patrol troopers was down. Commissioner Klein stated that state troopers, funded by a French Quarter sales tax, were being dispatched citywide. Noted was the possibility that some were undercover, and that the Bourbon Street project had disrupted patrol schedules. Commissioner Watters noted difficulties in getting information and suggested contacting the State’s Secretary of Revenue might be productive. Chair Oliver instructed the ED to contact Councilmember Ramsey to enlist her help in obtaining a copy of the report provided to Deputy Mayor Berni.
* *Presentation*. Ms. Remington stated that she had made a presentation to the Greater New Orleans Hotel and Lodging Association.
* *Bike-Share Program*. Ms. Remington confirmed that the Bike-Share Program continued to be a “hot” topic.

1. Treasurer’s Reports: March, April, May, and June 2017

Treasurer DeBlieux reviewed the FQMD Operating Accounts and FQTF Accounts for March, April, May, and June 2017 (Att. 4–7, as approved), noting that balances were healthy and that there had been no extraordinary expenditures. He noted that legal expenses were included in the June report. He referred to the continuing problem that FQTF funding was received late, occasioning problems with required payments, and suggested that the GNOHLA be requested to intervene to avoid the lag. Chair Oliver noted that the Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB) could not remit funds until after they were collected from member hotels. It was suggested that FQMD provide a cushion, perhaps by delaying the start-up of the FQTF parking/traffic patrol service. Commissioner Rosenberg’s motion (M5) to approve the reports was approved unanimously.

1. Report by Co-Chair, Infrastructure Committee

Co-Chair Gail Cavett’s report (Att. 8) addressed:

* *Lighting Update*. The street lighting repair and replacement program was 75 percent complete.
* *Decatur Street Sidewalk Repair*. Sidewalk repair and replacement continued satisfactorily.
* *Hop-on/Hop-off Bus Permit*. A permit having been issued despite united stakeholder opposition, the merchants in the Jax Brewery location continued to experience problems. Co-Chair Cavett stated that RTA would be contacted, and a Public Records Request filed to obtain relevant documents. Chair Oliver suggested that the FQTF parking/traffic patrol be alerted to focus on the issue.
* *Bike-Share Program Update*. The FQMD recommendations were put forward at the April 11 meeting; however, acceptance seemed unlikely. The City’s online public opinion survey was deeply flawed (e.g., the survey would not accept a “no” — only positive comments could be entered).

Ms. Cavett reported that Vieux Carré Commission (VCC) advertising bans would be circumvented. Commissioner Musso (VCC Executive Director) stated that the VCC had complained; had pointed to problems, especially with the proposed bike corrals; and had recommended reduced capacity. However, he pointed out that streets and sidewalks were legally outside of VCC jurisdiction, and that a VCC decision based on the “tout ensemble” provision could be challenged in court.

Ms. Cavett observed that time constraints complicated a public awareness campaign. District C Councilmember Ramsey’s position was not known.

* *Bourbon Street Infrastructure Project.* Ms. Cavett stated that the work was 20 days behind schedule, traffic was difficult, and the section staging was contrary to promises.
* *French Quarter Traffic Survey.* The City’s initial presentation had taken account of previous, less-comprehensive studies. A bollard system was proposed to control Bourbon cross streets but could not accommodate the 35-foot trucks necessary to service Bourbon Street businesses. Commissioner Musso noted an increase in truck-caused damage to balcony and balcony-supports. Commissioner Rosenberg suggested contacting liquor distributors (e.g., Crescent Crown); she also suggested additional publicity that would alert hotel guests and visitors that Bourbon Street businesses remained open.

1. Report by Co-Chairs, Security and Enforcement Committee

Co-Chair Bob Simms’ report (Att. 9) addressed:

* *FQTF operations*. Mr. Simms stated that progress was being made on finalizing the FQTF Phase 3, and that the process to take possession of the vehicle donated by French Quarter Advocates may finally be complete. The increase in FQTF operating expenses, when the additional daytime officer is added, could be offset by a reduction in the previously proposed G4S administrative costs that could result in a savings of $125,000 per year that could be used to support additional services. His report included a revised draft budget. Treasurer DeBlieux requested a consultation on the budget savings.
* *Crime and Statistics*. After reviewing recent statistics, Mr. Simms reported that there are nine police entities working in the French Quarter and often there is a lack of coordination. He noted as well that the NOPD continues to have staffing difficulties for vehicle patrols. Crime, he opined, is being displaced from Bourbon Street due to the increased NOPD presence on Bourbon Street and the construction.
* *FQTF*. Mr. Simms summarized FQTF May and June statistics, which now include App call locations. The 800–1000 blocks of St. Louis Street remain a particular problem.
* *Consent Decree*. Mr. Simms stated that the U.S. Department of Justice-NOPD Consent Decree provokes low NOPD morale, but changes are politically unlikely.

1. New Business

Commissioner Musso reported that the VCC was studying use of rooftops. The VCC is very restrictive, the DDD is less so. The VCC’s concerns include visual privacy and density, especially with the French Quarter’s smaller buildings. The subject, he reported, will be on the VCC’s September agenda.

1. Future Meetings: September 11, 2017
2. Adjournment

Adjournment (M6) was approved by acclamation at 4:20 pm.

Respectfully submitted

Brian R. Furness

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Brian R. Furness, Secretary

(facsimile signature – original in Secretary Meeting File)

Annex 1: Motions approved at the Meeting of July 10, 2017

Annex 2: List of Attachments

**ANNEX 1: Motions[[2]](#footnote-2) – Meeting of July 10, 2017**

1. *Executive Session (Agenda II.).* Kim Rosenberg: “... that the Board go into Executive Session to discuss legal issues.” Second: Musso. Approved unanimously.
2. *Agenda Change (Agenda III).* Kim Rosenberg: “... that Agenda Item VI “Black and Blue Project Presentation” be taken before Agenda Item III “Executive Session” actions). Second: DeBlieux. Approved unanimously.
3. *Employee Handbook Changes (Agenda III).* From issues discussed in Executive Session. Darryl Berger: “... that the Employee Handbook be amended that henceforth (1) a full-time employee accrues 0.769 days of Personal Time Off (PTO) per pay period (20 days per calendar year): (2) an employee will be allowed to carryforward a maximum of five (5) days of unused PTO into the following year; and (3) a maximum of five (5) days of unused, accrued PTO will not be forfeited.” Second: Speights. Approved unanimously.
4. *May 1 Minutes.* Kim Rosenberg: “... that the Minutes for the May 1, 2017 Regular Meeting as amended by inserting “North” before “Rampart Street Main Street” be approved.” Second: Musso. Approved unanimously.
5. *Treasurer’s Reports (Agenda IX):* Kim Rosenberg: “... that the Treasurer’s Reports for March, April, May, and June 2017 be approved.” Second: Speights. Approved unanimously.
6. *Adjournment (Agenda XIV).* Kim Rosenberg: “... that the meeting be adjourned.” Second: Speights. Approved by acclamation.

**ANNEX 2: Attachments – Meeting of July 10, 2017**

1. Agenda — Meeting of July 10, 2017
2. Black and Blue World Premiere Kickstarter Campaign video (link: [*Black and Blue World Premiere Kickstarter Campaign*](https://www.kickstarter.com/projects/436045959/black-and-blue-the-yvonne-bechet-story?ref=creator_nav))
3. Minutes (as amended) — Regular Meeting of May 1, 2017
4. Treasurer’s Report-March, 2017: Operating Account/FQTF Account
5. Treasurer’s Report-April, 2017: Operating Account/FQTF Account
6. Treasurer’s Report-May, 2017: Operating Account/FQTF Account
7. Treasurer’s Report-June, 2017: Operating Account/FQTF Account
8. Infrastructure Committee Report for the July 10, 2017 Meeting
9. Security and Enforcement Committee Report for the July 10, 2017 Meeting

1. From sign-in sheets. Spelling is not guaranteed. Undecipherable names not included. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. “Approved unanimously” means the Motion was approved by all Commissioners present. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)