

Monday, January 7, 2019

4pm - 5 pm

FQMD Office, 400 North Peters, Suite 206, New Orleans

**Finance and Development Committee Meeting Agenda & Meeting Notes**

*(Notes are contained in the text boxes)*

Commissioner Members: Matthew Emory, Jim Oliver, Heidi Raines, David Speights, Robert Watters

FQMD Staff: Emily Remington

1. Call to Order and Introduction of Attendees

The meeting was called to order at 4:06pm. Raines moved to go out of order on the agenda to welcome Faubert and Silverman, representatives from Ericksen, Krentel, and LaPorte, the firm that serves as FQMD’s auditor. Attendees discussed briefly the outcomes of previous audits and the timeline for the current year’s audit. Raines stated that Remington will begin producing additional monthly reports; Raines also discussed a potential third party controller hired via contract this year. Members discussed who a good fit might be.

Raines asked what FQMD needs to focus on this year during the audit. Silverman stated the feasibility for an outside person to do more in depth reporting was a good step in providing stronger checks and balances and financial accountability, allowing the Treasurer to move into a reviewer role versus preparing financials. Silverman noted the organization’s relative simplicity and lack of formality in its accounting practices, and lack of accounting software. While the practices were not formalized or structured, they were also not deficient; he also observed the difficulty of a one-staff person managing all of the administrative and financial tasks of an organization. Silverman opined that as FQMD’s needs grow, in-depth analysis will also be needed. A third party controller can provide general bookkeeping, but, most importantly proactive financial management and accurate program expense allocation. Raines informed the auditors that FQMD would resume using QuickBooks. Faubert agreed that this will help the third party controller so that the Board can provide more oversight rather than be part of the control structure.

Emory discussed potential new projects for FQMD and asked how FQMD best plan for the bookkeeper/monitor. Watters suggested a bookkeeper on a contract basis due to FQMD funding. Remington stated her belief that the time necessary would be about 20 hours/month. Emory asked auditors for input on hourly rate; Silverman and Raines agreed that the range could be $40-80 depending on the task. General bookkeeping would be approximately $40 per hour. Members discussed how many hours each month might be required and what his/her scope of work could be. Simms noted that much of the FQTF expenses are put on his personal credit card, which is an unsustainable practice.

Silverman suggested a person come in half a day once a week so that eventually Remington becomes part of the monitoring and another control agent. Raines stated her desire for the person to provide forecasts. Members discussed the annual reporting requirements, including the Louisiana Legislative Auditor. Watters questioned whether the Senate Finance Committee also required reporting; Faubert made note to determine such.

1. Approval of November 29, 2019 Finance Committee Meeting Notes, including the Finance Committee’s Mission Statement

Emory moved approval of the November 2018 notes. Watters seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

C. Ongoing Business

1. Review the draft of the **FQMD Financial Feasibility Request Form**

* FQMD's Finance and Development Committee will reviewed the financial feasibility of all projects requiring funding and resources from the French Quarter Management District (FQMD) and French Quarter Task Force (FQTF) and will present the financial analysis and finding to the full FQMD Board of Commissioners final review.

1. Research Request

* Determine point person to evaluate the FQTF CEA for use of funds and ability to allocate expenses to the program
* State bid requirements

Attendees reviewed the draft of the FQMD Financial Feasibility Request Form, which is intended for online use and will be used by the Committee to discuss the feasibility of requests. Emory provided background to the auditors about the purpose of the form; Raines noted that it will be internal control for determining the feasibility of proposed project and determining outcomes before a program or project is launched. Emory recommended a change to include internal FQMD request. Raines submitted proposed changes to Remington in writing.

Faubert discussed the limits of bids and proposal on services and materials. Raines asked if the auditors could be involved in the FQMD’s public bid process; they said they can a resource for determining guidelines. Faubert referenced a “Frequently Asked Questions” page on the Legislative Auditors web site. He will send a link to Emily and Emily will send to the committee. Faubert suggested that FQMD is a political subdivision and exempt from public bid law. Watters stated that the FQMD has always acted out of an abundance of caution when soliciting for bids and provided examples of such.

Raines asked that the January Board agenda include adoption of this funding request form. Silverman suggested that these requests have a ceiling. He stated that the form was a positive step forward in documentation and financial accountability for the FQMD. Raines and Emory discussed how this could streamline efforts at the Board level.

Watters suggested Rosenberg be asked to serve on the Committee given her expertise on bid law.

Raines asked about what the 3% administrative fee covered; members discussed allocations and effort expended. Raines discussed the need for FQMD to determine an overhead percentage that can be applied to each project proposal and the need for expenses to be allocated to applicable projects/programs.

D. Pending Financial Feasibility Reviews

1. Security Assessment

* Update from Matthew Emory, Chair of the Security Committee
* Update from Emily Remington and Jim Oliver regarding informing New Orleans & Company and the hotel association about the 3rd party evaluation
* Submittal of FQMD Financial Feasibility Request Form

Emory provided updates on the proposed security assessment. He stated that FQMD has secured two proposals. He stated that he intended to modify some of the scope and deliverables and stated that the Mayor, CM Palmer, and NOPD all support the initiative. Emory said that he will complete the online funding request form to move the initiative through the Finance Committee. Albin Guillot and Emory will put together a statement of work to circulate to members of the Security and Enforcement Committee and then the FQMD board.

Raines asked if funding for the proposed security assessment would come from the French Quarter Task Force. Members discussed the language in the CEA allowing for “monitoring of the Supplemental Police Force Program.” Simms does not think that the CEA allows for payment of the security assessment. Other members interpret the CEA language to allow for the security assessment monitoring of the program. Members disagreed about whether the existing CEA allows for the redistribution of excess funds, as carryover funding exists. Follow-up action is to examine the CEA to determine exact language and how this project fits into the scope and discuss at next committee meeting.

2. Sobering Center Support

* Update from Matthew Emory, Chair of Security Committee
* Submit form with agreement terms/deliverables + develop a CEA with the Sobering Center
* Inform New Orleans & Company

Emory provided updates on the sobering center. He opined that the Mayor’s “fair share” campaign has cooled off support of the sobering center by New Orleans & Company and GNOHLA. Raines noted that this particular initiative will be paused by this Committee. Simms offered additional background on the sobering center program, which the Committee opted to table for now. Emory will submit a request for review if/when the project requires financial support from the FQMD. Initiative will be removed from Finance Committee’s docket.

* Remington stated that the French Quarter Museum Association will present a final proposal to the January Board meeting and that this proposal will be circulated to Commissioners in the Board packet. Committee members suggested that the FQMA use the request for funding form.
* Update from Emily Remington on proposal from organization

Remington stated that the French Quarter Museum Association will present a final proposal to the January Board meeting and that this proposal will be circulated to Commissioners in the Board packet. Committee members suggested that a representative within FQMD champion this initiative and submit the request for funding form. It was unclear who within FQMD would champion this initiative. A follow-up action is to determine the FQMD point person, then this person will complete the form for the committee to review.

Raines stressed that more information is needed to determine the cost of this initiative, which Remington stated FQMA will provide at the FQMD Board Meeting. The goal is for FQMD to support the initiative while covering all costs. Raines also stated that prior to approval, FQMD and FQMA will need to draft a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) outlining the terms of the agreement.

E. Executive Director Report & Update

1. Review & Feedback of ED’s Proposed 2019 Strategic Plan

Remington, Emory, and Raines met after the meeting to Remington’s draft. Discussed the need to add FQMD’s accomplishments. Discussed adding data points, actions and results for FQMD, FQMD Programs and Executive Director. Raines asked Remington to review FQMD board meeting minutes, committee meeting notes and compile 2018 actions and outcomes. Raines asked Remington to meet talk with each committee chair and draft FQMD organizational goals for 2019.

2. Schedule 2018 End of Year Financial Review & Close

Discussed publishing the audit online.

3. Update on the status of pending meeting with accountants + auditors

Auditors attended this meeting.

4. Timeline for implementing financial software (QuickBooks) & cost

Remington to research and report back. Remington will also look into training for QuickBooks.

5. ED creation of scope of work for the vendor & timeline for obtaining bids for 3rd party controller contractor

Remington to create scope of work for committee. Raines and Faubert are both familiar with a person who is the outsourced controller for several non-profits. Commissioners approved Remington and Raines vetting recommended vendors and reporting back information to the committee.

6. Request from November 2018 meeting: Remington to send all Board Commissioners the dates & times for Commissioner Committees, so they may have the opportunity to attend committee meetings

Remington stated that the calendar on the FQMD website is up-to-date with times and dates of meetings.