

## Notes Government Affairs Committee Meeting

Wednesday, 12 August 2020  
2:10 to 3:40pm

**Via Teleconference:**

<https://meetings.ringcentral.com/j/2047589217>

**Meeting ID:**

204 758 9217

**Video:**

<https://meetings.ringcentral.com/personallink.html>

**Audio:**

+1 (469) 445 0100

I. CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order at 2:10 pm and the agenda was read into the record.

ROLL CALL:

Committee Members			
First Name	Last Name	Present	Absent
David	Bilbe	x	
Sherry	Cannon	x	
Jane	Cooper	x	
Jeremy	DeBlieux	x	
Brian	Furness		X
Juliet	Laughlin		x
Brittany	McGovern	x	
Christian	Pendleton	x	
Kim	Rosenberg	x	
Frank	Zumbo	x	

INTRODUCTION OF ATTENDEES:

Guests		
First Name	Last Name	Role
Karley	Frankic	Executive Director
Sue	Klein	Commissioner
Erin	Holmes	VCPOA
Kristin	Palmer	Cm District C
Chris	Young	FQBL
Andrew	Sullivan	District C Staff
Adreinne	Thomas	Business
Eric	Smith	City CAO
Heidi	Raines	Commissioner
Danielle	Leger	LRA
Gail	Cavett	Commissioner

- I. Public Comment: Anyone who wishes to comment on actionable items must announce their name for the recording and indicate the item(s) on which s/he wishes to comment.
- II. Update on District "C" by City Councilmember Kristin Gisleson Palmer

Councilmember Palmer thanked the committee for all of their work on the French Quarter Economic Development District (FQ EDD) renewal. It is apparent that FQMD has done a lot of work around consensus building around certain issues and she appreciates that and the Administration is hearing that very loudly. And we are going to have to come together around these issues to make it work. She also thanked Ms. Frankic for the amount of work she has been doing in terms with conversations for homeland Security and the different departments as well as Cm. Palmer's team. The conversation is going in the right direction and we are going in the right direction to spend this money wisely. And holding the use of this money accountable to the people that are taxing themselves.

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Mr. DeBlieux said that he believes we have a consensus around a couple of issues. 1. To maximize the number of post certified officers to patrol the French Quarter. 2. The continuation of what the FQMD's Supplemental Police Patrol Program (SPPP) has done with full transparency. And 3. That FQMD should have the responsibility of administrating all finances in regard to the FQ EDD Trust Fund. We hope that we can rely on the Cm. Palmer's support as we have support from the appointing entities. This is one of the few times he has see all of the organizations of the French Quarter come together on an issue. The issue is that if the FQ EDD sales tax is renewed it has to come to the FQMD.

Cm. Palmer agreed with Mr. DeBlieux's synopsis that we have never seen all of the groups come together like this since we found that we needed to create FQMD. In terms of having a group that is purely focused on the needs of the French Quarter. Because everything that happens in the Quarter has to be managed with a laser focus. She said that we have to roll up our sleeves and to get the Cooperative Endeavor Agreement (CEA) language the way in needs to read to so that it reflects what it is the community desires and we move it forward with accountability.

That said she is going to request that FQMD work with her to get the money from the DDD and that there should be a CEA on the money that is collected from the District C side of the street and it should go to the 100 blocks. She thinks that what FQMD feels from the Administration about having money going to a benefits corporation is that they feel there has to be greater accountability on the other end. The other end of the spectrum is are we getting the money from the DDD that we need for the French Quarter. She does not think that we are. We need to bring those services under central command as well. That central command is the SPPP. She doesn't think that DDD can respond as well. So she hopes that we can do both simultaneously over the next couple of months.

Mr. DeBlieux said that we all know that history has taught us that some cases a CEA isn't worth the paper it is written on. So therefore, can Cm. Palmer assist us in having a resolution and ballot language that specifies that funding comes to FQMD? Cm. Palmer answered yes. She says that knowing that the ballot language was noticed as a renewal so it can't be changed. We must have a resolution that accompanies this that clearly lays out how we want this to look and the levels of accountability. Mr. DeBlieux said that we all appreciate Cm. Palmers support in this matter. Cm. Palmer said that the effort had to be led by the stakeholders and FQMD had to create a coalition and consensus about what the Quarter wants. FQMD has done that and that is why she is so supportive of FQMD's efforts moving forward.

Ms. Rosenberg asked what the ballot language says now? Ms. Frankic shared the ballot language with the teleconference. Ms. Rosenberg said she is concerned about the ballot language that controls, not the resolution. It is the ballot language that will be voted on, so it needs to say the details. We cannot trust the City to give the money to FQMD to run the SPPP. We need to make sure we know what the money is going to be used for such as Armstrong Park would dilute the money for the French Quarter. Armstrong Park is the property of the City and the City should be responsible for patrolling it and not FQMD. They can use their FMC money for that. The way the map and the ballot language is Armstrong is located within the boundaries of the FQ EDD. It is wise that FQMD has been working with Homeland Security to figure out ways to maximize patrols and our constitutionally trained police are on the ground patrolling and allowing Grounds Patrol to do that kind of work. FQMD and the City are moving well together in that direction.

Ms. Frankic confirmed that FQ EDD boundaries align with the FQMD boundaries. She stated that the City currently has about \$300,000 in the general operating budget that pays for private security within Armstrong Park. We need to assure that remains in place and the City does not offset that obligation with FQ EDD revenues.

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Mr. DeBlieux asked if Cm. palmer or Mr. Sullivan could walk through what the deadlines are for the FQ EDD ballot language. Cm. Palmer said that her office is working through the issues and she will get that back to FQMD in a more formalized way. Mr. Sullivan said that the FQ EDD Governing Authority (City Council) will meet on next Thursday morning to approve the resolutions. They only get approved at the City Council. The public notice will go out 24 hours prior. Cm. Palmer noted that they were in conversations with the lawyer this morning and they need to figure out how to do this. Cm. Palmer said that she is disappointed about the ballot language because FQMD has been at the table negotiating in good faith.

Mr. Pendleton thanked Andrew Sullivan for all of his work with FQMD. He asked that in the last six months the City has put forward a lot of thoughts bout ways to reimagine the French Quarter. But it seems that FQMD gets brought into the back end of it. Is there a way that we could be more on the front end of it since we represent all the stakeholders in the French Quarter? Instead of getting quasi-final plans to respond to it would be better if FQMD could help put forward plans that everyone can agree on.

Mr. DeBlieux asked if Cm. palmer or Mr. Sullivan could walk through what the deadlines are for the FQ EDD ballot language. Cm. Palmer said that her office is working through the issues and she will get that back to FQMD in a more formalized way. Mr. Sullivan said that the FQ EDD Governing Authority (City Council) will meet on next Thursday morning to approve the resolutions. They only get approved at the City Council. The public notice will go out 24 hours prior. Cm. Palmer noted that they were in conversations with the lawyer this morning and they need to figure out how to do this. Cm. Palmer said that she is disappointed about the ballot language because FQMD has been at the table negotiating in good faith.

Cm. Palmer agreed with Mr. Pendleton which is why when the Administration first rolled this out they create an external tiger team that had the representation of the FQMD on it. Ms. Frankic has been sitting on these weekly calls for a couple of months. Cm. Palmer's understanding is that the Administration has hired a design company out of the Netherlands that is putting out different concepts that can then be worked from. She thinks that reality is that it is easier to respond to something than to create something out of nothing. Once those are done, they will come back to you. That said Cm. Palmer believes that more participation is needed so her office is holding separate meetings with the residents and businesses so we can get a more robust input into what is going on. She does think it is important that there were some missteps at the beginning in what the definition of what pedestrianization is. She wants to be clear that when she looks at it. We can only have it if two things exist: 1. Residents need to be able to drive and park in the Quarter and 2. Businesses have to be able to have specific delivery times. Businesses must be at the table because you have specific needs that need to be met. If these two things cannot be met we really cannot have discussions about pedestrianization and she has made those things clear. She is hoping that when some of those things come back FQMD has to be at the table or else none of these things are going to work. She hears this loud and clear.

### III. Discussion of the French Quarter Economic Development District sales tax referendum

Mr. DeBlieux said that it is great new to have the councilmember's support. He noted that he will be out of town next week so he asked if Mr. Pendleton could be available to meet with Cm. Palmer in his absence? Mr. Pendleton said he is available to do whatever it takes to get this over the finish line.

Ms. Rosenberg asked if everything can be circulated so that FQMD has the benefit of the comments from committee members prior to any meetings. Mr. DeBlieux said that he would circulate anything that we get in a manner that does not violate any open meeting laws. If we circulate anything to this committee please respond to

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the sender only do not reply all. Ms. Rosenberg said the proposed ballot language could also be posted on the website and ask for direct feedback. Ms. Frankic clarified that at this point FQMD has not received any new ballot language. The language is that from the 2015 referendum because it is a renewal. Any changes will come in the form of a resolution so we will be working down to the wire to get this done. She can put the 2015 ballot language of the website.

Mr. DeBlieux said that the most important thing here is that when we tie up as many details as we can in ballot language and resolution and not rely on a CEA to carry forward what we want. Ms. Rosenberg recommended talking with the Bond Commission lawyer to find out if this is considered as a renewal. Ms. Klein confirmed that it is a renewal.

Ms. Klein said asked when would be the next time the public could vote on it? Ms. Frankic said that would be the spring ballot. Ms. Rosenberg said that is better to get it right than to have the money going for something we don't want. Ms. Frankic said that it is important to keep in mind the timeline for when FQMD SPPP runs out of money.

Ms. Rosenberg asked if FQMD should start a GoFundMe page so that the public can contribute especially if we have to go to a spring election date. Ms. Frankic noted that FQMD already has a donate option on the website.

#### IV. New Business

No new business was discussed.

#### V. Next Meeting Date

The next meeting will be on Wednesday, September 23<sup>rd</sup>.

#### VI. Adjournment

Ms. Cooper moved to adjourn the meeting, and Ms. Rosenberg seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 2:39.