



## Board of Commissioners Meeting Minutes

Monday 23 October 2023

5:30 pm

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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

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**Commissioners Present:** Heidi Raines, Mamie Gasperez, Steve Caputo, Frank Zumbo, Glade Bilby, Christine Bondio, Sue Klein, Robert Simms, Christian Pendleton, David Bilbe

**Commissioners Absent:** Jane Cooper, Alex Fein, Mathew Emory

**Executive Director:** Karley Frankic

**Coordinator:** Shelby Ursu

**Guests:** Erin Holmes, Antonio Carbone, Maddie Charleston, Frances Hegenberger, Andrew Wilson, Cpt. LeJon Roberts, Jessica Dietz, Andrew Monteverde, John O'Brien, Charles Toney, Tatiana Jurzak, Chris Young, Stephen Mosgrove, Frank Scurlock

- I. **CALL TO ORDER: ROLL CALL: INTRODUCTION OF ATTENDEES** – Chair Ms. Raines called the French Quarter Management District (FQMD) October 23rd, 2023 special meeting to order at 5:35 pm. Ms. Frankic read the agenda as noticed and Ms. Klein called the roll.
- II. **PRESENTATION** – Board of Commissioners to provide information and solicit public input on public safety and quality-of-life programming, funded by a one-time 1.5-million-dollar appropriation from the State of Louisiana.  
Ms. Frankic discussed the purpose and history of the FQMD to the attendees, stating that the FQMD is a state political subdivision created by the Louisiana Legislature as a means for the residential and business communities to work together to protect, preserve, and maintain the world-famous French Quarter as a safe, clean, vibrant, and friendly neighborhood for residents, businesses, and visitors. She stated that the statutory purpose of the FQMD is to strengthen the District as a vital component of Louisiana's tourism industry; aid in the preservation of the District's architecture, quaint charm, and tout ensemble; beautify the District's appearance; improve public safety, foster quality experiences and quality of life within the District; and improve commercial and residential vitality, adding that the statutory functions of the FQMD include strategic planning, business and commercial development activities, and administering capital improvement funds. Ms. Frankic informed the guests that the purpose of the Board of Commissioners of the FQMD calling this special meeting is to provide information and solicit public input on public safety and quality-of-life programming, funded by a one-time appropriation from the State of Louisiana. Ms. Raines stated that the FQMD Board of Commissioners is a diverse group that comprises of business owners and residents and thanked everyone for their attendance. The Board of Commissioners and FQMD staff introduced themselves to the attendees.
- III. **PUBLIC COMMENT:** The Public Comment Policy can be found at

<https://www.fqmd.org/publiccomment-policy>. Written public comment may be submitted electronically via email to [publiccomments@fqmd.org](mailto:publiccomments@fqmd.org).

The Board of Commissioners proceeded to take public comment.

- Antonio Carbone, a member of the FQMD Livability Committee and resident of the French Quarter spoke first. Mr. Carbone addressed the safety and infrastructure concerns regarding North Rampart Street, stating that he has witnessed accidents involving pedestrians, cars, and vehicles on numerous occasions. Mr. Carbone pointed out that with multiple new restaurants and businesses opening up on North Rampart Street, foot traffic is dramatically increasing, and he believes that a portion of the State funding should be put towards infrastructural enhancements to take the proper steps to protect pedestrians and cyclists. Mr. Carbone reported that the results of the Vieux Carre Property Owners, Residents, and Associates' (VCPORA) recently conducted safety survey showed public support regarding the addition of curb extensions along North Rampart Street, as well as improved signage to create high-visibility crosswalks, and the re-installation of a stoplight at St. Ann and North Rampart Street. Mr. Carbone noted that if the FQMD puts funding towards these infrastructure improvements, the funds should be matched by the Department of Public Works (DPW), adding that by allocating State funding towards these enhancements, the FQMD can help to speed up the timeline and expand the scope of these improvements to create a lasting impact on the French Quarter.
- Andrew Monteverde introduced himself to the Board of Commissioners and addressed his concern regarding the lack of Parking Enforcement in the French Quarter. Mr. Monteverde stated that he is speaking on behalf of the New Orleans Firefighters Association Local 632 and is a Captain of the New Orleans Fire Department, as well as a property owner and resident of the French Quarter. Mr. Monteverde stated that there are serious and dire consequences for residents, visitors, and emergency responders with the lack of Parking Enforcement in the French Quarter, pointing out that street corners are constantly blocked by vehicles that are illegally parked, making it impossible for firefighters or other emergency responder vehicles to get through. Mr. Monteverde added that fire hydrants are regularly blocked at peak times, as well as fire engines. He informed the Board of multiple occasions where Towing Enforcement was either nonresponsive or neglected to tow vehicles altogether. Mr. Monteverde stated that he would like to see this State appropriation funding go towards hiring Parking Enforcement employees- specifically for the Towing Unit.
- Erin Holmes, VCPORA Executive Director, and Vice-Chair of the FQMD Livability Committee, introduced herself to the Board of Commissioners. Ms. Holmes seconded Mr. Carbone's request to use the State appropriation funding to improve the infrastructure of North Rampart Street. Ms. Holmes stated that the 2023 safety and infrastructure survey conducted by VCPORA was done in conjunction with the FQMD's Livability Committee and reported that the survey received over 300 responses from 30 different neighborhoods- a majority of which were French Quarter residents, business owners, workers, and commuters. She noted that, based on the responses received, the majority of people do not feel safe walking or biking on North Rampart Street. Ms. Holmes stated that she would like to see a portion of the State allocated funding be put towards curb extensions, improved signage for higher visibility crosswalks, and a stoplight at St. Ann and North Rampart Street. Regarding St. Ann Street, Ms. Holmes noted that this location is not only the entrance to Armstrong Park, but a streetcar stop as well as a bus stop on both sides of the street, pointing out that this location is in great need of safety improvements. She added that she believes this funding needs to be matched with City funds from the DPW. She reiterated Mr. Carbone's point that the economy is continuing to bounce back, and new businesses are constantly opening up along North Rampart Street, stressing that long-term and permanent solutions for everyone's safety must be taken into consideration.
- John O'Brien introduced himself and stated that he has been an insurance broker in the French Quarter since 1990. Mr. O'Brien said that this summer has been one of the toughest summers for his clients in the tourism industry, pointing out that numbers have been at an all-time low for hotel occupancy rates, with New Orleans having the lowest occupancy rate in the State four months in a row. He stressed the importance of tourism for the French Quarter and the City. Mr. O'Brien stated that he would like State

funding to be allocated towards supporting the municipal codes for ending the illegal vending throughout the French Quarter neighborhood, pointing out that the illegal vending hurts the revenue dollars coming into the City. He added that he would like to see the State funding also allocated towards compliance audits for liquor permits, stating that there is a lack of an organized strategy regarding alcohol vendors throughout the City. Mr. O'Brien requested that funding should also go towards enhancing law enforcement in the French Quarter. He stated that New Orleans is currently in a declining state and stressed the importance of improving the tourism industry and the overall vitality of the City.

Ms. Frankic read the public comments into the record.

- Written public comment number one:

From: **Jonathan Dolese** <[jdolese@gmail.com](mailto:jdolese@gmail.com)>

Date: Fri, Oct 20, 2023 at 9:58 AM

Subject: Rampart Safety

To: <[publiccomments@fqmd.org](mailto:publiccomments@fqmd.org)>

Dear Commissioners,

My family and I are French Quarter homeowners and full-time residents. As someone who commutes to work daily via Rampart, I would like to take a moment to ask for your consideration of funding for agenda item #2. I believe adding curb extensions would go a long way to help aid in both vehicular and pedestrian safety. Too many people park illegally at the end of the block, giving almost no visibility to those, like me, who have to enter Rampart from the French Quarter. We do not have the enforcement needed to move these vehicles quickly, so a permanent deterrent is warranted.

I am also in support of clearer signage at the Toulouse and Rampart intersection to prevent illegal left turns, which happen every single time I am at the intersection.

This street is a meeting place for residents and tourists who take advantage of the shopping and restaurants along the street. Pedestrian and vehicular safety should be a priority.

Sincerely,

Jonathan Dolese  
939 Orleans Ave  
New Orleans, LA 70116

Per your requirements for public comment, I am not being financially compensated for this comment.

- Written public comment number two:

From: **jborne1@cox.net** <[jborne1@cox.net](mailto:jborne1@cox.net)>

Date: Fri, Oct 20, 2023 at 9:18 AM

Subject: Agenda Item #2 - Special Board of Commissioners meeting for allotment of \$1.5million state appropriation

To: [publiccomments@fqmd.org](mailto:publiccomments@fqmd.org) <[publiccomments@fqmd.org](mailto:publiccomments@fqmd.org)>

Commissioners,

As a homeowner and full time resident of the French Quarter, I am writing to request that needed funds be allotted to implement the proposed permanent infrastructure improvements on N. Rampart St for the purpose of the safety of residents & visitors. Specifically, Signage at intersection of Rampart & Toulouse, curb extensions, bike lane protection, stoplight on St Ann, & High visibility crosswalks. These improvements are a much needed first step in making our neighborhood more welcoming and safe for all who enjoy the beauty of a truly unique neighborhood.

I also strongly request funding be allotted for enforcement of existing sound ordinances/laws as this is of utmost importance in ensuring survival of a neighborhood where residents (and visitors) can enjoy the right to peaceful existence in ones home & neighborhood without the detrimental physical and mental health effects of what has become excessive & hostile noise pollution in the French Quarter neighborhood. Specifically, Vehicles cruising through the neighborhood blasting noise/music so loud that historic homes/buildings actually shake and vibrate not to mention the mental and physical damage to pedestrians and people inside homes and businesses. This is a significant quality of life issue and needed funding should be allotted to rectifying this issue including enforcement of existing ordinances.

Thank you for addressing the above and ensuring allotment of needed funds to make what are necessary investments in ensuring the French Quarter survives as a viable neighborhood for residents to live as well as a welcoming place for visitors.

As per rules of submissions: I receive no payment in connection with the above comments.

Respectfully,  
Jessica A Borne  
906 Toulouse St  
New Orleans, LA 70112

- Written public comment number three:

From: **Terry A. DuFrene** <[tadufrene@gmail.com](mailto:tadufrene@gmail.com)>  
Date: Sat, Oct 21, 2023 at 10:45 AM  
Subject: FQMD  
To: <[publiccomments@fqmd.org](mailto:publiccomments@fqmd.org)>

Please support the plan to use the \$1.5 million for North Rampart public safety improvements.

- Written public comment number four:

From: **Chad Pellerin** <[chadpellerin69@gmail.com](mailto:chadpellerin69@gmail.com)>  
Date: Mon, Oct 23, 2023 at 2:45 PM  
Subject: Public comments to FQMD: Oct special meeting on Safety issues in the...  
To: Karley Frankic <[kfrankic@fqmd.org](mailto:kfrankic@fqmd.org)>

Public comments to FQMD: Oct special meeting on Safety issues in the French Quarter

SUGGESTED SAFETY CONCERNS 10/23,2023

From resident Marguerite Chad Pellerin  
819 Orleans Ave NOLA 70116  
I am responding in my own name and not paid by anyone

To FQMD :

1) I suggest for enforcing some temporary relief from excessive noise until a noise ordinance is passed  
Require establishments providing entertainment to protect their employees under OSHA guidelines of decibels standards in certain 15 minute interval decibels under 80 D's within 1 hour intervals. Some invasive base amplification beyond OSHA guidelines to employees inflicts long term hearing loss, even with wearing ear plugs. In the last few years the city required no smoking within public and entertainment venues to protect musicians and employees and customers from smoking The same should be done to protect excessive noise from entertainers and employees in such venues as well. If base amplification can be heard blocks away from passing automobiles and go through block walks to over 150 yards away, it surely must affect employees and customers and entertainers inside., not to mention near by building and other establishments. This has no requirement having to instill "ambient" noise This should be required inside a building. One suggestion is to require a zoning provision that where entertainment permits are required, a sound device inside should require sound decibel calibration. And when sound exceeds the limit of an OSHA provision, a strobe light

should be made to flash after 15 minutes if the limit reached and a manager by responsible to protect hearing of it's employees and entertainers that may be playing high noise levels. This should be a federal guideline required in any permit where entertainment is permitted to especially protect culture bearers and musicians.

2) The city's newly created enforcement office hasn't gotten off the ground yet But some policing of alcohol beverage permits issued by the state and city should not permit subleases verbal or written, that permits any sub-operator to share licensing of alcohol beverage permit. I believe this is the law already but presently little enforced. A permit issued to share venues, particularly after hours, with non-named performances without a manager on the premises to be present, should not be granted. Listing names and addresses of sub-leases' names and operators on a publicly filed permit with the city- could be electronically mailed with special designating also to sub-leasing parties that normally come on regular hours and dates. This loop hole in present city permits for entertainment permits, needs strengthening to require a named responsible person on some written document so that the city's safety and alcohol permits and sales taxes are protected as well as near by building owners are protected with subleasing to "unknowns" The safety of entertainment customers and near- by building owners have a right to know who may be violating civil, zoning rights and tax collection agencies.

Thank you for this opportunity  
Marguerite Chad Pellerin  
From my telephone 10/23/2023

- Written public comment number five:

From: **Tatiana Clay Jurzak** <[tatitutu@gmail.com](mailto:tatitutu@gmail.com)>  
Date: Mon, Oct 23, 2023 at 4:33 PM  
Subject: Comment for 10/23/2023 meeting  
To: <[publiccomments@fqmd.org](mailto:publiccomments@fqmd.org)>

- (i) Tatiana Clay Jurzak
- (ii) 511 Royal St.
- (iii) I am NOT being paid for this comment. I am a long-time, full-time French Quarter resident.
- (iv) Meeting Agenda Monday, 23 October 2023, 5:30 pm

Comment:

Please use this allocation to invest in clean, safe public restrooms for the French Quarter. I have never seen so much human excrement in the streets, sidewalks and sides of buildings as I have in recent years. It is very concerning for our quality of life and how we are viewed by visitors. Reporting human waste issues to Empire Services for clean up works sometimes. However, sometimes they don't answer the phone number provided by FQMD for this purpose and sometimes they insist that they do not do this type of clean-up. Thank you for your time.

Ms. Raines spoke to the attendees further about the FQMD and its' four main Committees, which include the Security and Enforcement Committee, the Livability Committee, the Finance and Development Committee, and the Government Affairs Committee. Ms. Raines discussed each Committee's integral role and the process of operations throughout the FQMD. She added that the FQMD also plays a role within the French Quarter Economic Development District Agreement Monitors monthly meetings which deal with public safety and homelessness assistance programming. Ms. Raines thanked everyone for their attendance and feedback and invited all guests to attend the public meetings conducted by each Committee, as well as the Board of Commissioners public monthly meeting. Mr. Pendleton invited Cpt. LeJon Roberts to speak. Cpt. Roberts thanked the Board for their time and discussed the NOPD Eighth District's recent illegal vending sweeps, stating that they have been working with multiple City entities to perform these sweeps with successful results so far, adding that this issue will not be eradicated overnight, but progress continues to be made. Cpt. Roberts reported that the State Office of Alcohol and Tobacco Control (ATC), Community Liaison Officers from other districts, the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, the Department of Revenue, and the Health Department have all assisted with the sweeps. He stated that over the last four weeks, numerous individuals were written citations and summonses regarding illegal vending, but had their charges dropped in court, which he pointed out was demoralizing for the officers performing these sweeps. Cpt. Roberts noted that the NOPD is

working with the Court to amend this issue going forward. He stated that the Eighth District is aiming to make the operational sweeps sustainable, adding that their agreement with the ATC is in effect until the end of 2023. Cpt. Roberts pointed out that with a number of holidays and special events coming up for the City, it's important that illegal vending, criminal activity, and complicit behavior do not overrun the French Quarter. He moved on to discuss Parking Enforcement in the French Quarter, stating that the Towing Unit is understaffed, further amplifying this problem. Cpt. Roberts informed the Commissioners that he recently met with Alton Jones, of the Towing Unit, and they discussed the lack of manpower and available space at the North Claiborne Avenue lot where towed vehicles are stored. Cpt. Roberts stated that by acquiring a tow truck for the NOPD, this would help to alleviate the issue, but the lack of available storage space for the towed vehicles would still present a challenge. He added that this is still something to consider and suggested that the tow truck could be utilized for special events only. Cpt. Roberts thanked the FQMD for their support and thanked the Supplemental Police Patrol Program. He reported that 70% of shifts have been filled this last month and thanked Mr. Simms for encouraging officers to take the incentivized shifts. Cpt. Roberts stated that he would like to see funding be put towards purchasing mobile light units for the French Quarter, pointing out that these towers help to deter criminal activity. He requested funding for 30 barricades with wheels that the officers can employ on Bourbon Street and Royal Street, and funding for two decibel meter readers to help enforce sound ordinance throughout the French Quarter- specifically with street performers.

IV. ADJOURNMENT: Mr. Pendleton motioned (M1) to “adjourn the October 23rd, 2023 Board of Commissioners meeting...”, Mr. Bilby seconded the motion to unanimous approval and the meeting was adjourned at 6:20 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
(Signed original available)  
Susan Klein, Secretary