

## GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

### Meeting Notes

Wednesday, 26 February 2025, 3:00 pm

400 North Peters Street, New Orleans, LA 70130

#### 1. Call to Order, Reading of the Agenda, and Roll Call

The meeting was called to order at 3:01 pm.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS				Approve Meeting Notes	Approve ballot language as is
First Name	Last Name	Present	Absent		
Glade	Bilby	X		Yes	Yes
Christian	Pendleton		X	-	-
Heidi	Raines	X		Yes	Yes
David	Bilbe	X		Yes	Yes

#### INTRODUCTION OF ATTENDEES:

GUESTS		
First	Last	Role
Michelle	Courseault	FQMD Executive Director
Shelby	Ursu	FQMD Coordinator
Jane	Cooper	FQMD Board Chair
Alex	Dunkenberger	CNO/CAO
Will	Dubos	LRA
Mike	Ince	Nighttime Economy
Desmond	LeBlanc	CNO/CAO

#### 2. Public Comment:

No written public comment was received.

#### 3. Motion – Consider a motion to approve the previous meeting notes

**Heidi Raines made a motion to approve the previous meeting notes. David Bilbe seconded the motion, and it was approved.**

#### 4. Committee Chair's Comments

Chair Glade Bilby thanked the Committee and guests for their attendance. He reported that security in the French Quarter during the Super Bowl was effective and successful. Mr. G. Bilby stated that the main objectives for the Government Affairs Committee this year are to focus on the Quarter for the Quarter tax renewal and an economic impact study of the French Quarter.

#### 5. Discussions –

##### a. Discussion By Committee- 2025 French Quarter Economic Development District Sales Tax Renewal

See attached document. Mr. G. Bilby stated that the FQMD has been taking on more work than ever, noting that the FQMD has moved on from focusing solely on security through the Supplemental Police Patrol Program (SPPP) to adding on quality of life programs, infrastructure improvements, recycling programs, homeless services, crime camera and license plate reader installations, and streetlight repairs. He stated that the funds from the French Quarter Economic Development District (FQEDD) have made these programs possible for the FQMD and have had a positive effect on the neighborhood, residents, businesses, and tourists. Mr. G. Bilby stressed the importance of disseminating this information and educating the public on

# French Quarter

## MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

the effectiveness of all of these endeavors over the past five years. Mr. G. Bilby reported that another factor to consider with the FQEDD Trust Fund is what dollar amount should be the appropriate amount to set aside as a backup fund balance, noting that the Committee must also keep in mind that there is a chance that the Louisiana State Police may be requesting funds at some point later this year. He stated that, with the streetlight repairs project nearing completion, another topic that is being discussed is a maintenance fund for future streetlight repairs. Mr. G. Bilby asked the Committee what dollar amount they felt would be appropriate to set aside to ensure that the Trust Fund does not fully deplete. Jane Cooper recommended \$1M or \$1.5M so that the SPPP can continue as a program for a year, even if the tax does not get renewed. The Committee agreed.

Reviewing the feedback received from the other three FQMD Committees, Mr. G. Bilby reported that, overall, the only recommended change was increasing the rate from .245% to .25%. He noted that Michelle Courseault and Alex Dunkenberger are looking into the history of why the tax rate was set at such a specific number. Mr. G. Bilby stated that he felt that it would be in the FQMD's best interest to leave the tax rate as it is, adding that if the percentage is increased, the public may be less likely to vote in favor of it being renewed. He noted that another idea that was discussed in the past was having the funding come through the FQMD instead of the FQEDD Trust Fund. Mr. G. Bilby stated that he felt this would present numerous problems, including liability issues, and that he feels this should not change in the ballot language and should remain as is. The Committee agreed. Ms. Courseault reported that Ellie Rand Public Relations, the FQMD PR firm, will present a campaign to the Committee, as well as to the Finance & Development Committee and the Board of Commissioners. She noted that in the timeline between now and November, she will be presenting this campaign to Councilmembers for feedback. Mr. Bilbe recommended engaging with State representatives as well. Ms. Cooper asked if Patio Planters should be added to the list of stakeholder groups to disseminate information to. Mr. G. Bilby replied yes, stating that getting residential groups to see the impact that the FQMD has made for the neighborhood with the tax funds would be advantageous. He added that sharing the 2024 FQMD Annual Report would also be a great idea to show the stakeholders the FQMD's past year of programs and successes. Mr. G. Bilby recommended that the Commissioners reach out to their appointing organizations to get letters in support of the tax renewal. Mr. Bilbe agreed, stating that he will get a letter of support from the Louisiana Restaurant Association.

**Ms. Raines motioned to leave all components of the Quarter for the Quarter tax ballot language as is, besides the updated dates. Mr. Bilbe seconded the motion, and it was approved.**

- b. Need for additional Government Affairs committee meetings (dates needed for March, April, June, August, September, October)

Ms. Courseault stated that more Committee meeting dates will be necessary to schedule for the upcoming months in order to continue the focus on the tax renewal timeline. The Committee agreed. Ms. Courseault will check with Mr. G. Bilby on setting March and April Committee meeting dates.

- c. Updates – (Alex Dunkenberger) - Procurement Process Impact Study Next Steps – *Deferred to next meeting*

Mr. G. Bilby stated that details are still being sorted out for this project and more discussion will take place at the next Committee meeting. Mr. Dunkenberger reported that he has the Request for Proposals (RFP) drafted, and just needs to have the draft reviewed by the Legal department. Mr. Dunkenberger will send the RFP draft to the Committee electronically between now and the next Committee meeting. He noted that no official vote is necessary to begin this process.

- 6. New Business– To consider and take action upon any other matters that may properly come before the French Quarter Management District Government Affairs Committee

No new business was discussed.

- 7. Next Meeting Date:

The next scheduled meeting date of the Committee will be in March, and is to be determined.

- 8. Adjournment

**Ms. Raines made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Bilbe seconded the motion, and the meeting adjourned at 3:39 PM.**

## QUARTER FOR THE QUARTER SALES TAX BALLOT

Shall a .245% increase in the sales tax be levied within the boundaries of the French Quarter Economic Development District ("FQ EDD") to be collected on the sale at retail, the use, the lease or rental, the consumption and storage for use or the consumption of tangible personal property and sales of services within the boundaries of the FQ EDD for a period of five years, beginning July 1, 2021 and ending June 30, 2026 (an estimated \$2.5 million reasonably expected at this time to be collected as a result of the levy per year) for the purpose of funding POST Certified supplemental police patrols and homeless assistance services, with the initial \$2 million collected in any year dedicated to supplemental police patrols and any additional revenue to be divided between additional patrols and public safety programs (including homeless assistance), and administered by the French Quarter Management District for fiscal and operational oversight of the FQ EDD Trust Fund and services provided by such fund and subject to quarterly budget and expenditure reports to the City Council, to facilitate economic development within the FQ EDD?

### FOR CONSIDERATION

As Is  
Approval -  
No Change

Recommended Change, if any.

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1. **Rate:**

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☐

2. **Boundaries:**

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3. **Collection Source:**

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4. **Expiration Period:**

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5. **Purpose:**

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6. **Administered By:**

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