

**St. Tammany Parish Development District  
Board of Commissioners Meeting  
Minutes | November 21, 2024**

**Present:** President Wainwright, Elder Brown III, Mike Gambrell, Albert M. Hamauei, Paul Myers IV, Louis Ochoa,

**Absent:** Joan Coffman, Mimi G. Dossett, Bruce Javery, Ross Lagarde, Eric Schouest

**Staff:** Chris Masingill, Timothy Billiot, Gabbi Brown, Kyle Buckley, Vincenzo Caronna, Sharon DeLong, Keith Espadron, Ashley Llewellyn, Kate Moore,

**Counsel:** Mark Balkin | Hardy Carey Chautin & Balkin

**Guests:** Kathleen Wilkins, small business advocate; Dariel Curren, Executive Vice President, Development Counsellors International (DCI), Gray Swope, Vision First Advisors, Eric Singletary

Vice President Coffman called the meeting to order at 3:03 p.m. Commissioners present established quorum.

**PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD**

No public comment on any agenda item.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

With no modifications, the Consent Agenda, which consisted of the October BOC Meeting Minutes, November Nominating Committee Meeting Minutes, and YTD Financial Statements, was approved. *Albert Hamauei, seconded by Louis Ochoa, motioned to approve the consent agenda as presented. All were in favor. Motion passed.*

**PRESENTATIONS**

A resolution of recognition and appreciation was presented to Melissa Kirsch, the former Executive Director of Tri-Parish Works, for her long-standing service in the workforce development arena. Resolutions of appreciation for Ben Seiden and Stephanie Brault were moved to the December meeting.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Nominating Committee Recommendation**

Masingill reminded Commissioners of the additional candidate, Eric Singletary of Atmos, who will fill Bruce Javery's expired term, ending on December 31, 2024. Masingill reported that the Nominating Committee met earlier that week and approved to recommend Singletary's candidacy to the Board at its November meeting. *Elder Brown, seconded by Albert Hamauei, motioned to approve the recommendations presented by the Nominating Committee. Motion passed. This candidate will be presented to Parish Council for final approval at its regular January meeting.*

**Resolution: Preliminary Approval – Project Tiana**

Masingill gave a brief history of the existing St. Tammany business, and Kyle Buckley detailed the terms of the PILOT for preliminary approval.

Project Tiana is a legacy specialty foods manufacturer in St. Tammany Parish with an exclusive supply contract with a multinational restaurant chain. In 2019, the company began a significant expansion project, investing approximately \$13 million in new production equipment. This expansion was supported by an 80% property tax abatement through Louisiana Economic Development's Industrial Tax Exemption Program (ITEP). Due to employment losses during the pandemic, the company became non-compliant with ITEP employment baselines and therefore lost their eligibility in the program.

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The company currently has 105 full-time employees, with a total annual payroll of approximately \$4.74 million. To offset the loss of the ITEP tax savings, the company is requesting consideration to participate in the PILOT program. This support would help maintain operations and retain the existing workforce.

Economic Analysis: St. Tammany Corporation recently commissioned a third-party economic impact analysis of the project. The study evaluated the financial and socioeconomic benefits to the parish and concluded that over the five-year PILOT term, the investment would yield a Benefit-Cost Ratio of 4.13 to 1.

Board Actions for Consideration: Considering the economic impact analysis results, the importance of supporting a legacy business in St. Tammany Parish, and the retention of 105 full-time jobs, staff is presenting a request for consideration of a PILOT for Project Tiana. Based on thorough internal review and professional analysis, staff recommends favorable consideration of this request. *Albert Hamauei, seconded by Mike Gambrell, motioned to recommend preliminary approval of the project. Louis Ochoa abstained from the vote. All other Board members present were in favor of recommending the approval of the resolution to the Board of Commissioners at the November 21 regular meeting. Motion passed.*

**Northshore Regional Resilience Collaborative-Professional Services Contract**

Ashley Lewellyn presented a contract with Retail Strategies for the Northshore Regional Resiliency Collaborative EDA grant program for the five-parish region. The contract will be data driven with specific data on how to recruit retailers in certain communities and will address Research, Real Estate Analysis, Marketing Materials, and Retail Academy. The contract was approved on a motion by Paul Myer, seconded by Mike Gambrell. Motion passed.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**Presentation: Vision First Advisors**

Masingill stated as a three-part engagement with VFA, Gray Swope presented draft strategic plan progress thus far.

**DCI Business Attraction and Marketing Presentation**

Julie Curtain and the DCI team provided a virtual presentation of the final logo and tagline and an introduction of the business attraction and marketing plan, including tactics and recommendations. Masingill requested approval today for the logo and brand refresh and all Board members present approved the adoption. After discussion, it was the consensus of the Board to move forward with the business attraction and marketing plan.

**EXECUTIVE UPDATE**

There was no executive update given.

**ADJOURN**

*The meeting adjourned at 5:08 p.m. on a motion by Elder Brown and seconded by Mike Gambrell. All were in favor. Motion passed.*

Minutes reviewed and submitted by the STC Staff.