

MINUTES OF
A REGULAR MEETING OF THE
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
OF THE
NEW ORLEANS REGIONAL BUSINESS PARK
Location: Milne Recreational Center
5420 Franklin Avenue, 70122

Friday , March 31, 2023, 3:00 p.m.

AGENDA

I. Call To Order Time: 3:12pm

II. Roll Call

Absent	Present	Commissioner
	X	Jonetta BENNETT (LA REP DIST. 99)
	X	Jason HUGHES (LA REP DIST 100)
	X	Gregory JEFFERSON (Mayor Cantrell – ENONAC)
	X	Lois A. JONES (US CONGRESS -LA DISTRICT 2)
	X	Samuel D. OLIPHANT (Mayor Cantrell - VIET)
	X	Alicia PLUMMER-CLIVENS (LA SENATE DISTRICT 3)
	X	Josh TATUM (LA SENATE DISTRICT 1)
	X	Otis TUCKER, JR. (City Councilmember Dist. E)
	8	Total Commissioners
		Quorum: Start of the Meeting Yes <u>X</u> No
		Time: <u>3:12pm</u> Quorum: After Meeting Start Yes X No

III. Introduction of Guests and Public Comment

Guest Present X Yes ___ No

Jeffery Schwartz – Director, Dept. of Economic Development –
City of New Orleans

Courtney Stuckwisch Wong - Dept. of Economic Development –
City of New Orleans

IV. Review and Approval of Agenda

Motion by Commissioner Jones/ Seconded by Commissioner Tatum to approve agenda with only change being to move “Item IX - Status Report – Progress of Advano lease preparation activities” to Item Vi and to move all other items down one position.

Vote in favor: Unanimous

Agenda as modified was approved.

V. Review and Approval of Minutes from February 24, 2023, Meeting of the Board of Commissioners

Motion by Commissioner Jones/ Seconded by Commissioner Tucker

Vote in favor: Unanimous

Motion to table. Minutes unavailable for review and approval

VI. Status Report – Progress of Advano lease preparation activities -

Mr. Schwartz addressed the Board and expressed the willingness and desire of his office to assist in any way possible with the execution of a lease with Advano, Inc. (“*Advano*”).

María Julianna Auzenne, Special Counsel to the NORBP, reported that negotiations continue towards formalizing a lease with prospective tenant, Advano. Advano has stated to her that they have a short timeframe in which to work and would like a lease ASAP. In the alternative, Advano’s counsel, Sherman Strategies, LLC, would like the NORBP to consider executing an Access and Indemnity Agreement in order to grant Advano access to the Warehouse in order to start taking accurate measurements and doing other non-construction preliminary work.

Ms. Auzenne advised of the steps required under Louisiana law for the NORBP to enter into a lease with Advano. Ms. Auzenne also reiterated the need to receive a current and accurate appraisal of the property and accurate measurements of the building, esp. the warehouse. Ms. Auzenne stated that counsel to Advano is concerned the current measurements may not be accurate when compared to the New Orleans’s Tax Assessor’s website and Advano’s architect’s observations.

NO ACTION NEEDED AT THIS TIME

VII. Finance Report – presented by Michelle Diaz, CPA

Motion by to accept the Financial Report as presented: Commissioner Jones/ Seconded by Commissioner Tucker

Vote in favor: Unanimous

Michelle Diaz, CPA presented the financial report for the NORBP, including the

NORBP's current financial position (income and expenditures). She reported that the rent from tenant, Meyers Warehouse, Inc. ("*Meyers*") is still at the rate of \$25,275 per month. Ms. Auzenne, Counsel to the NORBP, explained she is still in lease negotiations with counsel to Meyers.

Commissioner Tucker asked if any rent increase for Meyers would be retroactive. Counsel Auzenne stated rent would not be retroactively paid. the new lease has not yet been executed.

Chairperson Hughes inquired how landscaping services are currently paid and asked if the NORBP has received any invoices for landscaping. Ms. Diaz responded that landscaping has been an issue, and she will be prepared to present on the subject at the next finance committee meeting. She stated that Robert Packnett of RP Landscaping has been the NORBP landscaping provider.

Ms. Diaz stated that she has requested invoices from RP Landscaping on numerous occasions but has not received any invoices for approximately ten (10) months. She stated that she spoke with Mr. Packnett today and he told her that has been sending invoices. She also stated that she asked him approximately one (1) year ago to start providing pictures when the grass was cut because there was some concern that he wasn't cutting all of the grass. He informed her today that he has been sending those pictures to Lavon Wright, who was formerly on the Board of Commissioners of the NORBP and was a previous Chairperson of the NORBP. Ms. Diaz stated that Ms. Burbank did not forward anything to her.

Ms. Diaz stated that she asked Mr. Packnett today to give the NORBP a proposal to fill in the low area on the front lawn where water has accumulated. She also stated he told her he would send his invoices to her within a week. She said she will be able to present both the invoice and the proposal at the next meeting.

Commissioner Tucker inquired about the price of website hosting. Ms. Diaz stated it is normally \$25.00 but the amount she presented for payment includes past due amounts.

Ms. Auzenne said she spoke with Mr. Derrius Harrell regarding the website. He told her the design is very antiquated and it is difficult to upload to the site. He also told her he did not design the website but could redesign it. She recommended the Board consider doing so. There would be a cost involved with doing so. She also stated she asked Mr. Harrell to update the commissioners list.

VIII. Finance Committee Report –

**Motion by to accept the Finance Committee Report as presented: Commissioner Tatum/ Seconded by Commissioner Jones
Vote in favor: Unanimous**

Commissioner Tatum presented the Finance Committee Report. Commissioner Tatum discussed the status of the property insurance. He reported there has been no lapse in

coverage and the NORBP building and equipment both have insurance coverage. He also reported the Board does have E&O coverage and that coverage renews in June. The NORBP insurance needs are currently being handled by Noah Lewis and Associates, LLC and no change in insurance agents is recommended.

Commissioner Tatum stated that his committee also reviewed and recommended new accounting policies, establishing a PO Box in Lake Forest, and the budget recommendations.

A. Approval of proposed budget for 2023

Motion by to approve Proposed Budget of the fiscal year: Vice-President Plummer/ Seconded by Commissioner Oliphant

Vote in favor: Unanimous

Ms. Diaz presented the proposed budget. She stated this is the final budget after thorough deliberation by the finance committee at the meeting that was held on March 7th. The NORBP has tenant rent of \$369,225.00. NORBP received utilities reimbursement of \$16,000, saving interest of \$500. The projected total revenue is \$385,725 for the year. The expenses are insurance in the amount of \$72,000, management services in the amount of \$50,000. That is an amount that has been proposed to for the NORBP to bring in some sort of staffing for the balance of the year. For the year, legal fees are projected to be \$27,000 utilities - \$24,000, Accounting and review - \$13,000, repairs and maintenance, \$12,000, landscaping \$10,000, telephone \$1,500 , and web hosting \$1,200. Pest control for the building is estimated at \$1,000 and miscellaneous contingency of \$5,000 are both projected. The grand total for the proposed budget is \$216,700, which will give the NORBP revenue over expenditures for the year in the amount of \$169,025. The tenant rent would be roughly 301,000. This tenant rent number does include an additional \$68,000 that we are projecting to be collected between Myers and Advano for the year.

B. Approval to issue Request for Qualifications for Certified Public Accountant to complete Annual Review of the NORBP

Motion by to issue an RFQ to select State approved accounts who provide auditing services to public bodies: Commissioner Tucker/ Seconded by Commissioner Jefferson

Vote in favor: Unanimous

Counsel Auzenne stated she and Commissioner Tatum discussed this matter. She stated there was discussion regarding issuing an RFP in a publication, but the other option discussed was to issue an RFQ to a small group of CPAs identified as working with public bodies. Ms. Auzenne also recommended including Bruno & Tervalon since they have previously provided such services to the Board. Both Ms. Auzenne and Ms. Diaz reminded the Board of the short time frame in which to make the selection. The recommendation is the issue an RFQ to select State approved accounts who provide auditing services to public bodies. Vice-Chairperson

Plummer objects to sending the RFP to Mr. Victor Robinson , CPA due to his past performance for the NORBP.

C. Recommendation of accounting/disbursement policies

Motion by accept the Finance Committee accounting/disbursement polices recommendation: Commissioner Jones/ Seconded by Vice-Chairperson Plummer

Vote in favor: Motion passes with one objection from Commissioner Tucker

Current policy of requiring two (2) signatures for checks is recommended to remain. Furthermore, it is recommended that checks up to \$1,000 require only the chairman's approval. Any check above \$1,000, and up to \$2,500, would require both approval of the chairperson and the finance committee. And any check over \$2,500 would require full Board approval. There will be no carve out of those limits; however, in the case of emergencies, the Chairperson can execute checks not to exceed \$5,000.

IX. Property Committee Report

Motion by accept the Property Committee Report: Commissioner Tatum/ Seconded by Commissioner Tucker

Vote in favor: Unanimous

Commissioner Jefferson reported that he visited the building and did notice that the grass had been cut. Ms. Diaz stated she received a photo of the RNP Landscaping company cutting the grass last week.

Counsel Auzenne stated she noticed Advano had begun exterior demolition and requested Commissioner Jefferson inform the Board regarding that matter. Commissioner Jefferson reported the area being demolished is an old shed on the exterior of the property.

A. Recommendation: Approval of additional payment of \$300.00 to Rodney's Expert Home and Building Inspection Services ("*Rodney*") for Verification of Measurements Taken By Rodney

Motion by pay Mr. Rodney an additional \$350.00: Commissioner Jefferson/ Seconded by Commissioner Tucker

Vote in favor: Unanimous

Commissioner Jefferson reported that Mr. Rodney's measurements needed to be verified as they were questioned by Woodward on behalf of Advano. The measurements needed to be verified. Mr. Rodney returned to the property and realized the measurements he previously did need to be updated. Vice-Chairperson Plummer requested Mr. Rodney go back and verify his measurements and requests he be paid an additional \$350.00 for those services. Chairperson Hughes stated that he authorized the payment after receiving a call from Vice-Chairperson

Plummer regarding the matter. Commissioner Jefferson recommends the payment of the additional monies.

Counsel Auzenne stated she noticed Advano had begun exterior demolition and requested Commissioner Jefferson inform the Board regarding that matter. Commissioner Jefferson reported the area being demolished is an old shed on the exterior of the property.

B. Acceptance of building warehouse measurements

**Motion by accept the drawings done by Commissioner Jeferson:
Commissioner Tatum/ Seconded by Commissioner Oliphant**

Vote in favor: Unanimous

Commissioner Jefferson went to the property and verified Mr. Rodney's measurements. Commissioner Jefferson presented the drawings and measurement he did of the warehouse.

C. Update on Status of Appraisal Report to be completed by Peter "Pete" Hamilton of Hamilton Realty Company

Legal Counsel Auzenne stated that she is still waiting to receive the appraisal from Pete Hamilton.

IX. Status Report – Progress of Advano lease preparation activities **MOVED TO ITEM IV.**

X. Status Report – Infrastructure Grant from the City of New Orleans

Mr. Schwartz stated the City's commitment to providing monies from through a Cooperative Endeavor Agreement to assist the NORBP with infrastructure repair needs in order to further the purposes of the NORBP.

Chairperson Hughes requested Mr. Schwartz provide in writing information and direction regarding the City's intention for the usage of the CEA funds.

XI. Adjournment at 4:58pm