



MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 20, 2024 MEETING – LAFAYETTE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (LEDA)

1. CALL TO ORDER

Jan-Scott Richard, COG President & Scott Mayor, called the meeting to order at 6:16 p.m.

2. SILENT PRAYER & PLEDGE

Mayor Richard offered a silent prayer and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. INTRODUCTIONS

All in attendance were introduced. All COG entities were in attendance, with the exception of the City of Carencro, the Town of Duson, and the Lafayette Parish School System.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

A motion was offered by Broussard Mayor Ray Bourque, seconded by Lafayette Parish Councilman Bryan Tabor, to approve the minutes of the COG meeting of August 15, 2024. The motion was unanimously approved

5. APPROVAL OF TRESURER’S REPORT

A motion was offered by COG Vice President & Youngsville Mayor Ken Ritter, seconded by Scott City Councilman Doyle Boudreaux, to adopt the Treasurer’s Report with a balance of \$2,448.92. The motion was unanimously approved.

6. TOPICS OF DISCUSSION

- a. **DISCUSSION: Economic Development Update – Mandi Mitchell, LEDA President & CEO**
– Ms. Mitchell introduced her staff and identified the municipalities they each serve and represent. She highlighted LEDA’s vision and mission, emphasizing LEDA’s work in catalyzing job growth, attracting new businesses, and fostering economic development in Lafayette Parish. Ms. Mitchell reviewed LEDA’s programs and services, including workforce development initiatives and a pilot program for paid internships in the technology sector. She discussed the Louisiana Development-Ready Communities program and the importance of this designation for attracting investment. She also provided insights into the Retail Strategies program and the necessary tools for successful implementation. Additionally, Ms. Mitchell addressed LEDA initiatives such as Marketing

Lafayette Parish, the Certified Sites Program, and Small & DBE Business Development. She noted LEDA's role in capital expenditures exceeding \$400 million and the creation of 4,200 jobs. She concluded her report by opening the floor for questions and reaffirming LEDA's commitment to supporting stakeholders throughout Lafayette Parish.

b. **UPDATES: State Officials / Parish Elected Officials**

- i. **Simone Champagne – Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE)** – Mrs. Champagne gave accolades to Lafayette Parish School System on the release of BESE's accountability report, with Lafayette Parish receiving stellar rankings across various categories.
- ii. **Patricia Lanier – College of Business Administration, University of Louisiana at Lafayette (UL)** – Ms. Lanier announced the plan for a student to be set up as an intern with the City of Carencro and provided updates on a partnership between UL and LCG's International Trade Division.
- iii. **Edie Couvillion Aymond – 232-HELP Executive Director** – Mrs. Aymond gave updates on 232-HELP and 211 assistance as resources for the community.
- iv. **Chad Sonnier – Lafayette Parish Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness** – Director Sonnier expressed appreciation to the Mayors and Fire Chiefs and provided emergency management updates. He highlighted new software being used to test fire hydrants for optimal efficiency.
- v. **Justin Centanni, Assessor-Elect** – Mr. Centanni echoed Ms. Mitchells comments about tax reform and announced that the tax roll was submitted two weeks ago. He announced that he will be sworn in as Assessor on January 2, 2025 and that the Assessor's Office has moved to its new building.

c. **MUNICIPALITY UPDATES**

- i. **Broussard** – Mayor Bourque provided updates on projects in Broussard, including Downtown Broussard improvements and the awarding of work to qualified bidders. He noted the completion of the Garber Road bridge improvements and the approval of a K-8 charter school. He also announced the City's receipt of an \$800,000 grant for capital expansion. Mayor Bourque closed by announcing the December 7th Christmas parade and the Broussard Police Department's move into a larger facility.
- ii. **Scott** – Mayor Richard reminded attendees about the December 7th Winter Wonderland event in West Village and the December 14th annual Christmas event in front of Scott City Hall. He provided updates on various projects, including a master transportation plan set for mid-2025 implementation and the City's newly implemented land use map. He noted significant residential and business development, particularly at Destination Point, and extended holiday greetings to all.
- iii. **Youngsville** – Mayor Ritter announced the development of three sites in Youngsville, with LEDA playing a key role. He expressed optimism regarding LPSS involvement in the City and highlighted the collaborative approach of Superintendent Francis Touchet. He noted that the Youngsville Sports Complex amphitheater has opened, with SLEMCO securing naming rights. Mayor Ritter emphasized quality of life as a priority in City initiatives and acknowledged the conclusion of the current Leadership Youngsville class. He announced that Christmas Under the Stars would take place on December 14th at the amphitheater, and that December 7th marked election day for the Youngsville Police Chief and a City Council seat.

- iv. **Lafayette Consolidated Government** – Mayor-President Monique Boulet provided an update on Bertrand Drive improvements and plans for Johnston Street enhancements, aiming to reduce costs with an \$8 million to \$10 million per mile investment. She discussed a shared path plan for expanded sidewalks and safe spaces. Other updates included investments in the skate park and Picard Park, progress on the Homewood project reimbursements, and Lafayette Parish’s growth plans with a focus on infrastructure. She also discussed her intent to approach the Governor regarding a new \$50 million jail and the implications of tax reform on Lafayette Parish.

7. OTHER MATTERS

- a. Mayor Richard thanked the staff and officials from LEDA and the staff from Abacus for hosting the meeting and providing the meal. He reminded everyone that the next COG meeting will be held on Thursday, February 20, 2025 and that the meeting will be hosted by the City of Broussard.

8. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:47 p.m.