

Minutes of the May 10, 2021

Legal and Regular meeting of the Southside Economic Development District Board of Commissioners

The regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the Southside Economic Development District was held on May 10, 2021 at the SEDD headquarters, 1711 Arizona Street.

The meeting Began at 6:00 p.m. with the following members present: Rev. Campbell, Mr. Jones, Mr. Wright, and Mr. Brown. Absent was Dr. Watson. Atty. McConnell was present for the roll call on Zoom but logged out after a few minutes and was not present for any voting matters.

The roll was called, and a quorum was confirmed.

The board Unanimously approved the April 5, 2021, April 19, 2021, and April 28, 2021 minutes with the following corrections:

April 5,2021 Minute Corrections

Commissioner Wright suggested that both the President and the Secretary should sign the minutes, not just the secretary as shown in the minutes.

Mr. Jones and Wright asked for all contracts and were promised by the chairman that they would be made available by the next meeting.

At the request of commissioner Brown the 2021-22 proposed budget was tabled. All members present voted in favor of the motion. McConnell who was present by Zoom, but was not called on the roll call vote.

The president appointed a committee to review the budget and make a report at the next meeting. The committee consisted of commissioners Wright, Watson, and Director Theus.

April 19, 2021 minute corrections

The meeting was a special meeting to consider a resolution to call for a special tax election, however there is no mention of the tax in the minutes. At the very least, the ballot proposition itself should be in the minutes.

Commissioner Wright asked for a prepared statement he sent to the president and board member explaining his opposition to the tax be placed in the minutes. It was not included. The statement was: "I think it would be premature to ask for a sales tax until the district can demonstrate responsible stewardship over the funds already at its disposal."

Commissioner Wright gave the path he thought SEDD should take prior to asking the public for a tax: That SEDD should prepare an economic plan to city council approval. The plan should comprise input from the major employers in the district, African American Business, the Citizens of District 3,4,5, The Chamber of Commerce, The African-American Chamber of Commerce and finally, the city of Monroe. He said once the plan has been approved by the Monroe City Council that SEDD should begin executing the plan with its available funds before going to public and asking for increased sales taxes.

Commissioner Jones' request for copies of the bylaws and existing contracts and the subsequent promise by President Campbell that they would be available at the next meeting were omitted from the minutes, but should be included.

April 28, 2021 minute corrections

The phrase "Mr. Wright had presented a budget using the same funds less than one week ago and the budget was not passed" should be deleted because the board never considered or voted on a budget presented by commissioner Wright.

The notation about commissioner Jones request for discussion of credit car expenses should include that the president promised that he would have answers for commissioner Jones in 15 days.

A request by Commissioner Jones to review automobile leases, was omitted from the minutes. The president did not allow discussion on the lease expenses because they were not a part of the budget. He promised to have answers for Commissioner Jones in 15 days. This request should be included in the minutes

A request by Commissioner Jones and Wright for copies of the bylaws and existing SEDD contracts was promised in 15 days. The request was not included in the minutes.

End of corrections

President Campbell repeated the need for the board to work together in Unity to help the Southside. He promoted the importance of the tax. He said “Nobody likes a tax” but it takes a tax to have the resources. His monologue was interrupted by Jones said he wants to support initiatives that would help the poor. He questioned our lack of a plan for the sales tax and should not go the voters asking for a blank check.

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Campbell presented the board with a plan approved in 2003 by a previous board. He noted many of the projects in the plan had been implemented and it needed updating. That sparked a lively conversation about the need to have an updated plan prior to asking for a vote of the public. Theus said going to the bond commission with a different or updated plan would cancel the 2003 plan.

This discussion continued until Commissioner Brown noted he had to leave, his absence prompted the adjournment of the meeting for lack of a quorum.

Marty Campbell, President