



## **Report of the Treasurer**

To the Board of Commissioners;

Between May 1, 2018, and December 31, 2022, the Southside Economic Development District has generated more than a half million dollars in revenue from two sources: a two percent hotel/motel tax and a State of Louisiana appropriation. The sales tax has produced \$514,533.67. The state appropriation received in June of 2022 was \$75,000. Interest payments were \$15.01.

The total we have received from all sources since May 1, 2018, is \$589,548.68.

Except for the state appropriation, the district has only been authorized to use its tax funds to plan and implement projects in an economic development plan approved by the Monroe City Council.

The city council approved a plan in 2003, but its projects were never implemented.

When the district began receiving hotel/motel taxes in 2018, it used most of its funds for operational costs and staff without a specific council-approved plan.

It has spent \$213,327.85 on Staff wages and salaries and the remainder on other operational costs such as car leases, gasoline, auto insurance, a big screen T.V., private cell phones, Dish T.V., Cablevision, yard service, utilities, repairs, a conference, advertising, accounting, etc.

The total expenditures from May 1 to December 22, 2022, were: \$391,457.07.

A total of 54 cents out of every tax dollar spent was spent mainly on the executive director and staff. (\$213,327.85)

A total of 46 cents out of every tax dollar spent was spent on operational costs not related to projects in a council-approved plan. (\$178,129.22)

In May 2022, the city council approved the 47-project Southside Dream Economic Development Plan replacing the unexecuted 2003 plan, but our budgeted expenses still did not include any council-approved projects. We continued to pay the executive director and operational costs, with no appropriations toward a project included in the council-approved plan.

On January 9, 2023, the board unanimously agreed to reverse course, revise its budget and associate its expenses with projects included in the council-approved plan.

Specifically, the revised budget uses \$200,000 of the district's reserve funds and allocates them to four committees at \$50,000 each to hire architects, engineers, or consultants to implement eight of the 47 projects in the district's council-approved plan.

Fiscally, the district has eliminated the executive director position and will instead hire a grant writer to pursue federal, state, and private sector funding. It will rely on architects, engineers, and consultants to manage their assigned projects.

The changes mean that, in the future, less than 1 penny out of each tax dollar will be spent on salaries and operational expenses (\$2.984.23).

The revised budget has been advertised in the official journal and made available for public inspection for 15 days before the February 6, 2023, meeting as the law requires. A public hearing will be held before its adoption.

Please find attached finance documents from the City of Monroe from which this analysis was made

Roosevelt Wright, Jr.  
Secretary-Treasurer