



Minutes

Of the Special Call Meeting of the Southside Economic Development District to be held at Benoit Recreation Center

December 16, 2024

5:40 p.m.

A special call meeting of the Southside Economic Development District met on December 16, 2024, at the Benoit Recreation Center.

Present were: Mr. Tony Little, Mr. Roosevelt Wright, Jr., Mr. Karl Dhaliwal, Attorney Sarah Smith, Mrs. Anna Reed, Ms. Jessica DeTiege, Kenneth Hall, Bishop Michael Douglas, Herb Guillory, and Minister T.J. Stevenson

Also present were Monroe City Attorney Brandon Creekbaum, Kenya Roberson of the Black Chamber of Commerce, Marie Brown, City Council aid, and Minister Verbon Muhammad, Monroe City Council.

There was a quorum.

Adoption of Minutes

The board unanimously approved September 9, 2024, September 9, 2024, transcribed, and October 3, 2024 minutes previously provided to commissioners.

President's Report:

Mr. Little provided an update on the Dream Center. He noted modifications and plans to the facility have been submitted to the state fire marshal for approval. Once done, utilities can be turned, and the board will know whether it will need to be let for bids.

He emphasized the importance of Collaboration with Black Chamber of Commerce and going forward on the advice of legal counsel. He noted that with seven new members, he felt the need to update SEDD's bylaws to comply with new state legislation. To that end, he said he invited city attorney Brandon Creekbaum to address specific questions he posed so the board could get clarity on its fiscal obligations.

Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer did not give a report. He said it was missing from the published agenda and did not come prepared to provide one.

Budget Approval

The board unanimously agreed to adopt the proposed budget presented at the December 2, 2024, meeting. The budget anticipated \$120,000 in hotel motel income and \$145,000 in expenses, tapping into its fund balance for the additional \$25,000. It provides \$25,000 for each standing committee and \$35,000 for the completion of the dream center. It was agreed that the board could be amended.

City Attorney's Presentation

The board agreed to receive a presentation from City Attorney Creekbaum concerning SEDD's bylaws at the request of President Little. Mr. Wright said the discussion of the bylaws by Mr. Creekbaum is limited to only areas of concern to the President but should be assigned to a committee of the President's choosing where all the bylaws could be reviewed in detail. He said Mr. Creekbaum's presentation is a redundancy that must be reviewed quickly because of time and then repeated in committee. Mr. Wright voted nay.

Mr. Creekbaum said he reviewed the SEDD's bylaws at the President's request and noted that changes in state law will require the SEDD's bylaws to be updated. He noted that 1) SEDD now has a six-member quorum requirement instead of four; 2) Committees designate a quorum of two of three members, which could be better suited by not stipulating a number but by noting that a majority of members would constitute a quorum 3) No meetings can be held by Zoom unless the governor declares an emergency; 4) The board can act to fill the vacancy of vice-president immediately 5) Office of Secretary/Treasurer cannot be combined 6) The bylaws authorize both the President and Secretary/Treasurer to sign documents, an area that needs to be addressed because of ambiguity. 6) All meetings of the SEDD and its committees must follow the open meetings laws 7) Indemnification of board members needs to be revisited.

Mr. Little assigned the revision of the bylaws to Mr. Guillory's committee and charged it to review and report bylaw updates by the January 6, 2025 meeting.

Steaming meetings

Mr. Creekbaum noted that since SEDD can levy taxes, its meetings would need to be recorded, videoed, or live-streamed. The board unanimously decided not to purchase video streaming equipment since it would be installed in the Dream Center but to require two people to record the meetings. Mr. Dhaliwal volunteered to pay the cost of subscribing to a Dropbox for meeting audios to be uploaded and stored; he would not need a reimbursement. Bishop Douglas also offered to allow SEDD to charge the cost of a Dropbox to his corporate card and reimburse him. Until SEDD has its own servers, Dropbox will be used to store digital recordings of meetings in the future.

Black Chamber Corporate Endeavor Agreement

Mr. Little presented a corporate Endeavor Agreement for a collaboration with the Black Chamber of Commerce for \$5,000. Questions were raised about whether members of the Black Chamber board had conflicts. Mr. Creekbaum noted that there would be no conflict if the board members stated the conflict and did not participate in the deliberations or decisions. Mr. Little referred the agreement to the DBE committee chaired by Mr. Hall to discuss it in open meetings and refer it back to the SEDD Board at the January 6, 2025, meeting.

RCH Cease and Desist Letter

The board decided not to issue a cease and desist letter to RCH Engineering after Mr. Little withdrew his motion. In its September 9, 2024 meeting, the board unanimously authorized RCH Engineering to conduct an engineering study of the infrastructure projects of the SEDD 25-year plan. The contract was signed by the secretary/Treasurer on behalf of the board in October and is to be completed by December 1, 2024. RCH completed its study and submitted it on time. Mr. Little objected because he said the contract was not signed by the President but by the secretary/Treasurer and had several items he considered flaws, making it illegal. The SEDD bylaws give both the secretary/treasurer and the president authority to sign documents, but they need to stipulate whether both or only one is required, creating a procedural conundrum. Mr. Creekbaum suggested that the internal problem be resolved and that, in the meantime, the board could take action to confirm the contract that was given. Mr. Little withdrew his motion and noted that he expected Mr. Ron Haisty to make his report to the board.

Agenda Item Passovers

Several agenda items were passed over on the recommendation of the President, including 1) A report from Mr. Creekbaum on updating the bylaws, the Arizona Street Dream Center, the RCH contract, and other duties of the vice-president, 2) A vote on Mr. Creekbaum, 's recommendations, 3)A voting change the bylaws to conform with state statues 4)The election of secretary 5)The election of a treasurer/

After 2 hours and 1minute of deliberation, the board adjourned to meet again in regular session on January 6, 2024

Tony Little, President

Roosevelt Wright, Jr., Secretary-Treasurer