

Regular Meeting of the Board of Commissioners – Southside Economic Development District (SEDD)

Monday, February 9, 2025 | 12:00 P.M.

Harvey Benoit Recreation Center – 1700 Oaklawn Dr, Monroe, LA 71202

CALL TO ORDER

Secretary Guillory called the meeting to order at 12:00 PM

ROLL CALL

- Treasurer Bishop Michael Douglas (ABSENT)
- Secretary Mr. Herb Guillory (PRESENT)
- Commissioner Mr. Karl Dhaliwal (PRESENT)
- Commissioner Min. T.J. Stevenson (PRESENT)
- Commissioner Rev. Roosevelt Wright Jr. (PRESENT)
- Commissioner Miss Jessica DeTiege (PRESENT)
- Commissioner Mr. Kenneth Hall (ABSENT)
- Commissioner Mrs. Anna Reed (PRESENT)
- Commissioner Monyea Hampton (PRESENT)
- Commissioner Vicki Lang (PRESENT)

Quorum established

INVOCATION

- Performed by Commissioner Wright

ACTION 1: VOTE TO ELECT A TEMPORARY CHAIR TO PRESIDE OVER ELECTIONS

- **MOTION:** Commissioner Guillory motioned for Commissioner Stevenson to preside as temporary chair over elections; Commissioner DeTiege seconded but questioned if the board should proceed with an election of officers since all members were not present.
- Commissioner Stevenson disagreed with an interest in moving forward; citizen Mondrian Douglas spoke offering that the board should vote just as was done in the last meeting.
- A vote was taken to election Commissioner Stevenson to preside over the election of officers:
 - Guillory – Yes
 - Dhaliwal – Yes
 - Stevenson – Yes
 - Wright – Yes
 - DeTiege – Abstain

- Reed – Yes
- Hampton – Yes
- Lang – Yes

YES – 7; NO – 0; ABSTAIN - 1

- Standard protocol for elections was established by board attorney Brandon Creekbaum with open floor nominations in accordance with Robert’s Rules of Order, with nominations not requiring a second. After nominations for each office are closed a vote would be taken in the order which candidates are nominated. First person to receive 6 or more votes is elected to the position but if no one received 6 or more votes the process would be repeated.

ACTION 2: VOTE FOR BOARD OFFICERS (BOARD PRESIDENT)

- Nominations for board president are called.
- Commissioner Lang nominates Commissioner Guillory; Commissioner Reed nominates Commissioner Wright.
- Temporary chair, Commissioner Stevenson, asked both candidates what their short term are and long term goals for the board.
- Commissioner Guillory shared he wanted to see SEDD partner with entities to make some progression. His long term goal would be to obtaining a TIFF to gain more income for the board to provide more funding for the community.
- Commissioner Wright shared there were many things the board needed to handle including submitting the board’s budget to the city, go through the board’s plan to assign dollar values, share plan with city council, and recreate sub committees for the board; long term goals included implementing a plan that had been approved by the city council which developed subdivisions in SEDD districts that would be attractive to homeowners, selecting targeted areas for infrastructure improvements along with plans to help reduce crime.
- Commissioner Reed asked about the board’s bills and if the board website is functional; Commissioner Wright said that the utility bills at the SEDD building have been accumulating and he has paid bills in December, but nothing has been paid for January and February 2026. He suggested things like that need to be addressed and we utilize each board members strengths to move forward.
- Commissioner Reed stated that the board should rely on those with the most knowledge of SEDD to assume leadership roles within the organization in order to move it forward.
- Commissioner Stevenson said that the Dream Center should also be considered a priority for each candidate to consider. She also maintained that the board should set personal issues aside to see progress.
- Commissioner Guillory said he respects the board’s history but noted that newer boards have been able to make meaningful progress. He questioned when the

board will decide to embrace change in order to become the entity it is striving to be.

- Commissioner Wright shared the same sentiments with Commissioner Guillory to create a plan to pursue a tax for the board; he maintained that reestablishing subcommittees would help move things forward faster. He shared that he has the experience to lead to make sure we have the proper procedures in place to move forward.
- Commissioner DeTiege said she believes there is a way to move forward, suggesting that all points made are valid, especially leaning on each member's strengths. She shared concern about the disparaging things said about board members outside of meetings. She said she believes the board should be more respectful toward one another because otherwise it creates chaos. She also said she believes some of the issues now being discussed should have been brought up months prior to which Commissioner Wright said he tried to do so but was told by the then-board chair that he could not speak.
- Commissioner Stevenson asserted that many issues were brought up but no action was taken.
- Citizen Mondrian Douglas shared that she believes there have been no tricks however there has been bad judgement with no advancement. She asked what were projects each nominee were tasked with as she believes it matters in consideration for the role a chairperson.
- Commissioner Guillory stated that in his role as secretary, he presented "Project Paint Monroe" to the board for consideration, but a lack of board participation prevented the partnership from moving forward.
- Citizen Mondrian Douglas also questioned what happened regarding the board website being managed by a new web manager to which Commissioner Guillory commented that the website is active saying the new web manager is continuing to manage the board website along with making few changes to make it user friendly.
- Commissioner Wright shared that state law requires the board to have a plan approved first by the Planning and Zoning Commission and then by the Monroe City Council before determining how to implement it. As a result, several committees were formed, including Infrastructure, Business Development, Housing, and Safe Neighborhoods. Under his leadership as chair of the Safe Neighborhoods Committee, he oversaw the development of a neighborhood improvement plan that outlined costs and timelines, with a goal of creating model neighborhoods featuring no overhead utility wires and covered ditches. The board's approach was to request sufficient funding from the City Council each year to implement one project in each of the three districts from the approved list. He also shared that 10 mini-grants were created to generate immediate community impact. Additionally, he noted that the Dream Center was part of the board's broader plan to establish a central meeting place for community businesses working to improve the area.

- Citizen Mondrian Douglas then questioned both nominates asking since they served as secretary have they done their duties to maintain compliance.
- Commissioner Guillory said that since he has taken on the role, he has completed duties of sharing minutes and preparing the agenda for the meeting.
- Commissioner Wright shared that during his time serving, he ensured that everyone received printed copies of the minutes and was notified in advance of meetings and any other related matters. He stated that conflicts arose when the minutes were altered.

Citizen Marie Brown shared that the citizens are ready for the board to make decisions; she said previous leadership was in place to keep the board stagnant and the board was still voting to keep stalling progress, believing the board is being run by outside forces.

- A vote was called for Commissioner Guillory for board president, reflecting:
 - Guillory – YES
 - Dhaliwal – ABSTAIN
 - Stevenson – NO
 - Wright - ABSTAIN
 - DeTiege – ABSTAIN
 - Reed – NO
 - Hampton – NO
 - Lang – YES

YES – 2; NO – 3; ABSTAIN - 3

- A vote was for Commissioner Wright for board president, reflecting:
 - Guillory – NO
 - Dhaliwal – YES
 - Stevenson – YES
 - Wright - YES
 - DeTiege – ABSTAIN
 - Reed – YES
 - Hampton – YES
 - Lang – NO

YES – 5; NO – 2; ABSTAIN - 1

- Board attorney Brandon Creekbaum then said it was necessary to call for nominations once more.
- Commissioner Reed nominated Commissioner Wright; Commissioner Lang nominated Commissioner Guillory.
- Commissioner Stevenson then asked Commissioners DeTiege and Lang why they were against Commissioner Wright.

- Commissioner DeTiege shared that she didn't have any personal feelings against Commissioner Wright; she simply wanted each commissioner to have an opportunity to vote.
- Commissioner Lang shared she had nothing against Commissioner Wright, she didn't know he was running, and she made a commitment that she was honoring.
- Commissioner Guillory shared he had nothing against Commissioner Wright, only if the board wanted change something must be different.
- Commissioner Stevenson questioned if Commissioner Guillory was willing to work with the board after he spoke against Commissioner Wright during a city council meeting.
- Commissioner Guillory asserted he is simply interested in doing things differently. He shared he has had conversations with Commissioner Wright showing his willingness to work together, however no progress has been made.
- A second vote was eventually called for Commissioner Wright as board president, reflecting:
 - Guillory – ABSTAIN
 - Dhaliwal – YES
 - Stevenson – YES
 - Wright - YES
 - DeTiege – ABSTAIN
 - Reed – YES
 - Hampton – YES
 - Lang – NO

YES – 5; NO – 1; ABSTAIN – 2

- A second vote was eventually called for Commissioner Guillory as board president, reflecting:
 - Guillory – YES
 - Dhaliwal – YES
 - Stevenson – NO
 - Wright - NO
 - DeTiege – ABSTAIN
 - Reed – NO
 - Hampton – NO
 - Lang – YES

YES – 3; NO – 4; ABSTAIN – 1

- There is an impasse in the election.
- Commissioner Stevenson then made a motion to adjourn.