

**French Quarter-Marigny Historic
Area Management District
Special Meeting
Monday, May 18, 2009
11:00 am - 1:00 pm
Royal Orleans Hotel, Esplanade Room
New Orleans, LA**

Minutes

I. Call To Order; Roll Call; Introduction of Guests

Present: Peter Ambrose, Darryl Berger, Nathan Chapman, Chris Costello, Steve Pettus, Kim Rosenberg, Brett Smith, Sal Sunseri, Lois Sutton, Ted Young.

Guests: Sydney Anderson, French Quarter Business Association (FQBA); Ruth Burke, Meeting Of Minds (MOM) Member; Louis Dabdoub, Entergy Security; Annie Flettrich, FQBA; Billy Guste, Attorney; Coco Paddison, French Quarter Citizens (FQC); Bonnye Pardo, FQC; Frank Stansbury, FQBA.

Guests were recognized and welcomed by Mr. Berger.

II. Approval of Minutes: May 4, 2009

Motion by Brett Smith and seconded by Kim Rosenberg for approval of the May 4, 2009 Minutes passed by unanimous roll call vote.

III. Discussion of Proposed Tax District.

A. Review Proposed Legislation

Darryl Berger introduced Louis Dabdoub, currently head of all corporate security for Entergy and previously head of the 8th District Police. Mr. Dabdoub volunteered to come to the meeting to inform the Board of his opinions as to whether \$100,000 would make a difference in security and safety in the District.

Mr. Dabdoub was honored that the Board would ask for his input and offered his help in any other way, including help in developing a business plan. He stated his commitment to the French Quarter/Marigny area. Dabdoub stated that even an amount of \$100,000 would make a noticeable difference with an integrated plan and suggested focusing on three areas:

1. Physical security – such as computers to model problem areas, signage, and enhanced lighting, all done block by block.
2. Intangibles – including public relations, informing the public of changes, and thereby letting the lawbreakers know that the district is monitoring crime and creating the perception of safety. How do we spend money in human resources and do it wisely?
3. Establishment of baseline services with Chief of Police. For example, if 15% of current police resources are assigned to the French Quarter/Marigny area, 15% would have to remain in place at all times.

Some other ideas might include:

- The purchase of active police cars at a cost of \$25,000 (state contract for Crown Victorias) marked with FQ/M signage.
- Comprehensive plan could direct police based on up-to-date current information on “hot spots,” creating police patterns. Plan could integrate costly police with volunteers and rangers on foot.
- Install cameras throughout district and have them monitored.
- Tangibles of work such as GPS system to track the number of times patrol cars go by a specific area as proof that police are doing their part.
- Resources should be based on crime patterns within the District.

Mr. Dabdoub voiced concern that in District 8, criminal element is not necessarily coming from within the 8th District, so it will be incumbent upon us all to work with and rely on Captains in other districts to help fight crime in the 8th.

Nathan Chapman reiterated that residents want plan before the vote. He also voiced concern about how the district aligns with voting precincts.

Billy Guste did not think this would represent a problem but will check with Greg Rigamer (who he works with) for clarification.

Darryl Berger questioned the Board as to holding a fall 2009 election or a spring 2010 election (during the mayoral election). The consensus was for a fall 2009 election.

Kim Rosenberg stated that a vote could probably take place on October 17, or November 14, 2009.

As revised legislation for District has already been submitted to the Legislature. Darryl Berger stated that approval should come within next few weeks.

Review Proposed Legislation, cont.

Darryl Berger and Kim Rosenberg are working with Michael R. Schneider at Stone Pigman to write legislation and will have a pro-forma bill within 48 hours. It will include specific tiers:

Tier 1: \$185/yr. - Single Family/Single Condo up to four condos with no commercial

Tier 2: \$395/yr – 5 rental units or more; small commercial

Tier 3: 2.5 mills – major commercial; properties paying \$50,000 or more per year in property tax; minimum of \$1000 and maximum of \$15,000 added to tax bill

District and taxes to sunset June 30, 2014. Both additional legislation and a vote of the registered voters would be needed to extend the tax beyond 2014, or to increase the tax. If election held and passed in 2009, taxes begin in 2010. If we wait to hold election until 2010, taxes won't begin until 2011. A firm provision will be included for no increase without vote in 2014. Classification will be based on 2009 tax bill and fixed at that number for the duration of the taxes/assessments of the district.

Timeshares will be treated as condominiums per key or unit.

Single residential property paying \$50,000 or more will pay \$185/yr.

Purpose is two-fold:

1. Public Safety, security and crime prevention
2. Hiring of Executive Director

City imposes 1% to 2% for collection fees.

Marigny portion of District will get expenditures relatively proportionate with monies collected.

Must have reference to baseline services.

Ruth Burke said residents are worried about money going to the hotel district.

Sal Sunseri received message from MOM about having representation on Board. While they don't have a "seat," their membership is represented.

Coco Paddison asked about the Quality of life Court.

Steve Pettus stated that this type of Court would handle enforcement of noise ordinances, solicitation, barkers, T-Shirt shops, etc.

Discussions concerning District boundaries were discussed and questions arose as to whether the Board leaves boundaries as currently defined or changes boundaries to encompass entire Marigny Triangle/Marigny District.

Chris Costello voiced concerns of Marigny residents, which include:

- Residents don't believe they are currently getting basic levels of service.
- Residents fearful of loss of base services and want to know what is entailed in base services.
- It is believed that most security districts take in an entire district.
- Already have issues with the 5th and 8th districts.

Darryl Berger brought up 3 points:

- If the District expands, will it kill the vote?
- Should the District be kept as is?
- Should the Board consider a separate Marigny District?

Steve Pettus stated that just as the Marigny has concerns about getting base services, French Quarter residents and business don't believe they are getting appropriate services either.

Nathan Chapman asked if the Marigny could be separated from FQMAMD or perhaps as this body develops expertise, it could be considered at a later time.

Ruth Burke suggested creating a separate plan within the overall plan for the Marigny, with input from residents and businesses in this area.

Chris Costello commented on Marigny being distinct with its own issues.

Steve Pettus commented that it is important to realize the huge contribution businesses will make and yet they are willing for services to be spread throughout district rather than keeping it in the business district.

Lois Sutton suggested the importance of keeping the Marigny in the District as increasing safety in the French Quarter only has the potential of driving the criminal element into the Marigny business corridor.

Darryl Berger told the Board it could ask for a vote from the Marigny concerning whether to bifurcate, thus creating two different taxing districts; expand current FQMAMD District boundaries; or do nothing.

No vote was taken by the Board to make any changes to the current boundaries.

B. Development of Business Plan

Ruth Burke from MOM has offered to help with the business plan and made several recommendations.

1. Provide area map.
2. Include outline of assets and activities
3. Detail costs for implementation.
4. Need two-prong plan – what will happen immediately and long term
5. Spell out job of Executive Director, including role in acquiring additional funding and use of it.
6. Include process for educating the public prior to and after approval.

Ms. Burke also mentioned work done by Chuck Ransdell concerning costs for 24/7 private security detail.

Lois Sutton suggested putting plan and presentation online.

Plan needs to specify that there are exemptions for the elderly and poor who qualify as hardship cases and would be unable to pay the taxes/assessments created by a taxing district.

C Development of Informational/ Educational Plan

Need to get buy-in from all French Quarter/Marigny groups in support of taxing district.

Billy Guste mentioned that \$160,000 provided 24/7 patrol in Lakeview.

All agreed that it is imperative for vote to take place in 2009, and that we need to educate actual voters.

Kim Rosenberg suggested getting Chuck Ransdell to participate.

IV. Treasurer Report - None

V. Old Business

Officer signatures have been updated with Omni Bank.

VI. New Business

VII. Adjournment

Motion by Darryl Berger, seconded by Brett Smith to adjourn passed by unanimous vote.

Minutes submitted by Lois Sutton, secretary