



BioDistrict New Orleans
Board of Commissioners Meeting Minutes
December 5, 2024 | 2:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.
Location: New Orleans Business Alliance (NOLABA)
1250 Poydras St. Suite 2150 New Orleans, LA 70113

I Call to Order

The BioDistrict Board Meeting was called to order by Chairperson, Andy Kopplin at 2:20 pm.

II Roll Call

Commissioners Present: Emily Arata, Josh Fleig, Charlotte Parent, Andy Kopplin, Kaneisha Akinpelumi, Gregorie Tillery, Nicole Honoree, Michael Hecht

Commissioners Present via Zoom: N/A

Commissioners Absent: Sharon Courtney, Blake Stanfill, Arnel Cosey, Lowry Curley, Judith Dangerfield, Larissa Littleton-Steib

Quorum: Present

III Introduction of Guest(s)

NOLABA Attendees: Louis David (President & CEO), Andreas Pashos (Sr Dir Partnerships), Doug Porter (Marketing & Events), Jody Deffes (Director Accounting)

Others Present: Shaun Mena (LA State House Rep District 23), Rene Pastorek (DDD), Davon Barbour (DDD), Melody Chang (Broad Neighborhood Resident), Kris Khalil (NOBIC), Tyler Correa (DDD), Sharonda Williams[virtual] (Counsel to BioDistrict)

IV Adoption of Previous Board Meeting Minutes

Andy Kopplin requested the approval of the minutes from the previous BioDistrict board meeting on October 9, 2024. Charlotte Parent motioned for approval, and Michael Hecht seconded. There was no discussion or public comment and a vote on the motion was unanimously approved.

V Financial Report by NOLABA

Jody Deffes reported that the current balance in the BioDistrict account was \$1,566.00.

VI Chairperson's Report

a) Update on City Approval of BioDistrict Budgets for 2024 and 2025

Mr. Kopplin summarized that the City Council approved budget in October and the ordinance approving it was signed by Mayor. He said city economic development liaison Jeff Schwartz is working with city departments to send the approved funds to the BioDistrict. The legislative process is complete, Mr. Kopplin noted, and this is the bureaucrat process we are waiting on now. The city has collected the money and acknowledged they have it, and is going through final steps to send it.

Mr. Kopplin said that the BioDistrict had submitted its budget for 2025 to the City Council as part of the city-wide budget process. No questions or concerns were raised. The BioDistrict budget ordinance for 2025 is on the Council's agenda to be approved today. After receipt of the 2024 funds, the 2025 funds should then start to be delivered to the BioDistrict on a quarterly basis.

b) Authorization for the Chair to sign CEA with Downtown Development District for up to \$300,000 in 2024 funds to support landscaping work

Mr. Kopplin next introduced the CEA between the BioDistrict and the Downtown Development District (DDD) that covers landscape and tree canopy work to be completed in the Downtown portion of the BioDistrict prior to the Superbowl. He said the CEA has been reviewed by Sharonda Williams, BioDistrict counsel, as well as by counsel for DDD. Mr. Kopplin expressed his gratitude for Davon Barbour and Rene Pastorek of the DDD and Mr. Hecht, Leo John Arnett, and others on the team at GNO Inc. for their work to identify and move forward projects the BioDistrict can help implement. A list of projects has been provided to the board and Mr. Kopplin invited DDD and GNO to comment.

Mr. Barbour communicated his thanks for the confidence of the BioDistrict to work together with the DDD, and said the DDD is committed to the work of advancing the BioDistrict. Mr. Barbour shared a list of projects the DDD has been involved with the BioDistrict in undertaking: the BioDistrict strategic plan, as well as the NASA mural with Tulane University, sponsorship of the 2024 BioChallenge at NOBIC, adding BioDistrict banners, funding improvements, landscaping, lighting and placemaking in the district. Mr. Barbour reiterated that the DDD commitment to the BioDistrict is strong. This CEA is for enhanced landscaping in the district with vendors who are already in place.

Mr. Kopplin detailed the location of the projects to be funded under this CEA. He highlighted that DDD is doing a lot of work in the district at their own cost as well. Mr. Kopplin noted that future plans include improving bus shelters along Tulane Ave as well.

Mr. Kopplin offered time for questions or further comments. Mr. Hecht communicated the heightened excitement for all the improvements in the BioDistrict, and how the improvements are easily noticeable by the public. Nicole Honoree had a clarifying question related to the CEA and if it provided for additional services as noted in the agenda. Mr. Kopplin clarified it is for the presented limited scope for landscape and tree canopy enhancements. The agenda item highlighted a broader scope incorrectly.

Mr. Kopplin asked the public guests if they had any comments and Melody Chang responded with positive enthusiasm for what was presented.

Mr. Hecht mentioned that the RTA is in the process of doing a complete bus shelter upgrade project.

Mr. Kopplin requested the approval of the CEA with the DDD. Ms. Honoree motioned for approval, and Emily Arata seconded. There was no discussion or public comment and a vote on the motion was unanimously approved.

c) Authorization for the Chair to work with NOLABA staff to prepare and release requests for proposals for legal, public affairs, placemaking/public realm guidelines and communications/branding services

Mr. Kopplin noted that the BioDistrict in the future would want to seek external support in various aspects of the strategic plan, and Andreas Pashos at NOLABA would be able to support the board to develop RFPs that NOLABA could issue on behalf of the BioDistrict for such services consistent with the Strategic plan. NOLABA and Mr. Kopplin will work on those scopes to discuss with the board in a future meeting. If anyone on the board has any interest in volunteering for any of those efforts, that would be beneficial.

d) Update on the discussion with Delgado/STEM NOLA/Obatala Sciences regarding workforce training program

Mr. Kopplin explained this effort is around establishing a pharma manufacturing training program. He is currently looking for board member volunteers to help review and guide this project, but it is not ready to for funding at this time. Dr. Trivia Frazier, who leads Obatala Sciences and is focused on biomanufacturing has a need for such a workforce and helped lead this proposal with STEM NOLA and Delgado Community College. The goal would be to develop a training program with certification located at Delgado. Dr. Frazier will also be meeting with the Greater New Orleans Foundation workforce team to further develop this proposal and will coordinate future information sharing related to this project.

VII Partner Updates

There were no updates or public comment.

VIII Executive Session: Pending Litigation and Threatened Litigation (La. C.E. Art. 506)
Kinney v. The BioDistrict New Orleans, Orleans Parish Civil District Court No. 2022-11481

Mr. Kopplin requested to enter the executive session. Ms. Arata moved to approve the request, and Ms. Parent seconded the motion. There was no discussion or public comment. The motion was approved by the board.

Following the discussion in executive session, Mr. Kopplin requested to exit executive session. Ms. Parent moved to exit executive session, noting that no votes had been taken in executive session, and Ms. Honoree seconded the motion. There was no discussion or public comment. The motion was approved by the board and the board exited the executive session.

IX Consideration of approving any recommendations from BioDistrict Counsel regarding pending litigation

There were no recommendations by BioDistrict Counsel.

X New Business

There was no discussion or public comment.

XI Public Comment(s)

There was no discussion or public comment.

XII Adjournment

Mr. Kopplin moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Ms. Parent. The chair called for discussion and public comments, of which there were none, and the motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 2:57pm.
