

FSJNA Meeting
June 2, 2020
7pm via Zoom

Board Members Present: Antoine Claval, Jim Danner, Sally Main, Clark Thompson, Linda Landesberg, George Bartlett, Jeanie Donovan, Rocky Seydel, Steve Mardon, Greg Jeanfreau, Brenda London, Nancy Shepard, Beaux Jones, Bruce Hamilton

1. Call to Order 7:03pm

2. President's Update (5 min)

- Fortier Park
 - Proposed at the last meeting that while park is currently closed down, we are putting together a task force. If you're interested in joining please email Beaux at president@fsjna.org. Will be circulating a survey to the neighborhood about that.
- Moss St.
 - There has been a lot that's been circulated around related to this issue. Beaux talked to CM Giarusso's office. We should call the question and have a good discussion about visioning for Moss Street and its future. Hope that the city will make their position known as to the direction they want to take. FSJNA will help to convene a conversation.
 - 3101 Esplanade - Board voted virtually to execute cancellation of the prior Good Neighbor Agreement that was previously executed with The Half Shell. The provisos that were put in place currently restrict the type of business that can operate in that building. Need to clear up the paperwork, which we did, and it's Beaux's understanding that the sale went through.

3. Quick Board Business

- Approve May Minutes
 - Antoine calls for a motion to approve the May minutes, Linda seconds, with one change -Nancy Shepard was present at May meeting, passes without opposition
- Treasurer's Report
 - Still have a big chunk of funds that came out of a CD that we haven't yet put back into a CD. We're a little bit down on dues, but getting ready to do a membership push.
 - Linda: CD funds largely are not available for general expenditures as \$59,900 is restricted Re-Bridge funds and \$11,680+ is an emergency fund, both were in CDs.
 - Circulated the proposed 2020 budget, we were waiting to get certainty on Bayou Boogaloo and you will see gap in budget due to cancellation

4. Guests/Current Topics

- District A Councilmember Giarrusso
 - City got budget numbers yesterday and the city is doing well in some areas
 - Personnel budget projection - slated to save nearly \$19.5M in operating costs for the budget through not hiring people
 - Revenue collection report - because of increased property assessments, the city has collected almost \$26M more in property taxes than this time last year
 - Approved the Harrah's hotel and half of that payment (about \$23M) has been made already and they are expecting the second half by the end of the year.
 - Sales tax collection this year, end of April we're close to \$42M.
 - Next Thurs, Public Works meeting at 10am with S&WB, rescheduled from this past Weds because S&WB did not get complete answers to the questions the City Council has posted, sent S&WB the draft back and asked for additional information.
 - On Moss Street - the issue that kicked this off was Marconi, which was handled incorrectly with lack of public engagement. I voiced objections to Moss St. because it was being done during COVID. It's time to do something to begin with - we passed an ordinance on Complete Streets eight years ago that set policies and procedures on how cars and pedestrians and cyclists can all work together. The City still doesn't have clear policies to implement the Complete Streets policies, including a public input process and data requirements. Survey says that 87% of people are in support of the change, but there is some self selection and not clear that it was distributed widely. He is meeting with Public Works to talk about this issue and other issues (ditching on Fortin Street) to check in on where we are on all of these things. If there is an ordinance on the books, it's important that it be implemented.
 - Question: Jack Carey -
 - Agrees with the need for a transparent process. There is not a false choice between cars or a totally blocked off street, but the answer is somewhere in the middle. We do need process, but we also need safety. What are the intermediate steps, what can be done now while the process kicks off.
 - Answer: Joe G - Moss St. was scheduled for some traffic calming measures and still working with DPW to find out status. Speed bumps are not an option. There seems to be a generational issue, younger people who are walking or who have children seem to more worried about this compared to those who have been there longer. Is there a traffic circle concept that can slow things down?
 - Question: Conrad Abadie
 - Has heard that the funding for the turbine replacement is not available.
 - Answer: Joe G - the short version is that the turbine costs \$20M and S&WB says they don't have that money. City Council is trying to figure

out where we can find the money. SWB is talking about taking turbine 6 and changing the frequency. Or, buy turbine 7 in a lease-buy relationship.

- Representative Matthew Willard
 - Legislature adjourned its regular session yesterday and began 1st extraordinary session.
 - 41 items are listed in the special session call, the Speaker of the House and Senate president put together a task force to address ramifications of COVID-19. The task force came up with a lot of ideas for legislative instruments which will be considered during the special session. It will be a very quick session, a lot of bad bills will be rammed through, has a lot of concerns
 - The mayor put out a press release relating to the Corona Virus CARES Act funding, the Act dedicates \$811M to local governments. The Legislature added an amendment to take \$300M of that away and give to businesses. They also moved the deadline for local governments to apply up to September. When you look around the state, many parishes and cities were not affected greatly by COVID, so they wanted local businesses to have an opportunity to get some of that money. The Orleans delegation voted for the bill the first time it passed. The conference committee could not reach an agreement that was favorable for the city, so we did vote against it, and now it's up to the governor whether to sign it into law or whether to veto it. It did not receive 70 votes in the House so likely wouldn't be overridden.
 - State is moving into Phase 2 on Saturday, but Mayor Cantrell decided that city is not ready to move to next phase.
- NOPD 1st District / Fair Grounds Patrol - Captain Roberts not present.
- Fair Grounds – Virgil Duplessis- Not present
- Stephen Mosgrove – Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Engagement
 - Affirm Rep. Willard's points about Senate Bill 189. Relates to the city's financial standing. Much of what the mayor and city CAO are focused on is sustainability for the rest of 2020 and into 2021, with the assumption that the federal dollars will not reach the city. The initial concern from the administration is that the CARES Act money that was provided to cities and states had limits on how directly the dollars can go to the city. We've had to watch the state and see what allocation will be sent to the city, so the mayor is working on assumptions that the city won't get funding which isn't a cynical view but she's working within the reality.
 - Moss St - the players in the administration who are focused on slow streets concept and other things are the Mayor's office of transportation and public works. They loop me in and the neighborhood engagement piece is important to them and they're trying to figure it out in terms of the data they now have and trying to figure out whether it worked and how to engage further. Marconi

was a misstep, was some miscommunication about that project was going to look like and we've acknowledged that we didn't engage properly.

- Encourage everyone to think about hurricane preparedness in the context of COVID. If anyone would like the presentation given at the May 26 roundtable, Stephen will forward the presentation to Beaux.
- This is a Census year and the parish is a little low on response rate (52% range) the census tracts that cover the FSJNA area reveal a 49-54% response rate, encouraging everyone to respond to the Census. Census response is key to federal funding calculations. It's really important to the city this year because due to Katrina, the 2010 census was not a strong census year for the city.

5. Questions from Membership

Dawn Wesson: There's been a recent re-emergence of small fast boats on the bayou, gasoline motors are banned on the bayou, and it used to be that they were electric but the small boats are now electric. They harm and distract wildlife. Hoping there might be some consensus that we try to ban these things from the bayou.

Beaux - the water in the bayou is under the authority of the Dept of Wildlife and Fisheries and Beaux will check with them to get their thoughts.

April: Slow streets is similar to the request that Dawn is making re: quality of life. About Fortier Park - I wasn't here for that, is there a plan to take the gate down?

Beaux: There is not a plan to take it down, we haven't had a discussion about when Parks and Parkway will reopen the park, Beaux anticipates it will be in Phase 2.

6. Other Updates/Discussion Topics

- Beaux - on Moss Street: encourage us to compartmentalize concerns about the path forward, there is general traffic safety, slow streets, and complete streets. Important that safety is the primary concern.
- Bayou Fourth of July - there is no permit for any part on the Bayou - Sally saw mention of fireworks party on 4th of July, will send screenshot of that facebook chatter to Beaux
- Sally Main - according to her data, it appears that the slow streets created more of a problem than a safety benefit for bicycles as it pushed more people in the designated bike lane. City has not released the full survey and data set.

7. Additional Board Business (20 min)

- Approve 2020 Budget
 - Bayou Boogaloo usually brings in 6-12K per year typically. We originally thought it would be postponed, but seems like it was cancelled.

- Currently showing a 3K loss, going to try to continue to increase membership, getting business memberships up, going to be working on some handouts that will go out and try to walk them around neighbor by neighbor.
- Bounty on the Bayou - we all hope we're back to trick or treating in October, we don't know if that will happen.
- Linda - how much money do we have in our bank account? \$74K, some are restricted funds but we can survive losing \$3k this year.
- Once we have more certainty we can adjust, if we have events we can raise more and we can also spend less due to COVID.
- George Bartlett makes a motion to approve budget, Clark seconded, approved without objection.

8. Next meeting: Membership & Board meeting – Tuesday, July 07, 7 pm, Zoom or Haus

9. Motion to Adjourn 8:02pm - Motion to adjourn by Antoine, seconded by Jeanie, passes without opposition.