

Board Meeting

August 19, 2025

St. Landry Parish Economic and Industrial Development District

Business Resource Center

5367 I-49 S. Service Road

Opelousas, LA 70570

Agenda

- I. WELCOMEChairman, Seth Robin
- II. PLEDGE
- III. ROLL CALL
- IV. PUBLIC COMMENTS, VIA COMMENT CARDS- Limit of 3 Minutes
- V. ADOPTION OF JUNE 2025 REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES
- VI. FINANCIALS, JULY 2025..... Treasurer – John Hamlin
 - a. CD ACCOUNT RENEWAL
 - b. 2024/25 AUDIT ENGAGEMENT LETTER
- VII. BOARD AND COMMITTEE NOTES
 - a. SLED EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE NOTES
 - b. CSLED MEETING NOTES
 - c. ODD MEETING NOTES
- VIII. OLD BUSINESS
 - a. WALMART PROJECT ROSIE PILOT AGREEMENT (UPDATE)
 - b. SLED BY-LAW CHANGE
 - c. SLED BOARD MEMBER VACANCY
 - d. 2025 – 2026 LBIA GRANT APPLICATION
 - e. ST LANDRY PROFESSIONALS (THE SLP)
- IX. NEW BUSINESS
 - a. SLED BUSINESS CENTER EMERGENCY REPAIR
- X. BOARD COMMENTS
- XI. ADJOURN

Voting Members Present: Seth Robin, Andy Dakin, Devin McKnight, Kevin Doucet, Perry Fontenot, Chelsey Sharplin, John Hamlin, Juan Joseph, Thurman Johnson, Toni Effinger, Susan Vigee, Donald Dejean

Voting Members Absent: **Lena** Charles, Erika Milton, Daniel Lyons,

SLED Staff Members Present: Bill Rodier, Janece Riser, Brittany Cretchain, Victoria Mott

Guests: Anthony Gradney (Opelousas General Hospital), Herman Fuselier (SLP Tourism),

It was determined a quorum was present.

Chairman Seth Robin opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance and welcomed the board at 10:06 AM.

Lena Charles was marked present at 10:15 AM.

Candace Papillion was marked present at 10:23 AM.

Public Comments: None.

Adoption of June 17, 2025, Regular Board Meeting Minutes: A motion was made to accept the June 17, 2025, board meeting minutes as submitted by Donald Dejean and seconded by Thurman Johnson. The motion was carried without objection.

July 2025 Financial Report: Dr. John Hamlin reviewed the financial report, highlighting the expenditures and revenues of July 2025 noting that the that there was it was a pretty common month related to financial incomes and expenditures.

Bill Rodier informed the board that a large percentage of Bruce Gaudin's fees indicated in this financial report were related to services associated with the Walmart PILOT. He noted that they are working to get the fees associated with the project as well as Eric LaFleur's fees associated with the project reimbursed with hopes that this will happen before the end of the year.

Susan Vigee made a motion to accept the financial report for July 2025, seconded by Perry Fontenot. The motion carried without objection.

CD Account Renewal: Bill Rodier reported that the CD at Bank of Sunset is up for renewal on August 23. The bank has offered renewal options at 4% for either a 6-month or 12-month term. He also explained the distinction between how banks treat standard individual funds versus public funds.

Susan Vigee moved to approve renewing the CD at Bank of Sunset at 4% for a 12-month term. Chelsey Sharplin seconded, and the motion carried without objection. Andy Dakin abstained.

2025 Audit Engagement Letter: Bill Rodier presented the audit engagement letter from Vige, Tujague, and Noel in the amount of \$8,000 and the Compliance Questionnaire in the amount of \$2,000 for a total of \$10,000. As well as a proposal from JS Dowling for their portion of the audit with the amount of up to \$4,000. Mr. Rodier noted these costs are consistent with last year's. A motion was made by Devin Manuel to accept the proposals from Vige, Tujague, and Noel and JS. Dowling for audit services and seconded by Andy Dakin. Motion carried without objection.

COMMITTEE NOTES:

Executive Committee: Bill Rodier explained that most items brought before the full board are first reviewed and vetted by the Executive Committee to gather input and recommendations. He highlighted the approval of the new tenant, Anchored Scholars, an organization that supports parents and students in the public school system through various initiatives, noting they are scheduled to move in on September 1. He also mentioned several topics on the full board agenda, including a board member vacancy, a by-law amendment, and the LBIA grant. Lastly, he discussed the potential need for temporary staffing to address a shortage while an employee is out on maternity leave.

CSLEDD: Bill Rodier provided an update on the August CSLEDD meeting. He noted that they are still awaiting the Attorney General's opinion regarding ownership of the wastewater treatment facility. He explained that the next phase of the project will double the size of the existing facility and extend service under I-49 to support development on that side. A future phase will extend wastewater lines north and south along Harry Guilbeaux Road, covering the one-mile stretch between I-49 and Highway 182.

He also reported that the CSLEDD I-49 lighting project is moving forward. This project, a 90/10 match with the state, had originally been scheduled for fiscal year 2030. However, because other applicants lacked matching funds, DOTD advanced the timeline. As a result, the Washington Lighting Project may occur earlier than the initially projected 2032–2033 timeframe.

Mr. Rodier shared highlights from the recent Show Pig Sale at the Equine Center, where the highest piglet sold for \$17,000. He also discussed upcoming events at the Equine Sales and Event Center, including JAG Equine Day, which will introduce 60–80 students to various equine careers.

Brittany Cretchain added that the Equine Center will host a Christmas Market on December 14 from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. She encouraged anyone interested in being a vendor to contact Wendy Fryer at 337-501-5575.

ODDD: Lena Charles Lena Charles provided a brief update on the South Park Project, noting that significant progress is being made and excitement is building. She highlighted that the turf for the track will be unique, unlike any other in the area. She added that she has been hoping for lower temperatures and no hurricanes to help expedite the project's completion.

Mrs. Charles also reported that the ODDD board has formed a committee to explore potential catalyst projects for the downtown area. The committee's goal is to gain a clearer understanding of the board's role under its founding legislation, establish criteria and rules, and define priorities—particularly in light of the growing number of requests for ODDD participation in various projects.

Additionally, she reaffirmed ODDD's willingness to support the City's Code Enforcement efforts in advancing ordinance updates.

Bill Rodier added that properties such as the Federal Building, the former New Life Center, and the Old Palace Café could serve as major catalyst projects for ODDD and raised the question of whether there might also be a role for SLED in supporting them.

OLD BUSINESS

Walmart Project Rosie PILOT Agreement Update: Bill Rodier reported that Louisiana Economic Development (LED) approved a performance-based grant to Walmart of up to \$10 million, tied to wage and job retention requirements at the distribution center. This grant, already approved by the LED Secretary, is separate from the Project Rosie agreement.

He explained that Project Rosie involves upgrading technology and capacity within the facility to manage and distribute goods to more than 120 stores across Louisiana. The facility does not handle cold goods. At a special meeting held in late June, the parish proposed abating state sales tax through a PILOT agreement; however, no quorum was present, and no vote could be taken on whether SLED would support the proposal.

Effective July 1, the Governor's new executive order requires that any parish-level PILOT abating state sales tax must be approved by both the Secretary of LED and the Secretary of Revenue. The parish subsequently submitted a formal request to LED to abate state sales tax for Project Rosie. The LED Secretary denied the request, citing the \$10 million retention grant as sufficient state support.

As a result, attention returned to the Rosie PILOT agreement. According to Mr. Lafleur, the current proposal to Walmart includes a 50/50 personal property tax abatement on the new equipment for Project Rosie. While final numbers are not yet available, it was indicated that 7% of the abatement would be directed back to SLED through a separate CEA or similar agreement, leaving 43% for to be returned to the dedicated taxing entities through distribution by the Sheriffs Tax Property Tax Collection Office. Mr. Rodier noted that Walmart has expressed interest in keeping the SLED payment separate from the PILOT agreement but that this level of detail is preliminary and subject to change.

SLED By-Law Change: Seth Robin explained that he had originally hoped to introduce the proposed change at this meeting and bring it to a vote in September. However, the requested language revisions were not completed in time. He noted that SLED will continue working with Bruce Gaudin to finalize the details for revising the approval process for new PILOT projects, ensuring that all affected parties, including taxing authorities, are informed and engaged in the discussions. He anticipates presenting the revisions at the September SLED board meeting, with a vote to follow in October. Andy Dakin clarified that the change does not necessarily need to be introduced at a meeting; it only needs to be provided to the board in writing at least 10 days prior to the meeting where the action will be considered.

SLED Board Member Vacancy: Bill Rodier reminded the board that Kevin Fuselier officially resigned from the SLED Board, effective August 1, 2025. Mr. Rodier explained that this seat's appointing authority was the LMA and by the time the seat is filled at the November meeting and the expiration is in December. He added he would recommend the board leave the seat vacant until the expiration in December. The board acknowledged that the seat would remain vacant for the remainder of 2025.

2025-2026 LBIA Grant Application:

Bill Rodier reviewed the LBIA grant process and proposed that the 2025–2026 project focus on upgrading audio-visual technology in the open area. He noted that the only quote that was received from multiple requests was from Lanclos TV in the amount of \$34959.18. A motion to proceed with the 2025–2026 LBIA Grant Application was made by Devin Manual and seconded by Susan Vigee. The motion carried without objection.

St Landry Professionals (The SLP) – Brittany Cretchain announced that the first event of the SLP program will be held on Tuesday, September 23, 2025, at Toby's Downtown at 5:30 p.m. She emphasized that the event is open to individuals ages 21 to 45 from all industries and is not limited to St. Landry Parish but welcomes participants from surrounding parishes as well.

Ms. Victoria Mott noted that flyers have been distributed by email and in print, and she encouraged all board members to help promote the program. She also advised that there may be opportunities for board members to mentor participating young professionals.

NEW BUSINESS

SLED Business Center Emergency Repair:

Bill Rodier reported that the HVAC system leaked water over a weekend, flooding part of the open area, the cave, and an adjacent office. Fairway Flooring responded by removing the damaged flooring and baseboards to allow the spaces to dry completely. He presented two quotes provided by Fairway for the necessary repairs.

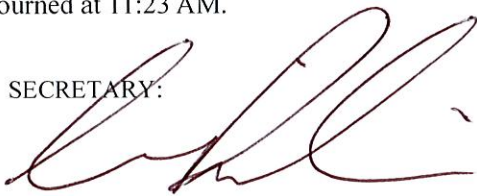
Janece Riser noted that she had reached out to other flooring companies but had not received any responses. Don Dejean inquired about the organization's quote and bid policies, which led to a discussion regarding both policies and flooring options. Andy Dakin expressed concern that additional effort had not been made to secure comparable quotes. Further discussion followed.

A motion was made by Andy Dakin to table the project to allow extra time to seek out additional quotes on the repair. The motion was seconded by Kevin Doucet. Motion carried without objection.

Board Comments: Mrs. Lena asked about the bathroom renovation project. Janece Riser advised the board that the architect who had done then proposed renovation drawings had been contacted but SLED had not received the drawings nor any kind of probable cost estimates.

With no further matters to be brought before the board, a motion to adjourn was made by Candace Papillion and seconded by Kevin Doucet. The motion passed without objection, and the meeting adjourned at 11:23 AM.

SECRETARY:



Candace Papillion

CHAIRMAN:



Seth Robin