

Minutes of April 24th, 2026

ODDD Board Meeting



Board Meeting

Date and Time: April 24 , 2026, at 9:00 a.m.

Meeting Place: 5367 I-49 S. Service Road
Opelousas, LA 70570

AGENDA

1. Welcome
2. Pledge and Opening Prayer
3. Roll Call
4. ODDD Business Recognition Program: CASA of St. Landry-Evangeline, Inc
5. Public Comments – Limit to 3 Minutes
6. Approval of March 20, 2026, Meeting Minutes
7. Monthly Financial Report
8. Executive Report
9. **Old Business:**
 - a) Vacant Structures Ordinance Update- Lance Ned
 - b) M&M Associates –ConnectLA/South Park Community Center Update
 - c) South Park Project Update- Chris Rideau and Mayor Julius Alsandor
 - d) Brownfield Coalition Update – Brittany Cretchain
 - e) Community Foundation of Acadiana
 - f) 2026 BIG Grant Program Update
10. New Business
 - a) Approval of Attorney General Request
11. Board Member Comments
12. Adjourn

The following members were present in person: Lena Charles, Don D’Avy, Pat Fontenot, Sarah Branton, Stephen Daste, Ogden Pitre

The following members were absent: Rob Hillard

The following SLED members were present: Janece Riser, Victoria Mott

The following guests were present: Marcus Bruno, Herman Fuselier, Madelyn Rosette, Teresa Reaves, Orlando Jack, Julius Alsandor

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Chairwoman Lena Charles welcomed the board and guests, opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance, and prayer at 9:05 AM.

It was determined that a quorum was present.

ODDD Business Recognition Program: Chairwoman Lena recognized CASA of St. Landry and Evangelin, Inc as the ODDD Business of the Month for April 2026.

Public Comments: None.

Approval of March 20, 2026, Meeting Minutes: Don D'Avy noted that there was a missing motion for the participation of representatives to attend the. Sarah Branton made a motion to accept the March 20th, 2026, meeting minutes with the necessary corrections. Pat Fontenot seconded the motion, and it carried without objection.

Monthly Financial Report: Janece Riser presented the financial update, including a review of the balance sheet and revenues and expenditures through January. Pat Fontenot made a motion to approve the financial report as presented. Rob Hillard seconded the motion, and it carried without objection.

Executive Director Report: Bill Rodier was not in attendance to give a report.

OLD BUSINESS

Vacant Structure Ordinance Update: Lance Ned was not in attendance to give a report.

Community Center Update- M&M Associates: Marcus Bruno of M&M Associates reported that the South Park Community Center project remains on schedule for completion by the end of the year. The metal building, along with prefabricated roof and wall panels, is currently in production and is expected to arrive within three to six weeks. Foundation formwork has been established, materials are on site, and excavation and footing preparation are underway, with rebar installation and concrete work to follow. It was further confirmed that all matters are in order with Connect Louisiana regarding the project.

South Park Project Update: During the South Park projects update, Mayor Alsandor highlighted several recreational initiatives and events associated with the park and the new

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stadium. He announced a groundbreaking ceremony scheduled for May 13 at 10:00 a.m. for the construction of new pickleball courts, in partnership with Creswell Elementary, noting that United Healthcare will provide pickleball paddles to approximately 150 students. He further reported strong utilization of the stadium, including parish meetings, tournaments, and an upcoming Dream Academy youth event designed to expose participants to multiple sports.

Discussion also addressed scheduling and staffing capacity. It was noted that a new contract with Chuck Hebert will assist in securing events and supporting park operations, while the City's Parks and Recreation Department will retain oversight and continue to prioritize facility use for local schools.

Brownfield Coalition Update: Lena Charles discussed progress on the Chateau De Maisons project as part of the broader coalition efforts. It was reported that initial interior cleanup and limited demolition activities have commenced, with significant assistance from the City in debris removal. The project manager has obtained a cost estimate for the full cleanup and rehabilitation and is actively pursuing permanent funding sources to support the project.

It was further noted that Opelousas serves as the lead city in the Brownfield Coalition, which includes Ville Platte, Eunice, Abbeville, and other participating communities. Additionally, ODDD has been formally designated, through documentation executed by the Mayor, to represent Opelousas as the lead entity within the coalition.

Community Foundation of Acadiana: The Board reviewed progress on establishing an account with the Community Foundation of Acadiana, including the previously approved initial organizational contribution of \$10,000. It was clarified that ODDD will not directly receive contributions related to the South Park project (e.g., a referenced \$5,000 donation); rather, such funds will be deposited into the Community Foundation account.

The account will be governed by a separate nonprofit foundation, which will be responsible for authorizing disbursements. Funds will be released to the City for specific project components as needed (e.g., upon request by the Mayor for playground-related work). This structure is intended to maintain a clear, arm's-length process whereby invoices prompt disbursements from the Foundation to the City, ensuring transparency, accountability, and continuity beyond current leadership.

2026 BIG Grant Program Update: Sarah Branton reported that only one completed application had been received to date, although approximately eight to nine businesses had requested information or assistance. In response, and to better align with an upcoming Main

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Street event at the end of May, Pat Fontenot made the motion to approve extending the application deadline from April 30 to May 30. Ogden Pitre seconded the motion, and it carried without objection.

It was recommended that the revised deadline be widely publicized, including through social media and other outreach efforts, to increase awareness and encourage additional submissions. The Board also agreed to place the revised Big Grant guidelines, along with the “Catalyst Big Grant” version, on the agenda for the next meeting for further discussion and potential adoption.

New Business:

Approval of Attorney General Request: Lena Charles informed the Board that she had spoken with Philip Sherman and that the letter requesting an opinion from the Attorney General has been prepared. She noted that a formal resolution is required to accompany the request, confirming that the Board is seeking guidance regarding the legality of ODDD entering into a public-private agreement for catalyst loans. Don D’Avy made a motion to move forward with a resolution for the Attorney General request. Stephen Daste seconded the motion, and it carried without objection.

Board Member Comments: Don D’Avy reminded members that their Louisiana Board of Ethics financial disclosure forms are due by May 15, noted that a new version of the form is now in use, and offered to provide a copy, with Janece Riser to distribute it via email to all members.

Sarah Branton reported that Main Street is in the process of closing on the two remaining Court Street buildings, resulting in all three donated properties being sold. She also outlined upcoming initiatives, including an economic summit planned for September in collaboration with CPEX, Place & Main, and Main Street, as well as a potential micro-business support program through Main Street America.

Additional comments from staff (Janece Riser and Brittany Cretchain) and Lena Charles highlighted recent and upcoming workshops and events, including an arts expo, financial literacy programming, an AI session, and activities associated with Economic Development Week. It was also noted that SLCC is planning a culinary program and facility in Opelousas, which the Board recognized as a significant opportunity for economic and workforce development within the corridor and the parish.

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Adjournment: With no further business to bring before the board, a motion to adjourn was made by Pat Fontenot and seconded by Ogden Pitre. The motion carried without objection and the meeting adjourned at 10:03 AM.



Secretary Stephen Daste



Chairperson Lena Charles

