

May 21, 2018

Chris Masingill named CEO of STPDD

Economic development commission shifts focus, welcomes new leadership

(Mandeville, La.) — After a five-month intensive search, the St. Tammany Parish Development District (STPDD) Board of Commissioners has hired Chris Masingill as its new chief executive officer. Masingill, who previously served as federal co-chairman of the Delta Regional Authority (DRA), will head STPDD as it assumes the role of the lead economic development organization (EDO) in St. Tammany Parish.

"I am grateful to the Board of Commissioners for the opportunity to lead this organization and its talented staff," Masingill said. "St. Tammany's incredible range of assets and the support demonstrated by business and community leaders impressed me from the start. In stepping into this role, I hope to reinforce existing partnerships and re-evaluate our strategies for promoting economic prosperity. Together, we can strengthen the parish's position as an economic driver in the American South."

As a U.S. Senate-confirmed presidential appointee, Masingill served as the federal co-chairman of the DRA from 2010-2017. The DRA works to improve regional economic opportunity by helping to create jobs, build communities and improve the lives of the 10 million people who reside in the 252 counties and parishes of the eight-state Delta region. As federal co-chairman, Masingill answered to a board composed of the governors of the eight states.

In Masingill's seven years as federal co-chairman, the DRA leveraged more than \$90 million in DRA funds into nearly \$1.6 billion in total private- and public-sector investments in Delta communities. Overall, DRA investments under Masingill assisted in the creation and retention of more than 5,700 jobs. Almost 3,000 workers received training for 21st-century employment.

He has a proven track record of creating sustainable, collaborative partnerships with a variety of local, federal and state agencies, as well as with business and community leaders, legislators and nonprofit organizations. As part of his plan to increase the DRA's transparency, accountability and program capacity, Masingill instituted a strategic and proactive communications program to increase stakeholder and public awareness of the DRA.

Marty Mayer, vice-president of the STPDD Board of Commissioners and chairman of the CEO Search Committee, said, "When we identified the qualifications for an ideal candidate, we wanted to appoint someone with a clear vision, unparalleled communications abilities and high-level leadership experience. This ideal candidate would identify, address and overcome the challenges faced in the economic development field while prioritizing the wellbeing of both residents and industry. Chris Masingill's proven track record of engaging diverse audiences and the enthusiasm he brought to the interview process



solidified him as that ideal candidate. This organization deserves the best-suited leader, and I believe we found him.”

STPDD is a political subdivision of the State of Louisiana. It was created by the Louisiana Legislature in 1992 to foster business development and advance sustainable commerce. From 1992-2017, the Board of Commissioners’ chief function was to issue bonds to business development projects.

Beginning in January 2018, STPDD expanded by hiring a full staff and assuming the responsibilities of the lead EDO for the parish. The private, nonprofit organization that previously led economic development in St. Tammany dissolved in December 2017.

President Bill Davis of the STPDD Board of Commissioners said, “St. Tammany Parish is poised for smart, healthy growth. Under Chris’s leadership, the District will guide that growth toward a sustainable, best-case scenario for St. Tammany Parish, its residents and its neighbors.”

Masingill served as a resident scholar for the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta, where he advised and collaborated with the Bank’s Community and Economic Development Department on research and policy for workforce development, small business and community investments. He also worked as a business consultant and strategic advisor for a multi-million-dollar Arkansas housing development company.

For his leadership in advancing economic development initiatives in the Delta region, Masingill was presented the Federal Leadership in Economic Development Programs Award in 2015 by the International Economic Development Council (IEDC).

Prior to leading the DRA, Masingill served the state of Arkansas as Governor Mike Beebe’s director of intergovernmental affairs and chief policy advisor for economic and community development. During that time, he was also tasked to serve as the Arkansas recovery implementation director for the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009.

His key areas of expertise include economic development; community revitalization and creative placemaking; small business development and entrepreneurship; workforce training and development; disaster recovery and resilience; public safety and law enforcement; and strategic organizational management and planning.

Masingill holds a Bachelor of Science in Social Science with a minor in business administration from Texas Wesleyan University. He also holds professional designations for economic development, project management and emergency management and disaster preparedness.

He will relocate to St. Tammany from Little Rock, Ark. to take charge of STPDD.

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About St. Tammany Parish Development District (STPDD)

STPDD is a political subdivision of the state of Louisiana created by the Legislature in 1992 to foster business development and advance sustainable commerce. STPDD leads economic development in St. Tammany, attracting and retaining employment opportunities in the area. We seek to improve parish residents’ quality of life by strengthening and supporting the business climate. For more information, call STPDD at (985) 809-7874 or visit www.stpdd.org.