

**St. Tammany Parish Development District
Board of Commissioners Meeting
Minutes | August 17, 2026**

Present: Chair Joan Coffman, Vice Chair, Mimi Dossett, Treasurer Paul Myers, Sandy Badinger, Elder Brown III, Dr. Jim Carlson, Ross Lagarde, Louis Ochoa, Eric Schouest, Eric Singletary

Absent: Sean Burkes

Staff: Russell Richardson, Ashley Llewellyn, Kyle Buckley, Sharon DeLong, Kristin Durand (virtual), Keith Espadron, Erin Prince, Tyler Miller, Shiv Thakor

Counsel: Mark Balkin | Hardy Carey Chautin & Balkin; Phil Sherman | Adams & Reese (virtual)

Guests: Tim Burns & Vincent Abdo | Florida Marine Transporters

Parish Officials: President Mike Cooper, Councilwoman Cheryl Tanner, Councilman Joe Impastato, Doyle Fillastre CFO of St. Tammany Coroner's office, and Mary Burkell, St. Tammany Parish Council Administrator, Sam Caruso, Jr. of The Campaign Group, and Annie Perkins of St. Tammany Parish Government Director of Finance.

Call to Order

Chair Joan Coffman called the meeting to order at 3:04 p.m., noting that a quorum was present.

Public Comment Period

Chair Joan Coffman opened the floor for public comment on any agenda item. No comments were received from the public.

Consent Agenda

The Consent Agenda included the June BOC minutes, June & July YTD Financial Statement. *With no requested revisions, the Consent Agenda was approved on a motion by Sandy Badinger, seconded by Dr. Jim Carlson. The motion carried.*

Presentation: The State of the City | Mayor of Slidell, Randy Fandal

Mayor Randy Fandal provided the Board with an update on the continued growth, development, and infrastructure improvements taking place throughout the City of Slidell. Mayor Fandal's update highlighted significant private investment, job creation, public safety improvements, recreational development, drainage infrastructure, and transportation and trail connectivity projects that are underway or planned throughout the City of Slidell.

Fremaux Town Center

Fremaux Town Center has entered its second phase of construction. Installation of lighting throughout the development is anticipated to be completed by November 1, 2026.

SBBA Fields / Travel Ball Complex

The City of Slidell has purchased the former SBBA fields. The property is expected to be transformed into an eight-field travel ball complex located near Fremaux Town Center, further expanding recreational opportunities and supporting the area's continued development.

Textron Facility

The City recently sold the 1010 Gause building to Textron for \$3.4 million. Textron plans to expand its operations at their Stone Road manufacturing facility, with the expansion expected to create more than 100 high-paying jobs, with a particular need for skilled welders.

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Northshore Mall

The Mayor provided an update on the Northshore Mall redevelopment. Acquistapace has purchased and is remodeling a portion of the currently vacant retail space. Plans include a large grocery store and additional retail outlets, representing a significant investment in the revitalization of the mall property.

New Slidell Police Department

A pre-construction meeting was held earlier that day for the City's planned \$17 million, state-of-the-art Slidell Police Department facility. Groundbreaking is anticipated to take place within approximately two weeks. The new facility will provide a modern headquarters to support the City's police department and public safety operations.

Drainage and Bayou Patassat

Mayor Fandal reported that the city continues to work on addressing drainage concerns associated with the area. Phase I of the Bayou Patassat construction project is expected to begin soon and is intended to provide improvements to the City's drainage infrastructure.

Tammany Trace Extension to Heritage Park

Mayor Fandal concluded his update with progress on the City's efforts to extend the Tammany Trace into Heritage Park. Recent discussions with the railroad have resulted in movement toward removing the existing rail line. The City plans to sell the rail for salvage following its removal. The Mayor expressed optimism that the Tammany Trace extension into Heritage Park, along with a new trailhead, could be completed within approximately two years. The project is expected to enhance recreational opportunities, connectivity, and access to Heritage Park.

Presentation: 1/4 Cent Sales Tax Election for Public Safety | Sam Caruso, Jr.

Sam Caruso, Jr. presented information regarding the upcoming St. Tammany Parish 1/4-cent sales tax election for public safety, which is scheduled for the December election. Mr. Caruso represents an organization that assists in efforts to successfully pass revenue measures.

Mr. Caruso presented a video outlining the merits of the proposed 1/4-cent sales tax and its intended purpose of providing funding for the Parish's public safety needs, including the Criminal Justice Center.

Annie Perkins, Director of Finance, provided additional financial information regarding the Parish's current revenue structure. Ms. Perkins explained that approximately 96% of Parish revenues are dedicated to specific taxing districts and are restricted from being moved or utilized for other purposes. Approximately 2% of Parish revenue is currently available to fund the Criminal Justice Center.

It was further explained that restricted funds cannot be redirected to provide additional funding for the Criminal Justice Center. A change in the funding structure would require approval by the voters.

Mr. Caruso and Ms. Perkins also provided comparative tax information, noting that St. Tammany Parish ranks 15th out of 64 parishes in property tax rates and 56th out of 64 parishes in sales tax rates.

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Following the presentation, the group was encouraged to vote YES on the proposed 1/4-cent sales tax in the upcoming December election to provide dedicated funding for the Criminal Justice Center and support the Parish's public safety needs.

Old Business-None

New Business

Resolution: Florida Marine Transporters – Vessel Reconveyance

Kyle Buckley presented a request regarding the reconveyance of certain vessels associated with Florida Marine Transporters (FMT) under the District's PILOT program.

FMT has participated in the District's PILOT program since 2006 and periodically temporarily conveys vessels out of the program for refinancing and other financing purposes. Under the applicable Bareboat Charter, vessels must generally be reconveyed to the District within 60 days to maintain their eligibility under the program.

Due to a delay in financing, FMT was unable to reconvey seven vessels within the required 60-day period. FMT requested that the District waive the applicable penalty and accept the return of the seven vessels so they could remain subject to the PILOT program through 2035. District special counsel, Adams & Reese LLP, reviewed the records and documents supporting the request.

The resolution waives the penalty provision associated with the missed 60-day reconveyance requirement and approves the reconveyance of the seven vessels to the District for tax years 2026 through 2035. The resolution also authorizes designated District officers to execute the necessary reconveyance documents and related agreements, subject to review and approval by Adams & Reese LLP.

The matter was presented as a housekeeping action related to maintaining the existing PILOT eligibility of vessels. The Board considered the resolution approving the transfer and reconveyance of the seven vessels. *Dr. Jim Carlson, seconded by Eric Schouest, moved to approve the resolution as stated. A roll call vote was taken, and all Commissioners present voted in favor of approving the resolution authorizing the reconveyance of the seven vessels.*

Activity Update | Russell Richardson

Russell Richardson provided an update on the organization's business development and regional engagement activities since the June Board meeting. He reported 20 significant engagements focused on companies, projects, and place, including seven business retention engagements, six project-development engagements, and seven sites and infrastructure engagements. The project-development pipeline currently represents 30 projects, approximately \$4.1 billion in potential capital investment, and approximately 1,300 jobs.

He also highlighted 18 additional engagements focused on strengthening regional partnerships, workforce development, innovation, community engagement, operations, and quality-of-life initiatives. These included meetings with regional economic development partners, workforce and education organizations, the Northshore Healthscape Steering Committee, housing technical and working groups, technology and operational partners, the Military Road Alliance, Leadership Louisiana, and LaunchPad workshops.

Russell also introduced the Board to an upcoming fall strategic discussion process for St. Tammany EDC, describing the period from September through November as an opportunity for

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the Board to listen, discuss, and shape shared priorities, with the goal of aligning and making decisions in December. He emphasized that the objective is not to begin with a finished answer, but to arrive at a clear direction together.

Adjournment

With no further business to come before the Board, *Eric Singletary moved to adjourn, seconded by Elder Brown. The motion carried.*

The meeting was adjourned at 4:57 p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by the St. Tammany EDC Staff.