

MINUTES
FRENCH MARKET CORPORATION
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
Tuesday, December 5, 2023- 12:00 p.m.
Union Passenger Terminal
1001 Loyola Avenue
2nd Floor – Conference Room
New Orleans, LA 70113

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by the Vice President, Mr. Doucette, at 12:07 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Members Present: Mr. DeLong, Mr. Doucette, Ms. Frilot, Councilmember Green, Mr. Johnson, Mr. Kennedy, and Ms. McClendon

Members Absent: Ms. Burns, Councilmembers King and Thomas, and Ms. Tusa

Staff Present: Ms. Alley, Mr. Gurtner, Ms. Watson, Ms. Clark, Mr. Coots, and Ms. Robison

A. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES – September 24, 2023

Mr. Johnson moved and Mr. Doucette seconded a motion to approve the minutes of the September 24, 2023 Board of Directors meeting.

B. REPORTS

1. Executive Director’s Report

Ms. Alley reported that there were a few things that the Staff wanted to amend since the Council’s Budget Hearings; beginning with the FMC’s Mission Statement. Each year, the FMC reminds the Council what the FMC’s mission is. The FMC is a Public Benefits Corporation, whose mission is the preservation, restoration, maintenance, promotion, and development of the City of New Orleans properties and historical assets, which have been entrusted to the French Market Corporation by virtue of lease and/or franchise ordinance, or Cooperative Endeavor Agreement (CEA).

The Staff believes this is important to remind the Council of, given the number of conversations had over the years/this year about whose property the FMC manages. All of the property that the FMC manage is the property of the City of New Orleans. The FMC is the manager of the properties and do not hold title to any property, except for one (1) small lot adjacent to the Elysian Fields parking lots. The Staff has talked a lot about what was found when we did our strategic plan, and what we put forth in it.

STRATEGIC PLAN

We get the three main areas (1) the activation, (2) the value, and (3) the sustainability. These

are what comes out of our strategic plan.

MARKETING

We have a very small staff and many of our departments are departments of one (1). Ms. Alley introduced Shayd Coots, the new Director of Marketing and Development. We were excited about returning to our full events schedule this year, after years of dealing with COVID-19, and then a year with Hurricane Ida damage.

We produce events of our own and we partner with other culture-bearers to produce events; some that are throughout the French Market District and others in the French Quarter. There are things we try to do each month, like a focus on the celebration of heritage, depending on what the cycle is nationally and how that tracks with some of the things we do locally. As with this year, we end up in December with the St. Nick Celebration and the Children's Hospital New Orleans Holiday Parade, which we have done for the second year and are hoping will become one of our signature events. Our events usually take place in Dutch Alley or the Flea Market. They are fun for both tourists and locals. We use local musicians and artists, etc. to join our regular troops when we have special events.

Our Creole Tomato troop won the National Tourism Travel Week Award for the Best Branded Company. They also performed in the Children's Hospital Holiday Parade.

TRAVELER'S AID

In the area of public benefit, the French Market Corporation works with Traveler's Aid and the City of New Orleans on a partnership to help provide services for people who are without homes, living on the streets of New Orleans, particularly, in the French Quarter, but also, specifically, in our area. We have worked with the French Quarter Economic Development District, they fund 75% of the services and we provide the other 25%. We also work with Nate Fields, Director of Homeless Services for the City of New Orleans, who have recently gotten funding from UNITY of New Orleans. We are hopeful that we will get people into housing pretty soon, particularly, because we have a camp of people underneath the wharf. This adds an extra challenge because it is dangerous to go down underneath the wharf. We have had conversations on the best way to move people out of that area and into services. Hopefully, UNITY will make its way down to our area to offer services.

Next year we may have one (1) more caseworker on the street and UNITY will also be getting a new van so that they can move people to services more quickly. We see people who come back to the streets after they have been placed in housing. Our understanding is that once they have housing they have problems with the continuation of services, afterwards. In the work that we do with Travelers Aid we see the most benefit where they are stopping the crisis in the street. We operate in an open-air environment and the homeless community moves in and out of our facility and interacts with our tenants and employees all the time. Travelers Aid helps us stop individuals who appear to be going into crisis from having conflicts with our vendors, because they can usually identify them and get them to medical

help, or to stop the direct interface. They may not be successful with getting the person to stay in housing, but they do stop the yelling, screaming, spitting, fighting, etc. a lot, and it is a great value to us to have an environment where that behavior is not happening. We want to make sure that, that person is one step closer to getting the driver's license or medical appointment they need and we hope that the van that is being purchased through the French Quarter Economic Development funds will help them get further along the chain in services so that they won't come back to the French Market District.

CAPITAL PROJECTS

We are excited that we got the roof finished on building C (Marche). It took some time, but we have it done. We are working with **trepwise** and Bright Moments to complete our feasibility study on the Elysian Fields parking lots. We have also engaged Parking Advisors, who is a national firm that works for owners of parking lots to assist us. We have recently brought in Waggonner & Ball Architects to work on it as well; they were the top scoring architects in the solicitation. They are also experts in stormwater management; we were advised in the capital budget that we were going to receive \$2 million in hazard mitigation funds to begin to look at the stormwater that can be held in the two parking lots. We have been advised that because they area upstream, and because of the location they are in, they will have an impact on preventing some of the flooding in Treme and St. Roch, if we provide more storage than required by the code, which is what we are looking for.

Our team is working on a feasibility study to see how all the pieces play together, such as the stormwater under the ground and in the building. The services we need to provide in the building, which is the parking, which supports all the things in the neighborhood; in addition to ground floor commercial. Audubon will also look to the buildings to see if there is any revenue we can use to support Crescent Park and the other parks.

We are hoping to wrap up our study in the 1st quarter of 2024 with all of the players working together to give us a good feasibility study on how to put the parking lots out, how to develop them, what income we need, and what income is available for other projects.

Building E has to be reconstructed. Since the last meeting, the bid opening was deferred until tomorrow. We will open the bids and hope they will come in where we anticipated. We had a 3rd party contractor give us an estimate and because there is not a lot to take off the building there should not be any surprises when we get the bid. It should cost between \$5 mil. and \$5.5 mil., which will be funded through the FMC's capital funds.

The UPB roof repairs, the interior courtyard restoration, and the HVAC upgrades were requested of the city council to provide the FMC with \$8 mil. of capital funds to allow the completion of this project in an efficient manner as a full scope. We were pleased that the city council found value in the project and granted the funds.

The funding allows the FMC to not have to save on everything the FMC does around the facility. We will be able to continue to operate on the maintenance budget and we can

restore some of the reserves we had to use, and we can continue to have our money-making assets make money. The job will start with the replacement of the chillers, which are near failing.

We received the Cooperative Endeavor Agreement (CEA) from the City earlier this week, which is for \$500,000 in bond funds to re-do the restrooms in the Flea Market. The drawings are ready to go to procurement. Procurement is also bidding our parking services at the end of the year.

COMMITTEES

We received the mockup of our float and our board members were real troopers. Councilmembers Green and King, Ms. McClendon, Ms. Burns, and Mr. Johnson were all participants. The Creole Tomato balloon was pulled from the parade due to the heavy rain; however, it will be carried in the Sugarbowl parade.

C. PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

D. CONSENT AGENDA

Finance Committee (November 28, 2023)

1. Consideration – Review of FMC Unaudited Financial Statements 2nd Quarter 2023
2. Consideration – Review of FMC Unaudited Financial Statements 3rd Quarter 2023

Real Estate Committee (November 28, 2023)

3. Consideration – Aunt Sally’s Praline Shop, Inc. – 810 Decatur Street – Request to Renew Lease
4. Consideration – Alberto’s Tapas LLC – 1100 S. Peter Street, Bay 11 – Request for Change of Use to Permit Additional Alcoholic Beverage Sales with Meals
5. Consideration – Meals from the Heart – Request for Reimbursement for Lost Sales

Mr. Doucette reported that the Finance Committee met on November 28, 2023 and it considered review of the FMC’s unaudited Financial Statements for the 2nd and 3rd quarters. The Real Estate Committee met and considered Aunt Sally’s Pralines’ request to renew their lease. The Committee considered Alberto’s Tapas, LLC’s request for change of use to permit additional alcoholic beverage sales with meals; and they considered Meals from the Heart’s request for reimbursement for lost sales.

Mr. DeLong moved and Mr. Johnson seconded a motion to accept the Consent Agenda. The motion carried unanimously.

E. OLD BUSINESS

1. Consideration - Request to Enter Into a Professional Services Agreement with Richard CPAs to Provide Audit and Accounting Services

Ms. Alley reported that at the Board's last meeting, the Staff informed the Board that RICHARD CPAs was the highest rated proposal, which included a DBE participation at 20%. Councilmember Thomas requested that the Staff request that the contractor raise their DBE percentage to 35%, consistent with the goals of the RFQ. The contractor agreed.

The FMC Executive Director requested authorization to enter into a Professional Service Agreement with RICHARD CPAs, subject to cost proposal submitted by the Contractor of \$49,500.00, as reflected in the post bid documents submitted by the applicant. The contract is for one (1) year with four (4) options.

Mr. Kennedy moved and Mr. DeLong seconded a motion to authorize the FMC Executive Director to enter into a Professional Service Agreement with RICHARD CPAs, subject to cost proposal submitted by the Contractor of \$49,500.00, as reflected in the post bid documents submitted by the applicant. The contract is for one (1) year with four (4) options. The motion carried unanimously.

F. NEW BUSINESS

1. Consideration – Children's Hospital New Orleans / Kern Studios Holiday 2023 Sponsorship Request – To Lie Over

Ms. Alley reported that the sponsorship request was being presented to begin its 30 day layover because there was not a quorum for the Marketing Committee meeting that was held in November. Children's Hospital made an informational presentation at the Marketing Committee meeting. By the time the 30 days are over we will know how many parking spaces they used, so we will have a calculation of that, and we will be able to present it for approval at the next Board meeting.

The FMC Staff recommended approval of the 2023 Sponsorship Request and that the Committee forward its recommendation to the Board of Directors to be considered at the next regularly scheduled meeting, once the lay over period has concluded.

Mr. Johnson moved and Mr. DeLong seconded a motion to approve the 2023 Sponsorship Request and that the Committee forward its recommendation to the Board of Directors to be considered at the next regularly scheduled meeting, once the lay over period has concluded. The motion carried unanimously.

2. Consideration – Adoption of 2024 Meeting Schedule

Ms. Alley reported that the schedule is the same schedule that is currently being followed. The meetings occur every other month, with the exception of September. The dates are as follows:

JANUARY 30, 2024; 12:00 PM; 1001 Loyola Avenue

MARCH 26, 2024; 12:00 PM; 1001 Loyola Avenue

MAY 28, 2024; 12:00 PM; 1001 Loyola Avenue

JULY 30, 2024; 12:00 PM; 1001 Loyola Avenue

SEPTEMBER 24, 2024; 12:00 PM; 1001 Loyola Avenue

DECEMBER 10, 2024; 12:00 PM; 1001 Loyola Avenue

The Board meets the last Tuesday of every other month, with the exception of December. We can always change this if something comes up throughout the year. The schedule is adopted at the end of the year and is posted on our website so that people know when the meetings are for the year.

Mr. Johnson moved and Ms. McClendon seconded a motion to adopt the meeting schedule for the year 2024. The motion carried unanimously.

3. Consideration - Election of Officers

Mr. Doucette reported that Ms. Tusa, Board President, was not present at the meeting and had therefore, requested that the election of officers be moved to the next meeting.

Mr. Doucette stated that the item has been moved a couple of times, so the Board needed to make a decision on if it would like to move forward with the consideration of the election of officers or to move the consideration to the next meeting.

Mr. DeLong moved and Mr. Johnson seconded a motion to defer the election of officers until the next Board of Directors meeting. The motion carried unanimously.

G. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Doucette moved to adjourn the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 12:35 p.m.