

***PROCEEDINGS OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE LAFAYETTE CONVENTION & VISITORS COMMISSION, STATE OF LOUISIANA, TAKEN AT A SPECIAL MEETING HELD SEPTEMBER 3, 2024***

The Board of Commissioners of the Lafayette Convention & Visitors Commission, State of Louisiana, met in person at the Lafayette Convention & Visitors Commission boardroom, 1100 Lafayette St., Lafayette, LA at 3:15 pm.

In attendance were the board of Commissioners as follows: Ricky Patel, Chair, Dr. Vincent June, Vice-Chair, Chris Alack, Treasurer, Gerald Breaux, Dr. Jessica Leger, and John O'Meara.

Commissioners Jim Doré, Nayan Patel, and Brenda Trahan were absent due to other obligations.

***GUESTS:*** Anil Patel and Henil Patel

***CALL TO ORDER***

Chair R. Patel called the meeting to order.

***CONSIDERATION AND VOTE ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR THE LEVY WITHIN THE LAFAYETTE TOURISM IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT, EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2025, OF A 2% ASSESSMENT ON CERTAIN LODGING BUSINESSES THEREIN; AND PROVIDING FOR OTHER MATTERS IN CONNECTION THEREWITH.***

Chair Patel stated there was a meeting among the Lafayette Parish hoteliers the previous week, noting the need for additional time to review the proposed indoor sports facility plan from Synergy Sports.

Commissioner Alack requested a reason for postponing the levy collection date. Chair Patel noted unresolved questions regarding the Synergy Sports company, particularly current projects, facility locations, construction, and the proposed financial model. Chair Patel indicated to hoteliers that maintaining the current Lafayette Tourism Improvement District (LTID) collection date would provide funds to purchase business events, even if the indoor facility was not built.

Commissioner Breaux noted postponing the collection date may lead to additional concerns including loss of currently available property.

Mr. Berthelot summarized the events leading to the current special meeting stating before the August 22, 2024 LCVC board meeting the LTID advisory committee and hoteliers indicated the levy collection date should remain October 1, 2024. He noted the additional tasks associated with voting to postpone the collection date including notifying the tax collectors' office and hoteliers.

Discussion continued suggesting if a final decision to begin levy collection on January 1, 2025 did not occur, the LTID should be tabled permanently.

Chair Patel requested additional information about Synergy Sports, specifically recommendation letters, current operating locations, construction models, pro forma financial model, and the success of facilities built and managed by Synergy Sports. Commissioner Breaux identified two concerns to resolve: one, more background information about Synergy Sports, and two, facility location. Chair Patel noted the facility location varied based on the organization that conducted the study, and that the hoteliers would provide additional site locations for consideration. Mr. Berthelot confirmed he would send the full location analysis report from Synergy Sports to the board of commissioners.

Vice-Chair June returned to the previous discussion to table the LTID permanently should the levy collection be postponed beyond January 1, 2025. Mr. Berthelot noted there was no specific language in the current resolution, but confirmed language could be added or a vote could be added to the agenda of a future LCVC board meeting.

Chair Patel requested Mr. Berthelot send the current resolution and Louisiana House bill creating the Tourism Improvement Districts to the LCVC board and LTID Advisory Committee. Mr. Berthelot stated he would also share the Synergy Sports presentation from the LTID meeting, and the LCVC strategic plan.

Commissioner O'Meara motioned to approve the resolution providing for the levy within the Lafayette Tourism Improvement District, effective January 1, 2025, of a 2% assessment on certain lodging businesses therein; and providing for other matters in connection therewith. Commissioner June seconded the motion.

Chair Patel called for public comment. Mr. Anil Patel stated he is in favor of the LTID levy but requested the collection date remain undetermined. Mr. Berthelot confirmed that the levy collection date must start at the beginning of a quarter.

YEA: (6) R. Patel, V. June, C. Alack, G. Breaux, J. Leger, J. O'Meara. NAY: (0) ABSENT: (3) J. Doré, N. Patel, and B. Trahan, ABSTAIN: (0). There was no additional public comment. The motion to approve the resolution carried.

Mr. Berthelot shared that this project has been extremely time-consuming for staff because it continues to be pushed back. He asked the board for support that this would be the last collection deferment. If a solution cannot be reached by the regularly scheduled November 2024 LCVC Board meeting he would request the board terminate the LTID.

There was no other business. Chair Patel adjourned the meeting.



Vimal "Ricky" Patel  
Chair



Benjamin J. Berthelot  
President & CEO