

GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

Meeting Notes

Wednesday, 8 May 2024, 3:00 pm

400 N. Peters Street, Suite 206, New Orleans, LA 70130

1. Call to Order, Reading of the Agenda, and Roll Call

The meeting was called to order at 3:05 pm and the agenda was read into the record.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS				VOTES
First Name	Last Name	Present	Absent	Approve mtg notes
Glade	Bilby	X		-
Christian	Pendleton		X	-
Heidi	Raines	X		-
David	Bilbe		X	-

INTRODUCTION OF ATTENDEES:

GUESTS		
First	Last	Role
Karley	Frankic	FQMD Executive Director
Shelby	Ursu	FQMD Coordinator
Jane	Cooper	FQMD Chair

2. Public Comment:

From: **Susan Klein** <fgfemme@gmail.com>

Date: Tue, May 7, 2024 at 2:43 PM

Subject: Public Comment for Government Committee Meeting - Wednesday, May 8th, 2024

To: <publiccomments@fqmd.org>

Cc: Glade Bilby II <gbilby@gmail.com>, Christian Pendleton <cpendleton@neworleans-food.com>, David Bilbe <david.bilbe@omnihotels.com>, Heidi Raines <hraines@performancehealthus.com>

Good Afternoon,

I am a volunteer Commissioner of the FQMD and a resident of the French Quarter that is not being paid for my comments.

I am writing regarding Agenda Item 4. a. on Senate Bill 365 Enabling Legislation with three comments.

1- Comment: The **FQMD FOOTPRINT SHOULD NOT BE EXPANDED** as proposed in SB 365.

2- Comment: The **TREME' AND FAUBOURG MARGINY SUBDISTRICTS SHOULD BE ELIMINATED** as currently listed in the present legislation.

" Proposed law retains present law but further provides that the Faubourg Marigny subdistrict shall be comprised of the area of the district lying within the following boundaries: the Mississippi River, the center line of Esplanade Avenue, the center line of North

French Quarter MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

Rampart Street, the rear property line of the properties fronting on the down river side of Esplanade Avenue to the Mississippi River., the Frenchmen Street corridor beginning with the intersection at the center line of Esplanade Avenue and ending at Royal Street, comprising the 400 block through 600 block of Frenchmen Street."

Reason for Comments 1 & 2: Over a decade ago, the leadership from the proposed expanded area rescinded their membership from FQMD. If the Faubourg Marigny subdistrict was not removed from the enabling legislation then, it was an oversight of the FQMD leadership at the time and should be removed at this point. Therefore, FQMD should not expand services or patrols to that area until after a special tax is generated to support said services, if at all. That additional area would generate more work for the FQMD limited staff and patrols, and increase the associated costs for those expanded services. Additional taxes should be leveled in any subdistrict that receives services, as is done in the Vieux Carre' and Iberville Corridor subdistricts.

3- Comment: The **FQMD should not be mandated to spend a percentage of the budget for any specific categories of service** as proposed in SB 365:

"Proposed law retains present law and further provides that 15% of the annual budget shall be dedicated to public safety, reducing the homelessness and/or infrastructure enhancements.

Reason for Comment: The FQMD does not have an annual guaranteed income source. The current budget on all public funds is vetted at public meetings via Committee, Commission and City Council. Additionally, the City Council or the State (grant revenue if any) must approve the budget. Therefore, while well-intended, this proposal places an unnecessary requirement on the Commission.

Sincerely,
Susan S Klein

3. Motion – Consider a motion to approve the previous meeting notes

A quorum of the Committee was not present to approve the motion.

4. Committee Chair's Comments

Chair Glade Bilby welcomed the Committee members. He reported that Senator Talbot's Bill 419 regarding carve out from the French Quarter from the permit-less carry law taking effect on July 4th has moved forward to the Senate after being approved in Committee but noted that the bill has been watered down. He stated that the bill proposes fining individuals \$500-\$1,000 for carrying a gun whilst under the influence. Mr. G. Bilby said that he will keep the Committee updated on the status of the permit-less carry bill.

a. Update on Senate Bill 365 Enabling Legislation

Responding to the public comment, Mr. G. Bilby stated that Ms. Klein made some valid points in her concerns, adding that the law's language is ambiguous. He pointed out that extending the FQMD's boundaries to include Frenchman Street could be beneficial, noting that Frenchman Street creates a large amount of revenue. Jane Cooper agreed but noted that this would be a burden on the FQMD unless additional funding was provided for the addition. Karley Frankic stated that she spoke with Kevin Ferguson of New Orleans and Company about these concerns. Heidi Raines asked what steps the Committee can take at this point in time. Ms. Frankic replied that the Senate has already approved the bill, and it is now making its' way through the House noting that the House Committee can still talk with local representatives about the removing the addition of Frenchman Street by an amendment to the bill. Ms. Cooper reported that the legislative session will end on June 3rd. Ms. Frankic will follow up with Councilmembers Freddie King and JP Morrell, and Senator Harris to discuss the matter.

5. Discussion by Committee of Updates on State Appropriations

a. 2023 State Appropriation Extension

French Quarter MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

Mr. G. Bilby reported that there have been no updates regarding the 2023 appropriation expansion.

b. New 2024 State Appropriation

Mr. G. Bilby had no updates to report regarding an appropriation for 2024-2025. Ms. Cooper stated that the City has given approval for the FQMD to create a Cooperative Endeavor Agreement between the City and FQMD that would allow the FQMD to move forward with streetlight repairs and installations in the French Quarter. She added that she and Ms. Frankic will be meeting monthly with the City's Chief Administrative Office to stay updated on information regarding the 2024 appropriation as well as other issues related to the FQEDD.

6. Discussion by Committee of a French Quarter Financial Impact Study

See attached document. Mr. G. Bilby stated that he has prepared a document detailing a plan of action for getting a French Quarter Economic Impact Study underway. He stressed the importance of showing the State the revenue generated by the French Quarter and all the impact that the district has on the City and State. Mr. G. Bilby suggested that the Committee look into local companies and colleges like the University of New Orleans and Louisiana State University to see who can conduct the study. Ms. Raines stated that a company recently conducted a Mardi Gras economic impact study, pointing out that it might be worth looking into who conducted this study. Ms. Raines will reach out to Walt Leger to discuss the economic impact study building off theirs. Mr. G. Bilby will send his digital document to Ms. Frankic, Ms. Raines, and Ms. Cooper, and Ms. Frankic will add the date, FQMD footer and logo to the document.

7. New Business– To consider and take action upon any other matters that may properly come before the French Quarter Management District Government Affairs Committee

Mr. G. Bilby suggested that, with the recent shooting on Bienville Street during a block party, the Committee look into banning block parties in the French Quarter. Ms. Frankic noted that in order for a block party to take place in the City, a special events permit must be approved by the District's Councilmember. Ms. Cooper pointed out that one benefit of the application process for a block party is that it gives the NOPD time to mobilize in advance in order to properly prepare for the event. Ms. Frankic will research what steps are in place for applying for a block party permit and report the information back to the Committee.

8. Next meeting date:

The Committee agreed to reschedule the July 3rd Committee meeting to Wednesday, June 26th at 3:00 pm.

9. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 3:42 pm.

Economic Impact Study Possibilities

EConsult Solutions Inc. (ESI)

Contact: Lee Huang

Huang@econsultsolutions.com

Website:

<https://econsultsolutions.com/practice-areas/>

- They would be able to provide an impact study for the whole area of the french quarter and asked for a draft RFP with details everything we would like included in the scope in detail.
- Current Research Agenda: "Our goal at ESI Center for the Future of Cities is to make cities and regions of all sizes and shapes more competitive, livable, and equitable. We recognized that coming out of the pandemic, there was a need for understanding the changes that cities were going through, the future forces that would affect our metropolitan regions, and the impact that new technologies and approaches would have on city residents, businesses, and governments".
- They provided past impact studies that can be found in the shared Google Drive or below.
 - ESI Materials
- They specialize in:
 - Economic Development
 - Equity and Inclusion
 - Government and Public Policy
 - Litigation Support
 - Real Estate
 - Transportation and Infrastructure
 - Thought Leadership
 - Universities and Hospitals (Recently did a impact study for Tulane)
- Additional reports can be found here: <https://econsultsolutions.com/our-impact/>

Louisiana State University (LSU)

Contact: Dek Terrell

mdterre@lsu.edu

Website: <https://www.lsu.edu/business/economics/eprg.php>

- Seems that they are mostly event focused based on our conversation. They did provide me with some studies seen here https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/19fTjtmDRNJas_U2_E5A4PnargnjsW6nV
- The Economics & Policy Research Group (EPRG) conducts economic research on topics of interest to the citizens of Louisiana. Projects focus on evaluating current issues affecting the lives of Louisianians as well as evaluating policies for Louisiana's leaders.

- EPRG has over a 20-year history of providing research to Louisiana's local, state, and private sectors to address the needs of the day. EPRG has partnered with scholars from across LSU and other universities within and outside Louisiana on research projects.
- They specialize in:
 - Health Economics: Since 2003, EPRG has conducted the Louisiana Health Insurance Survey for the Louisiana Department of Health. This is the largest survey of Louisiana households used to measure the number of uninsured children and adults and assess health-related issues.
 - Economic Development and Regional Economics: EPRG has worked with Louisiana Economic Development and others to evaluate the economic impact of over 70 major industrial development projects and events.
 - Economic Forecasting: EPRG has provided forecasts of Unemployment Claims and Employment to the Louisiana Workforce Commission over its 20-year history and provided numerous specialized studies to LWC and others based on forecasts of employment and related issues.
 - Environmental Economics & Energy: EPRG has worked closely with the Louisiana Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority providing reports on such issues as coastal erosion and GOMESA.

University of New Orleans (UNO)

Contact: Mohammed A. Hossain
mahossai@uno.edu

Website: <https://www.uno.edu/research/collaborate/economic-development>

The Office of Research links university expertise with industry and government entities to:

- Stimulate the growth of research, technology advancement, and educational collaboration among industry, government, and other university partners;
- Foster innovation, commercialization, and economic competitiveness;
- Connect the university to the economies in the Greater New Orleans area and the Gulf Coast region to create research opportunities, develop jobs for UNO graduates, and improve the economic viability of this region and the rest of the State of Louisiana.

They had several questions about our scope and wanted specific details included in a mock RFP:

- They asked if we have volunteer base to conduct surveys as they said hiring their own volunteers would be costly
- Mentioned we could use our subscriber list to disseminate the survey; i said this would reach a small amount of tourists and may not reflect exactly what we are looking for in our scope
- Suggested we ask FQF for their recent economic impact study UNO conducted for them for several festivals over the years.