

GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

Meeting Notes

Wednesday, 4 December 2024, 3:00 pm

610 Toulouse Street, 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.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS			
First Name	Last Name	Present	Absent
Glade	Bilby	X	
Christian	Pendleton	X	
Heidi	Raines	X	
David	Bilbe		X

INTRODUCTION OF ATTENDEES:

GUESTS		
First	Last	Role
Michelle	Courseault	FQMD Executive Director
Shelby	Ursu	FQMD Coordinator
Bob	Bejarano	FQMD Program Manager
Jane	Cooper	FQMD Board Chair
Alex	Dunkenberger	City's CAO Office
Andrew	Tuozzolo	Attorney

2. Public Comment:

No written public comment was received.

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

No motion was made.

4. Committee Chair's Comments

Chair Glade Bilby thanked the Committee for their attendance. He introduced guest speaker Andrew Tuozzolo to the Committee, stating that Mr. Tuozzolo may have useful advice to take into consideration with the oncoming tax renewal.

5. Discussion by Committee of the 2026 Tax Referendum Renewal Timeline & Next Steps with guest Andrew Tuozzolo, Attorney and Former Chief of Staff for the Vice President of the New Orleans City Council

Mr. Tuozzolo thanked the Committee for inviting him to today's meeting. He stated that with the quality of life, infrastructure, sanitation, and public safety challenges that the residents and businesses of the French Quarter face daily, there is a need to reemphasize the FQMD's efforts to improve the French Quarter. Mr. Tuozzolo noted that there could be potential opportunities for the FQMD to have more independence as a State agency, as well as be able to tackle more projects without having to face

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hindrances from the City. He recommended having a plan to show voters what improvements the FQMD would like to further enact. Mr. G. Bilby pointed out that the FQMD has taken a more active role in helping to fill in the gaps where the City has not. He added that he has spoken with Chuck Toney, the Chief of Staff for New Orleans Council District C, about the potential opportunity to increase the tax percentage. Mr. G. Bilby asked the Committee to consider this option. Heidi Raines pointed out that this could potentially be a disadvantage for the French Quarter businesses and residents and receive negative feedback from the public. Jane Cooper agreed, stating that this should be a discussion in future Committee and Board meetings. She reminded the Committee that it will ultimately be the French Quarter Economic Development District (FQEDD) who will determine the tax percentage, and noted that there are still excess funds available in the 2025 FQEDD budget. Vice-Chair Christian Pendleton pointed out that in the last few years the FQMD has had an improved and more collaborative working relationship with the City Council. He also noted the significant growth that FQMD has seen since its' inception and stated that it is important to take into consideration the projects that the FQMD should take on versus what should be the City's responsibility.

Mr. G. Bilby agreed to discuss the possibility of increasing the tax in more detail in future Committee and Board meetings. He stated that the pros of the current tax include the effectiveness of the police patrols resulting in a reduction of crime, the Task Force app resulting in an under two-minute response time, the installation of the Real Time Crime Center Cameras and License Plate Readers further helping in crime reduction, and the streetlight repairs. Mr. G. Bilby stated that the major con would be that residents may not feel that anything has been improved and that progress has been slow. Mr. Pendleton noted that with the results of the 2024 streetlight repairs project, it could help show the residents and businesses the FQMD's progress and dedication to improving public safety and quality of life. The Committee went on to discuss the context of the ballot language and what they would like to revise for the FQMD within the language. Ms. Raines pointed out that the ballot language was written to have the funds released to the City first, then to the FQMD through the Trust Fund. She suggested putting in stronger language that would state that the FQMD would be the agency to administer funds, rather than the City, noting that the extra step of having to wait for the City to release the funds has slowed down progress in the past. Ms. Cooper pointed out that the Committee needs to find out who has the authority to change the existing ballot language, pointing out that it will not just be up to the FQMD. Alex Dunkenberger stated that he believes the language went to City Council in the past. The Committee agreed that an extensive review of the ballot language will be necessary by the full Board as well as the Government Affairs Committee in order to provide the Commissioners the opportunity to provide their feedback. Mr. Pendleton summarized that the next steps are to ask Mr. Toney if the ballot language can change, and if so, what is the timeline and can the funds come directly to the FQMD versus going to the City.

Michelle Courseault stated that there are two paths the FQMD can choose to take for the timeline, either getting onto the fall ballots (October 2025 ballot or November 2025) or the spring 2026 ballot. This Committee will need to review the existing language to discuss and determine if any substantive changes (rate, scope, timeline, or other) will be recommended by this Committee to the FQMD board in the upcoming months. Ms. Raines suggested reaching out to FQMD legal counsel for feedback. Mr. Tuozzolo recommended that the FQMD choose the November timeline, pointing out that this gives more time to iron out all of the details. In order to get onto the November 2025 ballot, final language would need to be presented to City Council on or before August 2025. Mr. Pendleton agreed and stated that the Committee will speak with the Board about the November timeline and ballot language. Also discussed was the additional coverage area of Frenchman Street passed into law by SB365 and the need to determine funding for the implementation of police patrols for this expanded footprint. Mr. G. Bilby will pass out the ballot language to the Board at Monday's Board meeting and ask the Commissioners to review and provide feedback.

6. Discussion by Committee of the 2025 Government Affairs Committee Work Plan

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See attached document. Mr. G. Bilby stated that he wanted to remove the “renew the Cooperative Endeavor Agreement with the French Quarter Museum Association” from the work plan, pointing out that this is the Finance and Development Committee’s responsibility. The Committee agreed to this revision. Mr. Pendleton suggested adding “unify the FQEDD and FQMD maps for both taxation and services between the City and the State”. Mr. G. Bilby recommended adding “pursue potential future legislation that effects the FQMD” and “work toward crafting the ballot language for the upcoming French Quarter tax referendum.” The Committee agreed to these additions.

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

See attached document. Mr. G. Bilby reported that he has a point of contact who can recommend data points to take into consideration for the Financial Impact Study. Mr. G. Bilby added that this study could greatly show the value of the French Quarter to both the City and State and open up opportunities in the future for more funding. He asked that the Committee review the document he prepared and begin brainstorming what data points they think would be valuable to include in the study. Mr. Dunkenberger stated that he believes the funds for the study, which are in the 2025 FQEDD budget, will need to go through the procurement process. Mr. G. Bilby replied that he believes the study will be less than what was originally budgeted, estimating a total of \$60K instead of \$100K. Mr. Dunkenberger will find out the details on if the funds will need to go through City procurement and report back to the Committee.

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

No new business was discussed.

9. Next meeting date:

The next scheduled meeting of the Committee is To Be Determined.

10. Adjournment

Mr. Pendleton made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Raines seconded the motion, and the meeting was adjourned at 4:31 PM.

4/24/2021

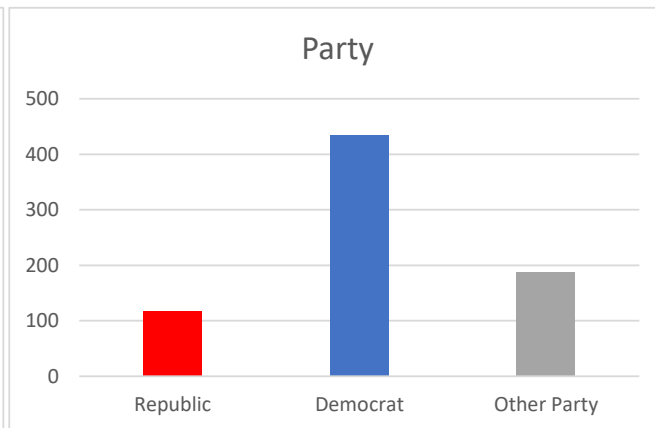
French Quarter Economic Development Dist. -- .245% S&U Tax Increase - CC - 5 Yrs.

Summary French Quarter Economic Development District Proposition

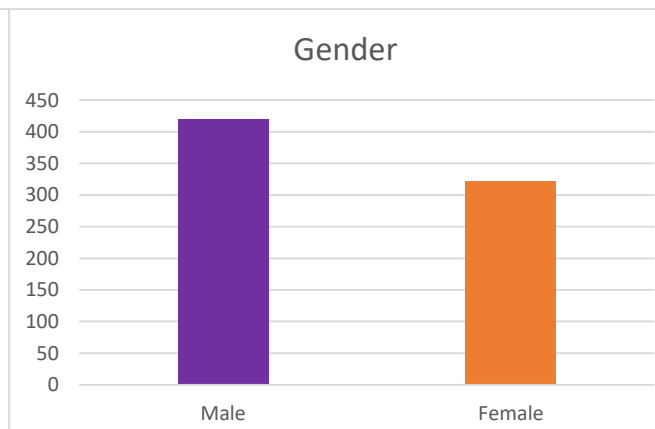
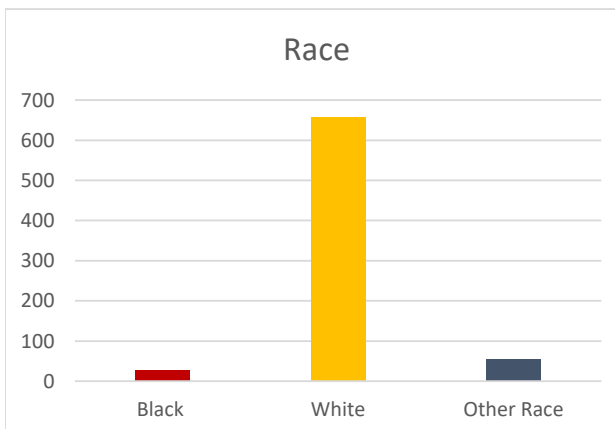
Shall a .245% increase in the sales tax be levied within the boundaries of the French Quarter Economic Development District ("FQ EDD") to be collected on the sale at retail, the use, the lease or rental, the consumption and storage for use or the consumption of tangible personal property and sales of services within the boundaries of the FQ EDD for a period of five years, beginning July 1, 2021 and ending June 30, 2026 (an estimated \$2.5 million reasonably expected at this time to be collected as a result of the levy per year) for the purpose of funding POST Certified supplemental police patrols and homeless assistance services, with the initial \$2 million collected in any year dedicated to supplemental police patrols and any additional revenue to be divided between additional patrols and public safety programs (including homeless assistance), and administered by the French Quarter Management District for fiscal and operational oversight of the FQ EDD Trust Fund and services provided by such fund and subject to quarterly budget and expenditure reports to the City Council, to facilitate economic development within the FQ EDD?

Full

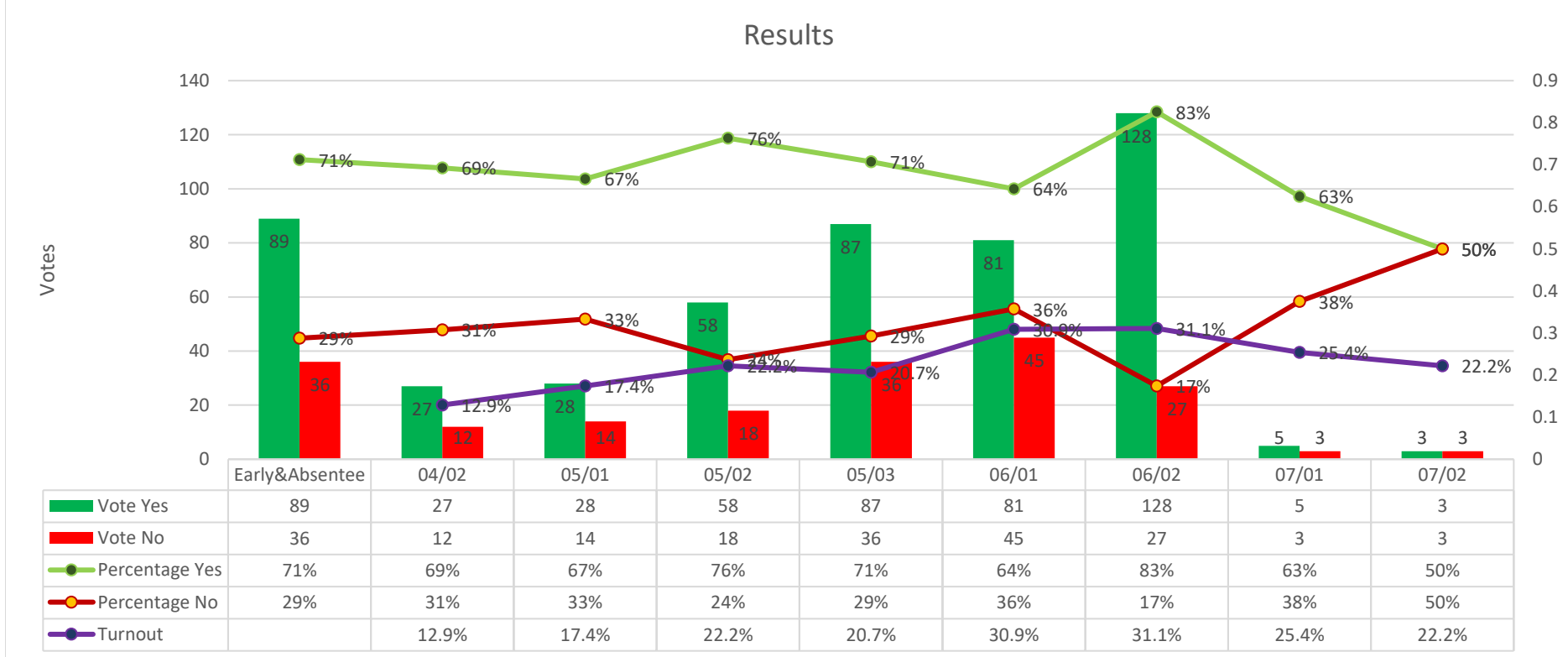
	Votes	Percent		Voted	Turnout
Yes	506	72.3%	Republic	118	20.8%
No	194	27.7%	Democrat	434	27.6%
Total Votes	700		Other Party	188	15.1%
Total Turnout		23.1%			



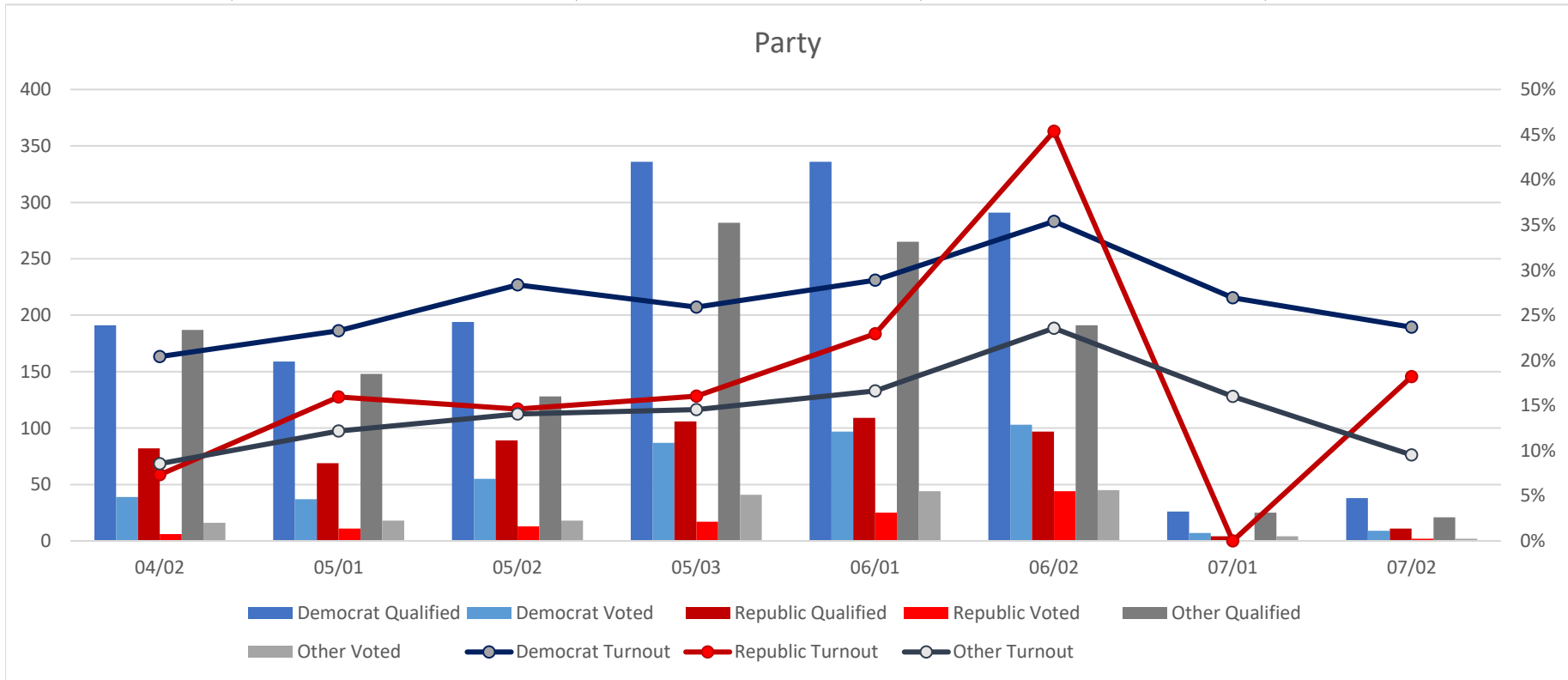
	Voted	Turnout		Voted	Turnout
Black	28	9.3%	Male	419	21.4%
White	657	24.2%	Female	321	22.5%
Other Race	55	14.9%			



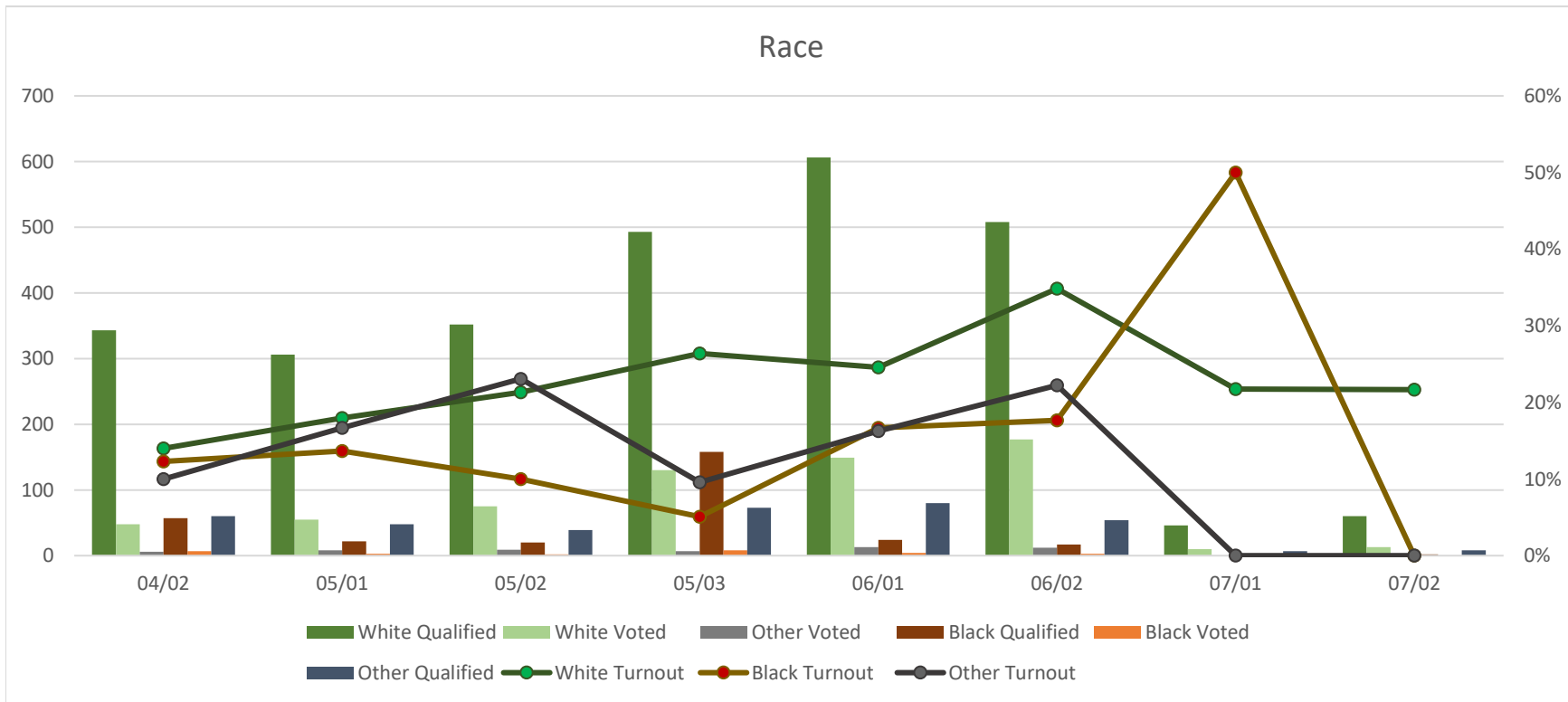
Precinct	Vote		Percentage		Total	Turnout
	Yes	No	Yes	No		
Early&Absentee	89	36	71%	29%	125	
04/02	27	12	69%	31%	39	12.9%
05/01	28	14	67%	33%	42	17.4%
05/02	58	18	76%	24%	76	22.2%
05/03	87	36	71%	29%	123	20.7%
06/01	81	45	64%	36%	126	30.9%
06/02	128	27	83%	17%	155	31.1%
07/01	5	3	63%	38%	8	25.4%
07/02	3	3	50%	50%	6	22.2%
Total	506	194	72%	28%	700	



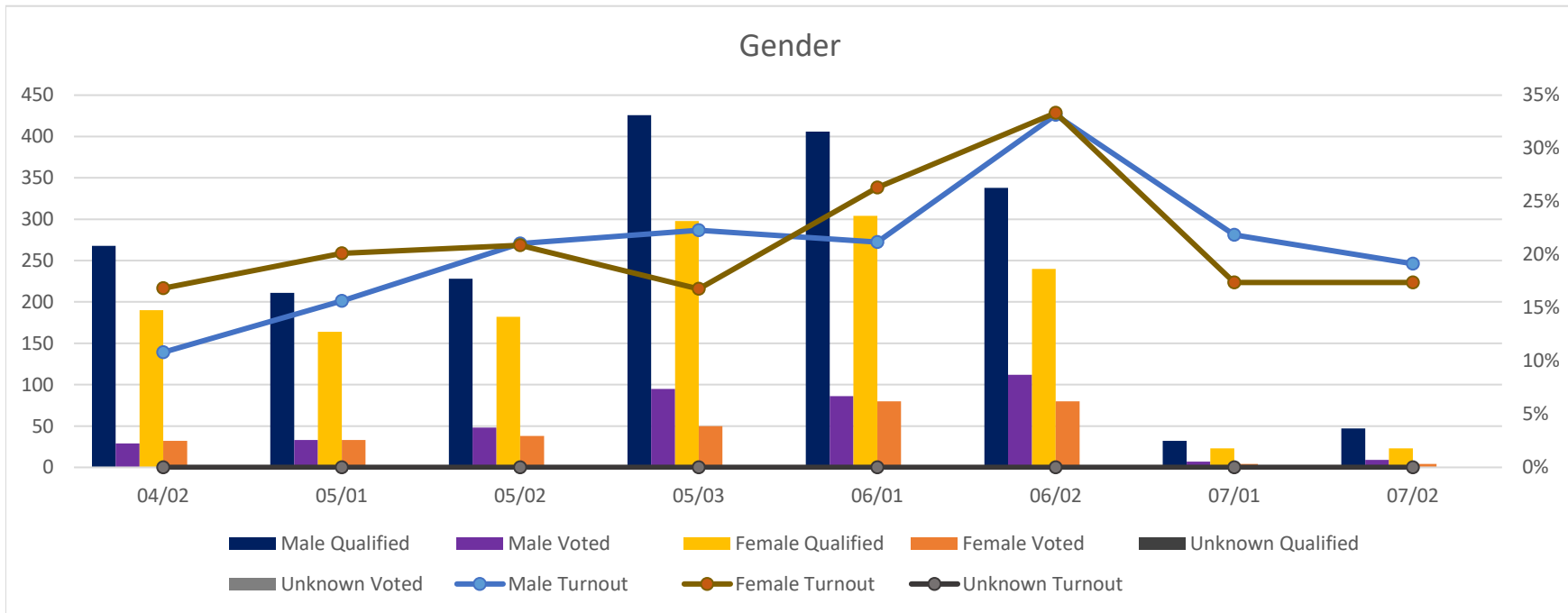
Precinct	Democrat			Republic			Other			Total		
	Qualified	Voted	Turnout	Qualified	Voted	Turnout	Qualified	Voted	Turnout	Qualified	Voted	Turnout
04/02	191	39	20%	82	6	7%	187	16	9%	460	61	13%
05/01	159	37	23%	69	11	16%	148	18	12%	376	66	18%
05/02	194	55	28%	89	13	15%	128	18	14%	411	86	21%
05/03	336	87	26%	106	17	16%	282	41	15%	724	145	20%
06/01	336	97	29%	109	25	23%	265	44	17%	710	166	23%
06/02	291	103	35%	97	44	45%	191	45	24%	579	192	33%
07/01	26	7	27%	4	0	0%	25	4	16%	55	11	20%
07/02	38	9	24%	11	2	18%	21	2	10%	70	13	19%
Total	1571	434	28%	567	118	21%	1247	188	15%	3385	740	22%
Percentage of Total	46%	59%		17%	16%		37%	25%				



Precinct	White			Black			Other			Total		
	Qualified	Voted	Turnout	Qualified	Voted	Turnout	Qualified	Voted	Turnout	Qualified	Voted	Turnout
04/02	343	48	14%	57	7	12%	60	6	10%	460	61	13%
05/01	306	55	18%	22	3	14%	48	8	17%	376	66	18%
05/02	352	75	21%	20	2	10%	39	9	23%	411	86	21%
05/03	493	130	26%	158	8	5%	73	7	10%	724	145	20%
06/01	606	149	25%	24	4	17%	80	13	16%	710	166	23%
06/02	508	177	35%	17	3	18%	54	12	22%	579	192	33%
07/01	46	10	22%	2	1	50%	7	0	0%	55	11	20%
07/02	60	13	22%	2	0	0%	8	0	0%	70	13	19%
Total	2714	657	24%	302	28	9%	369	55	15%	3385	740	22%
Percentage	80%	89%		9%	4%		11%	7%				



Precinct	Male			Female			Unknown			Total		
	Qualified	Voted	Turnout	Qualified	Voted	Turnout	Qualified	Voted	Turnout	Qualified	Voted	Turnout
04/02	268	29	11%	190	32	17%	2	0	0%	460	61	13%
05/01	211	33	16%	164	33	20%	1	0	0%	376	66	18%
05/02	228	48	21%	182	38	21%	1	0	0%	411	86	21%
05/03	426	95	22%	298	50	17%	0	0	#DIV/0!	724	145	20%
06/01	406	86	21%	304	80	26%	0	0	#DIV/0!	710	166	23%
06/02	338	112	33%	240	80	33%	1	0	0%	579	192	33%
07/01	32	7	22%	23	4	17%	0	0	#DIV/0!	55	11	20%
07/02	47	9	19%	23	4	17%	0	0	#DIV/0!	70	13	19%
Total	1956	419	21%	1424	321	23%	5	0	0%	3385	740	22%
Percentage	58%	57%		42%	43%		0.1%	0.0%				



Government Affairs Committee

Develop and foster relationships with other governmental agencies

- Work with state and local administrators and legislators to promote the importance and value of the French Quarter to the City, Region, and State
- Work towards permanent state funding through the legislature

Negotiate governmental contracts with other Committees for consideration by the Board of Commissioners

- Explore options for a French Quarter Economic Impact Assessment
- Renew Cooperative Endeavor Agreement with the French Quarter Museum Association

French Quarter Economic Impact Study

8 May 2024

Preparing an economic impact study for the French Quarter in New Orleans involves several steps to gather and analyze data effectively. Here's a guide on the best way to approach it:

- 1. Define the Scope and Objectives:** Determine the purpose of the economic impact study. This should focus on tourism, local business in the French Quarter, hotel related impact, and the effect of special events in the French Quarter, as well as the region. Define the scope of the study to ensure it addresses key questions and provides relevant insights. It is important to establish what the State and City consider to be their economic drivers, so we address these when illustrating data.
- 2. Gather Data:** Collect data from various sources to assess the economic activity in the French Quarter. This may include:
 - Business data: Number of businesses, employment levels, revenue, and sales tax revenue generated by businesses in the French Quarter.
 - All related tourism statistics: visitor arrivals, spending patterns, hotel occupancy rates, and the related expenditures. To be more accurate we should also include: flights in - out and airport usage, transportation revenues, convention center revenues
 - Real estate data: Property values, rental rates, and commercial real estate transactions in the area.
 - Government statistics: Economic indicators such as GDP, employment rates, and tax revenues at the city or regional level, and all City and State taxes generated from the French Quarter itself.
 - Surveys and interviews: Conduct surveys or interviews with local businesses, residents, and tourists to gather qualitative insights. This last part may not be necessary due to the limited time frame that we have to put together this study.

NOTE: To this point of gathering data for analysis, we need to gain access to a lot of confidential information. In some ways, it might be easier to partner with a larger independent institution like GNO, who can certainly spearhead this, or in fact with the State Dept of economic development and/or Dept of Commerce. Under the current State government, there might be a real willingness to do the deep dive into this as they take on more of the City's issues.

- 3. Choose a Methodology:** Select the appropriate methodology for assessing economic impact. Common approaches include:
 - Input-output analysis: Quantify the direct, indirect, and induced economic effects of spending in the French Quarter using input-output models.
 - Cost-benefit analysis: Evaluate the costs and benefits of specific projects or initiatives in the French Quarter, such as infrastructure improvements or tourism promotion campaigns.

Assuming the enormous financial impact that the French Quarter has on the City of New

Orleans and the State budget in general, this may prove to be of the most beneficial to FQMD securing permanent funding for ongoing operations and infrastructure improvements.

- Surveys and interviews: Use surveys or interviews to gather data on spending patterns, employment, and other economic indicators directly from businesses, residents, and visitors. Again, may not be necessary due to the limited time frame that we have to put together this study.

4. **Calculate Economic Indicators:** Use the data collected to calculate key economic indicators for the French Quarter, such as:

- Total economic output (Gross Domestic Product)
- Employment levels and labor income
- Tax revenues generated
- Return on investment for tourism promotion or infrastructure projects

We may already have access to much of this information from studies currently published and existing financial data available.

5. **Interpret Results:** Analyze the findings of the economic impact study to understand the significance of the French Quarter to the local economy. This should help us identify the key drivers of economic activity, opportunities for growth, and potential challenges or risks. It is important to illustrate: total revenues, total spending which has different multipliers, total payrolls (used to be X7), and the total spending on supplies and materials. This last data is particularly necessary for FQMD as we seek funding for security and infrastructure improvements.

6. **Communicate Findings:** Present the results of the economic impact study in a clear and accessible format. Prepare a written report summarizing the methodology, findings, and conclusions of the study. We could create visual aids such as charts, graphs, and maps to illustrate key points effectively if necessary. A 2-page summary together with an ROI as to the importance of this data to our State and City should be the result.

7. **Engage Stakeholders:** Share the results of the economic impact study with relevant stakeholders, State and local government officials initially, as they are most impacted. Business owners, community organizations, news organizations and residents should also be made aware of the impact that the French Quarter has on the financial viability of our region. If we have time and feel it necessary, we could solicit feedback and input on potential strategies for supporting economic development in the French Quarter.

8. **Update and Review:** Periodically update the economic impact study to reflect changes in the local economy, policy initiatives, or other relevant factors. Review the methodology and assumptions to

ensure the study remains accurate and relevant over time. It seems as though our time constraints are focused on the upcoming Super Bowl in early 2025, therefore this impact study could form the basis of an ongoing process to maintain and upgrade our tourist experience dominated economy in the French Quarter.

The exercise is very much the production of all the verified data to underpin and prove what the French Quarter is worth, what services we are presently receiving, our taxable revenues to the State and City - how many jobs are provided etc. On this last point, a great many jobs are filled by daily workers commuting into the district so the impact study should take this into consideration.

By following these guidelines, we can prepare a comprehensive economic impact study for the French Quarter that provides valuable insights into its importance to the local and state economy, and potential strategies for promoting economic growth and sustainability.

Prepared by: Glade Bilby II
Chair Government Affairs
French Quarter Management District
5/9/24