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2001
CEDS REPORT

SCPDC
South Central Planning &
Development Commission
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INTRODUCTION

The South Central Planning and Development Commission (SCPDC) prepared an Overall Economic Development Plan (OEDP) in 1997 covering the Parishes of Assumption, Lafourche, St. Charles, St. James, St. John the Baptist and Terrebonne. Each year the plan is reviewed and updated as part of the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy.

The CEDS is a mechanism for coordinating the efforts of those concerned with economic development. The CEDS comprises four main elements, *analysis, vision, action plan, and evaluation*. The *strategy* analyzes the regional economy and looks at external trends and forces. It identifies partners and resources for economic development. The *vision* is a statement of the region's goals; "Where do we want to be?" An *action plan* is developed as a way to attain the goals. Finally, an ongoing *evaluation* of the CEDS is made to determine what improvements or changes should be made in the strategy.

This 2001 Annual Report is divided into the following sections.

1. *Adjustments to the CEDS.* Adjustments are made to the implementation strategy outlined in 1997 to account for unforeseen opportunities or unexpected problems. Changes in the structure or composition of local and regional economic development committees are reported.

2. *Report on the previous year's economic development activities and any significant changes in the region's economic conditions.* Activities undertaken in the previous year are documented in relation to the needs and objectives identified in the 1997 strategy and the objectives of the 1998 Reform Act.

3. *Annual Evaluation.* A proposed guide for evaluation of the effectiveness of the CEDS in meeting goals and objectives is provided.

4. *Next Year's Goals.* A program of achievable activities for the upcoming year is provided. A brief discussion is provided for each in order to show how it is related to the goals and objectives of the 1997 OEDP, the Louisiana Vision 2020 and the EDA 1998 Reform Act.

The State of Louisiana Vision 2020 has three goals.

> *Goal One: To be a Learning Enterprise in which all business, institutions, and citizens are actively engaged in the pursuit of knowledge, and where that knowledge is deployed to improve the competitiveness of businesses, the efficiency of governmental institutions, and the quality of life of citizens.*
>
> *Goal Two: To have an economy driven by a diverse and thriving set of technology-intensive industries that actively utilize Louisiana's colleges and universities as a source of well-educated graduates as employees, a source of expertise for problem-solving, and a source of technology for commercialization.*
>
> *Goal Three: To have a standard of living among the top ten states in America and safe, healthy communities where rich natural and cultural assets continue to make the State a unique place, to live, work, visit, and do business.*

In developing and refining goals and objectives, the SCPDC remains cognizant of the general purposes established by the EDA and the Louisiana Vision 2020 Goals.

ADJUSTMENTS TO THE 1997 OEDP

The goals of the 1997 OEDP were changed in the year 2000 in order to better present an overall strategy for achieving a sustainable economy. The adopted goals for the South Central Region are modeled after those of State's 2020 Vision and others that address concerns particular to this region as follows:

Goal One: *To be a Learning Enterprise in which all business, institutions, and citizens are actively engaged in the pursuit of knowledge, and where that knowledge is deployed to improve the competitiveness of businesses, the efficiency of governmental institutions, and the quality of life of citizens.*

Goal Two: *To have an economy driven by a diverse and thriving set of technology-intensive industries that actively utilize Louisiana's colleges and universities as a source of well educated graduates as employees, a source of expertise for problem-solving, and a source of technology for commercialization.*

Goal Three: *To have the best standard of living for a Region in the State and comparable to the top ten Regions in the United States and have a safe and healthy community where rich natural and cultural assets continue to make the Region a unique place, to live, work, visit, and do business.*

Goal Four: *Improve the public infrastructure of the region in order to support and sustain a viable economy and environment.*

Goal Five: *Create and retain quality jobs and foster a more diversified economy.*

The SCPDC Board of Directors acts as the Regional CEDS Committee. The staff of SCPDC remains in touch with local economic development committees and staff throughout the year through periodic attendance at local meetings and through a working committee of the region's economic development specialists. In this way SCPDC can provide support for local efforts and help move forward regional goals. Current membership lists for each of these committees are included in Appendix A.

What does Goal 1 mean by To be a Learning Enterprise? Who? SCPDC?

2000-2001 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

In *Louisiana Economic Outlook: 2000 and 2001* by Dr. Loren Scott, Professor Emeritus in Economics and James A. Richardson, Alumni Professor of Economics, both of Louisiana State University, it was forecast that the Houma MSA, which includes Terrebonne and Lafourche Parishes, will be the second fastest growing MSA in Louisiana during the next two years. It was indicated that studies show the MSA's economy is heavily tied to the extraction industry and growth of the MSA's economy is tied to the resurgence in oil and gas exploration. That same report discussed the New Orleans MSA, which includes St. Charles, St. James, and St. John the Baptist Parishes. New Orleans is Louisiana's slowest growing MSA. It too is reliant upon energy development and suffered from job losses in the extraction sector. In the New Orleans MSA the manufacturing sector suffered as a result of several events in the River Parishes Region, a major explosion at the Kaiser Chemical Plant (Gramercy) resulting in plant closure, Orion Refinery (Norco) shut down temporarily for refitting to handle more sour crude oil, and layoffs of about 250 people at three IMC Agrico fertilizer plants due to a glut of ammonia fertilizer on the market. Scott predicted a slow growth rate for the New Orleans MSA of 1% in 2001 and 1.2% in 2002. On the positive side for the River Parishes Region Kaiser Chemical Plant should be up and running again in 2000 or 2001, Orion Refinery should be back at full employment in the next two years and the fertilizer glut may be exhausted by 2002. Recovery in the oil patch may help create an additional 700 jobs in the MSA.

The South Central Region thus needs to continue its diversification efforts to become less reliant on an industry driven by factors beyond its control. In order to do this the Region must continue to improve the education and skills of its labor force, improve transportation, and step up its efforts to attract the kinds of industry that offer quality jobs.

SCPDC completes its first year as the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for Terrebonne, Thibodaux and part of Lafourche Parish at the end of June 2001. The creation of a more regional MPO will improve efforts to address the issue of transportation at a larger scale. As the designated MPO, SCPDC will be developing a Transportation Improvement Program and a Unified Work Program for Terrebonne and Lafourche Parishes and the city of Thibodaux. These two documents will help to prioritize planning and implementation efforts for highway and transit projects in the two parishes.

A planning effort to create a regional transit service for the Parishes of St. Charles, St. James and St. John the Baptist is now underway. The new River Parishes Transit Authority is meeting and progress is being made toward the ultimate goal. The creation of a seamless transit service for the three parishes will provide a means of moving those most in need to training programs, services and job centers.

The State has completed improvements in the South Central Region to U. S. Highway 90 providing a link to Lafayette on the west and New Orleans on the east. Improvements to the Sunshine Bridge in St. James Parish are underway. The Environmental Impact Statement for the construction of a north to south access road for the Veterans Memorial Mississippi River Bridge between Gramercy and Wallace is ongoing and the outcome is anxiously awaited.

Louisiana Highway 1 project planning has made progress. The feasibility study for highway improvements from Larose to U.S. 90 was completed during the summer of 2000. An Environmental Impact Statement is underway for a critical stretch of highway between Port Fourchon and Golden Meadow. This portion of the highway is a vital commercial, recreational and hurricane evacuation link

and is extremely vulnerable to destruction as a result of erosion and land loss. Replacement of the Leeville Bridge with an overpass has been identified as a high priority for improvements to Highway 1.

In other transportation matters, a regional planning effort has gained momentum for the creation of a new State International Airport under the auspices of the Southeast Louisiana Airport Commission. While this State chartered commission struggles with the need to locate a major airport facility in the Baton Rouge and New Orleans Metropolitan area, local communities and smaller local airports are following their deliberations to see how they will be affected. It is not now known where such an airport might be located, but it is possible a site could be found in the South Central Region. While such a facility may have a great impact on existing communities in terms of land use and noise, these factors will be weighed along with the creation of numerous jobs and other economic spin offs into the local area economy. The role such a facility will play in the expansion and further development of other airports such as the Houma-Terrebonne and Thibodaux Airports is as yet undetermined. Thus SCPDC is closely monitoring progress of that Airport Commission.

The Houma-Terrebonne Airport is undertaking an improvement plan that will better position as an attractive site for cargo and shipping services. The Airport is working to improve its main runway. Plans call for the runway to be lengthened to 10,000 feet eventually and strengthened in order to handle larger planes and heavier loads.

As are all of Louisiana's ports, those in the South Central Region are directing efforts toward meeting the import/export demand of fast growing economies in Central and South America. Ongoing infrastructure improvements at the three ports progressed. The Greater Lafourche Port Commission received a grant from the Economic Development Commission to undertake a major expansion encompassing 1700 acres at Port Fourchon. The Port's location directly on the Gulf of Mexico and in the center of the Gulf of Mexico has made it a prime staging area for onshore facilities and services related to petroleum exploration.

The Port of South Louisiana continues to develop its Globalplex Intermodal Terminal. This Port is the third largest tonnage port in the World. In the coming year the Port plans to improve rail spurs that provide service into the Port site. The Terrebonne Port Commission continued improvements to its site at the intersection of the Houma Navigational Canal and the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway (G.I.W.W.). These improvements will provide an inland transfer point for the barging operations that dominate the G.I.W.W. Annually, some $69 million tons of goods pass through Houma on the G.I.W.W. By offering improved port facilities, Terrebonne is hoping to capitalize on its location along the G.I.W.W and become a key support and service center along this inland trade route.

These Ports are monitoring and participating in the development of the State's Millennium Port Plan. The State is evaluating sites that can be developed as a State Port to handle the larger ships that are dominating the overseas shipping industry. Regardless of the site chosen, the general opinion is that all of the ports in the State will need to coordinate their efforts and offer the full range of services that the Plan will call for in order to keep Louisiana at the forefront of port activity in the United States and the world.

Two other new regional efforts took off during early 2001. The three River Parishes formed a regional Tourist Commission. The Commission is now organizing and will be supported through a hotel motel tax. Its goal is to improve tourism opportunities and attract tourists to the River Parishes. A Solid Waste Authority was formed for the South Central Region and four parishes have joined thus far, Assumption, St. James, St. Charles and Terrebonne. The Authority will be analyzing methods to reduce the cost of solid waste collection and disposal.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Following are 2000-2001 accomplishments in attaining the revised CEDS goals as presented in this annual update. South Central Region SCPDC remains the coordinator for the CEDS

~~*Become a Learning Enterprise*~~

Assisted in community public relations actives.
Assisted U.S. Census Bureau with complete count outreach program.
Continued Census 2000 coordination efforts including review of preliminary maps and addresses.
Continued cooperative partnerships with other economic development agencies.
Continued economic development planning and technical assistance.
Continued Incumbent Workers Training Program.
Continued planning efforts for construction of the Assumption Parish Vocational School.
Coordinated with Bayou Vision and Metrovision planning efforts.
Implementation of the St. James Parish Strategic Plan.
Maintained Parish Economic Development Offices.
Maintenance of community and parish profiles by Utility Companies.
Monitored changes in industry and affect on area economy.
Operation of Lafourche Parish one-stop permit shop.
Participated in the American Economic Development Conference.
Participated in Workshop for Non-economic Development Planners in using the Ramey Model.
Participation in the State Travel and Tourism Summit.
Provided a Regional Governmental Training Workshop on State Laws.
Provided OSHA assisted job safety training program for the Region's shipyards.
Provided Regional workshop on Economic Incentives.
Provided support to local school boards in environmental and governmental curriculums.
Started St. Charles Parish Strategic Planning effort.
Started St. John the Baptist Parish Strategic Planning effort.
Support continued efforts of the Workforce Investment Board to improve skills and job access.
Supported efforts of local school boards to expand upgrade and construct new educational facilities.
Updated student enrollment projections for St. Charles Parish School Board to plan future facility needs.

Diverse and Technology-Interactive Economy Utilizing Louisiana Colleges and Universities

Assumption Parish continued its plans for construction of an Agricultural Center that will house Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service operations.
Construction of the Nicholls Allied Health Building in Houma.
Continued funding of the River Parish Economic Development Program through the South Louisiana Port Commission.
Continued work on development of a regional geographic information system.
Development of new websites and upgrade of existing sites for towns and Parishes.

Create a High Standard of Living

Administration of HUD entitlement program in Terrebonne and Thibodaux.
Continuation of Beautification and Anti-Litter Campaigns throughout the District.
Continuation of implementation of the Barataria Terrebonne National Estuary Program Plan.
Continuation of the historic structure survey.

Continue Atchafalaya Trace Commission efforts to preserve and promote cultural and heritage of the Atchafalaya Basin area.
Continue study of Bayou Lafourche Conveyance Channel.
Continue to improve St. James Welcome Center.
Continue to promote Nature Based Tourism.
Continued coastal protection planning in St. Charles, St. James, Lafourche and Terrebonne.
Continued efforts to revitalize the Thibodaux CBD.
Continued maintenance of the FEMA Community Rating System Programs.
Continued promotion of culture and heritage throughout the region.
Implementation of Barrier Island restoration projects.
Maintenance of Tourist Information Center in Raceland.
Ongoing construction of the Davis Pond Freshwater Diversion Program.
Provided Non-point Source Pollution presentations to students and civic groups.
Started a one-stop permit shop in Lafourche Parish.
Support efforts to improve the quality and availability of a potable water supply.
Support of Coast 2050 Plan.

Improve Infrastructure

Assisted in the development and implementation of the State's long-range highway plan.
Completed a facility plan for Lafourche Parish Library.
Completed Palm Avenue Extension.
Conducting an EIS for an elevated four lane highway from Golden Meadow to Port Fourchon.
Constructed Tigerville community sewerage in Assumption Parish.
Continue planning of Morganza to the Gulf Hurricane Protection Levee.
Continue planning of new Terrebonne Parish Main Library.
Continued drainage improvement efforts throughout the Region.
Continued efforts to create a regional solid waste authority.
Continued Parishwide sewerage efforts in St. Charles and Terrebonne.
Continued planning for creation of a St. Charles Parish Civic Center.
Continued plans to expand and improve airport facilities in Houma and St. John the Baptist Parish.
Continued Sidewalk Improvement program in St. James Parish.
Continued slip construction for Terrebonne Port Commission.
Continued work on the Vacherie Canal Backwater Prevention Project.
Improvements to La. Hwy. 1.

Create and Retain High Quality Jobs

Continued administration of SCPDC and Terrebonne Parish Revolving Loan Funds.
Continued efforts to create business development incubator in Terrebonne Parish.
Continued efforts to support expansion of Weatherford Gemoco in Terrebonne Parish.
Continued operation of St. James Business Incubator.
Participated in "Industry Appreciation Gala" by St. Charles, St. James, St. John the Baptist and Port of South Louisiana.
Participated in the Louisiana Dept. of Economic Development Regional Bayou Matchmaker program.

Changes in the Region's Economic Conditions

The total population for the South Central Region from the year 2000 Census was 330,197, an increase of 6.9% over the 1990 population of 308,907. St. Charles Parish experienced the largest growth rate in the region between 1990 and 2000 at 13.3%. Following is the 2000 Census for the six-parish area.

PARISH	2000 Census	1990 Census	Percent Change
ASSUMPTION	23,388	22,753	2.79
LAFOURCHE	89,974	85,860	4.79
ST. CHARLES	48,072	42,437	13.28
ST. JAMES	21,216	20,879	1.61
ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST	43,044	39,996	7.62
TERREBONNE	104,503	96,982	7.76
TOTAL	332,197	310,897	6.85

Overall employment has remained high. The Department of Labor noted that nonagricultural employment is at a record high in all of the State's metropolitan statistical areas with the Houma MSA having the largest percentage of growth over the year with an increase of 5.7 percent. Unemployment rates for February 2000 (revised) and 2001 (preliminary) follow:

PARISH	Feb 2000	Feb 2001
ASSUMPTION	8.4	9.1
LAFOURCHE	4.7	3.9
ST. CHARLES	4.7	5.7
ST. JAMES	10.2	12.8
ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST	6.4	7.3
TERREBONNE	5.0	4.3

While most of the area faired well, St. James retained a high unemployment level. This is probably due to the temporary closure and/or downsizing of several major manufacturers in the Parish, as mentioned at the outset of this report. Changes in employment were seen predominately within the manufacturing sector where 888 jobs were lost over the five years spanning 1996 to through the third quarter of 2000. The fourth quarter of 1998 was the highest employment in manufacturing with 3,078 employees. This figure dropped to 2,190 during the first quarter of 2000, the lowest number during the five years spanning 1996 through the third quarter of 2000. IMC Agrico, a major employer in St. James Parish laid off 250 workers in 1999 and another 60 in the year 2000. Two other companies scaled back. LaRoche laid off 30 employees and Oxy Chemical, which temporarily ceased operation but has since restarted, cut back on 60 contract-employee positions. Reasons for the changes are due to the high cost of natural gas that many plants use in their manufacturing processes and the world market for the products being offered, such as fertilizers.

Assumption Parish is not part of an MSA, but a look at its current unemployment and economic data from the State Department of Labor shows that Assumption too is experiencing increases in average unemployment rates. The Parish was at its ten year high in 1993 at 11.9% unemployment. The rate dropped in 1998 to the ten year low of 5.7%. The unemployment rate was back up to a 9% average for

2000. Manufacturing took a heavy blow in this parish too as 1215 jobs in that sector were lost between the 4th quarter of 1997 and the 4th quarter of 1999. A slight increase was gained in the first quarters of 2000. Jobs lost were probably a result of layoffs and downsizing at J. Ray McDermott, which operates a fabrication yard in Assumption Parish. In a recent news article it was reported that McDermott employed about 12,000 persons in 1998 and had 5,500 employees in March 2001.

The Department of Labor's 1999 "Statewide Occupational Forecasting Focus Meetings Executive Summary" it was noted for the Assumption, Lafourche and Terrebonne area that medical services in general are strong and although shipyards are laying-off marginal jobs skilled workers are being hired. Shipbuilding interests have diversified their clientele and thus are picking up many of the skilled workers laid off by more petroleum dependent concerns. A need for high school apprenticeship programs for welders and fitters was foreseen. Such courses are offered at Assumption Parish High School and East St. John Parish local High School along with electrical training. This is an area that needs to be explored further with other area trade schools.

In recent years, the South Central Region experienced substantial economic growth as the price of oil climbed and oil and gas exploration and production activity increased. Changes during the past two years in the price per barrel of oil caused a slump and then a growth spurt in activity throughout Louisiana.

The Louisiana Department of Labor forecast of top demand occupations in the South Central District for the years 1996 to 2006 showed the four occupations with the highest annual percent of growth to be systems analysts, home health aides, medical assistants and shipfitters. This is good news for the South Central Region as these sectors of the economy generally offer higher wages. The South Central Region has enjoyed excellent employment but still has lower than State and National per capita income levels.

Evaluation of Effectiveness in Meeting Goals

During the past year, EDA conducted a performance evaluation of SCPDC in 1999. Recommendations made as a result of that evaluation were as follows:

- A clearer description of the areas of interest represented by individual Commission members is needed.
- District members and the general public should be better educated about the District's activities.
- There should be one designated EDA contact person who would devote at least 50% of his or her time to accomplishing the work program and being knowledgeable about EDA and other economic development programs.
- Reports filed under the District planning grant should describe specific activities and accomplishments in relation to the CEDS in order to clarify the District's strategic outlook. The current practice has been to report activities by community.

It was felt that these changes would improve the CEDS documents and create a more effective CEDS planning process while resulting in better developed EDA projects and better quality EDA applications.

The District took steps to follow-up on these recommendations by appointing its Chief Executive Officer as the EDA contact. The District has taken steps to better inform both members and the general public of its activities. Planning grant reports have been modified to conform to recommended format.

A review of the past year's activities and accomplishments was undertaken in partnership with the local economic development committees and regional CEDS task force. Comments and direction for improvements have been included in this report.

The region's emphasis continues to be diversification and stabilization of the economy, improvement of training and educational opportunities, creation of quality jobs and improvement of regional transportation.

WORK PLAN FOR 2000-2001

After review of the 1997 OEDP with the various local committees, CEDS Task Force and CEDS Committee, the following work plan was established for 2000-2001. These were determined based upon the identified CEDS goals, ongoing need in the various communities, and the current status of the local economies in relation to the EDA Reform Act of 1998.

Completion of new or upgrade of aging infrastructure, in particular those pertaining to transportation, remain top priorities for the South Central Region. Movement of goods and people within the region is a top concern. Improved transportation will help to move people to and from job centers and essential services and provide an improved network for shipment of goods, of great concern considering the importance of the areas three ports and several airports.

The creation of quality jobs remains an issue. Although much of the South Central Region enjoys a high level of employment, per capita incomes remain well below the State and National averages. The Region hopes to attract the kind of industries and commercial activities that offer stable, higher paying wages. In order to accomplish this goal, emphasis is placed on improving the skills of the labor market, maintaining the quality of life and upgrading public services. There is concern over the large unemployment rate in St. James Parish which is related to changes in the worldwide demand for products offered by several major plants and the cost of natural gas, the fuel source for plant operations. The research on the reasons for this unemployment rate and development of a strategy for addressing the problem has been identified as a project for the coming year.

All are working but at low paying jobs: about ⅓ below the National per capita income average.

2000-2001 WORKPLAN

Become a Learning Enterprise

Assist Community Public Relations Activities and Maintenance of Community and Parish Profiles by Utility Companies.
Conduct economic development seminars.
Conduct trade shows in St. John the Baptist Parish.
Construct a Distance Learning Center at SCPDC Facilities. What kind of learning?
Continue cooperative partnerships with other economic development agencies, Bayou Vision and Metrovision Strategic Plans.
Continue Leadership Training Programs in Lafourche and Terrebonne Parishes.
Continue St. James and St. John the Baptist Parish School to Career Programs.
Create and disseminate parish information packages.
Develop an Economic Development Strategy for Terrebonne Parish.
Develop education and training programs to improve the skills of the local labor force.
Develop or update Strategic Plans for St. Charles, St. James and St. John the Baptist Parish.
Develop working onsite model of Nonpoint Source Pollution Best Management Practices to be used by schools and other interested parties.
Improvements to local and regional websites with links to demographic, economic and geographic information systems.
Investigate feasibility of creating Lafourche and Assumption Parishes economic development offices. SLEC ?
Monitor and assist in analysis and distribution of data generated from Census 2000.
Participate in student programs concerning government.
Present Non-point Source Pollution information to kindergarten and primary students. } Garbage !
Provide economic development training programs for elected officials.
Provision of funding by the Port of South Louisiana for River Parish economic development programs.
Support efforts of local school boards to expand, upgrade and construct new educational facilities. If needed!
Update the Business Directory of products and services available in the River Parishes.

Diverse and Technology-Interactive Economy Utilizing Louisiana Colleges and Universities

Complete the Nicholls State University EPSCOT grant.
Continue to create and update local and port GIS systems.
Continue work on development of a regional geographic information system.
Investigate Feasibility of Job Training Programs. Which jobs?

Create a High Standard of Living

Administration of HUD entitlement program in Terrebonne and Thibodaux.
Attract commercial enterprises to Napoleonville.
Complete construction of St. James Tourist Information Center.
Complete the Davis Pond Freshwater Diversion Program. Lawsuits will stop this !
Continue coastal protection planning in St. Charles, St. James, Lafourche and Terrebonne.
Continue efforts of the Atchafalaya Trace Commission.
Continue to revitalize the Houma CBD through the Houma Downtown Development Corporation.
Create a one-stop permit shop in St. James Parish. and other Parishes
Create a Planning and Zoning Department for St. James Parish.

Develop a Children's Museum in the Thibodaux area.
Develop a coastal management plan for St. John the Baptist Parish.
Develop a regulatory Houma Historic District.
Develop a St. Charles Parish Historical Museum.
Develop Home Place Plantation in St. Charles Parish as a State Park tourist attraction.
Develop Whitney Plantation as a tourist attraction and center for African American studies.
Docking facility at Oak Alley and other tourist attractions along the Mississippi River.
Document and portray OCS impact on Lafourche Parish.
Expand tourism efforts throughout the South Central Region.
Implement Barrier Island restoration projects.
Implement the Barataria Terrebonne National Estuary Program Plan.
Implement the Coast 2050 Ecosystem Strategy.
Inventory and assess brownfield sites.
Investigate feasibility of creating a Reserve Historic District.
Investigate the feasibility of website autoresponse for St. Charles Parish.
Maintain the FEMA Community Rating System Programs.
Monitor and support efforts of the new River Parish Tourism Commission.
Prepare a new Terrebonne Parish Comprehensive Plan and investigate feasibility of parishwide zoning.
Prepare a St. James Parish land use plan.
Promote the culture and heritage of the entire region.
Revitalize the Thibodaux CBD and Historic District area.
Support state efforts to obtain a portion of Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) revenues to be utilized consistent with said goal.
Update of historic structure inventory.
Update parish and municipal Codes.
Update the Lutcher Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances.
Update the St. Charles Parish land-use plan.

Improve Infrastructure

Provide for improvements to the region's ports and waterways.

- Construct conveyor from docks to service laydown areas at Globalplex.
- Construct Northern Expansion project for Port Fourchon. (est. $13.3 million)
- Continue efforts to ensure the planned Houma Navigation Canal and lock system are designed for medium draft vessels at 200 feet wide and 20 feet deep.
- Continue to pursue general cargo opportunities to better serve the maritime industry.
- Convert Golden Meadow and Larose Floodgates into locks in order to facilitate waterborne commerce during high water stages.
- Deepen the existing east-west channel connecting the Houma Navigation Canal to Port Fourchon to 12 feet to facilitate flow of traffic between the Terrebonne and Fourchon ports.
- Develop a public dock on the West Bank of St. Charles Parish.
- Complete dredging of 5,700-feet long slip and infrastructure improvements on 400 acres for medium draft Terrebonne Port facility. (est. $2 million for infrastructure)
- Explore feasibility of establishing rail service to Port Fourchon. No way!
- Increase warehouse and distribution capacity at the Port of South Louisiana.
- Rail spur rehabilitation and extension with warehouses for Globalplex Intermodal Terminal.
- Support initiatives to improve public facilities and access to Port Fourchon beaches. Good for Tourism!

Continue efforts to improve transportation within the District including the following:

- Complete E.I.S. and Feasibility Studies for North South Corridor connecting Port Fourchon to I-10.
- Complete road overlay and improvement programs in all parishes and municipalities.
- Complete sidewalk improvements throughout St. James Parish.
- Conduct a Traffic Study for St. John Parish.
- Construct La. Hwy. 20 Expansion and 40 Arpent Road Project in Thibodaux.
- Construct Thibodaux East/West Corridor Project.
- Continue efforts to gain support and funding for I-49.
- Continue efforts to gain support and funding for improvements to La. Hwy. 1.
- Continue preliminary design of La. 1 and La. 308 Couplet system in Thibodaux.
- Continue to develop and implement Safe Community Action Plan for the South Central Region to address ways to reduce traffic crashes.
- Continue to investigate feasibility of a public transit service for Assumption Parish.
- Develop a transportation loop around Thibodaux.
- Develop coordinated inter-parish transit service with the River Parish Transit Authority.
- Implement Pierre Part Enhancement Project constructing sidewalks.
- Investigate feasibility of designating La. Highways 1 and 308 as alternate hurricane evacuation routes in Assumption Parish.
- Monitor plans for creation of North to South Access Road between La. Hwy. 3127 and U.S. Hwy. 90.
- Reconstruct St. Patrick Highway.
- Support Governor's La. 1 Task Force plans for hurricane evacuation route from Grand Isle to Alexandria.

Construct improvements to the region's airports.

- Construct infrastructure improvements at the Houma-Terrebonne Airport.
- Continue plans to expand and improve airport facilities in St. John the Baptist Parish.
- Develop a regional airport to better serve the South Central Region.
- Improve and upgrade Thibodaux Municipal Airport.

Provide drainage and flood protection

- Assist St. Charles Parish in developing a drainage canal bank stabilization plan.
- Continue construction of levee from Coteau Canal Boat Launch to Forrestal Street in St. James Parish.
- Continue construction of Vacherie Canal Backwater Prevention Project.
- Continue drainage improvements throughout the Region.
- Investigate feasibility of funding for St. James Parish drainage canal improvements.
- Provide citywide drainage improvements in Thibodaux, including Rienzi Canal improvements.
- Support efforts to create a Comprehensive Hurricane Protection Plan for Coastal Louisiana.

Provide improvements to public utilities including the following:

- Build a community sewerage system for Rita in Lafourche Parish.
- Construct community sewerage system for Belle Rose and Blackwell Lanes in Assumption Parish.
- Continue Parishwide sewerage efforts in St. Charles and Terrebonne Parishes.
- Continue to explore alternatives for improvements to Reserve Sewerage Treatment Facilities in St. John the Baptist Parish.
- Gas, sewerage and water system improvements in Thibodaux.
- Prepare design and engineering work for update of St. James Parishwide Sewerage System facilities plan.

Sewerage improvements for Lockport.
Sewerage upgrade for Napoleonville.
Water system improvements in Lewistown, Lafourche Parish.

Improve Recreational Facilities:

Construct a bike path and walking trail in Thibodaux.
Construct Bayou L'Ourse and Pierre Part Walking Trails in Assumption Parish.
Continue working with the U. S. Corps of Engineers to improve the Attakapas Landing Boat Launch.
Establish a neighborhood park in Baytree area and improve existing parks in St. James Parish.

Improve Other Public Facilities:

Complete construction of additions to Assumption Parish Library.
Construct West Bank Library Branch and relocate and construct larger LaPlace Library in St. John the Baptist Parish.
Continue efforts to create a Regional Criminalistics Laboratory.
Continue planning for Belle Rose and Bayou L'Ourse Assumption Branch libraries.
Continue planning for new Terrebonne Parish Library.
Continue Regional Solid Waste Authority efforts to address solid waste disposal and transportation issues.
Develop design and engineering for a new Vacherie Branch Library and improvements to the Lutcher Library in St. James Parish.
Develop plan and design for St. Charles Civic Center/Fairgrounds.
Upgrade Fire Protection Facilities throughout the Region.

Create and Retain High Quality Jobs

Administration and expansion of SCPDC and Terrebonne Parish Revolving Loan Funds.
Continue Enterprise Zone Assistance.
Continue regional economic diversification and new business recruitment efforts.
Create a technology based business incubator center in Thibodaux.
Develop warehousing, light industrial and high technology clusters in St. Charles Parish.
Investigate feasibility of a warehouse distribution center in St. John the Baptist Parish.
Investigate feasibility of creating a business incubator in Terrebonne Parish.
Investigate the causes of high unemployment in St. James Parish and develop a strategy to address the problems.
Operation of St. James Parish Incubator program.

CONCLUSION

As illustrated herein, the South Central Planning and Development Commission has taken steps to achieve the goals outlined in its 1997 OEDP. It has updated the goals originally identified in the 1997 plan and developed a work plan for the coming year that will help to achieve the goals.

APPENDIX A

COMMITTEE ROSTERS

APPENDIX B
MINUTES

The Regional OEDP (CEDS) Committee is composed of members from each of the six participating parishes and the six participating municipalities. The Committee meets quarterly. Each member community shares in the cost of the annual CEDS process through its membership dues. Dues are based upon the population of each community and all of the twelve communities are current with their dues.

Following are minutes of Committee meetings held between July 2000 and June 2001.

MINUTES

SOUTH CENTRAL PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING

Thursday, September 28, 2000
10:30 a.m.
South Central Planning and Development Commission

A regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners for South Central Planning and Development Commission was called to order at 10:30 a.m. on Thursday, September 28, 2000, at the office of South Central Planning and Development Commission, Gray, Louisiana. Mr. Dale J. Hymel, Jr., Chairman, called the meeting to order, and requested Ms. Melissa Menuet to call the roll. Those members present or represented by proxy were:

Kim Torres, representing Martin Triche, President, Assumption Parish Police Jury;
Alvin Sylvester, Assumption Parish;
Bonnie Lafont, representing Mayor Charles Caillouet, City of Thibodaux;
Joe Townsend, Mayor, Town of Lockport;
Steve Sirmon, representing Albert Laque, Parish President, St. Charles Parish;
Dale J. Hymel Jr., Parish President, St. James Parish;
James Mitchell, St. James Parish;
Howard Jones, St. James Parish;
Ronald St. Pierre, Mayor, Town of Gramercy;
Wayne Thibodeaux, Terrebonne Parish;
Edmond Blanchard, Terrebonne Parish;

Those members absent:

Calvin James, Assumption Parish;
Darrell Jupiter, Mayor, Village of Napoleonville;
Gerald Breaux, Parish President, Lafourche Parish Council;
Jerry Jones, Lafourche Parish;
Chris Bollinger, Lafourche Parish;
Joey Bouziga, Town of Golden Meadow;
Dee Abadie, St. Charles Parish;
Debbie Dufresne Vial, St. Charles Parish;
Nickie Monica, Parish President, St. John the Baptist Parish;
Cleveland Farlough, St. John the Baptist Parish;
Ann Tatje, St. John the Baptist Parish;
Troas Poché, Mayor, Town of Lutcher;
Robert Bergeron, Parish President, Terrebonne Parish;

Members of the staff of South Central Planning in attendance were: Kevin Belanger, CEO; Melissa Menuet, Administrative Assistant; Richard Poché, GIS Administrator; Pam Roussel, Project Manager; Martha Cazaubon, Project Manager and Kevin Ghirardi, MPO Administrator.

Mr. Hymel recognized the corporate sponsor Mr. Ed Blanchard of BP Amoco.

Mr. Richard Champagne, Mayor-Elect of Lockport attended as a guest of Mayor Joe Townsend.

Acceptance of Minutes of June 29, 2000 Regular Meeting.

A motion was made by Mayor Townsend, seconded by Howard Jones to accept the minutes of June 29, 2000. There being no opposition, the motion passed unanimously.

Acceptance of Management Committee Minutes of April 7, 2000.

A motion was made by Mr. Sylvester, seconded by Mayor St. Pierre to accept the minutes of the April 7, 2000 Management Committee meeting. There being no opposition, the motion passed unanimously.

Acceptance of Management Committee Minutes of June 22, 2000.

A motion was made by Mayor Townsend, seconded by Mr. Blanchard to accept the minutes of the June 22, 2000 Management Committee meeting. There being no opposition, the motion passed unanimously.

Review and Approve Financial Statement Ending June 30, 2000.

Mr. Belanger briefly discussed the financial statement ending June 30, 2000, and explained that the figures are not completely audited and are subject to change. He said that as of June 30, 2000 the agency had total assets of $1,600,777.72, total liabilities of $1,046,852.11, a total fund equity of $553,925.61, and a total liabilities and fund equity of $1,600,777.72. Mr. Belanger further explained that under the Statement of Revenues and Expenditures, the agency has total revenues of $622,580.93, total expenditures of $863,571.46, a deficiency of $240,990.53, a beginning fund balance of $702,228.90, and an ending fund balance of $461,238.37.

Mr. Thibodeaux requested a copy of the RLF recipients to date. Mr. Belanger stated that all of the RLF money has been lent out as of the last meeting of the Loan Advisory Board.

Mr. Hymel inquired about the problem with Ameripure's loan. Mr. Belanger explained that Ameripure has located the equipment that was purchased with the RLF money in Franklin. He said that Ameripure is also having problems with the LCDBG program because they are not located in Golden Meadow. He explained that the LCDBG program is requesting that Ameripure pay their debt, and this could possibly throw

Ameripure into bankruptcy. SCPDC has approximately $180,000.00 outstanding on the Ameripure loan.

Mr. Belanger stated that the reason Ameripure did not locate in Golden Meadow is because of problems such as the bid process being very lengthy, and they needed to be able to start the business so they moved a lot of their facility to Franklin, which they now operate successfully. He said that they couldn't afford to split their operation in two. Mr. Belanger said that there was another oyster fisherman who was going to bring his operation into the Golden Meadow Plant to sublease, but CDBG did not want any part of it.

Mr. Belanger said that the Loan Committee has given Ameripure until January to locate in Golden Meadow. If they fail to locate in Golden Meadow by January, the RLF will file foreclosure.

Mr. Hymel asked if Ameripure made timely payments? Mr. Belanger said that Ameripure does make their payments in a timely manner.

Mr. Hymel asked if the agency is beginning to see financial effects of the MPO? Mr. Belanger said that in fiscal year 2000-2001, the agency will probably see about $150,000.00. He also stated that in fiscal year 2001-2002 the agency will probably show about $230,000.00 more added to the revenues.

Mr. Mitchell asked Mr. Belanger to explain the investments. Mr. Belanger explained that the agency has several thousand dollars in CD's. He explained that the agency moves the CD's from bank to bank depending on the interest rate.

A motion was made by Mayor Townsend, seconded by Mr. Thibodeaux to approve the unaudited financial statement ending June 30, 2000. There being no opposition, the motion passed unanimously.

Resolution: Declaring various equipment as surplus property and authorizing the Chief Executive Officer to appropriately dispose of said equipment.

Mr. Belanger explained that through the process of moving, the agency found several items that are no longer needed. Mr. Belanger said that if any parish or municipality is interested in any of the equipment, it is located in the room next door.

A motion was made by Mr. Blanchard, seconded by Mr. Jones to declare the various equipment as surplus property. There being no opposition, the motion passed unanimously.

Resolution: Authorizing the CEO to enter into a contract for Metropolitan Planning for fiscal year 2001, between SCPDC and the La. DOTD for the Houma-Thibodaux MPO, Transit Funds.

A motion was made by Mr. Thibodeaux, seconded by Mr. Sirmon to authorize the CEO to enter into a contract for Metropolitan Planning for fiscal year 2001 for Transit Funds. There being no opposition, the motion passed unanimously.

Resolution: Authorizing the CEO to enter into a contract for Metropolitan Planning for fiscal year 2001, between SCPDC and the La. DOTD for the Houma-Thibodaux MPO, continuing planning phase.

A motion was made by Mr. Sylvester, seconded by Mr. Mitchell to authorize the CEO to enter into a contract for Metropolitan Planning for fiscal year 2001 for the continuing planning phase. There being no opposition, the motion passed unanimously.

Status report on SCPDC Building Project.

Mr. Belanger briefly spoke about the agency's move to the new location. Mr. Belanger explained that he has a meeting lined up to formalize and complete the Joint Use Agreement for the property for the new office facility.

Mr. Hymel stated for the benefit of the new members that the agency has submitted a Capital Outlay application to the state for funding to construct a new office facility on the grounds owned by the LA DOTD. Mr. Belanger said that the architectural design is 95% complete.

Agency Activity Report.

Mr. Belanger briefly reviewed the Agency Activity Report.

Discussion ensued regarding the OSHA Train-the-Trainer Program. Mr. Thibodaux suggested contacting Job Service. He said that they might be a source of referral for the agency to make sure that the word gets out about the training.

Other Business.

Mr. Thibodeaux asked for an update on the Distance Learning Center grant. Mr. Belanger explained that the grant was written for the equipment to go into the construction of our new office facility. He said that the agency asked that the grant be put on hold until construction of the building begins, and Rural Development has agreed. Mr. Thibodaux asked if SCPDC would do something with the money now that the agency is in a new facility. Mr. Belanger said that he would get with DOTD to see what the ramifications would be if the Distance Learning Center would be located here. He said that he would also call Rural Development to make sure the money is still set aside. He said that he would also get estimates on what it would cost to have the center set up here, as well as move it to our new building.

Mayor Townsend stated that it has been a pleasure being with South Central Planning for the past six years. He said that come January 1, 2001 he will no longer be Mayor of Lockport, and at that time will resign his position as Secretary/Treasurer with South Central Planning. Mayor Townsend said that Buzz Breaux mentioned that because he is located in Thibodaux, he would be willing to take over as Secretary/Treasurer.

A motion was made by Mayor Townsend, seconded by Mr. Blanchard to accept the resignation of Mayor Townsend as of January 1, 2001, and to approve Buzz Breaux as the interim Secretary/Treasurer beginning January 1, 2001 until the January Commission meeting when elections are held. There being no opposition, the motion passed unanimously.

There being no other business to discuss, a motion was made by Mr. Sirmon, seconded by Mr. Mitchell to adjourn. There being no opposition, the motion passed unanimously.

As duly authorized officers of South Central Planning and Development Commission, Board of Commissioners, we do hereby certify that the above and foregoing is the official version of the Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Commissioners held on September 28, 2000.

Dale J. Hymel, Jr., Chairman
South Central Planning and Development Commission

Gerald "Buzz" Breaux, Secretary-Treasurer
South Central Planning and Development Commission

MINUTES

SOUTH CENTRAL PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING

Thursday, January 18, 2001
10:30 a.m.
Esperanza Restaurant
Luling, Louisiana

A regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners for South Central Planning and Development Commission was called to order at 10:30 a.m. on Thursday, January 18, 2001, at Esperanza Restaurant, Luling, Louisiana. Mr. Dale J. Hymel, Jr., Chairman, called the meeting to order, and requested Ms. Melissa Menuet to call the roll. Those members present or represented by proxy were:

Harriet Blanchard, representing Martin Triche, President, Assumption Parish;
Gerald "Buzz" Breaux, Parish President, Lafourche Parish Council;
Bonnie Lafont, representing Mayor Charles Caillouet, City of Thibodaux;
Richard Champagne, Mayor, Town of Lockport;
Gwen Theriot, representing Mayor Joey Bouziga, Town of Golden Meadow;
Albert Laque, Parish President, St. Charles Parish Council;
Dee Abadie, Councilwoman, St. Charles Parish Council;
Debbie Dufresne Vial, St. Charles Parish;
Dale J. Hymel Jr., Parish President, St. James Parish;
James Mitchell, Councilman, St. James Parish;
Ronald St. Pierre, Mayor, Town of Gramercy;
Nickie Monica, Parish President, St. John the Baptist Parish Council;
Cleveland Farlough, Councilman, St. John the Baptist Parish Council;
Wayne Thibodeaux, Councilman, Terrebonne Parish;
Edmond Blanchard, Terrebonne Parish;

Those members absent:

Calvin James, Police Juror, Assumption Parish;
Alvin Sylvester, Assumption Parish;
Darrell Jupiter, Mayor, Village of Napoleonville;
Jerry Jones, Councilman, Lafourche Parish;
Chris Bollinger, Lafourche Parish;
Howard Jones, St. James Parish;
Ann Tatje, St. John the Baptist Parish;
Troas Poché, Mayor, Town of Lutcher;
Robert Bergeron, Parish President, Terrebonne Parish;

Members of the staff of South Central Planning in attendance were: Kevin Belanger, CEO; Melissa Menuet, Administrative Assistant; Richard Poché, GIS Administrator; Daryl Noll, Planner II; Julie Boudreaux, Accountant and Kevin Ghirardi, MPO Administrator.

Mr. Hymel recognized the corporate sponsor Mr. Bob Monte of Quality Janitorial Service.

Guest in attendance were:

Earl Hicks, Airport Manager, Houma Terrebonne Airport Commission;
Polo LaCoste, Commissioner, Houma Terrebonne Airport Commission;
John Montero, Houma Terrebonne Airport Commission;
Albert Guidry, Commissioner, Houma Terrebonne Airport;
Wilson Malbrough, Councilman, St. James Parish;
Elwyn Bocz, Councilman, St. James Parish;
Deana Zeringue, Bourgeois Bennett;
Dan Toepfer, Bourgeois Bennett;
Glenda Jeansonne, Louisiana Airport Authority;
Ronnie Theriot, Manager, Evangeline Business Park;
Gary Bourgeois, Evangeline Business Park;
Lee Dautrieve, Regional Planning Commission;
Carolyn Louviere, Albert Laque's Office;
Steve Sirmon, Public Information Officer, St. Charles Parish.

Acceptance of Minutes of September 28, 2000 Regular Meeting.

A motion was made by Wayne Thibodeaux, seconded by Edmond Blanchard to accept the minutes of September 28, 2000. There being no opposition, the motion passed unanimously.

Review and Approve FY 2000-2001 Budget Adjustments

Mr. Belanger stated that enclosed in the packet are budget amendments to date. Total Revenues are $1,550,299.00, total expenditures for the year are $1,496,317.00, and the ending fund balance is $508,247.00.

Mr. Thibodaux asked where in the budget would the Distance Learning Center grant be shown. Mr. Belanger replied that it would not be shown in the budget until the actual year the grant is received.

A motion was made by Ed Blanchard, seconded by Albert Laque to approve the FY 2000-2001 budget adjustments.

Presentation of FY 1999-2000 Audit by Bourgeois Bennett, LLC

Dan Toepfer of Bourgeois Bennett reviewed the audit and stated that there were no findings regarding the financial statements or the grants.

Election of 2001 Officers

The Chairman opened the floor for nominations for chairman.

A motion was made by Wayne Thibodeaux, seconded by Albert Laque to nominate Edmond Blanchard for Chairman.

The Chairman entertained a motion that nominations be closed.

A motion was made by Nickie Monica, seconded by Wayne Thibodeaux to close nominations for Chairman. There being no opposition the motion carried.

The Chairman opened the floor for nominations for Vice-Chairman.

A motion was made by Nickie Monica, seconded by Albert Laque to nominate Dale Hymel for Vice-Chairman.

A motion was made by Dee Abadie, seconded by Debbie Vial to close nominations for Vice-Chairman. There being no opposition the motion carried.

The Chairman opened the floor for nominations for Secretary-Treasurer.

A motion was made by Richard Champagne, seconded by Albert Laque to nominate Gerald "Buzz" Breaux for Secretary-Treasurer.

A motion was made by Dee Abadie, seconded by Debbie Vial to close nominations for Secretary-Treasurer. There being no opposition, the motion carried.

Presentation of Appreciation to Joe "Bubba" Townsend

A plaque was presented to Bubba Townsend for his service to South Central Planning and Development Commission.

Guest Speaker – Louisiana Airport Authority

Mr. Blanchard introduced Ms. Glenda Jeansonne of the Louisiana Airport Authority. She informed the Board of the purpose of the Authority.

A motion was made by Nickie Monica, seconded by Albert Laque to pass a resolution in support of the Louisiana Airport Authority to be passed on to the state and congressional delegation. There being no opposition, the motion carried.

Discussion of SCPDC Annual Leave and Family Medical Leave Act

Mr. Belanger explained that prior to 1995 the employees of SCPDC received three (3) weeks vacation per year from the date of hire. In 1995 vacation time was reduced to two (2) weeks per year with an extra day per year after ten (10) years. The reason for

the change was due to financial difficulties. He said that now that the agency has sustained its financial stability, he would like to reinstate the three (3) weeks of annual leave, but only after an employee has been with the agency for a period of five (5) years. He said that the changes to be made to the personnel manual are in bold and underlined (see attached copy). He also said that verbiage regarding the Family Medical Leave act would also be included in the manual.

Mr. Blanchard stated that the Management Committee has approved the changes to the policies at the Management Committee meeting of January 12, 2001.

RESOLUTION: Giving Kevin Belanger authority to request an opinion for the Louisiana Attorney General's Office regarding the publishing of meeting notices and minutes.

Mr. Blanchard informed the Board that the resolution would be tabled until Mr. Belanger could research the matter further.

RESOLUTION: Declaring various equipment as surplus property and authorizing the Chief Executive Officer to appropriately dispose of said equipment.

A motion was made by Wayne Thibodeaux, seconded by Buzz Breaux to approve the resolution to surplus equipment. There being no opposition, the motion carried.

Discussion on Regional Veterans Administration Clinic

There was discussion by the Board regarding South Central Planning trying to attract a VA clinic to the region by providing technical assistance and providing demographic information to Mr. Ronnie Theriot of Evangeline Business Park.

A motion was made by Nickie Monica, seconded by Wayne Thibodeaux to pass a resolution that could be passed on to the congressional delegation requesting that a VA clinic be located in the SCPDC region. There being no opposition, the motion carried.

Agency Activity Report

Mr. Belanger presented the Agency Activity Report. He commented that the parishes of Assumption and Terrebonne have yet to appoint someone to the Solid Waste Authority. He said that efforts cannot begin until these members are appointed.

Other Business

Mr. Belanger said that a joint regional planning commission was created last year between South Central Planning and Regional Planning Commission. He said that through this effort, growth management meetings have taken place with the Regional Planning Commission of New Orleans. Mr. Belanger introduced Mr. Lee Dautrieve of Regional Planning Commission. Mr. Dautrieve invited the members of the Board to a breakfast meeting to be held at the Airport Hilton on January 23, 2000 at 8:30a.m.

There being no other business to discuss, a motion was made by Nickie Monica, seconded by James Mitchell to adjourn. There being no opposition, the motion passed unanimously.

As duly authorized officers of South Central Planning and Development Commission, Board of Commissioners, we do hereby certify that the above and foregoing is the official version of the Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Commissioners held on January 18, 2001.

Edmond J. Blanchard, III, Chairman
South Central Planning and Development Commission

Gerald "Buzz" Breaux, Secretary-Treasurer
South Central Planning and Development Commission

MINUTES

SOUTH CENTRAL PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING

Thursday, April 26, 2001
10:30 a.m.
Come Back Inn Restaurant
LaPlace, Louisiana

A regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners for South Central Planning and Development Commission was called to order at approximately 10:30 a.m. on Thursday, April 26, 2001, at Come Back Inn Restaurant, LaPlace, Louisiana. Mr. Dale J. Hymel, Jr., Vice-Chairman, called the meeting to order, and requested Ms. Melissa Menuet to call the roll. Those members present or represented by proxy were:

Alvin Sylvester, Assumption Parish;
Gerald "Buzz" Breaux, Parish President, Lafourche Parish Council;
Richard Champagne, Mayor, Town of Lockport;
Gwen Theriot, representing Mayor Joey Bouziga, Town of Golden Meadow;
Steve Sirmon, representing Albert Laque, Parish President, St. Charles Parish Council;
Dee Abadie, Councilwoman, St. Charles Parish Council;
Dale J. Hymel Jr., Parish President, St. James Parish;
James Mitchell, Councilman, St. James Parish;
Howard Jones, St. James Parish;
Nickie Monica, Parish President, St. John the Baptist Parish Council;
Cleveland Farlough, Councilman, St. John the Baptist Parish Council;
Wayne Thibodeaux, Councilman, Terrebonne Parish;

Those members absent:

Martin Triche, President, Assumption Parish Police Jury
Calvin James, Police Juror, Assumption Parish;
Darrell Jupiter, Mayor, Village of Napoleonville;
Jerry Jones, Councilman, Lafourche Parish;
Chris Bollinger, Lafourche Parish;
Charles Caillouet, Mayor, City of Thibodaux;
Debbie Dufresne Vial, St. Charles Parish;
Ann Tatje, St. John the Baptist Parish;
Ronald St. Pierre, Mayor, Town of Gramercy;
Troas Poché, Mayor, Town of Lutcher;
Robert Bergeron, Parish President, Terrebonne Parish;
Edmond Blanchard, Terrebonne Parish;

Members of the staff of South Central Planning in attendance were: Kevin Belanger, CEO; Melissa Menuet, Administrative Assistant; Daryl Noll, Planner II; Julie Boudreaux, Accountant; Pam Roussel, Project Manager; Leslie McVeigh, Training Administrator, and Martha Cazaubon, Project Manager.

Guest in attendance were Ms. Pamela Ehlers of EDA and Mr. Roy Francis of the LA 1 Coalition.

Mr. Hymel requested to deviate from the agenda to allow Mr. Roy Francis of the LA 1 Coalition to speak on behalf of Mr. Ted Falgout concerning the Louisiana Environmental Economic Resource Concept (LEERC).

Louisiana Environmental Economic Resource Concept (LEERC)
Speaker: Mr. Roy Francis, LA 1 Coalition

Mr. Francis presented the Louisiana Economic and Environmental Resources Concept.

Ms. Gwen Theriot of the Town of Golden Meadow entered the meeting at this time. Ms. Theriot represented Mayor Joey Bouziga of the Town of Golden Meadow.

Acceptance of Minutes of January 18, 2001 Regular Meeting.

A motion was made by Wayne Thibodeaux, seconded by Howard Jones to accept the minutes of January 18, 2001. There being no opposition, the motion passed unanimously.

Review and Approve Financial Statement Ending March 31, 2001.

Mr. Belanger explained that as of March 31, 2001 the agency had total assets of $636,238.68 and total liabilities of $164,932.22. The agency had a total fund equity of $471,306.46 and a total liabilities and fund equity of $636,238.68.

Mr. Thibodeaux asked Mr. Belanger if the compensated absences payable is for annual leave. Mr. Belanger replied that it is for annual leave.

A motion was made by Dee Abadie, seconded by Cleveland Farlough to approve the financial statement ending March 31, 2001. There being no opposition, the motion passed unanimously.

Review and Approve FY 2000-2001 Budget Adjustments

Mr. Belanger explained that reapportionment work has not been included in the budget and will probably add about $50,000.00 to this year's budget. He said that the reason reapportionment was not included is because no signed contracts had been received when the budget was prepared.

Mr. Belanger said that expenditures have increased due to the fact that the agency has hired a part time employee, which will hopefully become a full time employee, and is contemplating hiring another full time employee.

Mr. Thibodeaux questioned Mr. Belanger about agency staffing. He asked who makes the decisions on hiring. Mr. Belanger replied that the CEO makes all hiring and firing decisions. Mr. Thibodaux also asked if an organizational chart was available and how is the Board informed prior to a planned hiring. Mr. Belanger stated that the requirements that were set forth to him is that the CEO is supposed to advertise for positions of permanent status. He said that ads are placed in all of the local papers in order to attract the most qualified individual. The CEO interviews and makes the decision as to who to hire. Mr. Belanger stated that when the agency hires new employees the cost is reflected in the budget so that the Board is made aware of any new employees hired. Mr. Thibodeaux responded, after the fact? Mr. Belanger stated that most of the time before. Mr. Hymel stated that the Board's authority over the CEO is the budget. If the budget is not adopted or the Board chooses to make modifications, then the CEO cannot hire new employees. Mr. Hymel added that a Management Committee meets monthly and the CEO can get approvals on whether to move forward or not.

Mr. Thibodeaux stated that what he really is looking for is to see if a staffing plan is brought and introduced to the Board at some point annually. Mr. Belanger stated that he could budget new employees but would be guessing since the agency cannot foresee what contracts will be approved.

Mr. Thibodeaux requested that an organizational chart be made available for the next meeting. Mr. Belanger said that he would provide the chart as requested.

Ms. Abadie stated that she could see Mr. Thibodeaux's point. If you are going to hire and expand staff due to the workload with Reapportionment, will that same workload still be there 6 months or a year from now. She said that the item is not easily identified, but instead buried in a budget item. She said realistically couldn't the agency consult with someone instead of hiring. Mr. Belanger stated that the agency has enough work to sustain the new employees for three to four years.

A motion was made by Dee Abadie, seconded by James Mitchell to approve the FY 2000 – 2001 Budget Adjustments. There being no opposition, the motion passed unanimously.

Ratification of Management Committee Minutes of January 12, 2001.
Ratification of Management Committee Minutes of March 29, 2001.
Ratification of Management Committee Minutes of April 21, 2001.

A motion was made by Wayne Thibodeaux, seconded by Howard Jones to ratify the minutes of the January 12, March 29 and April 21, 2001 Management Committee meetings. There being no opposition, the motion passed unanimously.

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Review.

Mr. Belanger presented a draft of the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). He explained that every five (5) years the agency prepares a complete update to the report. He said that this is the year that a complete report should be prepared, however, EDA allowed the agency to do an annual update rather than a complete revision in order to take advantage of the new census figures. Mr. Belanger stated that the CEDS would be discussed more in depth at the next meeting.

SCPDC Building Update.

Mr. Belanger stated that he met with the area legislators a week ago regarding the agency's Capital Outlay Request. He stated that the expected cost for the new office building is expected to be $1.3 million and roughly only $400,000.00 is allocated to the project. Mr. Belanger stated that in October of 2000 South Central Planning submitted a Capital Outlay Request for $860,000.00 for the remainder of the money needed for the building. When the legislature began this year, Mark Drennan's office took out South Central Planning's request from the Capital Outlay because of the lack of a 50% match; therefore the request did not make House Bill No. 2. Mr. Belanger stated that for this reason he went to Baton Rouge to talk to the legislators to see if he could get the request into House Bill No. 2. Mr. Belanger said that the only legislator he was unable to talk to was Senator Louis Lambert. He said that if South Central Planning allocates 25% of the total cost, the legislature would agree to place $75,000.00 into Priority 2 this year, which would be added to the money that the agency would put in locally and the remainder of the money would be put into Priority 5 which would be trailing money that would need to be bonded out. Mr. Belanger stated that in order to do this, the agency would need to come up with $250,000.00 of our own local monies. Mr. Belanger added that the agency has a surplus of $352,000.00 and expects the surplus to grow even more by the end of the year. He said that if the agency were to allocate $250,000.00 of the $352,000.00 existing as of March 31st, the agency would be left with a balance of roughly $100,000.00 of cash to operate on and would expect the number to grow as the year ends.

Mr. Belanger stated that he has tentatively given the legislators his commitment that he would go to the Board to try to get the $250,000.00 allocated to the building. He said that $100,000.00 is already allocated to the building that is already included in the $352,000.00; therefore, the Board would only need to agree to another $150,000.00. He said that if he gets approval from the Board, he is very optimistic that the agency will be able to begin on the building this year. Mr. Belanger said that Representative Carla Dartez has given him her word that she will introduce the agency's request as an amendment into House Bill No. 2.

Mr. Belanger stated that the $675,000.00 is a guarantee if you make the Bond Commission, but you have to get to the Bond Commission. He said that the agency, in some way or another, would need to have promissory commitments by all of the Parishes, as a cosigner to the interim financing that will be needed. Mr. Belanger stated

that when the agency is close to starting the building, some type of cooperative agreement would probably need to be passed around regarding to signing any banking documents. Ms. Abadie asked what further commitment would be needed by the Parishes when construction begins and how much are you looking at for Priority 5? Mr. Belanger stated that $675,000.00 will be placed in Priority 5, and one alternative could be to break the amount up between the Parishes by per capita. Mr. Hymel added that South Central Planning could borrow the money and pay a note like the agency paid rent before.

Ms. Abadie said that she would in fact commit the parish to something if South Central Planning gets Priority 2 and Priority 5 falls through. Mr. Belanger said that you would not be committing the parishes to anything. Mr. Hymel said that he feels that even if the $250,000.00 is not approved today, the scenario of Priority 5 will still exist. He said that SCPDC is trying to make the application more intriguing to fund. Mr. Belanger added that the agency has $300,000.00 allocated out of state cash that was approved in 1998.

A motion was made by Alvin Sylvester, seconded by Gerald Breaux to allocate $250,000.00 to the Building project. There being no opposition, the motion passed unanimously.

Agency Activity Report.

A motion was made by Nickie Monica, seconded by Dee Abadie to accept the Agency Activity Report. There being no opposition, the motion passed unanimously.

Other Business

Mr. Belanger stated that SCPDC hired a Nicholls State University Intern to evaluate the Revolving Loan Fund Program. He stated that the Intern, Mr. David Chancey, in his research found that the RLF has a 7.14% failure rate and a 92.9% success rate. The RLF has participated in a total of $14,444,000.00 loaned out in the SCPDC region. Two hundred thirty one (231) jobs have been saved and three hundred nine (309) jobs were created for a total of five hundred forty (540) jobs. Mr. Belanger said that Mr. Chancey reported that some of the loan packages were not complete as far as the documentation from the closing. He said the banks have the information but did not forward the documents to South Central Planning at the time of closing. Mr. Belanger said that only one (1) bad loan has been made to date. That loan is in bankruptcy, and will either come out by Act of Sale, which would pay back all of the money lent out or will go into foreclosure and SCPDC would probably get back about 80% of the funds.

Mr. Thibodaux asked if the decision had already been made in regards to the CEO's vehicle. Mr. Belanger stated that the Management Committee did allow him to purchase a vehicle. Mr. Thibodaux stated that he was a bit confused about three people being able to make a decision for the entire Board and said that he is sure that this process is somewhere on record that would allow this to happen, but that he does not have the information.

Mr. Belanger stated that the Agency is currently in a lease agreement for a company vehicle that is coming to an end this coming month. He said that a decision needed to be made as to whether he would buy or lease a vehicle. He explained that he had a problem with using the agency vehicle for personal use and that his job requires that he be in a lot of different places every day. He said that he is always mandated because of his commitment to the agency to bring the vehicle straight home. Mr. Belanger stated that he looked at what the agency currently paid, which was about $627.00 per month for insurance and the lease of the vehicle, and felt that the agency was committed to at least the amount of the lease. He said that if the lease was sufficient enough three years ago, then he thought that it would be sufficient enough even now. Mr. Belanger stated that he feels that this move will actually save the agency money, because prior to this move, he would take the car back and forth to Houma, and there was a cost associated with running the vehicle from the agency and back to his home. Mr. Belanger stated that he would extract the miles to and from his home out of the billable miles, which over time will save the agency money. Mr. Belanger said that an average of $12,500.00 per year was spent to operate the agency vehicle and he expects that the cost on his new vehicle to be under that amount. Mr. Belanger also stated that he has insured the vehicle equal to or greater than the amount that the agency insured the vehicle before. Mr. Belanger stated that there was limited space in the agency vehicle and that the vehicle he purchased is much more safe.

Mr. Monica asked if by ratifying the minutes of the Management Committee meeting if that proves that the Board is in agreement with the Management Committee. Mr. Hymel stated that by ratifying the minutes it does prove that. Mr. Hymel added that the Commission had a lease on a vehicle and that the miles back and forth to Mr. Belanger's home exceeded the allowed amount of miles, so when the lease is up the agency will have to pay over $3,000.00 in extra charges over mileage. He said that Mr. Belanger proposed to purchase his own vehicle, which will save the Commission about $1,500.00. Mr. Belanger stated that if he would ever leave the district, the obligation would go with him. He said that the Board could change or amend the allowance at any time.

There being no other business to discuss, a motion was made by James Mitchell, seconded by Cleveland Farlough to adjourn. There being no opposition, the motion passed unanimously.

As duly authorized officers of South Central Planning and Development Commission, Board of Commissioners, we do hereby certify that the above and foregoing is the official version of the Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Commissioners held on April 26, 2001.

Edmond J. Blanchard, III, Chairman
South Central Planning and Development Commission

Gerald "Buzz" Breaux, Secretary-Treasurer
South Central Planning and Development Commission

MINUTES

SOUTH CENTRAL PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING

Thursday, June 28, 2001

A regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners for South Central Planning and Development Commission was called to order at approximately 10:30 a.m. on Thursday, June 28, 2001, at B & C Seafood, Vacherie, Louisiana. Chairman Blanchard called the meeting to order, and requested roll call. Members present or represented by proxy were A. Sylvester, R. Champagne, G. Theriot representing J. Bouziga, D. Abadie, D. Hymel Jr., J. Mitchell, H. Jones, N. Monica, C. Farlough, A. Tatje, R. St. Pierre, and E. Blanchard, III. Members absent were M. Triche, C. James, D. Jupiter, G. Breaux, J. Jones, C. Bollinger, C. Caillouet, A. Laque, D. Vial, T. Poché, R. Bergeron, W. Thibodeaux. Staff members present were K. Belanger, M. Menuet, D. Noll, J. Boudreaux and P. Roussel.

E. Blanchard introduced Brian Brennan, Barry Bordelon and Kimberly Mathis of Waste Management and Sgt. Darren Naquin of the LA State Police Troop C.

Hymel moved, St. Pierre seconded, to accept the minutes of April 26, 2001. Motion carried.

Abadie moved, Farlough seconded, to ratify the minutes of the June 22, 2001 Management Committee. Motion carried.

Discussion ensued regarding the financial statement ending May 31, 2001.

K. Belanger gave an update on the status of the building project and the Capital Outlay Request.

Sylvester moved, Abadie seconded, to approve the financial statement ending May 31, 2001. Motion carried.

There was discussion on the FY 2000-2001 budget adjustments.

J. Mitchell asked if the agency had an external audit performed every year. K. Belanger stated that Bourgeois Bennett, LLC, audits the agency every year.

Monica moved, Hymel seconded, to approve the FY 2000–2001 budget adjustments. Motion carried.

K. Belanger discussed the FY 2001-2002 proposed budget.

Champagne moved, Mitchell seconded, to approve the FY 2001-2002 proposed budget. Motion carried.

K. Belanger discussed the five goals of the region that were addressed in the CEDS.

D. Hymel noted that under the Regional CEDS Committee, both Dale Hymel and Ed Blanchard are listed as Vice-Chairman.

Hymel moved, St. Pierre seconded, to accept the CEDS report as amended. Motion carried.

K. Belanger advised the Board that the compliance questionnaire is part of the agency's yearly audit.

Champagne moved, Monica seconded, to adopt the Systems Survey Compliance Questionnaire. Motion carried.

K. Belanger discussed the purpose of the resolution that certifies the Revolving Loan Fund Program.

Hymel moved, St. Pierre seconded, to adopt the resolution certifying the RLF. Motion carried.

Sylvester moved, Jones seconded, to adopt the resolution authorizing the CEO to enter into a contract for Metropolitan Planning for FY 2002 Federal Transit. Motion carried.

Theriot moved, Champagne seconded, to adopt the resolution authorizing the CEO to enter into a contract for Metropolitan Planning for FY 2002 Federal Highways. Motion carried.

K. Belanger discussed the successes of the Safe Communities program.

Sgt. Darren Naquin conducted a presentation on the Traffic Stats Program.

There was discussion on the contract with the Louisiana Highway Safety Commission for crash prevention through data analysis.

K. Belanger briefly reviewed the Agency Activity Report.

Kimberly Mathis thanked South Central Planning on behalf of Waste Management for the opportunity to take part in the meeting and spoke of the philosophies of Waste Management.

D. Hymel recognized Tommy Breaux and Ms. Geneva, the owners of B & C Seafood.

There being no other business to discuss, Monica moved, St. Pierre seconded, to adjourn. Motion carried.

As duly authorized officers of South Central Planning and Development Commission, Board of Commissioners, we do hereby certify that the above and foregoing is the official version of the Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Commissioners held on June 28, 2001.

Edmond J. Blanchard, III, Chairman
South Central Planning and Development Commission

Gerald "Buzz" Breaux, Secretary-Treasurer
South Central Planning and Development Commission