

City Council June 4, 2009  
Regular Meeting Summary

News Release

June 4, 2009

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**New Orleans, LA - June 4, 2009** - Today the New Orleans City Council passed Ordinances approving funding for the Economic Development Public Private Partnership, and a Resolution restoring the designation "American Sector" to a specified area of the Central Business District.

Additionally, the Council passed a Resolution commending all those involved in securing the 2013 Super Bowl in New Orleans, and received a presentation from the Super Bowl negotiating team on the successful bid for the Super Bowl and the economic impact it will bring to the City.

The Council also addressed a presentation from the local Federal Communications Commission Office on the June 12th Digital TV conversion, a presentation on "Project Restore" and its efforts to assist at-risk youth, and a District "C" update from Councilmember Carter.

The Council held an Executive Session to discuss recent developments in pending litigation concerning the review and release of the City Council's email correspondence over a three-year period.

## *Supports Economic Development Public Private Partnership*



*Arthur Pulitzer & Bob Brown*

The Council passed Ordinance Calendar Nos. 27,486 and 27,496, co-authored by Councilmembers Fielkow and Hedge-Morrell, relative to the funding of the Economic Development Public Private Partnership (PPP).

Arthur Pulitzer, Co-Founder of Horizon Initiative of New Orleans, and Bob Brown, Executive Director of the Business Council of New Orleans, appeared before the Council to express their support for the Ordinances and to thank all parties involved in making the PPP a reality.

Ordinance Calendar No. 27,486 temporarily suspends for a period of 270 days the deadlines for economic development project proposals and/or recommendations, by the Economic Development Advisory Committee and/or the Mayor.

Ordinance Calendar No. 27,496 allocates 2008 Economic Development Fund (EDF) millage and previous years' unexpended EDF millage to the following projects in the following amounts:

- Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFI) Fund - \$758,209
- Sanitation Cleanup in the Vieux Carre - \$2,500,000
- Public Private Partnership - \$2,000,000

Council President Arnie Fielkow said, "This is a great day for New Orleans and a milestone for economic development in the City. The Public Private Partnership will change the landscape of economic development. This was an ongoing collaborative effort and we are so grateful to everyone who has worked tirelessly for the last two years to make this a reality."

Councilmember Fielkow noted that after the adoption of these Ordinances several other steps must be taken, including the creation of the Public Private Partnership (PPP) legal entity, the selection of the PPP Board, and the signing of a Cooperative Endeavor Agreement between the PPP and the Mayor.

## *Held Executive Session*



The City Council held an Executive Session to discuss recent developments in pending litigation concerning the review and release of the City Council's email correspondence over a three-year period. Due to the confidentiality of the issues, they were taken up in a duly noticed Executive Session closed to the public.

Following the Executive Session, Council President Arnie Fielkow announced that the Council would withdraw a Motion that would have authorized an increase in the maximum compensation allowed to be paid to its Special Counsel, Herman, Herman, Katz & Cotlar. The Council requested that Special Counsel Steven Lane explore alternate funding sources to ensure that Herman, Herman, Katz & Cotlar is compensated for fees exceeding the existing contract maximum compensation level, incurred related to the Council's email correspondence review and release.

Council President Fielkow also acknowledged that the Council is utilizing its best efforts to produce all public records requested in a timely manner.

"The action to withdraw the Motion today is a reflection of the Council's prioritization of general fund dollars to be spent on such important areas as crime prevention, health care, recreation programs and other critical needs of New Orleans. We have asked our Legal Counsel to explore other avenues for compensation of costs relating to the public records requests so that, at least at this time, additional public funds do not have to be expended," Fielkow said.

## *Restored "American Sector" Designation*



*Bill Detweiler & Dr. Nick Mueller*

The Council passed Resolution R-09-265, co-authored by Councilmembers Clarkson and Head, restoring the designation "American Sector" in the area bounded by the uptown side of Canal St., Calliope St., the Mississippi River, and S. Claiborne Ave.

The term "American Sector" was historically used to describe the area West of the French Quarter and East of the Garden District, and references the unique history of New Orleans, illuminating the City's evolution from the time of the Louisiana Purchase in 1803.

Dr. Nick Mueller, President and CEO of The National World War II Museum, and Bill Detweiler, Consultant to the National World War II Museum President on Military & Veterans Affairs, appeared before the Council to give some background information on the "American Sector" designation and to offer their support for the Resolution. The representatives also emphasized that the term "American Sector" would not re-name any current neighborhoods, but rather serve as an umbrella designation for the area.

District "B" Councilmember Head said, "We must ask the Downtown Development District, the Convention and Visitors Bureau, and all other appropriate parties to mark this area as the "American Sector" and promote it to ensure that both our citizens and our visitors are aware of this historic designation."

### *Commended Efforts to Secure 2013 Super Bowl in New Orleans*



*Bob Brown, Ron Gardner, Jay Cicero & Mary Beth Romig*

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Council passed Resolution R-09-246, by Councilmember Clarkson, commending and congratulating all those involved in securing the 2013 Super Bowl in New Orleans, including but not limited to, Governor Bobby Jindal, Tom Benson and Rita Benson LeBlanc, Mayor Nagin, Rod West, Steve Perry, Jay Cicero, Bob Brown and Ron Forman, and their staffs.

The following members of the Super Bowl negotiating team appeared before the Council today to provide the Council with an update on the successful bid and the economic impact that the Super Bowl will bring to the City:

- Bob Brown, Executive Director of the Business Council of New Orleans
- Ron Gardner, Chairman of the Greater New Orleans Sports Foundation
- Jay Cicero, CEO of the Greater New Orleans Sports Foundation
- Mary Beth Romig, Director of Communications and Public Relations for the New Orleans Convention and Visitors Bureau

Council Vice President Jacquelyn Brechtel Clarkson said, "We are exhilarated to learn that we will be hosting the Super Bowl in 2013. This event brings us an estimated \$300 million in direct economic impact and is a sign of a positive step in our recovery. Hosting this event is a victory that belongs to all New Orleanians who have chosen to come back and believe that this City

can recover."

The Super Bowl team discussed the bid presentation, which involved several informational binders featuring artwork from local children, as well as information on the importance of the City's hospitality workers and their high quality of service that will make this event a success.

The Councilmembers expressed their deep gratitude to all those organizations and individuals who worked diligently to make the 2013 Super Bowl in New Orleans a reality.

### ***Addressed Upcoming Digital TV Conversion***



*Dedrick Roybiskie & Stephen Rooney*

As its second Order of Business, the Council received a presentation on the June 12 Digital TV (DTV) conversion from representatives from the local Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Office.

Dedrick Roybiskie and Stephen Rooney, local FCC representatives, presented

information relative to which consumers will be affected by the conversion and what steps they need to take to make the conversion, including purchasing a converter box. The conversion will only affect those individuals who use an antenna to receive a television signal; all those consumers who currently have cable or satellite television will be unaffected by the conversion.

The representatives also discussed the availability of government coupons for purchasing a converter box and instructed consumers to call 1-888-CALL-FCC for more information on the June 12 Digital TV conversion.

### ***Received Presentation on "Project Restore"***



*Rev. Khalil Osiris, Rev. Patricia Watson  
& Rev. Tom Watson*

Reverends Tom Watson, Patricia Watson, and Khalil Osiris appeared before the Council today to give a presentation on "Project Restore" and its efforts to assist at-

risk youth.

"Project Restore" is a program dedicated to working with at-risk youth to keep communities safe, decrease crime, and promote victim awareness.

The representatives emphasized the importance of monitoring these at-risk individuals and connecting them to the services that they need - mental health, counseling, education, and employment.

Criminal Justice Committee Chair Councilmember James Carter said, "We need to invest in our youth and empower them to make good choices and to become productive citizens - this program is doing just that. I would like to invite the representatives of Project Restore to attend our next regular Criminal Justice Committee meeting so that we can discuss this program in more detail and evaluate the ways in which the Council can assist the program with its mission."

### *District "C" Report*



*Councilmember Carter*

District "C" Councilmember James Carter gave a report today on news and happenings in his District.

The report gave updates on:

- Code enforcement sweeps
- Status of adjudicated properties in the District
- Street repair projects including road resurfacing, reconstruction and streetscape development
- New business openings including Harmony House, the Treme Community Elderly Program
- Ongoing improvements to Brechtel Park

Councilmember Carter said, "Great things are happening in District C. Repairs to major streets on both sides of the river have either been completed or are in the offing. A total of 441 properties have been adjudicated in the last few months and Code Enforcement sweeps are addressing blight in eight neighborhoods. Major developments such as the "Inspire" venture on St. Bernard Avenue, a major hotel project on General DeGaulle, and a mixed housing complex on Esplanade Avenue have been approved by the Council. District C - home to numerous festivals and special events throughout the spring and summer - is an exciting place to be."

## **New Orleans City Council**

The New Orleans City Council is the legislative branch of New Orleans City government. The Council considers and enacts all local laws that govern the City of New Orleans. The Council also approves the operating and capital budgets for the City, as recommended by the mayor, and continually monitors revenues and expenditures for local government operations. The City Council is also the regulatory body for public utilities. It also reviews and has final say on many land use and zoning matters, as well as considers major economic development projects for the City. As a Board of Review for Orleans Parish, the Council examines appeals of property tax assessments for real estate taxes, and certifies tax rolls to the Louisiana Tax Commission. Other responsibilities of the Council include overseeing the operation of the public access television in Orleans Parish.

The City Council is comprised of five districts and two councilmembers-at-large. Council President and Councilmember-at-Large Arnie Fielkow; Council Vice President and Councilmember-at-Large Jacquelyn Brechtel Clarkson; District "A" Councilmember Shelley Midura; District "B" Councilmember Stacy S. Head; District "C" Councilmember James Carter; District "D" Councilmember Cynthia Hedge-Morrell; and District "E" Councilmember Cynthia Willard-Lewis.