

**LAKEFRONT MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY
FINANCE COMMITTEE MINUTES
THURSDAY, JANUARY 30, 2025 – 4:30 P.M
6001 Stars and Stripes Blvd.
New Orleans, LA 70126**

PRESENT: Commissioner Brian Egana – Chair
Commissioner Stanley Cohn
Commissioner Howard Rodgers
Commissioner Carlos Williams (Arrived at 4:35 pm)

ABSENT: Commissioner Sandra Thomas

STAFF: Louis Capo – Executive Director
Vanessa McKee – Assistant to the Executive Director
Laith Alshamaileh – Director of Operations and Engineering
Kristin Clinard – Finance Manager
Kel Brownfield – HR Director
Breal Hillery – Finance
Elaina King - Finance

ALSO

PRESENT: Gerry Metzger – LMA Counsel
Jeff Dye – LMA Counsel

The regular monthly Finance Committee meeting of the Lakefront Management Authority was held on Thursday, January 16, 2025, at 4:32 PM at the Lakefront Terminal Building, 2nd Floor Conference Center, 6001 Stars and Stripes Blvd., New Orleans, LA 70126 after due notice of the meeting was sent to each board member, the news media, and posted.

- I. **Called to Order at 4:32 pm.**
- II. **Pledge of Allegiance by Chair Rodgers**
- III. **Roll Called by Mr. Capo. (3) members present for a quorum.**
- IV. **Opening Comments – Chair Egana – welcomed all to the meeting and hoped everyone faired well in the snowstorm.**

Commissioner Williams arrived at 4:35 pm.

V. Motion to Adopt Agenda

A motion was offered by Commissioner Cohn and seconded by Commissioner Rodgers.

Hearing no questions or comments, Chair Drouant called for a vote. All were in favor. The motion passed.

VI. Public Comments – LIMITED TO (2) MINUTES – No Public Comments

VII. Director's Report

Mr. Capó introduced Breal Hillery and Elaina King as new staff of the finance department.

He let the committee know that there will be a few staffing changes in finance. Margie Brown has moved over to Orleans Marina and Cindy Grace will retire in July.

Chair Egana wanted to set up a time to set up a meeting with the finance department to review the next few months.

Mr. Capó let the committee know that he will circulate the first draft of the FY 2025-2026 budget to all committees. It must be finalized for approval at the March board meeting and sent to Baton Rouge by April 1, 2025.

The Capital Projects budget will be very lean for the next fiscal year.

2024 Winter Storm

- produced minor leaks at the marina. Staff were able to access damage on Thursday
- The airport faired out well. The Governor left from our airport and sent DOTD to clear out the runways.

Chair Egana appreciated Mr. Capó's updates during the snowstorm. He suggested that we be sure to emphasize the importance of this airport with city officials for all of the city's future events.

VIII. New Business

1. **Motion to recommend the amendment of the Professional Legal Services Contract with David Jefferson Dye, L.L.C. to increase the budget for legal services and for the reimbursement of expenses to a sum not to exceed \$250,000.**

A motion was offered by Commissioner Cohn and seconded by Commissioner Rodgers.

Mr. Capo stated that this contract also went before the legal committee.

We will be adding a total of \$180,000 to the Legal Services Contract:

- Adding \$120,000 to Jeff Dye's contract
- Adding \$60,000 to Gordon, Arata's contract
- \$100,000 will be moved from the Capital Projects Stars and Stripes striping project over to legal contracts. The City of New Orleans did the striping on the Boulevard ahead of the Superbowl.
- \$35,000 from Stars and Stripes comprehensive sign replacement to the Legal budget
- \$45,000 from Lakeshore Dr. shelters project to the Legal Budget

Commissioner Cohn commented that he was on the Legal committee and explained that the increase is due to ongoing litigation for cases that have gone to trial and have not reached a decision or settlement.

Chair Egana said that he had an opportunity to speak directly with legal staff to gain insight into the need for the increase in legal services contracts.

Mr. Dye added that there are three lawyers on his team; two of which are doing the majority of the work. More than 50% of the expense is associated with one case. Of the six years contracted with LMA, half of those have had to come back for a contract increase due to unforeseen

Chair Egana commented that legal and capital projects are two areas that sometimes incur unforeseen expenses.

Hearing no questions or comments, Chair Egana called for a vote. All were in favor. The motion passed.

Mr. Dye thanked the committee members for their continued support.

2. Motion to recommend the amendment of the Professional Legal Services Contract with Gordon, Arrata, Montgomery, Barnett, McCollam, Duplantis & Egan, L.L.C. to increase the budget for legal services and for the reimbursement of expenses to a sum not to exceed \$110,000.

A motion was offered by Commissioner Cohn and seconded by Commissioner Rodgers.

Mr. Capo informed the committee that this case is regarding the roof on this building since 2013. The case has been dormant for some time. There is now a push to settle. The plaintiff recently deposed its witnesses. We are hoping to settle without a trial.

Hearing no questions or comments, Chair Egana called for a vote. All were in favor. The motion passes.

3. Motion to recommend approval an amendment to the Fiscal year 2024-2025 Legal Budget and to increase the Legal Budget from \$300,000 to \$480,000.

A motion was offered by Commissioner Cohn and seconded by Commissioner Rodgers.

Hearing no questions or comments, Chair Egana called for a vote. All were in favor. The motion passes.

Chair Egana announced the next meeting and called for adjournment.

IX. Announcement of the next Finance Committee Meeting

1. Thursday February 13, 2025, at 4:30 PM

X. Adjourn

A motion was offered by Commissioner Cohn and seconded by Commissioner Williams.

Hearing no questions or comments, Chair Drouant called for a vote. All were in favor. The motion passed.

The meeting adjourned at 4:57 pm.