

**MINUTES OF THE ST. TAMMANY PARISH COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING**

**WEDNESDAY, JUNE 30, 2021 AT 5:30 P.M.**

**ST. TAMMANY GOVERNMENT COMPLEX**

**21490 KOOP DRIVE, MANDEVILLE, LA.**

**Call to Order by Honorable Michael R. Lorino, Jr., Chairman**

**Pledge of Allegiance by Mr. Toledano**

**Invocation by Mr. T. Smith**

**Roll Call:**     **Marty Dean**  
                  **David Fitzgerald**  
                  **Martha Jenkins Cazaubon**  
                  **Michael R. Lorino, Jr.**  
                  **Rykert O. Toledano, Jr.**  
                  **Cheryl Tanner**  
                  **James "Jimmie" Davis, III**  
                  **Christopher Canulette**  
                  **Michael "Mike" Maxwell Smith**  
                  **Maureen "MO" O'Brien**  
                  **Steve Stefancik**  
                  **Jerry Binder**  
                  **Jacob "Jake" Airey**  
                  **Thomas "T.J." Smith, Jr.**

**PUBLIC COMMENT: a three (3) minute time limit is established for each member of the public wishing to speak (for or against) an item on the Agenda, except Appeals.**

**To ensure that all speakers are heard please hold cheers and applause. Anyone who wishes to place a comment in the record but who does not wish to speak at the podium may fill out a speaker card and check the box indicating they do not wish to speak.**

**RESOLUTION**

**-Lorino - 1. Resolution C.S. No. C-6488 - A resolution ordering and calling a special election to be held in the Parish of St. Tammany, State of Louisiana, to consider whether a holder of an existing riverboat gaming license shall be allowed to relocate to an approved berth or docking facility in St. Tammany Parish and conduct riverboat gaming operations along portions of Lake Pontchartrain, specifically the waterways that are a part of the Lakeshore Marina located south and east of Interstate 10, Exit 261; making application to the State Bond Commission and providing for other matters in connection therewith.**

**-T. Smith – moved to postpone for 60 days to put together an independent study.**

**-Binder – made comments regarding the independent study and the email they received regarding someone offering to pay for the study.**

**-M. Smith – they are still working out details. Another 60 days will allow details to be worked out. Another look will be very beneficial.**

**-Davis – was looking forward to hearing from everyone tonight. Knowledge is how we learn things.**

**-T. Smith – the motion was not to exclude people from speaking tonight.**

**-Lorino made comments. Mentioned that postponing would be postponing this meeting. Thinks we are ready to move forward.**

-Motion to postpone fails with 6 yeas (Fitzgerald, Canulette, M. Smith, Airey, T. Smith) and 8 nays (Dean, Cazaubon, Lorino, Toledano, Tanner, Davis, O'Brien, Stefancik)

-Lorino – read his opening statement into record.

-Chris Masengill with St. Tammany Corp. – made a presentation regarding this project.

-Lorino asked questions to Masengill. He asked him to elaborate on the sports complex.

-Lorino – How is funding going to be provided?

-Masengill – It will be spread out over years.

-Lorino – Is it 10 years, or 35?

-Masengill – It is 30 years.

-Lorino – Can you address safety concerns that we heard over the last 24 hours?

-Masengill – they have statistics from several different entities, including the FBI.

-Lorino- How would you address concerns about the company and its past?

-Masengill – spoke about Peninsula Pacific Entertainment.

-T. Smith – wanted to ask the owner a question, but would defer until the time the owner comes up to speak.

-Dean – asked Masengill if he reached out to any Mayors, Sheriffs, etc. of other cities that have casinos regarding concerns that were mentioned?

-Airey – can you confirm that the casino will have to pay property taxes and the number?

-Masengill – they are paying full taxes.

-Canulette – have we talked to Bay St. Louis, Gulfport, Biloxi, because we have similar issues? He also asked about the money/payments and how much is guaranteed for the ball field if the casino is no longer there?

-Masengill – 100%.

-Binder – asked a question verifying a portion of the money concerning the park.

-Lorino – called up representatives from Pacific Peninsula Entertainment (P2E).

-Jeff Schoen with the Jones Fussell Law Firm – represents P2E, the developer. He introduced Brent Stevens, the chairman and CEO of P2e, and Johnathan Swain, the president of P2E.

-Stevens and Swain – started a PowerPoint presentation. The public wants a right to vote, deserves the opportunity to vote, is respectfully requesting the Council to allow the public the right to vote.

-Brent Stevens – they have listened since the last meeting. They have had meetings and listened to concerns of several individuals. Showed video of testimonials of previous projects.

-Johnathan Swain – the vision has greatly improved. The investment increased from \$250 million to \$325 million. Showed video of what they envisioned. Public safety is a top priority. They will develop a Sheriff's substation and reimburse for 4 deputies to patrol the site and neighborhoods surrounding the site. Showed a video regarding safety. Spoke about jobs this project would provide (1700 during construction, 1000

ongoing, at least 50% St. Tammany Parish residents). Spoke about the loyalty rewards program.

-Stevens – showed a video with testimonials from Slidell residents (93%, 9 out of 10 Slidell residents believe they should have a right to vote.

-Jeff Schoen – closed the presentation.

-Binder – the Council's job is to drill down and gather information. He asked Stevens and Swain questions.

-Davis asked a question.

-Airey – asked Stevens and Swain about problem gamblers.

-O'Brien – drainage hasn't been discussed yet. Askee them to address people's concerns.

-M. Smith – no one ever described this as a destination location. They will have a hard time because there is competition 40 minutes away on the Gulf Coast and 35-40 minutes away in New Orleans. How will this work as a destination to fill up the hotel?

-Binder - asked about the coupons for restaurants. He asked about smoking/non-smoking at casino and how it affected the recreation district.

-Swain – there will be smoking, but there is air conditioning and filtration that you won't even notice.

-Canulette – asked what happens when a property fails.

-Stevens – either market the hotel as a non-gaming hotel or demolish the building and deed it as a state park.

-T. Smith – asked if the contract is amendable or if it is final. He asked about the St. Tammany Parish 50% hiring and the minority 5% hiring .

-Lorino – asked about a mailer that he received regarding an indictment. He also mentioned using this as an opportunity to use some new materials.

-Lorino introduced some local pastors.

-Morris S. Angelo with New Beginnings Church – voiced concerns against this project.

-Cindy Collins – spoke about kidnapping and human trafficking.

-Pastor John Raymond – spoke against this project.

-Council discussion ensued.

-Lorino – called out individuals who filled out speaker cards.

-Ron Blich – Northshore Business Council – let the residents decide.

-Lee Longstreet – Code enforcement needs to be able to protect neighborhoods. Short term rentals and casinos do not go together.

-Ronald Reeves – Folsom – has a home in Slidell also. Thinks the substation is a plus. Doesn't really believe in statistics. St. Tammany Parish is boring. Give the people the right to vote.

-Burgess McCranie – Nothing has changed his mind. This is just something that should be done.

-Jay Albie – lives in Slidell. Has lived there for 22 years. It is a fantastic place to live and work and raise a family. Asks the Council to table this so voters could be more

informed. It is a travesty that there is no rec district on the eastern side of the Parish. Asks the Council to table and allow an independent study.

-Tressa Bell – Slidell – is concerned with a casino coming to Slidell. She originally lived in Kenner and moved 7 years ago to escape crime. All she is hearing is money. She will be greatly affected by this casino. Risking families isn't the way to get money.

-Doug McIntosh – Lacombe – Where do you think the money will come from? If you can't table it, downright vote it down.

-Josh Clayton

-Camille Thompson – from Slidell. This is not God's way to make money. This money will be cursed. Wants the whole Parish to vote, but it is barely over the Slidell city line.

-Amanda Clayton – against.

-Cathy Oltare – Bush – She is here on behalf of her brother who lives in Oak Harbor. He is a nurse and couldn't be there. Traffic is an issue.

-Colleen Kelly – Slidell – lived there since 1984. They already voted for no casinos. Why are we here? Let Slidell vote if they want a casino, not the whole Parish.

-Kathleen Benfield – Louisiana Family Forum

-Doug Reker – lived in Slidell since 1969. Worries about the casino. He runs the Wine Market and is worried about socio-economic concerns. He doesn't think Slidell can handle this. Hopes the table motion will be reconsidered.

-Chris Legrende – Southside Café – has been in business for 30 years. He has a list of 96 business owners who would like to table this.

-John Mason – he is a radio host and his mailbox exploded after the Sheriff and Police Chief's press conference.

-Kathleen Rohr – Slidell – moved from Metairie because of the quality of life. Didn't hear about the beautiful subdivisions in that area. The quality of life is different.

-Kim Bigler – James Samaritan – from Covington. She is pro-economic development. An informed vote is what we need. Don't need to trick the public.

-John Martin – Goodbee Civic Association – against.

-Chris Jean – Pearl River – offered \$30,000 to do a study. Have we done a real economic study?

-Tom Thornhill – the right to vote is guaranteed in the Constitution.

-Other individuals spoke in favor this resolution: Chris Abadie, Kendra Maness, Mike Saucier, Ross Lagarde, Greg Worley, Trent Dang, Pat Kelly Kielkucki, Diana Major

-Jeff Giles – Houma – do the Republican thing and vote down this resolution.

-David Cogle – how low is the bar and what's the price. Vote no.

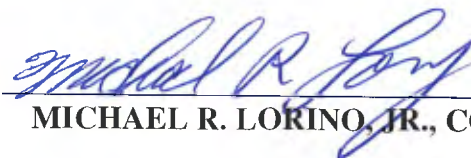
-Chandler Goltz- has done a lot of research. This should be voted down.

-Other people spoke against this resolution: Ben Clayton, Lisa Clayton, Chuck Branton, Patricia St. Angelo

-Chief Randy Fandall – table this. He has not been involved from the start. He didn't get a chance to meet with Masengill. Give 60 days.

-Chuch Walker -Madisonville – there are many unanswered questions.

- Reverend Randy Boyyett – passed out a handout
- Anthony Cognerich – urges Council to table or vote against.
- Sheriff Randy Smith – would like this to be tabled. He is not against a casino. He is against a casino in Slidell. He appreciates what is trying to be done.
- Lorino – asked questions about why can't the study go forward.
- Binder – made comments and thinks postponement is warranted.
- Toledano – spoke to the issue of the study. The vote should be left to the will of the people.
- Chris Jean – mentioned that he proposed several individuals for the independent study.
- Canulette – asked if there's any way this can be amended to say it could go anywhere in the Parish. It's not fair. They need to question the Legislature about the legality/criminality of this. This should die and there should be a vote for gambling.
- O'Brien – thanked everybody for coming.
- Lorino – spoke regarding emails.
- Davis – this is a vote for gambling. Thinks there is an advantage to having 1 casino in the Parish.
- Fitzgerald – If this doesn't go to the ballot, this will die.
- Airey – this has changed since the beginning. He can't vote for something like this.
- M. Smith – would like to hear from administration. Negatives outweigh the positives. We should all respect each other.
- President Cooper – can agree with some points on both sides. He hasn't heard why citizens shouldn't be allowed to vote. Asks Councilmembers to vote what they feel is best for St. Tammany Parish.
- Binder – wanted to follow up and thank colleagues. He does not want to deny the people the right to vote.
- Stefancik – made comments.
- Toledano – 4 months is enough time to do a study.
- Lorino – thanked everyone and made closing statements.
- Toledano - moved to adopt, seconded by Davis. Motion passes with 8 yeas (Dean, Cazaubon, Lorino, Toledano, Tanner, Davis, O'Brien, Stefancik) and 6 nays (Fitzgerald, Canulette, M. Smith, Binder, Airey, T. Smith)
- There being no further business, meeting adjourned at the call of the Chairman.



MICHAEL R. LORINO, JR., COUNCIL CHAIRMAN



KATRINA L. BUCKLEY, COUNCIL CLERK