

Redevelopment Research to Start in April

By Bonnie Bolden
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Kay King, CEO of Morehouse Economic Development Corporation, told the Morehouse Parish Police Jury that Younger & Associates, an affiliate of Tamerica, would begin research on the state-funded economic redevelopment plan later this month.

The team, she said, would start by handing out questionnaires at Wal-Mart and possibly disburse more in other parish municipalities like Log Cabin or Beekman.

"We need to get in areas where we can get large groups of people willing to do surveys," King said. "This is going to be valuable information."

King said the process will be time consuming, after the surveys, 400 people will be interviewed and community meetings will be held. The plan will determine how Morehouse Parish can attract more businesses that fit the community's needs.

The jury talked about the need for an organized effort to prioritize parish projects and apply for the appropriate grants or other funding aid with Ken McManus of McManus Engineering and Willie Crain. The men mentioned several funding and aid options for different projects and a later meeting with the jury to list all available aid is being planned. Both men they would provide assistance to the jury for free.

King said she would work with the jury to find projects that would also develop economic development.

Head of the bid committee, Isaac Gray, District 7, recommended a \$302,000 bid from Scott Truck & Tractor for a new gradall; the jury accepted the bid and said the funds would be drawn from both the road and drainage funds.

Gray also informed the jury that a letter would have to be sent to the previous owners of adjudicated properties before the jury could do anything to the properties.

The jury canvassed the vote and passed a resolution to approve the canvass of the tax renewals of the April 4 election.

"The votes are final as of last Tuesday," President Terry Matthews, District 6, said prior to the jury passing the resolution.

Dorothy Ford, director of the Bastrop/Morehouse Chamber of Commerce, asked the jury for permission to hold a prayer group once a month at the courthouse square. The chamber, she explained, is working with the Morehouse Minister's Alliance to hold the meetings, the group hoped to meet under the flagpole at 11:45 a.m. on the third Wednesday of the month, starting in May.

"The purpose of this community-wide prayer group is to bring together everyone who wants to come," Ford said; the group plans to pray for the nation, including governments at all levels.

Additionally, the jury renewed the contract of Highway Superintendent Gene Montgomery, until 2012, noting that he had performed well during the 90 -day trial period that started in January.

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