

# UELRR Advisory Committee Meeting

Meeting of January 8, 2009

## MINUTES

The UELRR Advisory Committee met at the Louisiana Department of Revenue on Thursday, January 8, 2009 at ten o'clock a.m. (10:00 a.m.)

Committee Members present were: Chairman, Mark West, Cynthia Bridges, Cynthia Boudreaux, and Henri Louapre (by phone). Committee Member Roy Austin was absent.

Chairman West declared the meeting duly convened at 10:10 a.m.

Cynthia Bridges made a motion to adopt the minutes from Advisory Committee meeting of December 11, 2008, the motion was seconded by Cynthia Boudreaux and the committee all agreed. Minutes were adopted.

The following agenda items were discussed by the committee:

### 1.) Status Update on System from RAMware

- Increased Usage and the System is functioning well.
- System is right at \$98 million (October-December) without counting collections before Going Live. If the total collections are counted, the system has collected over \$100 million.
- St. Bernard Parish still has not downloaded but has money out there (over \$250,000). Banking doesn't appear to be the issue for them. Rick suggested that they may have to go and help them out by going through each return with them. Secretary Bridges suggested maybe sending the affected businesses a postcard/email to inform them when the matter has been cleared up and to discontinue paper checks. Rick answered that it will not be hard to identify the businesses that have actually filed. Right now they are asking taxpayers to send in checks. Rick hopes to have this issue corrected by the end of next week.
- Wal-Mart has expressed an interest in the system. Payment will be an issue for them.
- Alert Notice – Needs a little tweaking (font, coloring).
- ACH Credit Issues are not a big problem. The parishes are able to reconcile the minor problems they are encountering. Rick will poll the Administrators at the next LATA Meeting.

### 2.) Validation of Account Number Update

- Jefferson Parish validation has been implemented and is going well. Ready for any other parish that wants to get on board.
- 25-30 more parishes have inquired about the account validation feature.

- Secretary Bridges asked about the parishes being aware of the costs and that each parish would be responsible for their own costs associated with this service. Rick Mekdessie answered that the parishes are being told about the costs and that each parish will have different needs so the rates will be on case by case basis.

### 3.) Orleans Parish Response

- As of today, the legal opinion has not been received by the committee.
- An official letter requesting the legal opinion was mailed on December 15, 2008.
- Secretary Bridges suggested that a follow-up letter be sent and Chairman West added that we send it by email and by certified mail to Ms. Samuel to receive a confirmation. Letter should go out as soon as possible.
- Orleans has been using the system. Interest and Penalty have not been an issue because 90% of the returns are being filed timely.

### 4.) Joint Effort Statement on Website

- Add an about Parish E-File link.
- Press Secretary, Byron Henderson added that the legislation which created the program is not relevant enough to add to the website.
- Rick Mekdessie suggests adding more logos to the website.
- Cynthia Bridges and Byron Henderson will re-work the statement and present at the next meeting.

### 5.) Hotel/Motel Tax

- Chairman West received a call and asked about fees for the .coms
- Secretary Bridges informed the committee about the topic coming up in previous sessions but the Bills never get out of committee due to opposition.

### 6.) Uniform Paper Return Strategy

- The Parishes are satisfied with their returns and maybe needs input from the outside to let them know what changes are needed.
- Rick says that it is one line deductions
- A Focus Group Discussion should be used to address this issue. Rick suggests major changes to the online system as well. Secretary Bridges likes Rick's suggestion about having the returns match and to change the online return and then populating later.
- Rick added that the streamline return is working well in other states. He will get copies of some of the returns and supply more information at the next meeting.
- Chairman West will ask around for volunteers to participate in the Focus Group at the next LATA organization meeting.

The next Advisory Committee Meeting is scheduled for Thursday, February 19, 2009 at 10:00 a.m., and will be at the Louisiana Department of Revenue, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Calcasieu Room.

There being no further agenda items or public comments Chairman West made a motion to adjourn the meeting and the committee seconded the motion. Chairman West then carried that the meeting be adjourned at 11:10 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

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Mark West, Chairman