MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE

NEW ORLEANS CITY PARK IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION

A meeting of the Board of Commissioners (the “Board”) of the New Orleans City Park Improvement Association (the “NOCPIA”) was called to order Tuesday, July 25, 2017, at 4p.m. by President Steve Pettus. The meeting was held in the Administration Building.

PRESENT: Commissioners Batt, Bingler, Cahn, Chase, Claverie, Guidry, Hess, Katz, Lupo, Masinter, McNeil, Offner, Pettus, Savoie, Schrenk, Slone, Sloss, Smith, Thomas, Thorpe, and Tregre

ABSENT: Commissioners Arnold, Balart, Hollis, LeCorgne, McKeithen, Navarre, Pate, Payton, Pineda, Powell, Seamon, Spears, Williams, and Wisdom

STAFF: Bob Becker, Kevin Cox, Rob DeViney, Meg Adams, John Hopper, and Denise Joubert

COUNSEL: Henry Kinney

GUESTS: Claire Bynum, Kwame Juakali, and Mark Zimmer

A quorum was present and voting throughout the meeting.

President Pettus welcomed everyone and thanked them for coming.

The minutes of the June Board meeting were approved.

Anyone wishing to comment on any item on the agenda must sign the sign-in sheet and indicate what item they wish to comment on.

Public comment was then invited; Mark Zimmer expressed the need for additional sports fields. He thanked management for allowing public comments in regards to the Wisner Tract. Zimmer also noted some problems in regards to the cross country course. Commissioner Steve Bingler recommended contacting the school district to utilize their available fields and getting more access to the fields in the area. Becker thanked Zimmer for his comments and noted that the City is in the process of amending its Master Plan and one of the recommendations is to try and maximize the use of existing resources.

In his President’s Report, Pettus reported:

* He attended the joint Finance & Audit Committee meeting and mentioned that operating results were below budget.
* The Compensation Committee has begun reviewing a salary pay analysis prepared by our Human Resources Department. The Committee will review market adjustments for certain positions based on management and consultant analysis. Pettus thanked Commissioner Mike Hollis for his work on this report.
* The Endowment has reached more than $5.0 million.
* He attended a meeting to review the results of House Bill #2.
* He reminded all Commissioners that ethics training must be completed by December 31.
* He mentioned the importance of attending the meetings for the Committee that each member agreed to serve on.

In the Management Report, Chief Executive Officer Bob Becker reported that operating results for May were slightly below budget. With one month remaining in our fiscal year that ends June 30, the Park is ahead of budget by approximately $400,000. Looking ahead to June, extremely poor weather conditions made it likely that the Park will give back a large portion of the current year surplus. Becker noted that the ability to grant a pay adjustment is depending on making the budget. In 2005 the Master Plan Endowment Goal was reaching $5.0 million by 2018. The Friends have kicked off a new campaign by allocating $50,000 towards a new endowment goal. Commissioner Paul Masinter noted that the endowment reaching $5.0 million is a milestone for the Park. He commended the staff, board, and past presidents for this accomplishment.

*Committee Reports:*

P, A&E – Commissioner Robert Lupo updated the Board on various construction projects. Lupo reported that construction of the golf course perimeter fence is near completion. The Marconi Bike Path is underway. The committee is in the process of getting proposals to begin renovations at building # 1 of the old Maintenance complex. Lupo mentioned that there has not been much success in the recent legislative session in regards to House Bill 2, which is the State’s construction budget. In the bill the Splash Park was only included for remaining design funds. The Park is working on a strategy to bring this matter to the attention of the Governor. Consideration of the land use changes for the Wisner Tract may be discussed at the September board meeting. Lupo commented that advertising banners between the Monteleone Columns blocks the beautiful view of the Park. The Committee will discuss improvements to the intersection at Marconi and City Park Avenue. Construction of The Children’s Museum should begin by early September.

CITO/Special Events – Commissioner Leigh Thorpe reported that “Moonshine Fever” is scheduled for August 18.

Development – Commissioner Larry Katz reported that the Committee is compiling a list of sponsorship opportunities within the Park. Katz mentioned that the Park secured a $250,000 sponsorship from Tania Hahn for the Louisiana Course in City Putt. There is currently one hole available at City Putt and one car on the Lady Bug roller coaster available to sponsor. Both sponsorships are $25,000 and can be paid over five years.

Finance & Audit – Commissioner Edmund Schrenk reported that the endowment is invested at the Greater New Orleans Foundation. The committee will meet to review the plan to be certain it plan is suitable for the Park. Schrenk mentioned that the Park is still waiting for reimbursement from FEMA for the damage from Hurricane Gustav.

Friends – Commissioner Leigh Thorpe reported that the Patron and Ambassador Member Thank You Party and Friends Fest were well attended. Commissioner Steven Pate confirmed that the Saints will donate the proceeds from the 5K season opener race to the Friends, earmarked for Tad Gormley Stadium. Martini Madness is scheduled for September 15 in the Arbor Room. The funds will be dedicated to the renovation of Popp Bandstand. President Pettus commended the healthy food options at Friends Fest.

H&G/Dog Park – Commissioner Liz Sloss updated the Board on various projects. Sloss thanked The Friends of City Park for dedicating the funds from Martini Madness to the renovations of Popp Bandstand. The Park is in the process of removing the palms on Anseman due to the Texas Palm Decline and planting Creole Queen American Elms. Sloss reported that Bow Wow Luau is scheduled for August 19 in the Arbor Room.

Legal & Risk Management – Commissioner Paul Masinter reported that the Committee met with Legal Counsel Henry Kinney and have engaged in discussions with Greenwood Cemetery and the City of New Orleans in an effort to assist in the movement of the Beauregard statue to Greenwood Cemetery. He is hopeful both parties will reach an agreement in regards to the future of Beauregard statue. President Pettus and Masinter have spoken to 34 of 36 board members who have all expressed support in moving forward in trying to get a positive resolution in the future of the statue. At this time it is undecided if Board action is necessary.

Public Relations – Commissioner Laura Claverie reported that Laborde Mountain, the Bio Blitz, and the Dog Park have received lots of media attention. The Park is in the process of implementing a new micro site on the website for Birthday parties that will help make the reservation process more streamlined. Social media continues to grow in numbers.

Nominating – According to the By-Laws, the President makes all appointments to the Committees with the exception of the Nominating Committee, which is voted on by the Board. Becker reported that the Board neglected to elect the Nominating Committee at the February meeting. The Board unanimously elected Commissioners Seamon and Claverie to third terms, Commissioners Katz, Batt, and Payton to second terms, and Commissioners Sloss and Lupo to a first term.

Sports – Commissioner Will Tregre reported that play at the new golf course has been good, whereas play at the North Course is off due to drainage problems from the amount of rain the Park has experienced. Tregre recommended developing a Master Plan to address some of the issues on the North Course. Several tournaments are scheduled for the fall as well as a Ladies Clinic on Sunday afternoons. The Audubon certification process is underway. The turf replacement project at Tad Gormley is underway. Tregre thanked Commissioners Jay Batt and Robert Lupo for requesting funding from the Sugarbowl Committee for several projects in Tad Gormley Stadium. The Park is in the process of relocating the City Park maintenance staff from the Quadraplex to Tad Gormley Stadium so that field can be put back into use.

Tennis – Commissioner Edgar Chase reported that the Committee is finalizing the plans for the MLK Day Family Tennis Event to celebrate diversity in the city. He is hoping to raise $50,000 in sponsorships for the event. Discussions are underway with Tulane in regards to their intentions of continued use of the facility. The Park is hosting the Allstate Sugar Bowl Tennis Tournament Level 2 tournament in 2017 and the Level 1 tournament in 2018.

Botanical Garden Foundation – No report

Sustainability Committee – Commissioner Thomas reported that BioBlitz was held on July 15. More than 200 volunteers and twenty experts attended the event. Thomas mentioned that at Swing in the Oaks we diverted 17% of total waste to recycling, at the July 3 event we diverted 27%, and the Park facilities are diverting 24% of its total waste on average.

A resolution was unanimously passed authorizing Bob Becker to enter into any and all cooperative endeavor agreements with the Department of the Treasury to secure line item appropriations for the “Beautification and Improvement of the New Orleans City Park fund.”

OTHER REPORTS:

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

NEW BUSINESS:

Public comment was then invited; there were no public comments.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:25p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday,   
September 26, 2017 at 4p.m.

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Denise Joubert

Recording Secretary

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Ronnie Slone

Secretary