

## 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 28, 2015, at 4:00p.m. by President Susan Hess. The meeting was held in the Arbor Room, located at 30 Zachary Taylor Drive.

**PRESENT:** Commissioners Chase, Claverie, Fernandez, Fierke, Giffin, Hales, Hess, Hoffman, Hollis, Johnson, Laborde, LaFranca, LeGrand, McKay, Palumbo, Payton, Pettus, Schrenk, Seamon, Slone, and Tregre

**ABSENT:** Commissioners Batt, Binger, Guidry, Masinter, McKeithen, Powell, Sanderford, Sloss, Spears, Thorpe, Waller, Williams, and Wisdom

**STAFF:** Bob Becker, Kevin Cox, John Hopper, Ginny Virgadamo, Amanda Frentz, and Denise Joubert

**COUNSEL:** Henry Kinney

**GUESTS:** Casie Duplechain, Robert Lupo, Janel Hazlett, Tara Jill, Kevin McDunn, Lauren Sullivan, Kerry Mansell, Jonathan Boover, Rebecca King, Cynthia Scott, Jeff Katz, Chris Lane, Nora Ellertson, and Laura Grannen

A quorum was present and voting throughout the meeting.

The minutes of the June board meeting and the July 13 special board meeting were approved.

President Hess welcomed and thanked everyone for coming.

In her President’s report, Hess noted that the Adhoc Smoking committee met and discussed the prohibition of smoking in several areas of the Park. A Resolution will be presented at a future board meeting.

Hess thanked John Hopper and his staff for preparing the Park’s first Annual Report.

In the Management Report, Chief Executive Officer Becker reported that operating results for June were below budget as we made the decision to “pay forward” some expenses that we planned to make in the new fiscal year. Overall we had a successful year exceeding our budget which allowed us to put funds into the reserve and catch up on our insurance payments. A major contributor to our financial success was having good weather on weekends, and during Celebration in the Oaks. Becker noted that the Department Heads should be commended for keeping expenses below budget.

Becker also reported:

- The July 3<sup>rd</sup> concert was successful.
- A meeting was held with the Executive Director of the National Park and Recreation Association to discuss current park issues.
- Renovation of the North Course greens is expected to be completed by the end of the month. Play should resume in September
- Construction of the new golf course continues. We are working with the Corps Of Engineers on an additional permit they determined should be issued.
- Construction has begun on the Tri-Centennial Place improvements
- Staff presented the capital requests before the City Planning Commission at their annual budget hearing

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

#### *Committee Reports:*

P, A&E - Commissioner Edmond Schrenk reported the Committee met with the architects for the Louisiana Children’s Museum to review the schematic design. The committee accepted several aspects of the schematic design but wanted further review on the exterior of the building. Another meeting is scheduled with the architects to discuss the design. The Committee discussed Pigeon Island, and agreed to remove the damaged boat house.

#### CITO/Special Events – No Report

Development – Commissioner Ronnie Slone commended John Hopper and his staff for building relationships, and following up on several prospects. Hopper reported on several meetings with potential donors at the entrance of the Botanical Garden, and the Enrique Alvarez Sculpture Garden. Commissioner Edgar Chase commented on the new bike racks which are being installed around the Park.

Finance & Audit – Commissioner Steve Pettus reported the Committee is reviewing the financials for June as well as FY 15. FY15 was a better year than FY14 and results showed a solid financial performance on behalf of the Park.

Friends – Commissioner Jackie Palumbo reported that Friends Fest was held on July 22 and was very successful. Martini Madness is scheduled for September 18 in the Arbor Room.

H&G/Dog Park – Becker updated the board on various projects. “The Wave” sculpture has been installed and is operating at Big Lake. The Committee is discussing the possibility of hosting a Wildflower Festival at the Festival Grounds in spring, 2016. The Committee also discussed the replacement program for the Nuttall, Overcup and Water Oak trees on Roosevelt Mall. Many trees are at the end of their life, and are dropping limbs. Over the last several years, we engaged in a program to remove those trees and replace them with Live Oak trees. To date we have replaced 5 or 6; and there are at least another 5 or 6 that need to be removed and replaced.

Commissioner Seamon inquired about the size of the replacement Live Oak trees. Becker replied that the replacement trees are normally 100 - 200 gallons. The cost to replace each tree is approximately \$10,000. 101 Donations, NOLA City Park's fundraiser for improvements at the Dog Park, will be held August 21st in the Arbor Room.

Legal & Risk Management – Becker reported that the committee is reviewing on-going legal issues.

Public Relations – Commissioner Laura Claverie reported the Park will host a Thank You party on August 12 for donors and volunteers. Dedication of the new Sir Cumference Playground at the Festival Grounds is scheduled for August 13. The Park will host a Katrina Day of service on August 29. Reporter Gilles Biassette with LaCroix, the largest Catholic paper in France, wrote about New Orleans after Katrina. He devoted more than one newspaper page and photos to City Park. The New Orleans Magazine will feature City Park in its August Katrina issue.

Nominating – No Report

Sports- Commissioner Will Tregre reported that Tad Gormley is undergoing its annual turf maintenance. The Committee will evaluate maintenance issues, and the various facility needs; and will put together a budget for funding. Football season will begin at the end of August. The Committee discussed the possibility of converting Quad 3 into a multi-purpose field, due to the demand for field space for various sports. The bicycle and boat rentals are interested in expanding to another location in the Park.

Tennis – Commissioner Errol Laborde reported the Pepsi Tennis Center is reserved this weekend for a Charity Tennis tournament.

Botanical Garden Foundation – Commissioner Dessa Giffin reported that construction of the new garden entrance and sculpture garden is on schedule. Magic in the Moonlight is scheduled for October 16.

**OTHER REPORTS:**

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:** No Report

**NEW BUSINESS:** No Report

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** Chief Executive Officer Becker read the rules for receiving public comments, and asked speakers to abide by those rules.

Becker read the following statement:

City Park Improvement Association has filed an application with the Corps of Engineers for final approval of wetland designation for a portion of the new golf course. Following a public comment period, the Park feels confident the Corp, the State, and City Park will reach an agreement on remedies to allow completion of the course. City Park has suspended construction

in the area of the disputed wetlands after being contacted by the Corps of Engineers pending a determination. Investigation of this small area by City Park consultant U.S. Helm, revealed the land was saturated due to a long-time leaking water pipe. The pipe was capped and the leak stopped in early April. The Corps of Engineers determined that less than one half of one percent of the golf course site displayed characteristics of a wetland. At this time the Corps of Engineers has completed its jurisdictional determination, and City Park has concurrently filed an application with the Corps of Engineers for a permit authorizing the work to continue at the area in question. City Park appreciates the Army Corps of Engineer's cooperation and assistance in facilitating the expeditious handling of this process.

The Board allowed speakers to make public statements. The following is a list of speakers: Janel Hazlett, Tara Jill, Kevin McDunn, Lauren Sullivan, Kerry Mansell, Jonathan Boover, Rebecca King, Cynthia Scott, Jeff Katz, Chris Lane, Nora Ellertson, and Laura Grannen. Becker thanked all the speakers for their comments.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:20p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, September 22, 2015 at 4:00p.m.

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Denise Joubert  
Recording Secretary

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Andrea LeGrand  
Secretary