

## 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, December 17, 2019 at 4 p.m. by President Larry Katz. The meeting was held in the Administration Building.

**PRESENT:** Commissioners, Arata, Arnold, Baker, Batt, Cahn, Dale, DeBlieux, Fitzpatrick, Gardner, Giarrusso, Hess, Katz, Lester, Masinter, McNeil, Pettus, Pineda, Powell, Seamon, Sloss, Taylor, Thomas, Tregre, and Waller

**ABSENT:** Commissioners Adkerson, Banks, Donovan, Hollis, LeCorgne, Leger, Lupo, McCrossen, Navarre, Pate, Savoie, and Spears

**STAFF:** Bob Becker, Rob DeViney, Keith Hemel, Casie Duplechain, Briana Spruille, Sarah Olivier, and Denise Joubert

**COUNSEL:** Henry Kinney

**GUESTS:** Charles Marsala, Andrea Legrand, Tate Elsensohn, Rachel Elsensohn, Emily Mueller, and Edmund Schrenk,

Larry Katz, President of the NOCPIA Board of Commissioners, called the meeting to order. Katz introduced Curtis Thomas, the appointee for the New Orleans Chamber of Commerce.

Public Comment – There was no public comment on any agenda item

In the President’s Report, Larry Katz reported that Storyland is doing very well. He noted that last year, from July 1 – Nov 30 of 2018 we collected approximately \$80,000 in revenue at Storyland. This year, from the opening on September 28 to present, roughly only 2 months, we have matched that. He noted that revenue, as well as attendance, has doubled from last year at this time.

In the Management Report, Chief Executive Officer Becker reported that the budget for October shows a loss of \$475,000. The loss is due to the misallocation of revenue in Amusements that was inadvertently spread over twelve months. He noted that the actual number will be more realistic when the six months budget is completed. He stated that we also reported a loss for the Scream Park, which is misleading because revenue received in November was not included in October’s numbers. Celebration is doing well, at this point last year we were down \$400,000 due to the weather. This year, with better weather, we are right on budget.

Becker reported on the following:

- The State has accepted the bid for the Maintenance Complex.
- The TIF is set to expire in January. The reauthorization of the City’s participation was approved by the City Council’s Governmental Affairs Committee, and we fully expect

that the continuation of the TIF will be approved at the next City Council meeting. He noted that this is important because the city's approval will open the door for the park to approach the State to participate as well. If approved by the State, the amount we receive will be modest initially, but will increase over time.

#### *Committee Reports:*

P, A&E – Edmund Schrenk reported that lowest bid for the Maintenance facility was \$1,200,000 which is less than budgeted. The bid was awarded to Lamar Contractors.

CITO/Special Events – Commissioner Chenier Taylor reported that Celebration in the Oaks is doing very well. Commissioner Steve Pettus asked for information on sponsorships for Celebration in the Oaks. Casie Duplechain mentioned that sponsorships are not what they once were, but said that Development, in place of Special Events, will be working to increase sponsorships.

Development – Casie Duplechain thanked Commissioner Robert Lupo for being the first board member to return the Give/Get donation form. She noted that staff is working on developing a spreadsheet listing all donations for the year. This spreadsheet will assist Development in creating packets to be sent to all board members listing their giving, remaining balance, and opportunities for 2020. Duplechain and Briana Spruille are planning to meet with Park Directors to determine departmental needs with a goal of seeking financial assistance through grants and donations. A meeting took place with Friends of City Park Lobbyist Darrell Hunt to assist with determining key legislators. On February 6, a luncheon will be held at the Park with the Legislative Delegation to provide an update on the current status of the Park. The sponsorship goal for Celebration in the Oaks is \$100,000, to date we have received \$90,000. Katz thanked Commissioner Richard Cahn for helping to secure a \$5,000 donation from the Fairgrounds.

Environmental Stewardship – Commissioner Carro Gardner mentioned that she has enjoyed her first year serving on the board. She noted that it has been a pleasure to work with Meg Adams and Lindsay Kirsch. There was a collaborative planting day in conjunction with Audubon Orleans, Master Gardeners, Iris Society, and New Orleans Town Gardeners on the Louisiana trail at Big Lake. There will be another planting day on March 21. 2020 marks the 50th anniversary of Earth Day and it will be celebrated on April 21st in the Botanical Garden.

#### Finance & Audit – No Report

Friends – Commissioner Larry Dale reported that Friends currently has more than 5700 members. This is the first time that membership has surpassed 5500. He noted that in 17 days membership increased by 500 members. Lark in the Park is scheduled for March 13, 2020. Friends secured a car from Bryan Subaru to be raffled. Heart of the Park Hat Luncheon is scheduled for April 22, 2020, and “Par for the Park” will be held on May 12, 2020. Katz noted that Friends has hired “Search Influence” to help increase membership.

H&G Committee/Dog Park – Commissioner Liz Sloss reported that a decision will be made soon on the tree survey. She noted that funds from the Heart of the Park Luncheon will be distributed as follows; \$25,000 to the endowment, \$56,000 to the tree survey, and \$54,000 to Lark in the Park. Becker mentioned that the tree survey will cost \$123,000 over three years. Work continues on improvements behind the Casino building. City Bark held their Christmas Event on the Great Lawn, and it was very successful.

Legal & Risk Management – No Report

NOMA – No Report

Wisner Tract – Sarah Olivier reported that Kurt Culbertson, from Design Workshop, has produced preliminary schematic drawings for the tract. The plans are very nature oriented; remove old golf paths, to create an enhanced trail network and focus on removing invasive species and planting native species.. A public meeting to secure more input will be held on January 15.

Public Relations – No Report

Nominating – No Report

Sports – No Report

Tennis – No Report

Botanical Garden Foundation - No Report

President Katz expressed his gratitude for a very rewarding year as board president. He stated that board members level of enjoyment will increase with their level of involvement. He encouraged board members to contact him, Bob or Denise about committee involvement.

President Katz recognized outgoing Board Members Cleland Powell, Will Tregre, Elizabeth Sloss, and Stephanie Navarre. Katz thanked them for their outstanding service to the Board, and distributed commemorative plaques. Katz also thanked Ex-Officio Steve Pettus for his support and dedication to the board and the Park. Becker also thanked all departing board members for their support

President Katz presented the President’s Award to several individuals for their outstanding support of the Park. The recipients are:

|                           |  |
|---------------------------|--|
| Andrea Legrand            | Dedication to City Park  |
| Tate and Rachel Elsensohn | Donation of Services and props to the Park and Celebration in the Oaks |
| Elizabeth Sloss           | Leadership and enthusiasm to the Park                                  |

All recipients expressed their gratitude for being recognized by the Park.

OTHER REPORTS:

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

NEW BUSINESS:

The meeting was adjourned at 5:00p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, January 28, 2020 at 4 p.m.

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Denise Joubert  
Recording Secretary

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Elizabeth Sloss