

## 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, January 23, 2018, at 4 p.m. by President Steve Pettus. The meeting was held in the Administration Building.

**PRESENT:** Commissioners Arnold, Balart, Batt, Cahn, Claverie, Dale, Hess, Katz, LeCorgne, Leger, Lupo, McCrossen, McNeil, Offner, Pate, Pettus, Powell, Savoie, Seamon, Slone, Sloss, Thomas, Thorpe, and Tregre

**ABSENT:** Commissioners Binger, Guidry, Hollis, Masinter, Messer, Navarre, Pineda, Spears, Waller, and Williams

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

**COUNSEL:**

**GUESTS:** Andrea Legrand, Casie Duplechain, and Claire Byun

A quorum was present and voting throughout the meeting.

Steve Pettus, President of the NOCPIA Board of Commissioners, called the meeting to order. Pettus welcomed everyone and thanked them for coming. Pettus introduced new Commissioners David Waller, Walt Leger, Quentin Messer, and Larry Dale.

The minutes of the December 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.

In his President’s Report, Pettus reported the following:

- The Strategic Planning task force concluded its 1<sup>st</sup> meeting – the objective is to define issues and submit a plan at the Board retreat for their input, development, and approval. The board retreat is scheduled for Saturday, March 3.
- The Park is moving forward with the Visitor Survey. The results would be instrumental in the development of its Strategic Plan.
- A long term perspective on Park finances makes clear that the Park needs to either develop a significant revenue stream within the Park that is less weather dependent or secure funding from outside the Park to secure the Park’s future.
- The Capital expansion funded by post-Katrina funding has ended and those projects are beginning to require additional maintenance. Pettus said if we are to be the world class Park the community deserves it will take the full support the Board. Pettus encouraged everyone to join a Committee.

- The May Board meeting has been rescheduled for Thursday, May 31.
- Pettus reminded everyone to file their Financial Disclosure.

In the Management Report, Chief Executive Officer Bob Becker reported that the first six months of the fiscal year had extremely poor weather conditions. The unseasonal weather continued through December during the Celebration in the Oaks event. The event was closed 10 of the 33 days due to rain or extreme cold. The Park went into December approximately \$200,000 below budget, which put it cumulatively \$500,000 below budget for the first six months of the fiscal year. Year to date the Park experienced a loss in revenue of approximately \$1.5 million. We saved expenses in December, resulting in a year to date expenditure savings of just over \$1.0 million resulting in a six month deficit of approximately \$.5 million. It will be difficult to make up the entire deficit for the year without going into a portion of the Park's reserves. This reiterates what Pettus mentioned about the difficulties the Park has to generate 90% of its operating budget when the Park is weather dependent.

- The Park was closed on January 17 due to extreme cold and low water pressure.
- A briefing was provided for the new board members.

Becker noted that the Park should be viewed as a world class park, but to avoid regressing the Park will need more public support. It is unrealistic to think the Park can raise 90% of its operating revenue from its current facilities. Commissioner Powell asked if NOMA contributes to the Park. Becker stated that they provide maintenance and security to the existing Sculpture Garden as well as the new Sculpture Garden. A discussion took place in regards to strategies to create additional revenue. Commissioner Susan Hess noted that the Park should consider using funds from the Endowment to help with the Park's shortfalls. Commissioner Muffin Balart asked if the Park has an ongoing educational campaign. The Park does not have an ongoing educational campaign but going forward will be important that the Park educates the public about its 90/10 situation and strategies the Park needs to pursue public support. Hess suggested that members should attend neighborhood association meetings to educate the public about the Park.

#### *Committee Reports:*

P, A&E – Commissioner Robert Lupo updated the Board on various projects. The renovation of one of the old Maintenance buildings is underway. The Committee discussed potential uses of the building and opportunities that may exist that will create additional self-generated revenue. NOMA has signed their construction contract for the expansion of the Sculpture Garden. Commissioner Lupo did a walk thru of the Louisiana Children's Museum construction site. The Maintenance Department has moved from the Quadraplex to Tad Gormley Stadium, which will allow the Park to open the 4<sup>th</sup> field as well as the Concession building. Becker mentioned that proposals for the new outdoor kitchen in the Botanical Garden came in over budget so they will redesign and try to secure new bids.

CITO/Special Events – No Report

Development – Becker reported that a meeting took place in regards to the restoration of Storyland. The Park retained an exhibit designer to recommend what exhibits should be modernized and upgraded. The Park will seek sponsorships for the renovation of the exhibits. Commissioner Larry Katz reported that the text to donate campaign is working well. The sponsorship benefits review has been completed. The state of the Development Committee report is near completion. Lindsey Loyd is working on a Board member prospect list. Commissioner Lupo suggested that the Development Committee produce bullet points on the Park to distribute to Board members.

Finance & Audit – Commissioner Will Tregre reported that auditors would be attending the next Board meeting to present the audit of FY17. Tregre mentioned that one of the ways The Park was able to cut expenses was by postponing spending money on things that can be deferred indefinitely.

Friends – Commissioner Leigh Thorpe reported that Friends currently have more than 5,300 members and have reached 100% participation from the Board. The Friends is launching a historical educational musical train tour of City Park. A kickoff event is scheduled for February 1 at the the home of Chair Robin Bordelon Borne. Thorpe mentioned that the Lupo family will be chairing the 2018 Lark in the Park, which is scheduled for March 9, 2018. The proceeds will go towards the renovation of the Casino Building.

H&G/Dog Park – Commissioner Elizabeth Sloss reported that Heart of the Park hat luncheon that will be held on April 11 in the Arbor Room. Half of the proceeds will go towards maintenance for the trees in the Park. The Committee discussed lightning protection for the trees and mentioned that this has already been done to several trees in the Park. Approximately 14,000 tulips were planted around Big Lake. Santa Paws was held at the Dog Park and was very successful. The funds will be used for new playground equipment that will be installed in March.

Legal & Risk Management – No Report

Public Relations – Commissioner Laura Claverie reported that work continues on the final upgrade of the mobile website that is expected to launch by February 1. The History of City Park on the website is being updated as well.

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. The Nominating Committee members are Ray Seamon, Laura Claverie, Jay Batt, Liz Sloss, and Robert Lupo. If anyone is interested in serving on the Committee, contact Commissioner Ray Seamon or Steve Pettus. President Pettus thanked everyone for serving on the Committee.

Sports - Commissioner Will Tregre reported that golf is below budget for the month of January, due to terrible weather conditions. On a positive note, more than 4,000 rounds were played last weekend. Golf has received a certificate for completing the first step of Audubon Certification. They have also installed a solar-powered aerator on one of the lagoons. The roof on the press box at Tad Gormley is being replaced. The Park is also in the process of restriping the track there, and purchasing a new pole vault pit. The committee discussed the utilization of park fields, and the

possibility of re-grading the outfield on the corner of Harrison and Marconi, to create a new multi-use sports field. There was discussion concerning the possibility of receiving compensation from Voodoo Fest for fields down time after the festival. Consideration was also given to the possibility of keeping Voodoo off of the sports fields.

Tennis – No Report

Botanical Garden Foundation – No Report

Sustainability Committee – Commissioner Robert Thomas reported that Earth Day is scheduled for April 24. A joint meeting of the Sustainability and the P, A&E Committee met with Kurt Culbertson to discuss the Wisner Tract. They are working on a possible bird event in the Park to support the Couturie Forest.

OTHER REPORTS:

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

NEW BUSINESS:

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

The meeting was adjourned at 5:15 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, February 27, 2018 at 4 p.m.

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Denise Joubert  
Recording Secretary

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Ronnie Slone  
Secretary