

## 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, May 28, 2019 at 4 p.m. by President Larry Katz. The meeting was held in the Administration Building.

PRESENT: Commissioners Arata, Arnold, Baker, Cahn, Dale, Gardner, Hess, Hollis, Katz, LeCorgne, Leger, Lupo, Pate, Pettus, Savoie, Seamon, Taylor, Tregre, and Waller

ABSENT: Commissioners Adkerson, Banks, Batt, DeBlieux, Donovan, Giarrusso, Lester, Masinter, McCrossen, McNeil, Messer, Navarre, Pineda, Powell, Sloss, Spears, and Thomas

STAFF: Bob Becker, Meg Adams, Amanda Frentz, Rob DeViney, Casie Duplechain, Sarah Olivier, and Denise Joubert

COUNSEL: Henry Kinney

GUESTS: Andrea LeGrand, Emily Mueller, Charles Marsala, Edmund Schrenk, and Cherie Faget

A quorum was present and voting throughout the meeting.

Larry Katz, President of the NOCPIA Board of Commissioners, called the meeting to order. Becker mentioned that we have a cake to celebrate a successful election, and the Park receiving city dedicated funding for the 1<sup>st</sup> time in 169 years.

The minutes of the April 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; Katz read the rules for receiving public comments; Charles Marsala congratulated the Park on the passing of the tax millage. He mentioned that he toured the Sculpture Garden and it is fabulous. Mr. Marsala stated that today is P.T. Beauregard’s 201<sup>st</sup> birthday. He expressed concern over the fact that he cannot find any record of the Beauregard monument being discussed at board meetings, for the past three years. He noted that the minutes should reflect any, and all discussions about ownership of the Beauregard monument. It should also state when the statue came down, and where it is being stored; for historical record. He distributed a copy of an email from John Hopper that stated the Park’s attorneys have done considerable research, and they concluded that City Park does not own the Beauregard monument. Mr. Marsala feels that the Park should clarify the situation by making a public statement regarding the resolution of the Beauregard statue ownership.

In the Presidents Report, Katz reported on the following:

Katz introduced Keith Hemel, who was hired as the Chief Financial Officer for the Park. He mentioned that all Commissioners must take Sexual Harassment training, Ethics Training and file their Personal Financial Disclosure annually.

Café Du Monde should be open for business by July 10.

Katz discussed the overwhelming support that voters gave to the millage proposal. Seventy Six percent of the voters in Orleans Parish voted in support of the millage. He noted that it was impossible to thank everyone involved individually, but he wanted to single out certain individuals. He thanked Casie Duplehcian for her tremendous effort, Edmund Schrenk, and Commissioner Robert Lupo for their early financial support, Commissioner David Waller for his efforts to gain the financial support of the board of the New Orleans Botanical Garden, and Commissioner Chenier Taylor for waving signs on Election Day. He thanked all the entities involved, and noted that he established relationships with several people while working on the campaign; including Ann Macdonald, Ron Forman, Rebecca Dietz, Larry Barabino, and Emily Wolff. He also thanked our political consultants, Bob Tucker and Karen Carvin. He thanked the CPIA Board, and the Friends of City Park, who donated time and funds to the effort. But most of all he wanted to thank the non-stop efforts of Bob Becker. Becker mentioned that the millage will take effect in January, 2021, and will expire on December 31, 2040. He noted that while we do not receive the funding for two years, knowing that it is coming will allow the Park to begin the planning necessary, to get the maximum benefit from the funds. Becker thanked everyone on the Board for their support, as well the support of the Mayor and the City Council. Katz is planning to invite our partners to a future board meeting. Katz thanked Commissioner Steve Pettus for all his hard work on the millage during his term as President. Pettus thanked the Convention Visitors Bureau for their generous donation. Katz also thanked Commissioner Paul Masinter for his work to raise funding for the campaign.

In the Management Report, Chief Executive Officer Becker reported that we are ahead of budget for the month of April, and was able to reduce our year to date deficit. However, we will still end the fiscal year with a deficit. This proves that good weather results in good financial reports.

Becker reported:

- We are working with the State to review the drawings, and cost estimates for the maintenance complex.
- The Sydney, and Waldo Besthoff Sculpture Garden expansion project is open and has received positive reviews.
- The Louisiana Children's Museum is expected to open in early September. Commissioner Lupo asked about the dead tree by the lagoon. Becker mentioned that we are meeting soon with the contractor to discuss the site.
- The second annual "Hat Luncheon", the project of the New Orleans Town Gardeners, and the Park, was very successful. The fundraiser will benefit the management, and protection of the Park's trees. This event is becoming the "fundraising event of the spring"!

### *Committee Reports:*

P, A&E – Commissioner Will Tregre reported that the plans for the Maintenance Complex will go out to bid shortly. Café Du Monde will be open for business in July. The RFP for the water management project was released to the public today. The grant will total \$16M, to help improve our water holding capacity. He mentioned that we are working to access the damage to the bridge between the expansion of the Sculpture Garden and the Children’s Museum.

CITO/Special Events – Commissioner Chenier Taylor reported on upcoming events. She reported that June Under the Moon is scheduled for June 7 in the Amusement Park. To celebrate the Dog Days of Summer, 101 dogs will be allowed to attend June under the Moon. The July 3 celebration, featuring the Marine Corp band, will take place on the Great Lawn from 7-9pm followed by a firework display.

Development – Casie Duplechain reported that she has assumed the position of the Chief Development Officer, and is working to fill two vacancies. She reported that the Heart of the Park Hat Luncheon was a great successful. The luncheon should net approximately \$271,000, and each organization should receive approximately \$135,000. The luncheon netted \$70,000 more than last year. The Friends of City Park is working on a formal agreement with the New Orleans Town Gardeners, to continue the partnership; and delineate roles and responsibilities between each organization. The Storyland campaign is close to raising its goal in sponsorships. We received a \$20,000 sponsorship from Perry Eastman, for the Whale plaza. Duplechain reviewed the sponsorships pledged/project cost to date. We expect to begin onsite construction on July 1, with the projected grand re-opening in September. Katz thanked Sarah Olivier for her leadership, vision, and work on the millage.

Environmental Stewardship - Commissioner Carro Gardner reported the Girl Scouts scheduled another campout for spring, 2020. Also, Live Oak Wilderness camp scheduled a campout in the fall. The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation grant for the shoreline restoration, and water hyacinth removal should will be complete in August. We are working with the Audubon Society to develop signage in the Bird Corridor at the Casino building, near Couturie Forest, and the Festival Grounds. . The phenology trail in Couturie Forest is open. The City has issued a request for proposals for the design of the City Park Water Plan, a project to allow the park’s extensive lagoon system to store stormwater from adjacent Lake Vista, mitigating flooding in Lakeview. City Park will be involved with all steps of the process. The City of New Orleans requested that the Park submit a proposal to put together a team to propagate, and test native plants for stormwater management at the Festival Grounds. The team will include LSU Ag Center, Water Wise NOLA, Limitless Vistas, Loyola University Environmental honors programs, City Park staff, and other partners. Food for Thought is scheduled on June 11, and July 17. Commissioner Billy Arnold asked how are we marketing camp outs in the Park. Becker mentioned that we are working to develop the program, and if we are successful we will market future campouts.

Finance & Audit – Commissioner Will Tregre reported that golf, tennis and City Putt exceeded their budget in April. We received the first payment from Café Du Monde for the operation of the food truck, and it exceeded past payments from our previous tenant. The new budget will include an increase in revenue due to the addition of the Scream Park.

Friends – President Katz congratulated Commissioner Larry Dale, President of the Jefferson Parish School Board, on the passing of the millage for a teacher pay raise. Commissioner Dale reported that Friends currently has more than 5,000 members. Lark's net total to date is greater than \$197,000, which consists of contributions of \$35,400 from the Marque fund, \$18,720 from GiveNOLA Day, and \$18,900 from the Subaru raffle. Upcoming events include Toast in the Oaks on June 13, Friends Fest on July 17, and Martini Madness on September 20.

H&G Committee/Dog Park – Commissioner David Waller reported that the Park received \$135,000 from the Hat luncheon, and \$50,000 will be placed in an endowment for tree maintenance. We will complete a base line survey on all the trees in the Park, gathering information that will be useful for future tree management. The survey will also provide important information as we seek future grants. The Sundial behind the Casino building has been removed. We will work to beautify the area for future use. The Dog Park has a long list of projects.

Legal & Risk Management – No Report

NOMA – Commissioner Robert Lupo noted that he thinks that the Sculpture Garden is the finest example of an outdoor Sculpture Garden in America.

Wisner Tract – Commissioner Bill LeCorgne reported that we are in the final stages of executing the contract for the Wisner Tract. There will be a kick-off committee meeting to review the scope of the contract. Environmental consultants were added as part of the scope of work. Once the contract is executed, we will prepare an executive summary for review. The contract has been reviewed by legal counsel.

Public Relations – Commissioner Chenier Taylor reported that Thrillist named New Orleans City Park as one of the top 18 city parks in the County. Also, USA Today named City Park among the ten best things to do with kids in New Orleans. A great story about the Park was aired on WWL. NOLA .com provided coverage of the Swans in the Park. The Park is in the process of rebranding Sno-Balls in City Park.

Nominating –. No Report

Sports – No Report

Tennis – Becker mentioned that the tennis facility was name the USTA national facility of the Year.

Botanical Garden Foundation – Commissioner David Waller reported that the Botanical Garden kitchen is near completion. Work is ongoing for Magic in the Moonlight event on October. 13.

OTHER REPORTS: Katz mentioned that additional sponsorship opportunities for Storyland have been created for donors at different levels.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

NEW BUSINESS: Commissioner Billy Arnold asked about the status of the Voodoo contract negotiations. Becker said that we are actively working with our attorneys on the new contract. The new contract will be very specific, and we are hoping for successful negotiations.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:20p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, June 25, 2019 at 4 p.m.

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Denise Joubert  
Recording Secretary

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Elizabeth Sloss