

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, November 26, 2013 at 4:00 p.m. by President Bill Hoffman. The meeting was held in the City Park Administration Building, located at 1 Palm Drive, New Orleans, Louisiana 70124.

PRESENT: Commissioners Chase, Clarkson, DeBlieux, Fernandez, Fierke, Hess, Hoffman, Johnson, Katz, Laborde, LaFranca, LeGrand, Lupo, Palumbo, Payton, Pettus, Romig, Schrenk, Slone, Sloss and Tregre

ABSENT: Commissioners Bingler, Brooks, Brown, Crawford, Farnet, Giffin, Guidry, Hales, Masinter, McKay, McKeithen, Powell, Shreves and Vesich

STAFF: Bob Becker, Rob DeViney, Kevin Cox, George Parker, John Hopper, Julie LaCour and Denise Joubert

GUESTS: Douglas Meffert

A quorum was present and voting throughout the meeting.

President Hoffman welcomed and thanked everyone for coming.

The October minutes were approved.

In the Management Report, Chief Executive Officer Becker reported operating results for October were somewhat disappointing as we missed our budget by approximately \$20,000, mainly due to the threat of Tropical Storm Karen. As a result, the Fall Garden Show and several weddings were canceled this resulted in a significant loss of revenue. However, for the first third of the year we remain ahead of plan by nearly \$273,000.

The Voodoo Music Experience went very well on the Festival Grounds with the exception of the sound. The Park as well as the City Council, received numerous complaints in regards to the noise. We held a wrap up meeting with the promoter and emphasized the importance of addressing the sound issues and will follow-up with a letter putting our position in writing. Becker met with Councilwoman Guidry in regards to the complaints and feels the City will take a stronger approach related to noise at outdoor music festivals. Julie LaCour reported there was minimal damage to the grounds mainly due to dry weather. Although there were complaints relating to the noise, there were fewer parking and trash complaints. The event was successful and should be financially rewarding for the Park. Commissioner Romig asked if there is a sound clause in the contract. The contract does not have a specific sound clause but does state that Voodoo has to obtain every appropriate city permit.

No progress has been made to secure the release of State funds for the Golf and Splash Park projects.

The Civil Service Commission approved new unclassified positions for the Park. These positions will help address our staffing needs currently and in the future.

The Park received an award for “Great Places in Louisiana” sponsored by AARP and the Center for Planning Excellence. We received a check for \$1500.00. Linzey Powers wrote the application for the grant.

Included in your packet is the 1st edition of the employee newsletter since Hurricane Katrina. Also included are the dates of the board meetings scheduled in 2014.

President Hoffman reported on a great article in the University of New Orleans magazine on Becker called “Man with a Plan.”

Becker introduced Doug Meffert, Executive Director of Audubon Louisiana, gave a presentation on an Urban Bird Corridor in Couturie Forest. Mr. Meffert proposed a 60-acre bird corridor conjoined with Grow Dat Youth Farm which would provide a habitat and recreation amenities for Park patrons. Audubon Louisiana received a \$25,000 from the Selley Foundation to remove invasive species, develop trail and signage along the trail.

Committee Report:

A&E – Commissioner Edmund Schrenk updated the Board on various projects in the Park. Burk Kleinpeter completed a study on the impact of Delgado students parking in the Park and will meet to review the findings and suggestions. Discussions are ongoing with the New Orleans Museum in regards to the expansion of the Sculpture Garden.

Athletics – No Report

Golf – No Report

Development – Commissioner Liz Sloss reported Geneva Marney has been hired as Major Gift and Planning Officer for the Park. The Holiday appeal was mailed out. Ralph Brennan hosted a book signing by Kerri McCaffety. Another book signing will take place on December 5th at Morning Call. Commissioner Karen DeBlieux suggested several board members join together to sponsor a roller coaster car. DeViney received notification from FEMA that the final review of the paperwork for the roller coaster is underway. The company has begun preliminary engineering work for the new coaster. DeBlieux thanked Commissioner Katz and Palumbo for sponsoring a roller coaster car. Sloss reminded all board members to fulfill their annual pledges by the end of the year.

Finance – No Report

Special Events/CITO – Julie LaCour thanked everyone who participated in Celebration In The Oaks preview party. LaCour also thanked Commissioner Karen DeBlieux for setting up the

party. Attendance doubled for the Family Night party. President Hoffman thanked LaCour and her staff for a great job.

Horticulture and Grounds – Commissioner Andrea LeGrand reported the Committee reviewed the use of the Festival Grounds during Voodoo. Because the weekend was mostly dry, there was minimal damage to the site. The soccer fields have been rolled to remove any ruts. Committee also discussed the importance of allowing public access to most of the Big Lake area during Voodoo Festival. Volunteers from Shell Oil did a major cleanup of the edge of Bayou St. John including removal of Chinese tallow trees and planting of new cypress trees. A budget of \$10,000 has been set for new tree planting at the Festival Grounds site. Plantings will take into consideration use patterns observed during Voodoo as well as other events. The Board viewed a slide show of recent plantings throughout the Park including the area in front of Morning Call, various sites in Amusements, and areas near the entry to the Festival Grounds. The first two letters of the City Park hedge along City Park Avenue have been replanted by Vista Landscapes.

NOMA – No Report

Nominating – The Board voted unanimously to elect Susan Hess, President-Elect, Edmund Schrenk, Vice-President; Ronnie Slone, Vice-President; Karen DeBlieux, Vice-President; Larry Katz, Treasurer; and Jackie Shreves, Secretary. The Board also voted unanimously to elect Edgar Chase, Edmund Schrenk and Marjorie McKeithen to serve a second four year term. President Hoffman thanked Katz and the committee for their work.

Legal – Commissioner Steve Pettus reported work continues on the By-Laws and Articles of Incorporation.

Public Relations – Commissioner Edgar Chase reported the committee will pursue a photo contest of the Park. The last portion of the BP grant will be used for advertising out of the region for CITO.

Tennis – Commissioner Errol Laborde reported the handicap ramp should be complete within two weeks.

Friends of City Park – Commissioner Mary Johnson reported Casie Duplechain will replace Rodney Thoulion as Executive Director for Friends.

Dog Park – No Report

New Business: Councilwoman Clarkson updated the Board on the City's budget hearings.

Public comment was then invited.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, December 17, 2013 at 4:00 pm.

Denise Joubert
Recording Secretary

Jackie Shreves
Secretary