

NOCPIA  
BOARD MEETING

5/25/2021

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 25, 2021, at 4 p.m. by Jay Batt. The meeting was held in-person and via Zoom at the Pavilion of Two Sisters.

**PRESENT:** Commissioners Arata, Batt, Bordelon, Cahn, Charbonnet, Coaxum, Dale, DeBlieux, Fitzpatrick, Gardner, Giffin, Hardie, Hollis, Katz, King, LeCorgne, Lupo, Morrell, Pate, Pineda, Powell, Savoie, Sloss, Sterbcow, Taylor, Thorpe, Waller, and Worley

**ABSENT:** Commissioners Banks, Brandt, Giarrusso, Leger, McNeil, Rodriguez Spears, and Williams

**STAFF:** Cara Lambright, Rob DeViney, Keith Hemel, Casie Duplechain, and Denise Joubert

**GUESTS:** Paul Masinter, Stephanie Bell, Edmund Schrenk, and Ray Seamon

President Jay Batt called the meeting to order. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by the Board.

A quorum is present and voting throughout the meeting.

A motion was made to accept the minutes from the April 27, 2021 meeting, as circulated via email. The motion was seconded, voted on, and approved unanimously.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:** There were no public comments

In the Management Report, Chief Executive Officer Cara Lambright reported:

- She thanked the staff and the Friends of City Park for organizing two “Sip and Strolls”. The events were well attended.
- The Amusement Park is scheduled to reopen on July 2. The First Responders will be honored on opening day.
- The Park will host its annual Fourth of July celebration on July 3.
- She provided the Board with an update on the Nola Nature School. The lease will not be renewed.
- The Hazard Mitigation Grant Program project is being monitored by the P, A&E Committee. The 75 percent plan should be ready for the P, A&E Committee to review by mid-June. The plan will then be presented to the Board of Directors.
- The Park has an agreement with the New Orleans Museum of Art to provide free Park land to the Sculpture Garden; in exchange for free admission to Park visitors. During COVID we allowed the museum to charge for a limited time due to the museum being closed due to COVID. The agreement came to an end in March. However, the Museum is resisting our request to eliminate the admission fee and

return the park land to being free and accessible to the public. A discussion took place about the best strategy to handle the situation.

- A Master Plan for the Botanical Garden is being developed by the Botanical Garden Foundation. We will conduct an RFQ to assist with the design and programming.
- Despite COVID, City Park raised baseline pay to living wage of \$11.19 per hour to improve conditions for staff.
- Employee appreciation week will take place the last week of May, with a variety of activities scheduled throughout the week.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**P, A&E** – Commissioner Bill LeCorgne updated the Board on various projects.

- The CEA with the City for bond projects is still unresolved. We are working with the City to alter the capital project payment structure.
- We are trying to determine how much work we can get done on the resurfacing of Roosevelt Mall with the \$575,000 that is available.
- The old Maintenance Building has \$885,000 in funding for construction from FP&C with additional funding expected to be authorized by the State later this year.
- Work continues on the food and beverage RFP for City Putt.
- Received \$145,000 to undertake a planning study for the covered tennis courts.

**WISNER TRACT** – Commissioner LeCorgne shared the final version of the Wisner Tract Master Plan, and the Committee feels that this is the ideal vision for the North side of I-610.

LeCorgne presented Resolution 2021-06 – Adopting the Wisner Tract Vision Plan which supports converting the old east golf course to a place of passive recreation and natural resource to be made a part of the Park’s Master Plan. The design was reviewed and approved by the P, A&E Committee, and the Executive Committee. The Board unanimously adopted the Resolution.

**CITO/SPECIAL EVENTS** – No Report

**DEVELOPMENT**– Chief Development Officer, Casie Duplechain reported that we are working to secure sponsorships for Celebration in the Oaks, and Magic in the Moonlight. A volunteer service day will be held over Memorial Day weekend to assist the Maintenance Department.

**ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP** – No Report

**FINANCE & AUDIT** – Keith Hemel reported on the following:

- Received \$1.7 million in millage payments from the City.
- Golf and Tennis continue to do well.
- Wedding event deposits for April were \$290,000 compared to \$116,000 in March.
- Received our quarterly slot reimbursement of \$1.5 million from the State.
- Received our first quarter TIF payment of \$50,000 from the City.

**FRIENDS** – Stephanie Bell stated that Friend’s membership is steadily recovering following COVID 19. Memberships are currently at 4,952 with a 79% monthly renewal rate, up 12% from last year.

Bell reported:

- The Heart of the Park Hat luncheon was very successful
- Give Nola Day was held on May 4
- Friends Fest is scheduled for June 23
- Toast in the Oaks is scheduled for July 29
- Martini Madness is scheduled for September 10

**H&G/DOG PARK** – Commissioner David Waller stated that half of the funds from the Hat Luncheon will be used to maintain the Park's trees. Due to the popularity of the Greenhouse plant sales, we don't have the capability to meet demand. Working with Paul Soniat to explore if additional plants can be grown for sale on Nursery Island.

**LEGAL & MANAGEMENT** – No Report

**NOMA** – No Report

**PUBLIC RELATIONS** – No Report

**NOMINATING** – Commissioner Bryan Fitzpatrick reported that a board matrix is being created to assist the Committee in recruiting new board members and predicting future skill shortfalls. The matrix will categorize all board members' expertise, as well as their remaining tenure on the board.

**SPORTS** – No Report

**TENNIS** – No Report

**BOTANICAL GARDEN FOUNDATION** – No Report

**OTHER REPORTS:**

**NEW BUSINESS:**

The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, June 22, 2021.