

72

**City/Parish Recreation Advisory Commission
April 14, 2025 Meeting Minutes**

Attendance:

Commission:

Larry Lanclos	Judy Placer	Harold Porter	Kristopher Harrison
Patti Carter	Thaddeus Shelvin	Johnafort Bernard	

Staff:

Timothy Sensley	Todd Robertson	David Gary	Alena Fields
Nourine Lanerie			

Opening Prayer/Pledge of Allegiance:

Meeting called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Chairperson Larry Lanclos. Opened with a Prayer and Pledge of Allegiance.

Recognition of Guests/Staff Members:

Chairperson Larry Lanclos welcomes the guests in attendance: Rachel Godeaux, Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) of LCG; Elroy Broussard, District 1 City Councilman; Vincent Pierre, Mayor-President's Office; Alex Montgomery, Brown Park Athletics (BPA) Board Member; Terry Shelvin, BPA Board Member; Consuela Gaines, Voice Of The Experience; Marcus Simmons, Voice Of The Experience; Trincella Bonnet, Constituent; Brenda Andrus, BPA Board Member.

Correspondence/Announcements:

None

Approval of Monthly Reports/Previous Meeting Minutes (Action Required):

Monthly reports for February and March 2025 had been emailed. Harold Porter motions to accept the monthly reports; seconded by Judy Placer; no opposition; motion passed unanimously. Judy Placer motions to accept the previous meeting minutes as written; seconded by Harold Porter; no opposition; motion passed unanimously.

Chairperson's Report – Larry Lanclos:

Larry asks Tim to provide an update on the department.

Director's Report

Tim advises that the budget season is underway. The department has four key vacancies that need to be filled. The positions that are vacant are Parks Maintenance Manager, Parks Maintenance Supervisor, Athletic Programs Supervisor and Recreation Centers Maintenance Supervisor.

Tim advises that the Parish Proud event this past weekend at the Domingue Center, Clark Field and the Greenhouse was a success. There were over 400 volunteers that participated.

Capital Projects Update

Tim advises that the projected bid date for the Heymann Park Amphitheater is May 29, 2025. The Thomas Park tennis court project will be going out to bid soon. The Picard Park project is underway and the projected ribbon cutting date for Moore Park is mid-June. The Girard Park pool is projected to open up on May 22nd. There are still some maintenance items that need to be addressed before it can be opened. Tim adds that the cost to get it up and running was under \$20,000.

Parks Report/Athletic Programs/Youth Neighborhood Associations

Tim advises that the Request For Quotation (RFQ) will be out soon for the Parks Master Plan. This will provide an assessment of all the assets within the parks.

Tim advises that \$908,000 has been approved for the water intrusion project at the Comeaux Recreation Center. A resiliency grant in the amount of \$1.4 million was awarded for the Martin Luther King Center. Larry asks for more details on the water intrusion project at the Comeaux Recreation Center. Tim explains that there was water that was getting inside the building, causing damage to ceiling tiles and other things. Larry asks if a third party is preparing the Parks Master Plan. Tim confirms that a third party is preparing it. Johnafort asks for more details on the resiliency grant for the MLK Center. Tim explains that it will be used to equip the center to be used as resource in times of storms or emergencies. Judy advises that the vacancies raise some concerns, especially since they are key positions. Tim explains that he is working on getting them filled. He has appointed Stephen Peloquin as the provisional Athletics Programs Supervisor and Michael Manceaux as the provisional Parks Maintenance Supervisor. Judy adds that Nanette Cook wanted to thank the department for the upkeep of Girard Park. Nanette has a running club that utilizes the park and she is grateful for the great condition of the park.

Tim advises that the basketball season ended and baseball season is underway. The monthly report includes all of the participation numbers. The Cajun Sports Association (CSA) at Beaulieu Park will not be participating in the baseball season and there is a meeting tonight in Carencro regarding the Carencro Youth Sports Association (CAYSI). Judy asks for details on why CSA is not participating. Tim explains that the majority of them play at Lafayette Little League.

Judy asks for an update on the OJ Mouton Pool. Tim explains that plans are underway to bring it back online. The cost will be around \$1.3 million to get it ready. Judy asks if it will be open for the 2025 season. Tim advises that it will not be opened in 2025. It may possibly open in 2026, but more likely in 2027.

Budget

Tim advises that he has budget meetings scheduled with the Administration on April 29th and May 29th. He is looking into a leasing program for the golf course equipment. The program would include an option to purchase at the end of the lease for \$1, and will also cut back on the up-front capital expense. Some of the equipment at the courses is over 13 years old and is costing a lot to maintain.

Public Comments

Ms. Trincella Bonnet advises that she recently attended an event at the Heymann Recreation Center and the sewer system had backed up all over the place. Tim explains that the issue was fixed and the sewer system is back online. Ms. Bonnet asks for an update on the Heymann Amphitheater project. Tim explains that the project is set to go out to bid on April 29th. Ms. Bonnet asks if any changes have been made to the design. Tim explains that the size of the stage has been modified to handle larger acts. Trincella asks if any bathrooms have been added. Tim confirms that they have. Ms. Bonnet advises that when the city sold the vermilion property, the community did not find out until they heard it on the news. The community had invested over \$125,000 on the property and had installed two storage buildings on the property. Since it has been sold, the community no longer has access to the property. Ms. Bonnet adds that it is very upsetting that the community was not notified before it was sold to be used as a parking lot; she was hoping that the parking lot would have been put further down by the river. Tim advises that the parking lot could not have been put by the river since it is in a flood area. There are requirements and regulations involved that are out of anyone's control.

Ms. Bonnet advises that when her kids were young, the community had access to the baseball fields for free. The community was able to host tournaments and sell concessions to raise funds for the youth associations. According to a recent news report, that is not the case at Brown Park. Tim explains that he

met with the Brown Park Association (BPA) board members after the ribbon cutting and conveyed to them the new policy moving forward. They have first right of refusal for use of the fields and everything will be scheduled around them. The asset has changed and the dynamics on how it will be utilized has changed. When BPA wants to host a tournament, they will be able to use the fields at no charge. He is making every effort to work with them. Ms. Bonnet advises that the park was built for the community to have access to it; however, the park stays locked. Tim explains that they can notify the department and it will be unlocked for them. Tim advises that during construction, the park was locked and still had roughly \$40,000 worth of damage. If the park stays wide open, it would not be beneficial for the community. Rachel asks if the entire park is locked. Tim explains that the baseball fields and the batting cage are the only things that are locked; the rest of the park is being used by the community every day. Ms. Bonnet asks why the concession stand is not available to the youth association when they host tournaments. Tim advises that the model that was selected by LCG included a concessionaire and it was put out to bid.

Rachel Godeaux (CAO) explains that when their Administration took office, they inherited around \$17.5 million on the park without any funds allocated for the operations and maintenance of it. The challenge is in making sure that the costs are being covered and the park was given to the community in a form and fashion that they can enjoy, without having to worry about security and maintenance. The Administration is raising the bar on parks overall. They do not want one association to get preferential treatment and they are working on standardizing the processes and policies. Rachel adds that the changes will not be liked by everyone, but everyone will have to be okay with the changes. It all goes with raising the standard and expectation. Ms. Bonnet advises that the community is not happy; they feel that the park is being privatized. The community did not get what they were expecting in the park, even though their tax dollars were used for the park. These changes should have been explained before the project was done, instead of after it was completed. Rachel advises that the Administration committed to move forward with the project and give the community a nice park. Ms. Bonnet adds that the park was supposed to be a state-of-the-art facility and be able to hold big tournaments for all age groups; however, the fields are not big enough. Tim explains that the original design included more ballfield, and the park was going to be similar to St. Julien Park in Broussard. The new Administration held town hall meetings with the community to see what they wanted within the budget. There were additional amenities that were added as a result of those town hall meetings. Rachel adds that the same conversations are taking place regarding Moore Park and the changes there. Judy asks who the concessionaire for Brown Park is. Rachel advises that a Request for Proposal was advertised and Bon Temps Grill was selected. Judy asks if they were awarded for all of the parks, or just Brown and Moore. Rachel advises that the agreement is only for Brown and Moore Parks for now.

Judy asks if the new amphitheater in Youngsville has been looked at to get ideas on building the Heymann Amphitheater. Tim advises that some things have been taken into consideration within the budget and restrictions. Judy adds that it is nice to see the project finally moving along.

Councilman Broussard advises that the damage that was done at Brown Park happened when it was locked. Every park in Lafayette has been vandalized, whether it was open or locked. He does not want to keep hearing that Brown Park is locked for security purposes and to stop vandalism, as this narrative reflects badly on the community.

Larry asks if there has been any movement on the sponsorships and naming rights of fields. Tim advises that the sponsorship ordinance has passed. They are finalizing the fee structure and options for each field.

Ms. Consuela Gaines asks if there will be any designated times that the baseball fields at Brown Park will be open to the community without having to reserve them. Tim explains that the dynamics of how the asset is being utilized has changed. He would like to meet with all of the stakeholders and come up with a plan to see how the asset can be utilized to serve the community while helping LCG generate revenue to keep it

going. Ms. Gaines asks for details of the process involved in reserving a field. Tim explains that reservations are handled through the department's administrative offices.

Ms. Bonnet asks if Bon Temps Grill is in charge of the concession at all times, including when the association is hosting tournaments. Tim confirms that they do. Thaddeus asks when the contract with Bon Temps Grill expires. Tim advises that it is good for seven years. Thaddeus asks if something can be written into the contract when it renews that allows for a percentage of the sales to go back to the association, especially since they bring in the kids and Bon Temps Grill makes the money off of them. Tim advises that is not the business model we are following with Bon Temps Grill. Tim adds that Brown Park is a state-of-the-art facility and a weekend tournament could cost about \$10,000 to rent the fields. Therefore, if the BPA hosts tournaments, they would not have to pay that fee and have the potential to bring in a lot of money. Tim advises that no one can give him an answer of how much money can be brought in from concession during a tourney. Mr. Alex Montgomery explains that a two-day tournament can bring in around \$20,000 from concessions. Tim asks how much the BPA generated when they ran it. If he has that amount, then he can come up with a plan to make them whole. The goal is not to handicap the BPA; there will be changes with the new asset and the goal is to work together to advance the community and help LCG to keep the park a viable asset. Councilman Broussard advises that the association will not generate as much revenue without the concession, especially with the cost of security. The gate money covers the cost of the security and the concession usually covers the cost of the umpires.

Mr. Terry Shelvin advises that the concession stand is only a shell right now; there is no equipment in it. Tim explains that the concession stand was built by LCG; however, the equipment and goods will be provided by Bon Temps Grill. Ms. Bonnet asks if it is guaranteed that Bon Temps Grill will always be there when an event is scheduled. Tim confirms that they will be; they are making a sizable investment and will be looking to recoup their costs as soon as possible. Ms. Bonnet asks if the BPA and/or Councilman Broussard will be provided with a key for the fields at Brown Park. Rachel explains that it is the policy of LCG to not provide youth associations with keys for the parks and fields. Tim adds that there may be some associations that have keys; however, that is not the policy of the current Administration or him since he has taken over the department. The only ones that have keys are the associations who have Cooperative Endeavor Agreements with LCG.

Mr. Shelvin advises that the practice fields that the teams are using are in bad shape at Brown Park, and the new fields should be available to them. Tim explains that there is a lot misinformation out there. If the BPA needs access to the fields, they just need to schedule it with the department. Ms. Bonnet advises that only two keys are needed, one for Councilman Broussard and one for the BPA, especially if field access is needed on weekends. Tim explains that he has four recreation coordinators that are available at any time to open up the fields. Ms. Gaines asks how the scheduling will be prioritized and communicated to the public. Tim advises that the BPA will have the first right of refusal on all rentals. Rachel asks if Civic Rec is a public facing platform. Tim explains that the process is underway to make it public facing.

Mr. Shelvin asks if the concessionaire agreement is automatically renewed after seven years. Tim explains that there is an option to renew; however, the contract can be terminated by either party if it is now working out. Ms. Shelvin asks if the concessionaire has a projected idea of revenue. Tim advises that they have a business model. Mr. Shelvin asks if they are only contracted at Brown Park, or if the concessionaire has other parks as well. Tim explains that they are contracted at Brown Park and Moore Park.

Ms. Brenda Andrus asks if the concession stand could be used by the association during practices. Tim advises that they cannot, as that would violate the contract with Bon Temps Grill.

Patti asks if the same security is required for practices as well as tournaments. Tim explains that the park police has been reinstated; therefore, they will be available to work once their schedule is reworked.

Thaddeus asks what can be done for the kids. The BPA is losing kids because they do not have access to the fields. He has personally refunded 41 kids within the last two weeks. Tim advises that it is not an accurate statement. If the BPA sends in a schedule, the fields will be unlocked whenever they need. Thaddeus advises that the coordinators know the baseball schedule and should have the fields open and ready for the kids. Tim explains that the fields are not going to be open when not utilized. Thaddeus suggests that the coordinator at the Dupuis Recreation Center be able to issue a key when needed. Ms. Andrus asks if whoever opens the fields has to stay at the park the entire time. Tim advises that someone has to be on site in case anything transpires. Harold adds that Tim is looking for accountability from the association.

Divisional Presentations

Jay & Lionel Hebert Municipal Golf Course – Christopher Arceneaux

See monthly report.

Les Vieux Chenes – Todd Robertson

See monthly report.

The Wetlands Golf Course – David Gary

See monthly report.

Centers and Programs – Alena Fields

Alena advises that the April calendars are included in the monthly report. She recently had a recognition luncheon for her staff for their efforts during the shelters. The staff is continuing to cover the athletic programming on the weekends. The MLK Resilience grant of \$1.4 million is a great win to help create a self-sustaining facility during an emergency. She also received a grant for the Dupuis Recreation Center, which is used as a shelter for emergencies.

Alena advises that summer camp planning is in full swing for the camp to be held at Girard Park. She is in the process of hiring the staff. The camp will be held from June 9th through July 18th from 7:30 am to 5:30 pm and registration opens tomorrow. This camp will be run by LCG and \$125 is the cost for six weeks of camp, with breakfast and lunch served.

A senior's event was recently held at the Dupuis Center with over 200 attendees. Last weekend, Parish Proud partnered with the PARC Department to do some much-needed work at the Greenhouse, Domingue Recreation Center and Clark Field. Over 400 people volunteered and the event was a great success.

Alena advises that the centers are full, as noted on the monthly reports. Patti advises that it was brought to her attention that the MLK Center has an insect problem. Alena explains that the center was serviced by an exterminator recently to remedy the situation. It takes a lot to keep the center clean with all of the activity taking place at the center, including food services.

Committee Reports:

None

Old Business:

None

New Business:

Harold asks Tim to send out the budget hearing dates so that the commissioners can attend and help support the department. He adds that the department is often compared to other municipalities, who have much more funding. Tim agrees and advises that the department still operates on the 1961 millage.

Next Meeting – June 9, 2025 at 5:30 p.m.

Harold Porter motions to adjourn, seconded by Patti Cater; no opposition; motion passed unanimously.
Meeting adjourned at 6:41 p.m.