

*City/Parish Recreation Advisory Commission
February 10, 2025 Meeting Minutes*

Attendance:

Commission:

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

Staff:

Timothy Sensley	Todd Robertson	David Gary	Christopher Arceneaux
Alena Fields	Nourine Lanerie		

Guests:

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: Barbara Gauthier with Scott Area Team Sports (SATS), Michael Manceaux, Maintenance Supervisor in PARC; Jennifer Simms with Destiny Swim Camp; Mr. Chavis, resident of the Brown Park area; Terry Shelvin with Brown Park Athletics (BPA); Phillip Mason, Recreation Coordinator in PARC; and, Rachel Godeaux, Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) of LCG.

Correspondence/Announcements:

None.

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

Monthly reports for October, November, December 2024, and January 2025 had been emailed. Judy Placer motions to accept the monthly reports; seconded by Joseph Tidwell; no opposition; motion passed unanimously. Judy Placer motions to accept the previous meeting minutes as written; seconded by Thaddeus Shelvin; 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 115 people utilized the warming shelter at the Dupuis Recreation Center during the winter storm in January. LCG collaborated with many organizations and agencies to staff the shelter and provide services.

Capital Projects Update

Tim advises that the projected ribbon cutting date for Brown Park has been tentatively set for later this month. Security cameras have been installed and the park is looking great. The projected ribbon cutting date for Moore Park is sometime in March and the process is underway to install cameras there as well. The bid has been awarded for the Picard Park project; therefore, the project should be underway soon.

Parks Report/Athletic Programs/Youth Neighborhood Associations

Tim advises that the Parks Maintenance Division is actively working to fill vacancies. The Acadiana Campground has reopened and is running smoothly. The Girard and Fabacher ponds were stocked with rainbow trout on January 16th. The Athletics Division is busy with the basketball season and baseball

registration will be starting soon. The OJ Mouton Pool is currently being assessed to determine the cost to get it up and running. On February 6th, a company was selected to perform an assessment regarding structural issues and cost. The plan is to open the Girard pool so that it can be utilized while the Martin Luther King pool is shut down for construction. The Therapeutic Recreation Section is going well and the participation numbers are included in the monthly report.

Tim advises that an ordinance to receive sponsorships within the parks and recreation centers is up for final adoption at next week's council meeting.

Judy asks for details on the pool projects. Tim advises that the cost to reopen the Girard pool back will be around \$80,000. The OJ Mouton pool will have to be completely gutted and reconstructed.

Harold asks for more details on the sponsorships. Tim explains that he is working with a company to secure advertising. The plan is to put together a sponsorship package with the help of the commission, who will serve as overseers. Harold adds that it is a good idea to have an outside company involved in structuring the varying costs of the sponsorships. Tim explains that a logistic report was performed last year and there were about 315,000 people who went through Moore Park and around 60,000 that went through Brown Park. Companies will be more apt to buy a larger sponsorship package in a park that has more foot traffic. He is working with Angie Eckman with Adworx, who initiated the sponsorships at Youngsville and Broussard. Harold asks how the existing sponsorships will be incorporated into the new package. Tim advises that the existing sponsorships will be handled on a case by case basis and he would like to have uniformity across the board. Thaddeus asks how the sponsorship funds will be allocated. Tim explains that the sponsors will pay to have their businesses advertised on signs within the park. Thaddeus asks for clarification on how this would work for the youth associations who are trying to get sponsorships. Tim advises that his ultimate goal is to work out an agreement between the associations and LCG. Thaddeus adds that this a growing concern for the youth association at Brown Park. They were not aware that an outside company will be running the concessions and that they would not be able to charge a gate fee; this will affect the association's ability to raise funds. Tim advises that the Brown Park Association (BPA) was made aware of the concession agreement from the beginning. The decision to not charge a gate fee was not made by LCG; the decision was made by the associations at the meeting in July of 2024. Phillip Mason adds that each association can decide if they want to charge a gate fee or not. Thaddeus explains that BPA will not know if they will be playing in house for baseball/softball until all registrations are received; therefore, if they will be traveling, they will not be able to charge a gate fee. He asks for clarification on how that would work if another association is charging a gate fee and other associations are traveling to play. Thaddeus adds that the fees to pay the officials fall on the associations and are usually paid out of the gate fees. Phillip explains that LCG pays the security fees and the official fees are covered by the associations. He adds that LCG will reimburse the associations half of the officials' cost at the end of the season.

Tim introduces Rachel Godeaux, Chief Administrative Officer of LCG. Rachel shares the Administration's overall vision for the PARC Department. When this Administration took office, there were a lot of inconsistencies across the board regarding how each association was being treated and/or different standards were being applied. She asked Tim to figure out how to standardize the way all of the youth associations are handled. She would like to see consistency and standardization across the board. She also challenged Tim and the staff to look at other ways to start raising revenues. The challenge on the city side is that the PARC Department is not covering the cost for itself and funds are consistently having to be pumped into it. This is not a bad thing; however, the department should be in a much better position. She would like to see the department operate much like Broussard and Youngsville, where they are able to advertise commercial business. The Administration is looking at ways to offset the costs that are continually being incurred by the PARC Department. There are staffing issues, deferred maintenance issues and the goal is to see the parks improve overall. There is no appetite in the community for a new tax, so

we have to figure out ways to generate revenue to support our parks and have a vibrant community with top notch facilities in our parks. The only way to do that is to make sure that we are covering our costs in all aspects in regards to staffing, deferred maintenance and other items. Rachel advises that the Administration is constantly hearing that the pools need to be reopened; however, that cannot be done without the finances to back it up. They are continually looking at ways to generate revenue to so the community can have the big-ticket items that everyone wants. This is what was envisioned in the park sponsorship ordinance. The goal is not to cut the associations at their knees, it is to help support them. Harold advises that Youngsville is a new facility; the department has older facilities that require a lot of maintenance. People do not want a new tax; however, they want to be first class and look like it. Harold adds that we have the same youth and our critical mass is a lot larger and older; therefore, we have a lot of work to do. He does not want to follow Youngsville's model, as they have their own tax to support their new facility. Rachel agrees and advises that her job is to figure out how to pay the expenses and generate revenue. They are also exploring ways to fund raise. Judy thanks Rachel for coming and for the Administration's support of the parks. Judy agrees that we need to find funds in addition to what we have and use those funds wisely, as we continue to lose our kids to the other facilities. Rachel agrees and advises that she grew up playing soccer at Moore Park and now has to drive her kids to Youngsville or Broussard for soccer. Rachel explains that \$17.5 million was invested into Moore Park and we have to make sure that it does not go into deferred maintenance. A one-time capital investment was made without a plan for the operations and maintenance of it. Joseph advises that a new tax will probably not happen. He is encouraged to hear that an assessment is underway and he appreciates the Administration's efforts to support the parks. The attitude and the culture of the department has changed a lot, and that is the biggest step that could have been taken over the last year. He appreciates the staff for all of the work they have been doing. Some have been through some not so good times and have stuck with it and done a great job.

Tim advises that if the Brown Park Association wants to host a tournament, they will not be charged a fee. He would like everyone to look at the bigger picture and realize it will require giving and taking by both sides. He is willing to sit down with the Brown Park Association and come up with a plan to better provide the best quality of life for our youth.

Larry asks for an update on Moore Park. Tim advises that the ribbon cutting should be held sometime next month, depending on the weather. Larry asks if any funding has been found to replace the fence at Moore Park and when the fields will be ready to play on. Tim explains that bollards will be put up, similar to what is at Girard Park; the fields should be playable sometime in May.

Thaddeus asks if a date has been set for the ribbon cutting at Brown Park. Tim advises that March 21st has been set as the target date.

Judy advises that she recently went to the Thomas Skate Park and it looks great. She asks Tim to provide an update on the tennis courts at Thomas Park. Tim explains that the designs have been completed by Chase Architects. The project should go out to bid within the next few weeks and the project is expected to start in the early spring. Judy advises that four tennis courts are nice; however, five courts are needed for league play. Tim adds that the project includes refurbishing the other four tennis courts to give a total of eight courts at Thomas Park upon completion of the project.

Johnafort asks for an update on the Heymann Amphitheater project. Tim advises that it should be going out to bid soon and construction should begin sometime in the spring.

Judy commends the staff for their work in providing a shelter at the Dupuis Recreation Center during the recent cold weather. She also commends the Administration for the new hurricane readiness program they initiated.

Divisional Presentations

Jay & Lionel Hebert Municipal Golf Course – Christopher Arceneaux

Chris advises that the course was closed for a total of nine days in January due to the cold weather; however, the good weather in February has helped them catch up. The golf season will be busy with golf tournaments and kids' programs. Maintenance and improvement projects continue at the course and he is looking forward to the upcoming Veterans Cup, as it was a big success last year.

Les Vieux Chenes – Todd Robertson

Todd thanks Rachel for attending tonight. The morale amongst the staff is up and there is a feeling that a new day has come, and it is great to have a positive outlook on the future. The snow in January resulted in the closure of the course for a total of nine days. Even with the snow, the revenue numbers in January 2025 were better than January 2024. Todd adds that the high school golf season is underway.

The Wetlands Golf Course – David Gary

David shares an interesting fact: ten inches of snow equals one inch of rain. The snow was a nice experience and did not damage the greens too much; it actually insulated the grass. The greens are looking great again, thanks to the recent warm weather. The revenue numbers are reflective of the cold and wet weather in January; however, January of 2025 was still better than January of 2024. The average rainfall in January is about 5-1/2 inches, and January of 2024 had 11-12 inches of rain. The course is in good shape and the staff is gearing up for the busy tournament season. There are still some staff vacancies; however, the new pay raises have helped with more people applying. David adds that they hope to be fully staffed soon and that will help Thomas and the maintenance staff to get things done.

Centers and Programs – Alena Fields

Alena advises that she is so proud of her staff for the work they provided during the opening of the shelter at the Dupuis Recreation Center; they stepped up and did a great job. They created a very welcoming atmosphere for the residents. The first week of the shelter had 60 residents and the second week had 50. The Martin Luther King Holiday events also took place in January and the staff stepped up for that as well. Athletic programs are taking place on the weekends in six different recreation centers, and the staff is supporting that as well. Girard recently hosted a Cleo Parker event which showcased a dance competition and gave recognition to some historical events. They held a special dance class/meeting at Girard prior to their performance at the Heymann Performing Arts Center.

Alena advises that the new Recreation Centers Maintenance Supervisor, Drew Dogay, has started and she is so excited to have him on board. He has been a huge asset to the team and has been fixing a lot of things. His skillset is really saving the department a lot of money. Alena adds that a new Clerk III will be starting on Wednesday. Alena explains that with ten recreation centers, the staff consists of three full time recreation center coordinators and six full time janitors, who man ten recreation centers and two senior centers. Alena advises that her monthly report includes the calendar of events at all of the recreation centers and the foot traffic within each center.

Judy asks about the vacant Athletic Programs Supervisor position identified in the monthly report, as she thought the position had been filled. Tim explains that some things transpired and the position is vacant again. Judy asks how that is affecting athletics. Tim explains that the rest of the staff has stepped up and the fourth coordinator has been recommended and is going through the hiring process at HR. Judy adds that the basketball participation numbers look great; the associations total 852, with 72 total teams, excluding CSA.

Patti asks what avenues are used to advertise the open positions. Alena explains that the process is handled through Civil Service for the full-time workers. The challenge lies in the budget and positions allocated

within the manning tables. The temporary positions are filled via word of mouth. Tim advises that the advertisement is sent out through all departments within LCG. Alena adds that many people apply for positions; the issue is not in getting people to apply, the issue is that the positions are not available to fill within the budget. Rachel advises that the length of the hiring process is also a challenge. Tim adds that the position has to be officially vacated before the job can be advertised. Rachel advises that the Administration is looking at ways to revamp the hiring process. LCG is moving to a new Employee ERP system that should help tremendously and should cut out some of the paperwork. She is establishing a PPM committee to improve the overall processes. They inherited over 300 vacancies and it is challenging to fill them. Discussion follows.

Committee Reports:

None

Old Business:

None

New Business:

Election of Chairperson: Judy nominates Larry Lanclos as Chairperson, seconded by Harold Porter; no further nominations; no opposition, motion passed unanimously. Larry Lanclos is elected as the Chairperson of the City-Parish Recreation Advisory Commission for the 2025 calendar year.

Election of Vice-Chairperson: Larry nominates Harold Porter as Vice-Chairperson; seconded by Judy Placer; no further nominations; no opposition; motion passed unanimously. Harold Porter is elected as the Vice-Chairperson of the City-Parish Recreation Advisory Commission for the 2025 calendar year.

Johnafort advises that some commission appointments have expired. Larry advises that the relevant Council Members have been notified that the terms have expired. He suggests that commissioners contact their council member if they would like to be reappointed.

Public Comment

Mr. Chavis introduces himself and advises that he is a resident of the northside. He asks about the financial support for the youth to participate in sports at Brown Park. Tim advises that fee waivers are available. Mr. Chavis advises that the website does not have any information regarding the financial support. Thaddeus explains that Brown Park does not have a website; however, they recently started a Facebook page. Joseph advises that some people do not have access to online services and suggests that paper applications be made available. Mr. Chavis agrees and would like to see the fee waiver opportunity be advertised to get the word out. Tim advises that he will follow up with the Communications Department regarding the Parks & Recreation site; however, each youth association handles their own social media site. Judy asks if the fee waiver is offered through the youth association or through LCG. Tim advises that the recommendation comes from the association and LCG processes it.

Mr. Terry Shelvin advises that paper and pencil is always available at Brown Park for youth sports' sign-ups and board members are available to assist. They are going through many changes and are trying to get the online site up and running. Thaddeus adds that the board member contact information will be sent out. Johnafort suggests that they schedule regular board meetings. Mr. Shelvin advises that they do meet once a month, and more often if necessary. Thaddeus explains that a regular date is not ongoing, as it is a challenge to coordinate everyone's schedule; however, he is not a board member of BPA. Tim adds that they have access to the Dupuis Center for meetings. Councilman Elroy Broussard is the current president and the Athletic Divisions should have a full list of the BPA board members that can be sent out.

Next Meeting – April 14, 2025 at 5:30 p.m.

February 10, 2025 Minutes

Page 6

Judy Placer motions to adjourn, seconded by Harold Porter; no opposition; motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 6:35 p.m.