

*City/Parish Recreation Advisory Commission
Facilities Committee
July 8, 2024 Meeting Minutes*

Present: Joseph Tidwell, Larry Lanclos, Harold Porter, Johnafort Bernard, Raymond Mallery, Kristopher Harrison, Tim Sensley, Nourine Lanerie

Facilities Committee Chairperson Joseph Tidwell calls the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. Opened with a Prayer and Pledge of Allegiance.

Recognition of Guests/Staff Members:

Committee Chairperson Joseph Tidwell welcomes the only guest in attendance, Megan White with the Acadiana Advocate.

Correspondence/Announcements:

Joseph advises that today is Tim Sensley's fifth month as the Director of PARC.

Recreation Centers

Tim advises that the monthly report includes information on the projects and activities in the recreation and senior centers. Summer camps are ongoing at the Comeaux and Robicheaux Centers. Arts classes will be launched soon at the Greenhouse and the hiring process is in the final stages for the Senior Center Coordinator there. The participation numbers for June 2024 are also included in the report, along with the calendars for July 2024. Joseph asks if the summer camps are being outsourced, as they were last year. Tim explains that Kidcam is hosting their summer camp at Comeaux and Robicheaux; however, there were not enough participants signed up to host a summer camp at the Martin Luther King Center. Subsidies were also offered to qualified participants. Joseph asks if camp participant numbers are more or less than last year. Tim advises that the numbers are less than last year. He adds that the Girard Recreation Center was rented by Camp Calvary to host their summer camp.

Kristopher asks for details on the upcoming meeting at Brown Park. Tim explains that a public meeting will be held on July 10th at 6:00 p.m. to provide an update on the project. When the initial town hall meeting was held a few months back, the community provided input on the amenities they wanted to see within the park. The Mayor-President advised that she would host a recap meeting to share updates with the community. The meeting on July 10th will be a recap of the amenities that will be incorporated into the park, based on the budget. The commission is welcome to attend, as with all public meetings regarding the department.

Johnafort asks for an update on the Brown Park Association. Tim explains that the board has been elected; however, the officers have not yet been elected. Joseph asks if there has been any discussion regarding centralizing the youth associations. Tim advises that a meeting is tentatively scheduled with the youth associations on July 22nd to get everyone together and create uniformity across the board. This will allow for a smooth transition if kids move from one association to another. They will also discuss expectations as a whole. Joseph advises that the commission is available to assist if needed. Tim explains that each youth association will have a few members in attendance; the entire board will not be invited. Harold asks if any consideration has been given to streamlining the boards. Tim advises that the goal right now is to get some cohesiveness and uniformity across the board.

Golf Courses

Tim advises that Jay & Lionel Hebert Municipal Golf Course (Hebert) changed out the netting on the Louisiana Avenue side. The damage to the netting was received from the May storms; therefore, funding from FEMA assisted with 70% of the cost. The netting at The Wetlands is also being changed out. LVC is on the schedule, however, their netting issue is not as urgent since a ball cannot hit a road or neighborhood

as easily as at The Wetlands or Hebert. Tim advises that dirt from the Moore Park project is being delivered to Hebert to assist with the drainage issues. Tim adds that the family of Jay & Lionel Hebert have requested that the course be referred to with its given name, Jay & Lionel Hebert Municipal Golf Course.

Parks

Tim advises that the projected completed date for Brown Park is slated for the end of October. Moore Park is scheduled to be complete by the end of September, and the Thomas Skate Park should be complete by the end of August or September. Due to the concrete work at Thomas, the weather is a determining factor in the completion date. The Picard Park project is currently in the professional services stage.

Tim advises that Our Savior's Church and Love Acadiana will be doing a beautification project at Girard Park this Saturday. The project will have over 200 workers and over \$20,000 in donated products. The work will mainly be done in front of the building and around the pond.

Tim advises that the courts at Thomas have been resurfaced and we are waiting on the design for the other four courts. Ross, who is on vacation this week, is planning to apply a sealant on the concrete bathroom floors in the parks. This should eliminate the foul order. Parish Proud will also be doing a project that will involve cleaning the park restrooms. Kristopher asks if there is a way to sign up to volunteer. Tim advises that he will send out a link with that information.

Tim advises that the MLK pool enclosure project came in over bid. It is currently in the design phase and the details are being worked out.

Johnafort asks for an update on Heymann Park. Tim explains that the project is being expedited and the goal is to get on the same page with the community. Johnafort advises that he understood that additional property was purchased for parking. Tim advises that the land purchased was in a flood plain; therefore, they will have to relook at it as a parking option.

Johnafort asks for an update on the park police. Tim advises that the funds have been put into the upcoming year's budget and everything will be facilitated through the Marshal's office. The proposal is for six officers and their priority will be in the parks. The cost will be around \$650,000 to get them off the ground.

Tim advises that Ross is working with Councilman Boudreaux to schedule the groundbreaking for the Nabers Recreational Complex. Joseph advises that he is glad to hear that it is moving along, as this project has been a while in the making.

Joseph reviews the budget and asks Tim how confident he feels about staying under budget through the end of the fiscal year. Tim explains that he hopes not to have to go before the council for a budget amendment. Harold advises that he hopes the department will have to go to council for a budget amendment so that they can see how bad the department has been cut. If not, this department will continue to be the whipping child of LCG and will continue to get cut. He encourages Tim to make sure everything in the budget for this year is spent. Harold adds that if the goal is to make Lafayette a first-class city, it has to have first-class facilities. Joseph advises that we are going from one Administration to another, and the previous one had less of a vision for the parks. The current Administration seems to have a vision for the parks and that is a benefit for the community. This may be a "rehab" year in assessing the budget. There were a lot of cuts made in the last Administration. At some point the community will have to decide what to do with the parks. Tim advises that the community may not be fully aware of the current millage; they need to be informed on the need for an increase. Everybody wants something, but the question is in how to build it and maintain it. Joseph advises that there will need to be a campaign to get the word out. It will be a struggle if we don't find a funding source. Louisiana is losing population and having good green spaces will attract people and businesses. Harold adds that we have to hold the elected officials accountable; this department is the first to get cut, making it a challenge to get ahead. Kristopher requests copies of recent

budget proposals for review in preparation for the upcoming budget. He asks if there is a way to protect funds in the budget for this department. He hopes there is something in place that this commission could advocate for. Discussion follows.

Harold Porter motions to adjourn, seconded by Johnafort Bernard; no opposition; motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 6:04 p.m.