

*City/Parish Recreation Advisory Commission
June 10, 2024 Meeting Minutes*

Attendance:

Commission:

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

Staff:

Timothy Sensley 	Todd Robertson	Thomas Eschete	Christopher Arceneaux
Alena Fields	Ross Gresham	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: Megan Wyatt with The Acadiana Advocate, Trincella Bonnet, Merlin Leger and Nanette Cook.

Correspondence/Announcements:

Larry introduces and welcomes Harold Porter, the newest commission member. He was appointed by District 1 Parish Councilman Bryan Tabor. Larry asks Harold to share a little about himself. Harold advises that he moved to Lafayette in 1969. He attended UL, where he played football and ran track. Harold adds that he sold pharmaceuticals for 25 years and retired from Johnson & Johnson. He previously served on this commission for 16 years and is happy to be back.

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

Monthly reports for April and May 2024 had been emailed. Judy Placer motions to accept the monthly reports for April and May 2024; seconded by Patti Carter; no opposition; motion passed unanimously. Harold Porter motions to accept the previous meeting minutes as written; seconded by Kristopher Harrison; 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 on April 30th, he and Alena attended the LRPA day at the state capitol in Baton Rouge. They were able to share information on Lafayette hosting the annual LRPA state conference. The Brown Park Association Election was held successfully and 12 members were elected. On March 14th, the film "Resilience" was shown at the Clifton Chenier Center. It was very good and explained why people respond to certain triggers the way they do. On May 22nd, he attended the Emergency Preparedness meeting to discuss the current hurricane season. The Dupuis Center and the Heymann Performing Arts Center are used as shelters during storm events. Also, when the heat index reaches triple digits, some of the centers are opened up and used as cooling stations for the public. Tim advises that the recent storms in May impacted the golf courses and parks. Jay & Lionel Hebert Municipal Golf Course (Hebert) was hit the hardest with many uprooted trees and netting damage. A tree fell and hit the maintenance building at Les Vieux Chenes (LVC) and hindered their ability to remotely use the sprinkler system. The Wetlands received minimal tree damage and the netting was also damaged. The nets at Hebert and The Wetlands are not only cosmetic; they actually serve a safety purpose by not allowing golf balls to enter the road way.

The Governor of Louisiana has declared a state of emergency in Lafayette Parish; therefore, FEMA funds will be available for repairs. Larry asks if insurance will cover the cost of the repairs. Tim explains that there is a deductible involved in filing an insurance claim. The declaration made by the Governor will allow FEMA to pay up to 70%.

Tim advises that there are things going on in the department that he is not privy to discuss. As per the directive from his superiors, any questions related to Walter Guillory can be directed to the Mayor's office, via the Chief Administrative Officer or the Communications Department. Judy asks if anyone is able to take over Walter's duties. Tim explains that Ross is handling them along with the four recreation coordinators. They are currently wrapping up the baseball season, so it is not a busy time for Athletics. Tim advises that the process is underway to fill the Athletic Programs Supervisor position. Tim adds that they will hold a meeting in July with all of the associations to discuss the plan moving forward, and to create uniformity across the board.

Judy asks if the department will need any assistance from the commission for the upcoming Louisiana Recreation and Parks Association (LRPA) convention. Tim explains that all of the commission members are members of LRPA and he would love to have the commission participate and assist. There will be a social held on November 19th at the Hilton Garden Inn; the conference will start on November 20th and a social will be held at Rock 'n Bowl that evening. On Thursday, November 20th, the actual ceremony will take place at the Cajundome. The expenses incurred by the department will be the cost of the socials on Tuesday and Wednesday nights. LCVC contributed \$24,000 to the event and that should cover those costs. Judy asks how many people are expected to attend. Tim explains that LRPA handles the registrations; however, he is preparing for 75-100 people to attend the socials.

Capital Projects Update

Brown Park

Tim advises that the Brown Park project is going well. The anticipated completion date is late September or mid-October. They are currently working on finalizing the actual amenities within the park. There will be a small dog park and a large dog park; both will have watering and waste stations. There will also be three pavilions and an outdoor basketball court. The Administration is looking to host a public meeting with the community on July 10th, and he will share the finalized details with the commission.

Moore Park

Tim advises that the Moore Park project is going well and should be completed in September. He anticipates the project to be finalized a few weeks ahead of the Brown Park project.

Thomas Park

Tim advises that he and Ross were at Thomas Park this morning and construction on the skate park is coming along well. The four tennis courts at Thomas have been resurfaced and the process is underway to secure funding to redo the courts. There are a few issues with the water settling on the courts, so the plan is to minimize the cost while ensuring it is done the right way. Judy advises that she was at Thomas Park recently on a weekend and was impressed to see them working on the skate park on a Sunday.

Other

Tim advises that the Fabacher Field Turf project was completed two weeks ago. There was a Webb Coulee Detention project at Mouton Park that was put on hold. The Ernest Nabers Recreation Complex signage has been installed and Ross is working on the details for the ribbon cutting ceremony. Judy asks for details on the exact location of the signage. Tim explains that it is located on Mudd by the fire station.

Larry asks for an update on the reopening of the road by the Comeaux Center. Tim advises that he does not have an update.

Budget

Tim advises that he had his first budget meeting with the Administration last week. The meeting went well and he received an email last night asking him to cut \$70,000. He asked for clarification since they have already taken out \$100,000. Larry asks for details on what was reduced. Tim explains that the line item for Recreation Center Improvements was reduced to \$250,000. Judy asks for an explanation of the budget timeline. Tim explains that the budget is now in the Administration's hands. Judy advises that this department has already been drastically cut and needs to get back to where it was. The priorities should be to pay the employees more and for the department to receive the subsidy from the LCG general fund as before. Tim shares that LCG held a successful job fair on May 16th; the hope is to attract qualified people to work here. The biggest issue is to hire people at the current wages LCG is offering.

Ms. Trincella Bonnet (Guest) asks for an update on Heymann Park. Tim advises that Councilman Kenneth Boudreaux secured additional funding for the Heymann Park project. There was a meeting held on site a few months ago and the plan is to combine the initial design with the current design. The goal is to have the capability to hold national acts and they require certain specifications. The initial design did not meet those requirements, so the designs are being merged to be able to facilitate the requests of the community. Ms. Bonnet asks for clarification on the latest design and if it is available on the website. Tim explains that it did not meet Councilman Boudreaux's expectations, so it is being reworked. Judy advises that the architects came to a previous commission meeting and presented their plan. They were supposed to meet with the community, but that meeting never took place. Tim advises that when the final plan is complete, it will be available for viewing on the website. Ms. Bonnet adds that they should not finalize a design that the community does not want. Tim explains that there will be a community meeting held before the final approval. Ms. Bonnet advises that the community already gave their input; however, they did not follow their recommendations. She asks if the information from the community is still available. Tim advises that it may be available; however, he has not seen the minutes from that meeting. He will do research in advance of any further community meetings. Ms. Bonnet advises that the community has quite a few concerns regarding what will be taking place in the park. Heymann Park is historically a black park that was donated by the Heymann family. They would like to keep it mainly like it is, but the community would like to have a pool and a boat launch. Johnafort asks for details on Councilman Boudreaux's expectations of the project. Tim explains that he does not want to speak for Councilman Boudreaux; however, he does know that the stage was not big enough to facilitate a large crowd and 18 wheelers. Tim adds that he is trying to get up to speed on this project. He asks for patience as he continues to find out what was promised and what is actually documented. Ms. Bonnet advises that she conducted a number of surveys within the community and the last designs did not include restrooms close to the amphitheater. Tim explains that all of that information will be taken into consideration. Ms. Bonnet adds that the community was concerned about the mounds in the back and the drainage. Tim explains that the mounds serve a purpose with the drainage issue and people can also sit on them while attending concerts. Ms. Bonnet suggests that someone attend the next meeting to present an update and possibly share some maps. Johnafort asks for an update on the bridge from the Bayou Vermilion District into Heymann Park. Tim explains that it is a different venture, due to the specific requirements when installing a bridge, and the cost is also an issue. Johnafort agrees and advises that the priority needs to be on police enforcement if that bridge is installed. Tim adds that steps are being made to install cameras in all of the parks and they will be monitored by the Lafayette Police Department.

Judy asks for an update on the return of the Park Police. Tim explains that the proposal is to have six officers, one lieutenant and five others. The hold up right now is the cost of the six Park Police vehicles, which totals around \$200,000. When the park police were eliminated in 2020, their six vehicles were given to the Lafayette Parish Sheriff's Department, the Lafayette Police Department and the Lafayette City

Marshal. Tim advises that the officers will be hired under the Lafayette City Marshal's office; however, their first priority will be security of the parks. The hope is that post-certified officers will be hired; if not, they will have to attend the academy which is only held in August and February of each year.

Jay & Lionel Hebert Municipal Golf Course – Chris Arceneaux

Chris advises that April was a great month and the revenue numbers hit record levels; however, May was a different story with the rain and the storms. The golf course received damage from the May storms, specifically damage to the netting. Tim adds that during the month of April, the revenue generated from all through golf courses hit record levels. Golf is at the mercy of mother nature and April had great weather. When the golf courses are closed due to weather, there are still expenses incurred. Chris advises that they have rebounded from the May weather; the golf course is back in good shape and moving along with scheduled events.

Les Vieux Chenes – Todd Robertson

Todd advises that the course received tree and net damage from the May storms. As a result, the remote access for the sprinkler system was not available. The netting damage was minimal compared to the damage at Hebert. The revenue in May was down by around \$6,000 due to the rescheduling of two golf tournaments. Todd advises that beginning August 1st, all three golf courses will institute a summer golf pass for middle school and high school students. For a \$150 fee, they can play for the entire months of June, July and August. Todd adds that a greens aerification was performed in May and the golf course is in good shape. Patti asks for details on the age restrictions recently instituted at the golf courses. Todd explains that they researched age policy restrictions at various golf courses around the state, and they could not find a consistent policy regarding age. They felt that there needed to be an age restriction for the small children and infants on the golf course. For safety reasons, children ages five and under are not allowed on the golf course at any time; however, they are allowed in the club house with adult supervision. Children ages six and older are allowed on the golf course and/or driving age with adult supervision. Additionally, the age requirement to drive a golf cart is 17 with a valid driver's license. Larry asks if a sixth grader can play by himself without supervision. Todd advises that the age restriction is for spectators, not golfers. Tim adds that 12 and 13-year olds should be able to play unsupervised. Judy asks how many summer passes have been sold thus far. Todd advises that he has sold four so far.

Judy asks for an update on the junior golf camp. Chris advises that the first camp was held last week. He adds that he is working on a Veteran's Cup program in collaboration with PGA Hope. He held training at Jay & Lionel Hebert Municipal Golf Course last Monday for the event. On Tuesday, the PGA junior golf tournament was held and there were around eight participants. There will be two additional camps held in addition to the Sheriff's Junior Golf Camp.

Tim advises that is working on the report requested by the commission detailing the breakdown of revenues at the golf courses.

The Wetlands Golf Course – Thomas Eschete

Thomas advises that the golf course received 10.2 inches of rain in May. The average is 4.78 for the month of May. There were a lot of golf tournaments held during the month of May. There will be an aerification performed tomorrow at the course. Thomas adds that the main challenge right now is to keep up with the grass cutting.

Athletic Programs/Parks Maintenance – Ross Gresham

Ross advises that the month of May was challenging for parks maintenance due to the wind storms. There were some trees uprooted, so the crews have been busy with clean-up within the parks. Larry asks if outside services are hired for the tree cleanup, or if LCG provides the service. Tim explains that it is a combination of both, and the Public Works Department also assists.

Ross advises that track season recently wrapped up. There were four track meets held at Teurlings High School with an average of 150 participants per meet. The regular baseball season is wrapping up and all-stars will be starting. Ross explains that the total participants for Little League is 429, instead of 472 noted on his report. Ross adds that adult basketball regular season ended and play-offs are now underway. Judy asks if the baseball participant numbers have picked up, or if people are still migrating to Broussard and Youngsville. Ross advises that he would have to go back and look; however, they continue to lose a lot of kids to travel baseball. He does not think there is an upswing in recreation baseball.

Ross advises that some of the recreation coordinator schedules were adjusted so that they could open up the Thomas Recreation Centers on Wednesdays for pickleball from 9:00 am – 1:00 pm. The MLK pool is open on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 2 pm – 6 pm. Judy asks if the participant numbers have increased from last year. Ross advises that it is too soon to tell, as it has only been open for four days. He should have more accurate numbers next month. Judy asks if the Earl J. Chris Pool has had more swimmers. Ross explains that he does not receive that information.

Ross advises that the tennis courts at Acadian Park have been pressure washed and Mouton Park is up next.

Johnafort asks what the budgeted amount for the MLK pool enclosure was. Tim advises that there was initially \$500,000 included and \$300,000 was added due to the design. There are additional professional services costs of around \$40,000. Johnafort asks what the anticipated start date is. Tim advises that he recently met with Councilman Broussard and Jennifer Simms. The whole goal is to have the project started by the end of the year so that it will be enclosed for the next swimming season; however, the plan is tentative. There is still some additional work needed on the actual pool and that has to be taken into consideration as well.

Centers & Programs – Alena Fields

Alena advises that staffing continues to be a big concern. The senior center coordinator position is in the hiring process. She has also hired some temporary personnel, as she needs to have them to backfill areas where there are no permanent employees.

Alena advises that capital projects include Girard and Domingue Roof Repairs, Dupuis bathroom renovations, and Heymann bathroom renovations. Funds were requested for the Thomas bathrooms to be renovated in next year's budget. The ceiling tile project at Girard was a big project and has been completed, The Heymann Recreation Center hallways and entryways are being renovated and the interior paint job at Dupuis is nearing completion.

Alena advises that the recent LCG job fair was a great success and helped out with the staffing issues. The Athletics Division has assisted with staffing the morning pickleball hours at Thomas and evening pickleball is offered at no charge at Comeaux, Dupuis, Domingue, Robicheaux and Thomas. Judy advises that she is happy to see more pickleball time slots offered.

Alena advises that summer camp is in full swing. Kidcam is hosting at Comeaux and Robicheaux. Tuition assistance scholarships were secured for 102 participants. She is working with Community Development on grant opportunities for the Martin Luther King Center and funding for art programs at the senior center locations. Alena advises that there was an indoor movie day held at the Martin Luther King Center two weeks ago. Two movies were shown and food was provided for around 40 kids. A free kite fiesta was also offered at the Heymann Center. Alena adds that she continues to look at ways to offer free events for families in the community.

Alena advises that the recreation centers are hosting free spay and neuter events for the Animal Shelter. Kristopher asks for details on the event. Alena advises that all the information is included in the monthly

report. Registration is available onsite; the pets are taken offsite for the procedure and can be picked up after at the recreation center.

Alena advises that she is looking forward to the commission's involvement at the upcoming LRPA Convention.

Committee Reports:

Larry advises that the Finance Committee Meeting Minutes are included in the binders. The Committee Chairperson, Matt Hulin, is not in attendance to provide a report. Larry adds that he attended the meeting and there was a lot of discussion regarding the various financial reports. Johnafort asks if this agenda item will be tabled, as is the procedure when following the Robert Rules of Order. Larry advises that the committee reports do not have to be approved; the minutes are provided for informational purposes.

Old Business:

None

New Business:

Judy asks when the department's Council Budget Review meeting is. Tim advises that it will be held on August 13th at 9:00 a.m. in the Council Auditorium at City Hall and all commissioners are invited to attend. Kristopher asks for guidance on lobbying the council members. Tim advises that it would be helpful for the commissioners to meet with the council members before the August 13th budget review meeting. Judy asks Nanette Cook to provide some background on the council budget hearings, as she was a previous councilmember. Ms. Cook advises that adjustments to the budget can be made up until the final approval of the budget in September. Judy encourages all commission members to attend the department's budget review meeting. She adds that it is good for the Council Members to see support for the department. Ms. Cook advises that it is also helpful for members of the community to attend and speak about their specific interests. Patti asks Tim to update the commission on any budget cuts he intends to make. Tim explains that he is hopeful that the FEMA funds for the May storms can be used for the netting at the golf courses; if so, he will not have to cut anything from the budget.

Larry thanks everyone for their hard work in making the community a better place.

Facilities Committee Meeting: July 8, 2024, at 5:30 p.m.

Next Commission Meeting: August 12, 2024, at 5:30 p.m.

Johnafort Bernard motions to adjourn, seconded by Judy Placer; no opposition; motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 6:47 p.m.