

**RECREATION AND PARK COMMISSION
FOR THE PARISH OF EAST BATON ROUGE**
Regular Meeting – 5:00 p.m.
BREC Administration Building
6201 Florida Boulevard
Baton Rouge, Louisiana
Commission Minutes
January 28, 2025

Call to Order

A regular meeting of the Recreation and Park Commission for the Parish of East Baton Rouge (BREC) was held at BREC's Administrative Offices on January 28, 2025. The meeting was called to order at 5:02 p.m. by Chairman Kenneth Pointer. Commissioner Dwayne Rogers offered the invocation. Commissioner Rossie Washington, Jr. led the pledge of allegiance. Roll was taken and a quorum of Commissioners was present including Kenneth Pointer, Chair; Donna Collins Lewis, Vice Chair; Dwayne Rogers, Treasurer; Nathan Rust; Lon Vicknair; and Rossie Washington, Jr were present. Commissioner Collis Temple III arrived at 5:11 pm. Commissioners Clairice Gordon and Michael Polito were absent. Staff members present were Corey K. Wilson, Superintendent; Reed Richard, Assistant Superintendent of System Planning; Aneatra Boykin, Chief Administrative Officer; Andrea Roberts, Chief Operating Officer; Don Johnson, Chief Financial Officer; Chad Brewer, Katrina Coots-Ward, Jim Fleshman, Angela Harms, Darlene Jarvis, Mike Raby and Chris Marchiafava. Murphy Foster, legal counsel; Christina Melton, Executive Director of the Knock Knock Children's Museum; and former Commissioner Trina Hall were also in attendance. The rest of the audience consisted of other BREC staff, sign language interpreters, and the public.

Public Comment

The Chairman announced that public comment would be allowed prior to a vote being taken on any agenda action item and explained the process to be observed.

Adoption of Minutes

Chairman Pointer read the following resolution:

Resolved, That the reading of the minutes of the Recreation and Park Commission Meetings of December 18, 2024, be dispensed with, and that they be approved as written.

Motion to approve by Mr. Washington

Second by Mr. Rogers

Unanimously approved

Consent Calendar

Resolved, That the Commission approve the routine Personnel Transactions from December 4, 2024 to January 6, 2025.

Motion by Mr. Washington

Second by Mr. Rogers

Unanimously approved

Presentations

Chairman Pointer recognized Christina Melton, Executive Director of Knock Knock Children's Museum, who gave a presentation highlighting their programs, events, and partnerships. Afterwards, Mr. Washington commented favorably about the Museum and encouraged everyone to visit.

The Commission viewed a brief video highlighting various upcoming events throughout the parish during the month of February.

Reports of Officers and Standing Committees

Chairman Pointer recognized Superintendent Wilson to provide the Superintendent's report. Superintendent Wilson welcomed new Commissioners; Collins Temple III and Lon Vicknair and offered them the opportunity to comment. They each commented on the Knock Knock presentation and the importance of the museum to the community.

Superintendent Wilson stated that there was one item under Administrative Matters. He then read the following resolution:

Resolved, That the Commission approve the Second Amended Cooperative Endeavor Agreement with the Knock Knock Children's Museum, Inc., as presented. Authorize the Superintendent to execute the necessary documents, pending final review.

Motion by Ms. Lewis

Second by Mr. Washington

Unanimously approved

Superintendent Wilson presented Ms. Melton with a certificate in grateful recognition of Knock Knock Children's Museum's support and commitment to BREC's mission and thanked them for their partnership.

Under Communications, Superintendent Wilson reviewed the December 2024 activity report. He spoke about the recent Louisiana Park and Recreation Association (LRPA) Conference and noted the BREC staff serving in a leadership capacity with LRPA as follows: District 3 Chair Tonya Smith, Legislative Chair Andrea Roberts, and President Elect Katrina Coots-Ward. The Superintendent also congratulated Katrina Coots-Ward on receiving the LRPA Carroll Breeden Fellowship Award. The award recognizes professional activism, leadership, and dedication in advancing recreation and parks in Louisiana. Superintendent Wilson told the Commission about the Let It Sneaux event at Perkins Road Park. He stated that the announcement of the name of the new jaguar cub at the Zoo as Lacumba III was recently made at the Southern University Board of Supervisors meeting. The Superintendent noted that BREC recently held a Volunteer Gala to honor the dedicated volunteers who help BREC in providing various programs and events throughout the community.

Superintendent Wilson spoke about the recent winter weather event. He invited RaHarold Lawson, Director of Park Operations, to speak on the impact to the parks affected by the extreme low temperatures and snow. Mr. Lawson stated that both the damage and financial impact were minimal.

The Superintendent asked for a moment of silence to recognize the passing of a long-time BREC employee, Jesse Townsend. A moment of silence was observed.

The Human Resources Advisory Committee routine transactions were approved on the consent calendar.

Chairman Pointer recognized Mr. Washington for the Selection of Professionals Committee report. Mr. Washington stated that there were seven items on the agenda for approval that had previously been discussed in the workshop held on January 13, 2025 and also in the Selection of Professionals Committee meeting that immediately preceded the Commission meeting.

The Chairman recognized Stan Prutz, Chairman of the Greater Baton Rouge State Fair Foundation, to speak on the item related to Airline Highway Park. He had questions and expressed concerns about the upcoming construction at Airline Highway Park and the potential hardship this may cause for parking for the Greater Baton Rouge State Fair.

Superintendent Wilson spoke about the development of Airline Highway Park as a community park included in the Imagine Your Parks 2 Strategic Plan. He went on to describe the amenities that would be included on the site. The Superintendent told about the recent meetings that BREC had with representatives from the fair and BREC's willingness to delay construction from the August/ September start date to November 1 after the state fair is over. The Superintendent stated that BREC would continue to work with the state fair representatives to find a solution. He suggested that they submit any additional questions in writing and that BREC would respond in writing. Mr. Rogers asked if there was any legal commitment related to the land acquisition requiring BREC to continue making the site available for the state fair. The Superintendent explained that there was an initial three-year commitment in 1986 allowing the state fair to use the property but no commitment beyond that.

Mr. Rust asked about the level of engagement with the state fair officials in 2020 when planning for the community park was taking place. The Superintendent stated that there had been engagement with all the user groups that utilize Airline Highway Park for various activities including the state fair. Mr. Rust encouraged the Superintendent to continue to work with the State Fair Foundation.

Mr. Washington paused taking up the committee items to honor former Commissioner Trina Hall. The Superintendent and Chairman presented her with a plaque in recognition of her service from April 2021 to January 2025. Superintendent Wilson personally thanked her the guidance and direction she provided to him and the organization as the first Commissioner who had extensive financial expertise in government accounting which she shared to help make BREC better financial stewards of taxpayer dollars.

Ms. Hall expressed her gratitude for the opportunity to serve the community with the staff and fellow Commissioners for the last almost four years.

Chairman Pointer recognized Mr. Washington to continue with the Selection of Professionals Committee items. Mr. Washington then asked Reed Richard, Assistant Superintendent of System Planning, to read the following resolutions:

Resolved, That the Commission approve a contract with Fusion Architects, APC to provide the schematic design, design development, construction documents, bidding, and construction administration for the FEMA/HMGP-funded Airline Safe Room Project. Interim fee, based on fee curve of construction costs of \$11,958,731.00, for \$971,542 plus Not-to-Exceed \$50,000 for reimbursable expenses. Fee will be adjusted for actual Construction Costs after project is bid and at the end of construction.

Resolved, That the Commission approve a contract with Tipton Associates APAC, to provide the schematic design, design development, construction documents, bidding, and construction administration for the FEMA/HMGP funded Memorial Safe Room Project. Interim fee, based on fee curve of construction costs of \$12,564,078. for \$1,017,638 plus Not-to-Exceed \$60,000 for reimbursable expenses. Fee will be adjusted for actual Construction Costs after project is bid and at the end of construction.

Resolved, That the Commission approve a contract with CSRS, to provide engineering services including topographic surveys, for the design of a two-lane road of approximately 2,700 LF, traffic impact study, utility relocation coordination, traffic signal design at Lavey Lane, wetland permitting and wetland mitigation costs for a not-to-exceed (NTE) fee of \$475,000. This new entry drive segment is part of the original Greenwood master plan and is needed for traffic alleviation within the Park and Zoo.

Resolved, That the Commission approve Amendment No. 2 to Contract 2023000330 with All South Engineers for the Highland Tennis Courts and Lighting Project in the amount of \$54,167 for engineering services that include design, plans and construction administration for the removal and replacement of four tennis courts including post-tensioned slabs, new cushioned surfacing and striping, site work, drainage, USTA LED lighting and fencing. The original Contract amount was \$54,629 based on BREC's Fee Curve and the original budget of \$545,000. Amendment No. 1 in the amount of \$4,510 was for additional topographic survey work (outside of basic services for fee curve). The new contract total with Amendment No. 2 is \$113,306 and is the result of a Fee Curve adjustment for the actual construction bid amount of \$1,146,500. Amendment No. 2 is 99% higher than the original fee.

Resolved, That the Commission approve Amendment No. 1 to Contract 2023000018 with Duplantis Design Group Engineers for the Louisiana Watershed Initiative-funded Cypress Bayou Green Infrastructure Project at Greenwood Park in the amount of \$93,000. Additional services include the design for the addition of a large, reinforced turf overflow parking area, additional tree surveys for areas to be incorporated as an island within the lake expansion areas, the design and incorporation of a new pedestrian bridge and associated grading design, and the value engineering of new lakeview shelter. The current contract amount is \$1,042,953 and the new total with amendment No. 1 is \$1,135,953.

Resolved, That the Commission approve Amendment No. 1 to Contract 2023000342 with Waggoner/Sigma Engineers for the design, engineering and construction administration of three large clear span steel bridges in Scotlandville Parkway in the amount of \$32,000. Additional services include the requirements for additional geotechnical surveys and additional engineering design for bridge foundations and abutment walls. The current contract amount is \$130,000 and the new total with amendment No. 1 is \$162,000.

Resolved, That the Commission approve Amendment No. 8 to Contract No. 2020-112 with Sasaki Associates, the prime design professional for Phase 1 of the Greenwood Park and Baton Rouge Zoo Design and Construction project, for a not-to-exceed (NTE) amount of \$341,600 for a new Zoo Ambassador Animal Building, originally included in the Master Plan and Phase 1 design, but removed from the project scope due to the overall cost of construction. The scope of this additional architectural design includes program verification and scoping, stakeholder meetings, collaboration with Zoo and Planning and Engineering staff for developing a detailed program for all building spaces; schematic design; design development; construction documents; permitting and bidding; construction administration and renderings and drawings for capital campaign purposes for the Baton Rouge Zoo Foundation. The current Zoo/Greenwood Park/Dumas Golf Course Contract is \$6,719,303 and the new total with Amendment No. 8 is \$7,060,903. (This building is required for AZA Accreditation and will be designed to be well integrated with the new Entry Building and a future Kids Discovery Area.)

Motion by Ms. Lewis

Second by Mr. Washington

Unanimously approved

Reports of Special Committees

None

Special Orders

None

Unfinished Business and General Orders

None

New Business

None

Adjournment

Mr. Washington made a motion to adjourn, Ms. Lewis seconded, and Chairman Pointer adjourned the meeting at 6.17 p.m. without objection.

Corey K. Wilson, Superintendent
and Ex-Officio Secretary

Kenneth Pointer, Chairman