

**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
March 27, 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 March 27, 2025. The meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m. by Chairwoman Donna Collins Lewis, who then offered the invocation. Commissioner Rossie Washington, Jr. led the Pledge of Allegiance. Roll was taken and a quorum of Commissioners was present, including Donna Collins Lewis, Chair; Clarice Gordon, Vice Chair; Kenneth Pointer, Treasurer; Mike Polito; Dwayne Rogers; Nathan Rust; Lon Vicknair; and Rossie Washington, Jr. were present. Commissioner Collis Temple III arrived at 5:09 pm. 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, Jim Fleshman, Angela Harms, Darlene Jarvis, RaHarold Lawson, Mike Raby, Ryan Reed, Chris Marchiafava and Ebony Allen. Murphy Foster, legal counsel; Rhonda Ruffino, Executive Director of Friends of the Baton Rouge Zoo; and Carl Stages, Executive Director of BREC Foundation, were also in attendance. The rest of the audience consisted of other BREC staff, sign language interpreters, media, and the public.

Public Comment

The Chair 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

Chairwoman Lewis read the following resolution:
Resolved, That the reading of the minutes of the Recreation and Park Commission Meeting of February 27, 2025, be dispensed with, and that they be approved as written.
Motion to approve by Ms. Gordon
Second by Mr. Pointer
Unanimously approved

Consent Calendar

Resolved, That the Commission approve the routine Personnel Transactions from February 18, 2025, to March 11, 2025.
Motion by Mr. Pointer
Second by Ms. Gordon
Unanimously approved

Presentations

Superintendent Wilson recognized three employees who have given five years or more of service thanking them for their dedication, sacrifice and excellent performance:

5 Years
Amy Northrop
Dr. Brian Watkins

10 Years
Palmer Proctor

Chief Administrative Officer Aneatra Boykin recognized Chris Marchiafava for her incredible legacy she leaves behind as she retires after 25 years of service. Ms. Boykin spoke highly of Ms. Marchiafava's work ethic and deep love for BREC. The Commission, executive staff, and the public gave a standing ovation as Ms. Marchiafava received her retirement award, presented to her by Superintendent Wilson.

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

Reports of Officers and Standing Committees

Superintendent Wilson stated that there were two items under Administrative Matters. He explained that the first item was the acceptance of the annual report to the Commission. The Superintendent detailed that the annual report consists of goals set and achieved for 2024, identified by each department as it relates to the system-wide master plan. He then read the following resolution:

Resolved, That the Commission accept the 2024 Annual Report.

Motion to approve the resolution by Mr. Pointer

Second by Mr. Rogers

Unanimously approved

The next item was regarding the signature authority for the new Treasurer. Mr. Temple made a motion to approve the following resolution from Hancock Whitney Bank and authorize the signatures of the officers, Donna Collins Lewis, Chair; Kenneth M. Pointer, Treasurer; and Superintendent Corey K. Wilson:

**RESOLUTION OF A STATE OR LOCAL GOVERNMENT OPERATING UNDER
AUTHORITY OF AN ELECTED/APPOINTED GOVERNING OFFICIAL**

Hancock Whitney Bank

Name: BREC

Address: 6201 FLORIDA BLVD

City, State and ZIP: BATON ROUGE, LA 70806

We, the undersigned, certify that: we are the Chairman and Treasurer of the above-named State or Local Government (hereinafter referred to as the "Governing Authority") duly created, organized, and operating under the Constitution and Laws of the State of LOUISIANA, Federal Employer ID Number 72 - * * * * *. In negotiating checks, drafts, electronic transfer, or other negotiable instruments drawn on, or made payable to, said Governing Authority and endorsed in said name by myself as the duly elected officer or by those authorized by me below, I agree and certify that:

B. To be resolved that:

- (1) The Financial Institution named above is designated as a depository for the funds of the Governing Authority;
- (2) This resolution shall continue to have effect until express written notice of its recession, modification, or cancellation has been received and recorded by this Financial Institution;

- (3) All transactions, if any, with respect to any deposits, withdrawals, rediscounts and borrowings by or on behalf of this Governing Authority with this Financial Institution prior to the adoption of this resolution are hereby ratified, approved and confirmed.
- (4) Any of the persons named below, so long as they act in a representative capacity as agents of the Governing Authority, are authorized to make any and all contracts, agreements, stipulations and orders which they may deem advisable and necessary to open an Account(s) with the Financial Institution and for the effective exercise of powers over said account(s) for the transacting of all business concerning funds deposited in, moneys borrowed from, or other business transacted by and between this Governing Authority and said Financial Institution and; to endorse checks and orders for the payment of moneys and withdrawal of funds on deposit with this Financial Institution, subject to any restriction(s) stated below. The Governing Authority agrees to, shall be bound by, and otherwise liable for, the terms and conditions of all such contracts, agreements, stipulations and orders. It shall be the responsibility of the Governing Authority to provide written notice to this Financial Institution should the authority of any of the agents it has so authorized to transact business on its behalf have been terminated. This Financial Institution shall incur no liability for acting in good faith upon the representations of said agents until such notice is properly given;
- (5) Any and all prior resolutions adopted by this governing authority and certified to this Financial Institution as governing the operation of the Governing Authority's account(s), are in full force and effect, unless supplemented or modified by this authorization;
- (6) The Governing Authority hereby agrees to the terms and conditions of any account agreement, properly opened by any authorized representative of the Governing Authority and authorizes the Financial Institution named above, at any time, to charge the Governing Authority for all checks, drafts, or other orders for the payment of moneys that are drawn on the Financial Institution;

Each person named below (name and title) is authorized to exercise the powers granted herein on all accounts opened under this Agreement and accompanying Master Signature Card on behalf of the Governing Authority:

Corey K. Wilson - Superintendent

Kenneth Pointer - Treasurer

Donna Collins Lewis - Chair

I further certify that the Governing Authority has, and at the time of adoption of this resolution did have, full power and lawful authority to adopt the foregoing resolution(s) and to confer the powers granted to the person(s) named herein;

IN WITNESS WHEREOF. We have hereunto affixed our signatures of _____(date).

Donna Collins-Lewis	Chair	Signature	Date
Kenneth Pointer	Treasurer	Signature	Date

The motion was unanimously approved.

Under Communications, Superintendent Wilson reviewed the February 2025 activity report noting a 6% decrease in attendance when compared to 2023 that was mainly weather related. He mentioned that Golf is anticipating that last year's March numbers will be exceeded.

He pointed out that the Zoo continues to see success after the completion of its improvements. He gave an update on BREC's ability to identify the number of visitors of the parks, highlighting PlacerAI, a platform that partners with several apps, which allows visitors to be counted based on cellphone usage across all 175 parks. He provided insight on how PlacerAI has helped BREC quantify the amount of people who frequent the parks, noting that in 2024, before using PlacerAI, the total number counted was 1.8 million people. PlacerAI was able to detect that BREC, in fact, served seven million people in 2024, with Burbank Park being the most frequented park and Independence Community Park being a close second.

Superintendent Wilson mentioned the Gardere Initiative, led by Dr. Harrison, and their valued partnership with over 122 Gardere residents visiting the Zoo on March 5th. He also acknowledged two BREC staff who are 2025 NRPA Director School graduates, Dr. RaHarold Lawson and Katrina Coots-Ward.

Superintendent Wilson displayed his March meetings and engagements with various organizations and public officials to give updates on BREC's 10-year plan that was approved by the Commission last year. Superintendent Wilson noted that Andrea Roberts, Chief Operating Officer, participated in "The Power of Partnerships" presentation, an LMA event hosted at the Kenner Planetarium.

Superintendent Wilson offered a reminder that the ribbon cutting for the new Nature Station at Frenchtown Conservation Area will be held on Friday, April 25th.

Superintendent Wilson announced that he has decided not to seek a third extension or renewal of his contract, and instead will separate from the Agency when his contract expires on January 31, 2026. He mentioned that he is making this announcement three months in advance of the six-month notice required in his contract to provide the Commission sufficient time to search for and hire the agency's seventh superintendent. He confirmed that in addition to onboarding the new superintendent, his focus will be completing the 2023 and 2024 audits bringing the Agency into compliance with state law, implementation of the 10-year *Imagine Your Parks 3* plan, and the 3-year strategic plan. He said that he is proud of the accomplishments BREC has achieved in his tenure, including; reaccreditation in 2019, navigating COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, defeating Senate Bill 205 in 2021, winning the agency's third Gold Medal as the best park system in the country in 2022, hosting the U.S. Youth Soccer Regional Tournament at Burbank Park in 2023, winning the Southeastern Museum first place program award for *And We Went* in 2023. He mentioned that he is most proud of 2024 regaining the Zoo's accreditation, the completion of a 10-year system masterplan, his induction into the American Academy of Park and Recreation Administrators, BREC's celebration of over 50 million dollars in investments in improvements at Greenwood Community Park, and the community voted in favor for both tax renewals, last November. He concluded his announcement by thanking the Commission and employees for their support and expressed his gratitude for the opportunity to serve as Superintendent.

Standing Committee Reports

Chairwoman Lewis recognized Mr. Pointer for the Finance report. Mr. Pointer introduced to Don Johnson, Chief Financial Officer, to present the action items. Under Budget Status Report, Mr. Johnson reviewed the first item and read the following resolution:

Resolved, That the Commission accept the unaudited monthly Budget Status Report for the month ending and fiscal year-to-date period ending December 31, 2024, as presented.

Motion by Mr. Washington

Second by Mr. Temple

Approved by unanimous consent

Mr. Johnson reviewed the next item and read the following resolution:

Resolved, That the Commission accept the unaudited monthly Budget Status Report for the month ending and fiscal year-to-date period ending February 28, 2025, as presented.

Motion by Mr. Washington

Second by Mr. Vicknair

Unanimously approved

Under Contracts and Bids, Mr. Johnson reviewed the first item and read the following resolution:

Resolved, That the Commission approve awarding SB 1845 Alsen Park Site Improvements to the lowest responsive bidder, Hill Construction, LLC, for the base bid of \$329,435.00 and one alternate for \$47,326.00 and concurrently accept a deductive change order to reduce the project cost by \$34,620.00 for a total contact price of \$342,141.00.

Motion by Ms. Rust

Second by Mr. Temple

Approved by unanimous consent

Mr. Johnson reviewed the next item and read the following resolution:

Resolved, That the Commission approve utilizing Louisiana State Contract No. 4400028996 with Trane US Inc. to furnish and install an Aaon Model Number RN-040-2-0-E609-000 40-ton HVAC unit at Baker Recreation Center Gym for a total contract amount of \$194,206.52, as described on Trane Quote Number K6-mtEAAS-25-001.

Motion by Mr. Rust

Second by Mr. Temple

Unanimously approved

The Golf Advisory Committee was unable hold the scheduled meeting due to lack of quorum.

The Chair noted that the Human Resources Advisory Committee action item for the routine transactions was on the Consent Calendar.

Chairwoman Lewis recognized Mr. Washington for the Recreation Advisory Committee report. Mr. Washington stated that there was no action necessary.

The Chair stated that the Zoo Advisory Committee was information only, no action necessary.

Selection of Professionals

The Chair recognized Mr. Washington for the Selection of Professionals Committee report. Mr. Washington stated there were two items on the agenda. He recognized Mr. Johnson to present those items. Mr. Johnson reviewed the first item and read the following resolution:

Resolved, That the Commission approve a contract for professional accounting services to be provided by LaPorte CPAs and Business Advisors (LaPorte) in supplementing the Finance Department's existing personnel shortages with highly specialized accountants in the field of governmental accounting. The accounting services being provided will ensure proper internal controls and reviews, including but not limited to, schedules, reconciliations, and postings of journal entries to trial balances. The cost estimate for these accounting services shall not exceed \$75,000 and shall cover a period up to six months and/or up to 300 work hours. Authorize the superintendent to execute appropriate documents.

Motion by Mr. Washington
Second by Mr. Rogers
Approved by unanimous consent

Mr. Johnson reviewed the next item and read the following resolution:

Resolved, That the Commission approve the license renewal with Aurigo Software Technologies, Inc. for Aurigo Masterworks Cloud for an additional five (5) years at annual license costs as follows:

Year 1: \$43,117.80

Year 2: \$44,411.33

Year 3: \$45,743.67

Year 4: \$47,115.98

Year 5: \$48,529.46

Motion by Mr. Pointer

Second by Mr. Washington

Unanimously approved

Reports of Special Committees

None

Special Orders

Chairwoman Lewis, then took up the appointments to standing advisory committees as follows:

Clarice Gordon

Renee Verma

Tine Neams

Austin Lindsay

Tim Gaines

André Prejean

Wanda Hargroder

Communications & I.T.

Finance

Golf

Planning & Park Resources

Recreation & Special Facilities

Zoo

Donna Collins Lewis

Terrence Lockett

Matthew Robinson III

Martin Taylor

Kenneth Wright

James Anderson

Shatonda Chandler

Communications & Information Systems

Finance

Human Resources

Planning & Park Resources

Recreation

Zoo

Kenneth Pointer

Kirt Guerin

Bruce Walker

Michael Thomas

Melvin Sylvester

Kenrick Nixon

Anthony Lewis

Frederick Boutté

Communications & Information Systems

Finance

Golf

Human Resources

Planning & Park Resources

Recreation

Zoo

Dwayne Rogers

Joe Toranto

Communications & I.T.

Linton Naquin
Adam Albright
Andrée Talbert
Lindsey McMorris
Ajay McClendon
Laurie Gilpin

Finance
Golf
Human Resources
Planning & Park Resources
Recreation
Zoo

Nathan Rust
Adrian Owen Jones
Barbee Pipes
Scott Wilfong
Mike Bird
Carlton Jones
Sean Root
Crystal Ellis

Communications & Information Systems
Finance
Golf
Human Resources
Planning & Park Resources
Recreation
Zoo

Rossie Washington, Jr.
Tony King
Devin Harrison
Matthew Valliere
A. Brock Avery
Kenneth Holmes
Reggie Abraham

Communications & Information Systems
Golf
Human Resources
Planning & Park Resources
Recreation
Zoo

Darnell Waites, Mayor of Baker
Trinard Franklin
Ashley Lathan
Angela Canady
Amelia Georgetown
Carl Stages
Gerald Collins
John Brown

Communications & I.T.
Finance
Golf
Human Resources
Planning & Park Resources
Recreation & Special Facilities
Zoo

Motion to approve the committee appointments by Mr. Pointer
Second by Mr. Washington
Approved by unanimous consent

Unfinished Business and General Orders

None

New Business

The Chair recognized Mr. Johnson for the item under New Business. Mr. Johnson read the following resolution:

Resolved, That the Commission accept the 2022 Audit.
Motion to approve t by Mr. Pointer
Second by Mr. Washington
Approved by unanimous consent

Adjournment

Chairwoman Lewis adjourned the meeting at 6:02 p.m. without objection.

Corey K. Wilson, Superintendent
and Ex-Officio Secretary

Donna Collins Lewis, Chairwoman