

**MINUTES OF
LAKEFRONT MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY
RECREATION/SUBDIVISION COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD ON TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 2020**

PRESENT: Chair Dawn Hebert
Vice Chair Robert Romero
Commissioner Stanley Brien
Commissioner Esmond Carr
Commissioner Stanley Cohn

STAFF: Louis Capo – Executive Director
Madison Bonaventure – Assistant to the Executive Director
Sarion Granger – Human Resources Analyst
Daniel Hill – Director of Engineering & Operations
Chandra Chaffin – Grants Administrator

PUBLIC: Ann Duffy – Lake Oaks Association President
Drew Regan – 7317 W. Roadway
Freddy Yoder – Lakeview Resident
Nancy Lytle – 5523 Milne Blvd.
Jim Moriarty – Louisiana Hibernian Charity
James McKay – Louisiana Hibernian Charity
Wes Eustis – Property Owner
Phalon Cornist – Resident
Kayne Stewart – Roy Johnson, Jr. Memorial
Roy Arrigo – Lakefront Management Authority Board Commissioner
Tim Jackson – Lakeview Resident
Roy Arrigo – Appearing as Lakeview Resident
Wilma Heaton – Appearing as Lakeview Resident

The Recreation/Subdivision Committee of the Lakefront Management Authority met on Tuesday, February 11, 2020, in the Lakefront Airport Terminal Building, 2nd Floor Conference Center, 6001 Stars and Stripes Blvd., New Orleans, Louisiana.

Chair Hebert called the meeting to order at 4:45 p.m.

Opening Comments: None

Motion to Adopt Agenda:

A motion was offered by Commissioner Cohn, seconded by Commissioner Carr, and unanimously adopted, to adopt the agenda.

Motion to Approve Minutes:

A motion was offered by Commissioner Cohn, seconded by Commissioner Carr, and unanimously adopted, to approve the minutes of December 10, 2019.

Director's Report:

Daniel Hill, Director of Engineering & Operations, reported that an additional fire extinguisher has been placed at the Lake Vista Community Center (LVCC). All fire extinguishers are up-to-date and functional at LVCC, and a contractor will replace some broken fire alarm pull boxes.

Mr. Hill reported that the Lakefront Management Authority's maintenance team began repairing the Lake Terrace subdivision sign. He explained that the old acrylic letters on the sign cannot be removed without breaking the welded areas of the sign. Mr. Hill stated that it will cost \$1,200.00 to replace the acrylic letters, in the original design, on both sides. He announced that the maintenance crew will continue to clean and repaint the sign while the signage contractor determines a cost for mounting the sign.

Mr. Hill explained that the Authority's maintenance crew cannot troubleshoot the electrical system, powered by variable frequency drives (VFDs), at the Mardi Gras Fountain because the system requires complex equipment and software that the Authority doesn't own. Mr. Hill said this requires the Authority to hire an outside contractor to repair and maintain the fountain. Mr. Hill reported that the Authority's maintenance crew drained the fountain to examine the pumps to the best of their ability earlier that day. Commissioner Carr inquired about the vendor that supplied the Variable Frequency Drives (VFDs) that are in the Mardi Gras Fountain. Mr. Hill responded that he contacted the vendor that supplied the VFDs, and the earliest availability for maintenance is Monday, February 18, 2020.

Louis Capo, Executive Director, reported that the Authority hasn't received any ad valorem taxes from the city yet. He noted that the Authority would typically see these funds clear from the city at this point. He reported that this year's grass cutting costs should be about \$530,000, and the projected cost for next fiscal year will be increased to \$650,000.00 to improve service to Lakeshore Drive and parks. He stated that the trash disposal service costs will also increase to improve service, and the projected cost for next fiscal year will be \$225,000.00. Chair Hebert questioned the cost increase. Director Capo responded that the cost will increase because of an increase in frequency of collection and the additional services on the weekend due to the high volume of visitors. Mr. Hill also noted that the trash disposal service contract expires on June 30, 2020. He reported that the Authority shows a \$75,000 loss when revenue is applied over

expenses. Director Capo announced that the budget must be passed by the Board Meeting on March 26, 2020.

Old Business:

1) **Discussion and recommendation for approval of the design plans for the Roy Johnson, Jr. Memorial:**

Kayne Stewart introduced the design for the Roy Johnson, Jr. Memorial to the Board previously. She explained that the drinking fountain for the memorial required a more reliable water source and thus needs to be relocated. She stated that the Mardi Gras Fountain has a more readily available water source.

Ms. Stewart commented that all the funds for the Memorial's construction have been donated by private benefactors.

Since the location changed after the project's initial approval, it was recommended by the Authority's legal counsel, Gerard Metzger, that a new resolution be passed by the Board to approve the new location. He recommended that the Committee offer a motion to recommend the approval of the Memorial's new location to the Board.

- A motion was offered by Commissioner Cohn, seconded by Commissioner Carr, and abstained by Commissioner Romero, to recommend the approval of the relocation of the construction site of the Roy Johnson, Jr. Memorial Drinking Fountain and Bench to the Board.

New Business:

1) **Update on the Hibernian Memorial Park and discussion of temporary art.**

Jim Moriarty, of the Louisiana Hibernian Charity, explained that Louisiana Hibernian Charity is pursuing funds to construct capital improvements, of which some have been already designed, to the Hibernian Memorial Park through possible grants and private benefactors including a \$250,000 grant from the Irish government. He stated that the temporary sculptures were chosen to enhance the area permitted to the Memorial for a period of only two years.

Chair Hebert inquired about the content of placards placed in front of the art. Mr. Moriarty said that the placards have been removed and will be updated with content about the art and artist only.

Commissioner Cohn asked how much time is needed to obtain funding for the project. Mr. Moriarty could not offer a firm time frame, but he noted that the group was granted an extension to construct the park for an additional year and a half.

Commissioner Romero asked who granted the extension. Mr. Metzger and Mr. Moriarty responded that the Authority granted the extension. Vice Chair Romero complimented the design Mr. Moriarty presented to the Committee. Vice Chair Romero then inquired about the review process for the artwork. Mr. Moriarty responded that a committee within their organization reviewed the artwork before it was placed in the Hibernian Memorial Park.

Vice Chair Romero requested clarification on how the land may be used pursuant to the permit the Authority issued because while he liked the prospective design of the Memorial, he had concerns about the placement of the artwork. Mr. Metzger explained that the permit requirements state that improvements done at the Hibernian Memorial Park must be pre-approved by the Authority's Board. He stated that the permit was extended for an additional ten years, and they have additional time to improve the park.

Public Comments:

Nancy Lytle, longtime Lakeview resident and community activist, expressed her disappointment with the lack of planning for the Hibernian Memorial Park project. She said she originally saw the artwork on the New Basin Canal when she drove down Pontchartrain Boulevard at 3:00 AM to view the new lights that had been installed along the New Basin Canal. She stated that the Lakeview residents weren't notified of the decision to place the artwork at the Memorial. Commissioner Cohn asked if Ms. Lytle had any objections to the proposed project. Ms. Lytle responded that any artwork or structure that was placed at the area without a permit from the Lakefront Management Authority's Board should be removed. She felt that there would be a precedent set that would allow other illicit developments along the New Basin Canal such as condominiums. Commissioner Cohn asked her if she or anyone she knows in the community objects to the Memorial itself. She responded no and reiterated that the group should have gotten permission.

Freddy Yoder, Lakeview resident and community activist, expressed his disapproval of the project due to the extensive planning he believes is required and believes did not transpire. He stated that the original design plans were altered without approval. He explained that the project didn't receive final acceptance before the artwork was placed at the Memorial. Mr. Yoder requested that the Lakefront Management Authority's Board exercise good judgement and request removal of the artwork. Mr. Yoder expressed that he believes in the mission of the Hibernian Memorial Park. He sympathized with their having issues raising funds, but said he depends on the board to do what he believes to be the right thing. He believes that they have no plan and wishes to appeal to the better judgement of the Board.

Roy Arrigo, appearing as a Lakeview resident, stated that the artwork isn't an enhancement to the monument and that the artwork detracts from the reverence of the cross at the Hibernian Memorial Park. He commented that he liked the proposed architectural design of the park. He suggested that the artwork should be removed

because it is unauthorized. Commissioner Arrigo requested that the Hibernians reflect on the impact of their decisions and consider removing the artwork.

Wilma Heaton, appearing as a Lakeview resident, said she understood the different perspectives about the situation; however, she felt it was important to remember the history behind the New Basin Canal site and what the park project meant to the history of the community. She stated that in 1830 American businessmen decided to build a shipping canal. She stated that the businessmen selected Irishmen to dig the canal because they were cheaper than contracted slaves in those days. Many of them dropped dead of malaria and yellow fever, and about 30,000 men were buried on site. Ms. Heaton recalled beginning work on preserving the New Basin Canal in 1988 when she appealed to the federal government for a bike path grant, and it has always been her interest in preserving that area for the public's enjoyment. She stated that the artwork is an opportunity to support local artists and is a temporary endeavor. She said that ultimately the purpose of the artwork was to draw attention to the project and the Celtic cross. She explained that the Hibernians didn't mean any ill-will, and they wrote a letter in May to ask for assistance, but the Authority did not reconnect. She said that she felt like it was a shame that the Irish government needed to intervene in aiding in this project because she felt it is a topic that the community should invest in due to its significance.

Tim Jackson, Lakeview resident, stated that the Hibernian Memorial Park site and seeing the Memorial's plans come to fruition was very important to his family because his great-great grandfather died there and is possibly buried there. He added that the Counsel General of the Irish government traveled to New Orleans to dedicate the artwork to the Hibernian Memorial Park, and he believes that it would be disrespectful to remove the artwork.

James McKay, Louisiana Hibernian Charity Board Member, apologized for not requesting approval from the Board to place the artwork at the Memorial. He stated while they were in error, they were amateurs in taking on this endeavor and assumed all parties knew about the artwork being placed at the Hibernian Memorial Park. He assured the Committee that their group would have approached the Board if they had known that was the proper protocol, and they know what they should do now moving forward. It was his desire that the artwork is not removed.

Chair Hebert suggested that there may be other options to draw attention to the Memorial such as a high-quality sign. Mr. Moriarty stated that they did not have the funds to sink into additional signage.

James McKay said that he understood that rules are rules, but that each case should be evaluated especially since this project is meant to have a positive impact on the community. Vice Chair Romero reiterated that he loved the idea of the park but reiterated that the Committee needed to protect their agreement.

Commissioner Cohn stated that that protocol may not have been followed during this project. He suggested that the Authority schedule a special meeting or defer to discuss this issue in more detail.

Commissioner Carr wanted to learn more about the sculptures and to see a plan to have something on paper, such as detailed schematics, to approve.

A motion was offered by Commissioner Cohn, seconded by Commissioner Carr, and unanimously adopted, for the Committee of Recreation/Subdivision to continue the discussion at a later date.

Announcement of next Recreation/Subdivision Committee Meeting:

1) Tuesday, March 17, 2020 – 4:30 P.M.

Adjourn:

A motion was offered by Vice Chair Romero, seconded by Commissioner Carr, and unanimously adopted, to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 6:17 PM.