

**MINUTES OF
LAKEFRONT MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY
RECREATION/SUBDIVISION SPECIAL COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD ON TUESDAY, JUNE 16, 2020**

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

STAFF: Louis Capo – Executive Director
Madison Bonaventure – Assistant to the Executive Director
Daniel Hill – Director of Engineering & Operations

PUBLIC: Jay Baudier – Lake Vista Resident
Stephen Caplinger – Lake Vista Resident
Phalon Cornist – Lake Oaks Civic Association
Ann Duffy – Lake Oaks Neighborhood Resident
R. C. Fullmer–Self
Kevin Gray – Employment Development Services, Inc. (EDS, Inc.)
Wilma Heaton– LMA Chair
Brian Hope – Lakeshore Property Owners Association
Cyril Laan – Lake Vista Resident
Van Robichaux – Vice President of Lake Oaks Civics Association
Monte Shalett – Lake Vista Property Owners’ Association

The Recreation/Subdivision Committee of the Lakefront Management Authority met on Tuesday, June 16, 2020, in the Lakefront Airport Terminal Building, 2nd Floor Conference Center, 6001 Stars and Stripes Blvd., New Orleans, Louisiana.

Chair Romero called the meeting to order at 4:35 p.m. and led in the pledge of allegiance.

Opening Comments:

Chair Romero said that the current fiscal year was coming to an end, and thus new contracts must be ratified. He said that the items before them were in relation to grass cutting, and it was important that the Committee advance these items to the Board so there would not be a disruption in service.

Motion to Adopt Agenda:

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

Motion to Approve Minutes:

A motion was offered by Commissioner Carr, seconded by Commissioner Hebert, and unanimously adopted, to approve the minutes from the February 11, 2020 meeting.

A motion was offered by Commissioner Cohn, seconded by Commissioner Brien, and unanimously adopted, to approve the minutes from the June 9, 2020 special meeting.

Public Comments:

Mr. Van Robichaux introduced himself as the Vice President of the Lake Oaks Civic Association and said he has served on their board for approximately 20 years. He said he was appearing to the Committee due to the issues he has experienced with the alleyways. Mr. Robichaux said that before Hurricane Katrina, the Orleans Levee District used to maintain the alleyways, which are access points for electrical and phone service. He said after Hurricane Katrina, the alleyway maintenance stopped. Mr. Robichaux said he thought it was not feasible for the homeowners to clean the alleyways because there is not an access point to the alleyways from their properties. Mr. Robichaux said that residents have cleaned and trimmed the alleyways in recent memory, but he wanted the Committee to consider adding the additional service of cleaning the alleyways into the Authority's budget.

Louis Capo, Executive Director, responded that he appreciated what Mr. Robichaux had to say; however, he said that the post-Katrina a legal opinion was circulated indicating that it was the homeowners who should be maintaining the alleyways. He said in the past, the Levee Board conducted maintenance activities which were above the requirements of its obligations. He said due to the lack of funding and staff after Hurricane Katrina, many of these services were reduced after examination of true obligations.

Mr. Robichaux said that he believes the issue will rise to litigation if it is not remedied.

Commissioner Cohn said to Mr. Robichaux had not argued that the homeowners do not have a legal obligation to maintain the alleyways. Commissioner Cohn suggested that the homeowners collaborate to share the cost. Commissioner Cohn said it was not appropriate for the Authority to maintain the alleyways if the homeowners have a legal duty to do so themselves.

Vice Chair Hebert asked if the neighborhood association collected dues. Mr. Robichaux said yes, but not every resident pays. Vice Chair Hebert suggested that they use dues to remedy the issue.

Mr. Robichaux said that the residents do not have an issue using their funds to remedy the issue, but he thinks it is a waste of money if the Authority does not maintain the alleyways. He said he wanted assistance from the Authority.

Chair Romero said that if the Authority is not obligated to maintain the alleys, they will not do it. He said if they are required, they will do it.

Ann Duffy introduced herself to the Committee as a resident of Lake Oaks. Mrs. Duffy passed out a letter to the Committee dated 1997 that was sent to Mr. Max Hearn, former Director of the Orleans Levee District, stating that the Levee Board historically cut the alleys.

Commissioner Wilma Heaton, Chair of the Authority's Board, suggested that the Legal Committee discuss the issue and write a letter to the Attorney General's office to get an opinion on who is responsible for the maintenance of the alleyways.

Phalon Cornist introduced himself as the President of the Lake Oaks Civic Association. Mr. Cornist said he hosted an event to clean up the alleyways with Lake Oaks residents, but attendance overall was poor. Mr. Cornist said he had also gotten volunteers from St. Augustine High School, but they were unable to complete the project. Mr. Cornist pointed out that about 40% of Lake Oaks residents are elderly so they cannot do the work themselves. He said that in addition to maintenance issues, criminals hide in the overgrown alleyways as well.

Cyril Laan, Lake Vista Resident, said he thought the legal issue had already been addressed and that homeowners are expected to maintain the alleys.

Monte Shallet, Lake Vista Resident, said that a deed from the original sale of the property may clear up any confusion as to who is responsible as it is explicit in such documents relating to the properties in Lake Vista.

Chair Romero said he would like to defer the discussion about the alleyways until the July meeting.

Mr. Laan said he was appearing before the Committee to discuss the enforcement of noise and speeding on Lakeshore Drive. Mr. Laan said there is signage along Lakeshore Drive relating to noise ordinance rules, but he said the rules are not being enforced. Mr. Laan said he felt like the lakefront should be accessible for all, but laws must be abided by. Mr. Laan said he feels like someone needs to reach out to the Orleans Levee District Police Department (OLDPD) to remind them to enforce the rules.

Vice Chair Hebert said she agreed with Mr. Laan, and she said she felt there should be more enforcement on Lakeshore Drive.

Chair Romero said that he would be interested in learning about ways to calm traffic on Lakeshore Drive.

Commissioner Heaton said she is employed by the Flood Protection Authority (FPA), and she wanted to remind the public that the OLDPD is under the jurisdiction of the FPA, not the LMA. She said that she could forward along Mr. Laan's concerns to the OLDPD Superintendent of Police with his permission. Mr. Laan said he contacted Superintendent Kerry Najolia in the past with success.

Jay Baudier, a Lake Vista resident, introduced himself to the Board. Mr. Baudier said that he witnessed multiple traffic infractions and unsafe driving approaching and on Lakeshore Drive.

Brian Hope introduced himself to the Committee as the Interim President of the Lakeshore Property Owners' Association. Mr. Hope expressed concern about the trash and litter on Lakeshore Drive. Mr. Hope said that trash was on the levee as well. Mr. Hope also expressed concerns about dangerous traffic. Mr. Hope said he feels that he believes the lakefront is an asset for all and proposed a plan of access to Lakeshore Drive as a compromise to drivers and recreationists on foot or bike. He said if the north side of Lakeshore Drive were closed, it would allow for traffic to run east and west and would open additional room for recreationists.

Vice Chair Hebert said that there have been more concrete areas added over the years for recreational use. Commissioner Heaton said she would suggest a traffic study be done for Lakeshore Drive by the Flood Protection Authority since there is more attendance due to the recreation-conducive improvements that have been made over the years.

Monte Shalett said he was representing himself but indicated he was on the board of the Lake Vista Property Owners' Association. Mr. Shalett said he saw an uptick in attendance of Lakeshore Drive when the city entered Phase 2 of reopening. Mr. Shalett said he was concerned about public safety and loss of life due to unsafe traffic conditions.

Stephen Caplinger, a Lake Vista resident and landscape architect, said he was there to address the litter issue on Lakeshore Drive. Mr. Caplinger said that he would suggest adding a domed top to the trash cans to prevent birds from strewing trash around. Mr. Caplinger complimented the sanitation crew for their hard work.

Vice Chair Hebert asked about the frequency of trash pick up services. Mr. Capo said EDS, Inc. picks up trash daily.

Commissioner Carr asked if there was a special trash pickup before Tropical Storm Cristobal. Director Capo said that the maintenance team did go out to ensure there was no large, hazardous debris.

Commissioner Heaton said she received reports of the poor condition of the lakefront, and on the same day of the reports she witnessed EDS, Inc. working diligently to clean up the lakefront. Commissioner Heaton suggested that the Committee explore all options for enforcing littering consequences.

Kevin Gray, of EDS, Inc., introduced himself to the Committee. He explained that EDS, Inc. contracts with ARC Services to employ those with developmental disabilities. He said that the trash volume has ballooned. He said their team picked up 360 bags of trash in one day. Mr. Gray said his team has experienced staffing issues due to the COVID-19 crisis because many of their employees are in a vulnerable population who are safest at home, and his team is doing everything they can to move forward despite the present challenges.

Commissioner Carr thanked Mr. Gray and complimented him on his team's job on cleaning up the lakefront each day.

Director Capo said additional trash cans would be purchased as well.

New Business:

1) Motion to recommend acceptance of low quote by H&O Investments, LLC in the total amount of \$47,983.92 for Maintenance Mowing Services for New Basin Canal Park and Orleans Marina

Commissioner Carr asked if the grass cutting services for the New Basin Canal included the Hibernian Memorial Park. Director Capo said that the Ancient Order of the Hibernians of Louisiana, Inc. are responsible for the grass cutting. Commissioner Carr recommended that the LMA furnish the Ancient Order of the Hibernians of Louisiana, Inc. with the grass cutting schedule so the length of grass could remain consistent.

A motion was offered by Commissioner Cohn, seconded by Vice Chair Hebert, and unanimously approved, to recommend acceptance of low quote by H&O Investments, LLC in the total amount of \$47,983.92 for Maintenance Mowing Services for New Basin Canal Park and Orleans Marina.

2) Motion to recommend acceptance of low quote by H&O Investments, LLC in the total amount of \$128,128.32 for Maintenance Mowing Services for Lakefront Subdivisions

A motion was offered by Commissioner Cohn, seconded by Commissioner Carr, and unanimously approved, to recommend acceptance of low quote by H&O Investments, LLC in the total amount of \$128,128.32 for Maintenance Mowing Services for Lakefront Subdivisions.

3) Update on Lakeshore Drive closures and litter issues

Chair Romero agreed that the Committee needed to explore options to enforce littering.

Commissioner Heaton said it is possible that a special ordinance may be able to be ratified.

Vice Chair Hebert wanted to address the closure of Lakeshore Drive. She said she did not understand why shelter parking bays were closed since Phase 2 allows for more than 10 people in a group to gather. She said she is still inquiring about these details from the Flood Protection Authority. She said that she did not see any large crowds gathering on the lakefront.

Director Capo said that the LMA is not taking shelter reservations.

Vice Chair Hebert said she noticed that in Phase 1 there were many people gathered at the Bonnabel Boat Launch. Chair Romero said that Jefferson Parish did have looser restrictions than Orleans Parish at that time. Vice Chair Hebert reiterated that she thought that the

lakefront should be more easily accessible to all.

Announcement of next Regular Recreation/Subdivision Committee Meeting:

1) Tuesday, July 14, 2020– 4:30 P.M.

Adjourn:

A motion was offered by Commissioner Cohn, seconded by Commissioner Carr, and unanimously adopted, to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 6:20 P.M.