

**MINUTES OF
LAKEFRONT MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY
REGULAR MEETING OF THE RECREATION/SUBDIVISION COMMITTEE
HELD ON TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 9, 2022**

PRESENT: Vice-Chair Stanley Brien
Commissioner Patricia Meadowcroft
Commissioner Dawn Hebert

ABSENT: Chair Esmond Carr
Commissioner Robert Lupo

STAFF: Louis Capo – Executive Director
Vanessa McKee – Assistant to the Executive Director

ALSO

PRESENT: Gerard G. Metzger – Legal Counsel to the LMA
Commissioner Wilma Heaton
Al Pappalardo
Ashley Haspel – LTPOA President
Ann Duffy – Lake Oaks Resident
John Skinner – Lake Oaks Resident
Patricia Fullmer – Lake Vista Resident
Dennis Pons
Michael Boudreaux
Rashawn Higgins – Times-Picayune
Eva Washington – NOEM
Alexcar Short – NOEM
Mr. Ackel – Lake Area Resident
Tangee Wall – Lake Terrace Resident
Frank McStravick – Lake Terrace Resident
Phalon Cornist LOCA President

The Recreation/Subdivision Committee of the Lakefront Management Authority met on Tuesday, November 9, 2022, at the New Orleans Lakefront Airport at 6001 Stars and Stripes Blvd., New Orleans, LA 70126.

I. Call to Order

Vice-Chair Brien called the meeting to order at 4:40 P.M.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

Vice-Chair Brien led in the pledge of allegiance.

III. Roll Call

Director Capo called the roll; three commissioners were present, and a quorum was present.

IV. Opening Comments: NONE

V. Motion to Adopt Agenda:

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

VI. Director's Report:

Director Louis Capo briefed the board and the public on the discrepancy of information that Mr. Ricci, attorney for the Ponchartrain beach Foundation, had not received the lease draft. Mr. Jeff Dye was out of the country on October 31st when he emailed the lease to the attorney for The Ponchartrain Beach Foundation. It was determined that Mr. Ricci's email did not recognize the foreign IP address, therefore, blocking the email. The confusion has been resolved and Mr. Ricci now has the lease in hand.

Gerry Metzger added that everyone else on the email transmission received the email except Mr. Ricci.

VII. Public Comments:

Vice-Chair Brien called for public comments and asked that everyone stick to the 2-minute limit.

Patricia Fullmer reported on the widespread damage that has been done to their tree environment on the west side of Lake Vista where gas line work was done incorrectly by Cimarron, who was one of two subcontracted companies by Entergy. She submitted a report to Paul Caboche that detailed the work in the area where the gas lines were trenched instead of pulled up which caused the damage to the trees. Mr. Caboche contacted Entergy who promised to take the necessary corrective action. However, she added that they were in their last month of work on a three-year job, and the trees are significantly damaged.

Mrs. Fullmer also reported she spoke to Terrance Rush, an Entergy supervisor for Cimarron, who said that he had not heard from anyone at LMA regarding where the work needs to be done. The contractors put in faulty sidewalks that have either cracked or collapsed throughout the neighborhood. They understand that are contractually obligated to do the repairs but need assistance identifying the areas where the work is needed. She asked for assistance to determine who will be the designee to identify the areas that need work done.

Adam Gulino replied that his understanding is that Entergy should be responsible for identifying the areas that need to be restored. They should video survey the property before work begins to be able to restore the area to its original standing. He was not opposed to identifying the areas; however, it is extremely labor-intensive for our small staff to physically walk the parks and neighborhoods to determine where their work is less than satisfactory.

Commissioner Meadowcroft requested that the neighborhood residents could work together in Lake Vista to identify the areas needing work and put it on a map to give to Entergy to complete their obligated remediation.

Mrs. Fullmer closed with a reminder from last month's meeting that LMA wanted to do work on the oak trees in the parks and made note of her previous request not to send unskilled workers into their parks to work on the trees. Since then, she has identified a lot of work that could be done in-house by LMA. It would not require power tools to cut anything. Whoppers, rakes, and small tools to trim succors. She expressed that they could not afford the arborist to do this work so it would be much appreciated if LMA would take on this task. She expressed that she would be willing to walk the parks to show what needs to be done.

Mr. Capo noted for Mrs. Fullmer that LMA is working with a very limited staff of only three maintenance workers who are currently inundated with ongoing infrastructure and electrical issues. We're trying to hire new maintenance workers who don't show up for interviews. We are even willing to try temp services to no avail. This is the reason that we requested a priority list from the subdivisions to prioritize and organize tasks.

Ann Duffy commented on a handout that she submitted to the board for the record. She pointed out that she is also a professional park planner had been hired to tell us how this could be a better experience for the beach participants.

Mike Boudreaux, Lake Terrace resident. Expressed concern about not having heard about how the PBF plans to address crime prevention, security, safety, and trash control. He also inquired about the cost and the terms of the lease questioning the imbalance of their budget and how funds are spent.

Dennis Pons, a Lake Terrace resident, expressed concern about the Ponchartrain Beach Foundation's lease and would like to see how it addresses the issues of subcontracting bands with loud music and other noise pollution to the residents. He is not a proponent of nightly events with alcohol, loud music, and other noise pollution.

Frank McStravick, a Lake Terrace resident, expressed his opposition to the current Ponchartrain Beach proposal. He's concerned that the residents aren't getting satisfactory answers to any of their questions such as funding sources, grants applications, parking, and traffic issues. He referenced an article "A Dream Come True" by WDSU's digital team which was published exactly one year ago. He addressed the board with questions about information in the article.

Commissioner Meadowcroft explained that the article is not about us. She explained that we know that there is infrastructure money being distributed but not through the LMA. UNO serves as a flow-through where the funds are distributed, and Mr. Dufrechou is on that board.

Mr. McStravick expressed concern about how the PBF plans to come up with \$30 million and asked if they plan to access this stream of money coming in on a five-year plan to acquire their funds for the beach project.

Mr. Capo stated that Mr. Williams will be addressing questions at the end of the public comment period.

Ashley Haspel, President of Lake Terrace spoke on clearing her name regarding a discrepancy of misinformation that has been deiminated to the residents. She played two audio files. The first audio referenced Mr. Ricci's statement to seek information directly from them. The second file referenced Mr. Williams which referenced possible parking possibilities to utilize a newly built parking lot for the football stadium the UNO Tech center.

Ms. Haspel also commented on the idea of a priority list of each neighborhood Her top three items remain the same, the lights and the sign.

Adam Gulino reported that we will have the quote on the lights on November 21st. He will call CT Trainor to find out an installation date on the sign. The sign is ready to go up, but they are behind schedule on the installation.

Phalon Cornist, President of Lake Oaks Civic Association, also mentioned the lights at the church are out next to the police station. The area is pitch black when they come out of their meetings.

He explained that he had a meeting with Ms. Haspel and Mr. Caboche to come up with a time frame to have these meetings with you all. He explained that their big issue, for the record, is the easements.

Mr. Capo stated that we could meet on a quarterly basis.

Mr. Cornist spoke about the meeting with the Ponchartrain Beach Foundation's presentation by Van Robicheaux and expressed that most of the neighborhood residents did not like the presentation. They felt like their questions regarding parking, neighborhood security concerns, crime, and traffic reports were not answered.

Mr. Cornist expressed that he would like to have a meeting with all of the neighborhoods to address the concerns and unanswered questions. He also asked when a good time would be to start holding the meetings.

Mr. Capo said that we could begin the quarterly meetings once the presidents have met to discuss and agree on their priorities.

Ray Landeche president of the Lake Shore neighborhood. He thanked Mr. Gulino for trimming the hazardous trees on Canal Blvd. He began to talk about the challenges that came from road work on the New Basin Canal and Mr. Capo advised him that this is a subject that should be discussed with SLFPA-E. Mr. Landeche thanked the Lake Terrace group for their support to stop the commercialization of shelters numbers one and two.

Mr. Ackel, a Lake Terrace resident, expressed his concerns with PBF's ongoing uncertainty regarding answers to questions regarding parking, traffic, crime, trash, and other issues.

Guy Williams, Ponchartrain Beach Foundation (PBF), addressed some of the following concerns of the public:

- PBF has been busy meeting with the City of New Orleans (CNO), a preliminary meeting with UNO, and the churches and associations in the circle. The objective is to continue to hear concerns to see how we should move forward with addressing them. We met with the city and got a very good response to address the traffic, speeding, and stunt cars on the weekends.
- He explained that there is some confusion in the challenges they face as a non-profit that raises money to complete a project versus a for-profit company like Disney which already has money to complete their projects.
- **Funding:** He explained that they're asking for an opportunity to apply for funding for this project. No funds have been received by PBF or LMA for this project. We will apply for federal funding that's where the money will come from, once we receive the confected lease.
- **The Lease:** The lease, which is still in negotiation between the attorneys, must be confected before we can apply for a grant to fund the project. There is a trigger in the lease which states that if funding is not approved then the lease dissolves.
- **Timing:** Because we are seeking federal funding, three to five years would be the reasonable time frame to have activity on the beach.

- **Detailed Security Plan:** We don't know what the security plan will look like yet. We don't know if there will be one entrance or three entrances. When we apply for the federal funding, it will dictate a lot of what we do. The security plan will also be dependent on how many entrances we have. The lease obligates us to have a satisfactory security plan in place that LMA will approve. We cannot address and develop a security plan that is three or four years in the future.
- **Trash:** We know for sure that the area around the beach will be cleaner than it is now. From studies as far back as the world fair show that clean areas beget other clean areas. We will have adequate trash receptacles in place.
- **Parking:** there have been numerous discussions regarding the parking piece for the Beach which is still unresolved. Clearly the best parking is the closest parking. There is no agreement with UNO at this time. They are interested in assisting with parking but, again, they have not committed. The skybridge was not our idea. We will continue to work on the parking, there are many ideas under consideration but no resolution yet.

Mr. Williams closed in summary by saying they are just a group coming to people with good fundamental ideas to reopen the Ponchartrain Beach. **We cannot apply for federal funds until we have a lease in hand that outlines what needs to be done, we cannot negotiate the any of the plans you've been asking about like parking, security, traffic, and crime.**

He explained that people have talked about revenue, one good thing that happens if this we get the \$30 million, is that part of the funds includes administrative fee that would flow to LMA which would help address some of the other issues that LMA faces.

To the question of how it could be so expensive, the engineers have found that there will be major expenses incurred to correct major underwater safety issues.

Mrs. Duffy had questions surrounding a huge pile of sand that was sold to the beach for \$50,000 several years ago and wanted to know who paid for the sand since it didn't come from federal funding.

Commissioner Meadowcroft explained, in detail that back then the sand was sent to the Ponchartrain Basin Foundation who did a fundraiser at the lighthouse to sell buckets of sand which were bought by private donations that raised \$50,000.

Commissioner Meadowcroft further explained that they have since changed their name from The Ponchartrain Basin Foundation to now The Ponchartrain Conservancy. A feasibility study was done, and we discovered that this was outside of their Mission Statement. Also, we didn't have the money back then that it would take to run a beach, nor did we have a business plan. When the lease expired, and we gave up the beach and hence, this group, the Ponchartrain Beach Foundation, has since gotten involved with the efforts to bring back the beach. Mr. Dufrechou is not involved with the Ponchartrain Conservancy.

Mr. Williams stated that Mr. Dufrechou also is not affiliated with the Ponchartrain Beach Foundation board. He added that The Ponchartrain Conservancy will continue to test the water at the Eco Park.

Commissioner Meadowcroft explained the importance of the Ponchartrain Conservancy maintaining the right to continue to test the lake waters.

Mr. McStravick stated that understanding that your will get your money from a federal grant, has the PBF pinpointed exactly where the money will come from and when is the deadline for the grant application.

Mr. Williams stated that they have not pinpointed where the money will come from, and he does not know the deadline date. The lease will say if we don't get the money, the lease will go away. There is a rush as it relates to there being 49 other states who can apply for the money. However, we cannot apply for the grant funding until we have a lease in hand.

VIII. Old Business

1. Project Status Update

Adam Gulino, Director of Operations and Engineering reported on the following:

- **St. John Park lighting** we will receive the quotes for the lighting on November 21st.
- **Alleyway quotes** we now have a PO to start work.

Gerry Metzger added that we are currently working with the Artist to erect the statue in the park.

Commissioner Hebert asked for clarification where there were several line items that reference tree trimmings.

Mr. Gulino stated that it should be changed from parks to nuisance locations. He referenced Mr. Landeche's statement about having tree trimming on Canal Blvd. We are short handed but we continue to assess problematic areas.

Commissioner Hebert stated that she will send the engineer a link to a grant for trash cans, specifically ones with lids. She then asked for the status on the bus shelters at Lake Vista and building new shelters on Lake Shore Drive (reiterating that they want them to resemble the existing shelters).

Mr. Gulino stated that unfortunately the cans still do not have lids.

Mr. Capo stated we have started the design on the shelters. We also put in Capital Outlay for next year also. Those will look like a pavilion. We are still in the planning stages with the shelters.

IX. New Business: - NONE

X. Announcement of next Recreation/Subdivision Committee Meeting:

1) Tuesday, December 6, 2022– 4:30 P.M.

X. Adjourn:

Vice-Chair Brien called to adjourn the meeting.

A motion was offered by Commissioner Hebert, seconded by Commissioner Meadowcroft, and unanimously adopted, to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 6:06 PM.