

**MINUTES OF
LAKEFRONT MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY
REGULAR MEETING OF THE RECREATION/SUBDIVISION COMMITTEE
HELD ON TUESDAY, JULY 19, 2022**

PRESENT: Chair Esmond Carr
Vice-Chair Stanley Brien (Arrived at 4:47 PM)
Commissioner Patricia Meadowcroft
Commissioner Dawn Hebert

STAFF: Louis Capo – Executive Director
Vanessa McKee – Assistant to the Executive Director
Winifred Christopher – Airport Manager

ALSO

PRESENT: Gerry Metzger – LMA Legal Counsel
Jeff Dye – LMA Legal Counsel
Al Pappalardo – Real Estate
Dana Brown – Presenter for Ponchartrain Beach Foundation
Guy Williams – Gulf Coast Bank/Ponchartrain Beach Foundation (PBF)
Patrick Daugherty – Kuppermann
Anne Duffy – Lake Oaks Resident
Phalon Cornist – President Lake Oakes
Sage Michael – Community Activist
Julia Marshall – New Orleans Resident
Abraham McNeil - Passport New Orleans
Harold Matherne Lake Oaks Security District
Shelia Englert
Carlton Dufrechou – Self
Sallie Arnoult – Lake Oaks Resident

The Recreation/Subdivision Committee of the Lakefront Management Authority met on Tuesday, July 19, 2022, at the New Orleans Lakefront Airport at 6001 Stars and Stripes Blvd., New Orleans, LA 70126.

- II. **Chair Carr** called the meeting to order at 4:32 P.M. and led in the pledge of allegiance.
- III. **Director Capo** called the roll, and two members were present quorum was **not** present. The meeting will be informational at this time.
- IV. **Opening Comments** – Chair Carr/Commissioners
Commissioner Carr informed the public that due to a lack of a quorum, this evening's meeting would be informational at this time

Commissioner Carr informed the Krewe of Vaporwave that the committee cannot officially recommend their resolution however, the resolution will be forwarded to the e full board has presented their case

V. **Motion to Adopt Agenda**

Commissioner Brien arrived at 4:47 pm and a quorum was established.

Chair Carr made a motion to adopt the agenda; seconded by **Commissioner Meadowcroft**. All were in favor. The motion passed.

VI. **Director's Report**

Executive Director Louis Capo reported on the following items:

- The skylight and interior work have been completed at shelter #4. Once the plumbing issues are resolved, Shelter #4 will reopen the bathrooms and the shelter will be available for rental.
- The area near Lake Terrace Parkway needs to have the lawn mowed. We will have maintenance go out and mow the area until we can get it under contract. That area was managed by the Flood Authority and has since been returned to Non-Flood.

Chair Carr asked for an update on the servitudes.

Mr. Capo stated that there was no new information regarding the servitudes and cut-throughs.

Commissioner Fierke asked that the servitudes and cut throughs be added to the next full board meeting.

Commissioner Heaton added that she spoke with Chair Richard about the wet area of land near Shelter #1. She said that it was supposed to be on the Flood Authority's agenda on Thursday to accept the bid from Cycle Construction to fix it but they don't have a quorum and are trying to reschedule the meeting.

VII. **Public Comments** will be reserved until after the presentation at Chair Carr's request.

VIII. **New Business**

1. **Discussion of the response to the Request for Proposals and Qualification for the Lease and Development of Pontchartrain Beach submitted by the Pontchartrain Beach Foundation.**

Chair Carr announced that there will be a presentation and discussion only. The committee will not be recommending anything at this point.

Chair Carr introduced Ms. Dana Brown who presented on behalf of the Pontchartrain Beach Foundation.

Dana Brown presented information from a PowerPoint presentation on the Pontchartrain Beach Foundation's response to the RFP/Q for the Pontchartrain Beach Lease. The Pontchartrain Beach Foundation (PBF) was which was founded for the sole purpose of bringing Pontchartrain Beach back for the citizens of New Orleans. She introduced Mr. Guy Williams who is one of the founders of Gulf Coast Bank and also the Pontchartrain Beach Foundation(PBF) who was quoted to say that 'he has fond memories of the beach and is working to bring back Pontchartrain Beach so younger generations will be able to make their own memories.'

Ms. Brown detailed their plans for the development of the beach if they are awarded the lease. The development team plans to build on the Master Plan they have developed to include

- In-depth water analysis around the piers and jetties which have to be studied carefully.
- The landside analysis
- Safety and security before, during construction, and after it opens
- A rigorous public outreach engagement program – time for public input on what they want to see at the beach
- Begin the engineering of the waterside improvements
- Begin the landside design improvements

Ms. Brown quoted Zach Kuppermann, who is one of the developers and is also seated on the PBF Board of Directors, saying “New Orleanians need and deserve a world-class beach. Bringing back the Beach will serve as a huge quality-of-life amenity and as a catalyst for jobs in economic development opportunities.”

Ms. Brown explained that the plan has been modified over the years but is basically to take advantage of the existing coves. She showed a futuristic picture of how they perceived the beach to look upon completion and further explained the picture looked like three coves but there are two additional coves on both ends for a total of five coves. She pointed to the westernmost end where surfers already surf up to the beach in the winter. This would also be a great educational place because of the shorelines, live oaks, and habitat that it will provide on the landside. The dog park would be on the far east. There will also be kayaking.

The middle cove to the left will be for motorists to include the fishing pier which will be redeveloped. The big cove in the middle of the picture will be for human swimming only. There’s also an existing road that we would utilize for emergency vehicles, maintenance vehicles, and possibly food trucks for events. Other than that there will be no motor vehicles.

Ms. Brown introduced the development team and the advisory team by PowerPoint slide.

Ms. Brown detailed the estimated development timeline of four years. The new website backtothebeach.org just went live

Year one:

- Seeking funding and financing
- To begin public engagement planning where there will be many ways to participate
- Further investigation and the design of waterside improvements
- Draft the landside improvement programming

Year Two:

- More Fundraising
- Continued public engagement.
- Begin permitting for the waterside improvements
- Finalizing the landside design and begin the permitting process

Year Three:

- Fund Raising
- Public Engagement
- Early Construction on the waterside

Year Four:

- Complete construction to open the beach to the public.

Chair Carr acknowledged additional board members (not on this committee) who were in attendance for the Ponchartrain Beach Foundation's presentation and gave them time to speak. He opened the floor for comments and discussion by the committee members

- Chair Anthony Richard
- Commissioner Wilma Heaton
- Commissioner Tom Fierke
- Commissioner Renee Lapeyrolerie

Chair Richard addressed the PBF to thank them for the work they have put into this project. He has every confidence that this will be a win for all.

Commissioner Meadowcroft thanked PBF and Ms. Brown for the presentation and business plan which was very interesting. She expressed her concerns with questions regarding

- the stockpiled sand that has dissipated over time from the elements of weather events.
- the funding referenced on page 31 of the business plan and that there are 19 projects to accomplish in the first year with \$20, 000 in their account
- Fundraising efforts
- She asked for clarification on the business plan's vision for a public recreation area cited on page 6. Yet in the fundraising plan, they plan to charge to access the beach. Charging people to enter each makes it private property and would bring on another set of rules and regulations.
- Testing the water. Ensure that an EPA-certified and accredited organization does the testing. Ponchartrain Conservancy has been doing this for years and has been called upon to do water testing.
- She likes dog parks but asked if PBF has studied the tide flow and how it would affect water quality. She cautioned PBF on the use of jetties. They have not worked for the Great Lakes for decades.

In conclusion, Commissioner Meadowcroft stated there are many studies that have yet to be done in detail to be sure that we have a success. She is one, who would love to go back to the beach!

Mr. Guy Williams asked to address Commissioner Meadowcroft's questions and concerns. He thanked the Lake Ponchartrain Basin Foundation, now The Conservancy.

- The money in the bank is now up to \$46,000 after paying all expenses. We bought 26 tons of fracking sand. We've started the engineering, paid for the studies, and intend to raise more money. We also have a window of opportunity right now for a big federal grant for the infrastructure which we wouldn't have to spend time explaining Ponchartrain Beach or Lincoln Beach because our former Mayor Mitch Landrieu is responsible for allocating the money and understands the importance of this project.

Mr. Williams explained that charging admission to the beach would depend on two major factors for PBF where we are looking to the state, local, and other entities for assistance to pick up the costs in the following areas

1. Insurance Coverage. Currently, LMA is covering the insurance on the beach property but if PBF has to cover insurance, it would be \$500,000. If we could find a public entity to cover the insurance that could relieve admission fees
2. Security. If we could make an arrangement for Orleans Levee District and maybe the sheriff's office to cover the security piece.

Mr. Williams closed by stating if PBF would have to cover insurance and security, we could have no other recourse than to charge a small admission fee.

Commissioner Carr asked, what is the benefit of using a private entity as opposed to the LMA securing those funds to manage this project?

Mr. Williams responded that LMA has always had the ability to acquire the grant funds and step in to be the developer. He further stated that you must consider focus. PBF has assembled a team of engineers, developers, and scientists who have been doing the work for free, and to add that we have spent over \$300,000 of our own money to date. The PBF board is set up so that none of us will ever get a penny back. Any profits received are designed to be reinvested into LMA's assets. There is always an option for LMA to get a team of engineers, developers, and scientists to apply for the grant and there would be no need to do an RFP. Considering bandwidth and practicality, we are ready to apply for the grant right now.

Commissioner Meadowcroft asked if Mr. Williams knew how much funding he would be asking for and is it possible for us not to charge admission to the beach.

Mr. Williams said he would ask for \$15 - \$20 million for Ponchartrain Beach. He said he would also request additional funding for Lincoln Beach as well. As far as charging admission to the beach it would depend if the Foundation would have to cover insurance and security fees.

Chair Carr replied that the practicality of it is that we are experts at what we do and we often hire consultants for various projects. You originally stated that you are not looking to make anything back; what commitment would you make if the LMA decided to manage the project?

Mr. Williams replied that it would leave the decision up to them to manage the project. However, there's a small window of time to apply for the grant and I'm not sure LMA has the structure to get everything done in time to apply for this money. The PBF was asked to make a proposal and we have done our best to focus our energy, time, and money on this project.

Chair Carr stated that he appreciated their efforts but was concerned about privatizing the beach.

Commissioner Hebert asked how many employees would be working at the beach and where will the funding come from to pay employees.

Mr. Williams replied that is several years down the road and we have not addressed it yet.

IX. Public Comments

Carlton Dufrechou commented that Mr. Williams' group put together a great presentation and he was in support of the Ponchartrain Beach project.

Harold Matherne, a Lake Oaks resident, expressed his concerns based on what he read on the website and newspapers regarding security, safety traffic parking, funding, and proper budgeting.

Phalon Cornist expressed, as president of Lake Oaks, that the residents share the same concerns about security, traffic, and parking (specifically the use of greenspace to create parking) and that they feel that this has been forced upon them.

Anne Duffy, a Lake Oaks resident, expressed concerns over possible loud music events. She stated that it would be nice to have the beach back if it was well run.

John Skinner, a Lake Oaks resident, expressed concerns over loud music and other noise from beachgoers. He said it is not clear where the funds to develop the beach will come from.

Shelia Englert commented that she and hundreds of others are in support of the Ponchartrain Beach Project

Sally Arnold, a resident of Lake Oaks, generally spoke in support of the Ponchartrain Beach Project however she had concerns about security, traffic, and trash.

Sage Michael commented that he was in support of the Ponchartrain Beach Project. As a community activist who stands firm on the community's best interest, said he wanted to ensure that the community's questions were heard and answered.

Guy Williams of Ponchartrain Beach Foundation commented that he was interested in the community's concerns, and he appreciated all of the feedback. He assured the community members that the PBF is working to address their concerns with trash, safety, traffic, and parking.

Julia Marshall was in support of the Pontchartrain Beach Project because New Orleans does not have a lot of kid and family-friendly places.

Chair Carr expressed his gratitude for the input on the Ponchartrain Beach Project and looked forward to working with the Foundation and the community to develop and Bring Back the Beach.

3. Motion to recommend approval of the Vaporwave plaque installation at the Mardi Gras Fountain including costs associated with removal.

A motion was offered by **Commissioner Brien**; and seconded by **Commissioner Meadowcroft**. All were in favor. The motion passed.

**IX. Announcement of the next Recreation/Subdivision Committee Meeting:
Tuesday, August 16, 2022 – 4:30 P.M.**

X. Adjourn at 5:44 PM.

Chair Carr announced the next meeting and called for a motion to adjourn

Announcement of next Recreation/Subdivision Committee Meeting:

1)Tuesday, June 14, 2022– 4:30 P.M.

Adjourn:

A motion was offered by **Commissioner Brien**, and seconded by **Commissioner Meadowcroft**. All were in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 5:44 PM.