

**RECREATION AND PARK COMMISSION
FOR THE PARISH OF EAST BATON ROUGE**
Regular Meeting – 5:00 p.m.
Meeting held through Zoom Meeting App
Meeting ID: 798 541 480
Commission Minutes
March 26, 2020

Call to Order

A regular meeting of the Recreation and Park Commission for the Parish of East Baton Rouge (BREC) was held through the Zoom meeting app on March 26, 2020. The meeting was called to order at 5:10 p.m. by Lloyd H. Benson Jr., Chairman. Chairman Benson explained that the meeting was being held through the Zoom meeting app with the meeting ID 798 541 480. He further stated that a link to the meeting can be found on the BREC website and that the public could submit comments to public.comment@brec.org or comment through the Zoom app when recognized. Vice Chairman Shelton C. Dixon Jr. offered the invocation. Commissioner Kenneth Pointer led the pledge of allegiance. Roll was taken, and a quorum of Commissioners was present including Lloyd H. Benson Jr., Chairman; Shelton C. Dixon, Vice Chairman; William Scheffy, Treasurer; Connie Bernard; Sandra Davis; Jerry Jones Jr., Kenneth Pointer, Davis Rhorer; and Rossie Washington, Jr. Staff members present were Corey K. Wilson, Superintendent; Reed Richard, Assistant Superintendent System Planning; Brandon Smith, Assistant Superintendent of Recreation; Aneatra Boykin, Chief Legal Officer; Andrea Roberts, Chief Operating Officer; Phil Frost; Steven Knight; RaHarold Lawson; Cheryl Michelet; Michael Raby; Michael Smith; and Chris Marchiafava. Murphy Foster, legal counsel, was also in attendance. The rest of the audience consisted of other BREC staff and the general public.

Public Comment

Mr. Benson stated that additional time would be allowed for receiving public comments because of the nature of the meeting. Mr. Benson opened the floor for public comment on the agenda action items. He asked if there was anyone who would like to speak on any agenda action item. Hearing none, Mr. Benson closed the floor.

Reports of Officers and Standing Committees

Mr. Benson recognized Mr. Wilson for the Superintendent's Report. The Chairman asked Mr. Wilson to address Mr. Phillip Lillard's comments from an email received the previous day. Mr. Wilson stated that staff had provided a response to Mr. Lillard's concerns regarding the authority to hold a public meeting via telephone or video conference and still comply with the open meetings law. He was provided a copy of the memorandum from the attorney general which offered guidance to public agencies outlining how to properly conduct a meeting electronically. Ms. Marchiafava tried to forward a new comment from Mr. Lillard to Superintendent Wilson but was unsuccessful. Superintendent Wilson asked if Mr. Lillard's recent comment had been submitted to the public comment email. Ms. Marchiafava stated that the comment had been sent to the BREC Commission. Commissioner Jones asked Ms. Marchiafava to read the comment to the Commission. Ms. Marchiafava read the following:

Dear BREC Commission:

Related to the commission meeting today, the following is included on the Agenda:

"BE IT FURTHER DECLARED that, in accordance with the Governor's declaration, any bidding requirements of the Louisiana Public Bid Law (La. R.S. 38:2212 et seq.) applicable to any purchases related to BREC's response to the coronavirus outbreak are hereby suspended."

While I understand the possible need for the above, I request that ONLY purchases directly related to the Coronavirus be allowed to not follow standard bidding procedures, and I

request that a list of all contracts that are awarded and do not follow the normal bidding process be made available for the public to review on the BREC website.

Mr. Wilson stated all contracts are listed in our financial statements each month and that BREC would follow the related laws and policies.

Mr. Wilson stated that there was one administrative matter. He then read the following resolution:

Resolved, That the Commission shall for the purpose of this meeting waive its by-laws, special rules of order, and standing rules as needed to hold this meeting and carry out the actions authorized by the items on the agenda.

The Chairman stated that he needed a motion and a second and that a roll call vote would be taken for each agenda item.

Ms. Bernard made a motion to approve and Mr. Rhorer seconded. A roll call vote was taken with the following results:

Yeas: 9 Mr. Benson, Ms. Bernard, Ms. Davis, Mr. Dixon, Mr. Jones, Mr. Pointer, Mr. Rhorer, Mr. Scheffy, Mr. Washington

Nays: 0

Abstain: 0

Absent: 0

The motion was unanimously approved.

Mr. Wilson gave the Commission an update on BREC's response to the coronavirus pandemic. He told them about the measures BREC had taken to ensure staff's health and safety as well as that of the community. Staff made the decision to close facilities even before it was mandated by the governor. Additionally, in compliance with the governor's decision to require that all playgrounds be closed, staff wrapped over a hundred playgrounds with caution tape by the deadline. BREC is still working with other agencies to distribute meals to the public at over 20 parks. BREC also continues to serve the community by encouraging citizens to get outdoors and use our parks for walking, exercising and relieving stress. Mr. Wilson told the Commission about a virtual town hall meeting for staff scheduled to take place on March 27. During the live streamed meeting Mr. Wilson will answer questions from staff about how the pandemic crisis is affecting operations at BREC.

The Ms. Bernard asked about the availability of personal protective equipment for staff. Mr. Wilson stated that the equipment it is provided as needed. Mr. Rhorer expressed his support for the measures being taken to ensure the public is practicing social distancing. Mr. Scheffy asked about some golfers that were seen on the course at Webb and how that was being monitored. The Superintendent stated that at this time golfers are not being told to get off the course, but staff will watch the situation.

Unfinished Business

The Chairman stated that the next item is on the agenda to hold a public hearing and approve the following:

Resolved, That the Commission approve an ordinance which authorizes the sale of 1.13± acres of vacant land described as Lot 6, Lafitte Hill Subdivision, not needed for public recreation purposes, for the minimum price of \$190,000.

Motion by Mr. Jones

Second by Mr. Rhorer

ORDINANCE

BE IT ORDAINED by the Recreation and Park Commission for the Parish of East Baton Rouge (the "Commission"), in legal session convened, as follows:

Hereby authorizes the sale of 1.13± acres of vacant land described as Lot 6, Lafitte Hill Subdivision, not needed for public recreation purposes, for the minimum price of \$190,000. Any opposition received during the fifteen-day notice period of March 4 through March 18, 2020 will be heard at a public hearing held during the regular meeting of the Commission on March 26, 2020 at BREC Administrative Office in Womack Park, 6201 Florida Boulevard, Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED that this ordinance shall become effective on April 5, 2020 ten days after its adoption.

The above and foregoing ordinance was submitted to a roll call vote for adoption, and the ordinance was adopted by the following votes:

YEAS: 9 Mr. Benson, Ms. Bernard, Ms. Davis, Mr. Dixon, Mr. Jones, Mr. Pointer, Mr. Rhorer, Mr. Scheffy, Mr. Washington

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINED: 0

ABSENT: 0

The foregoing ordinance was signed and approved by the Chairman, attested by the Superintendent and Ex-Officio Secretary and declared to be adopted on this the 26th day of March 2020.

Attest:

/s/ Lloyd H. Benson Jr.
Lloyd H. Benson Jr., Chairman

/s/ Corey K. Wilson
Corey K. Wilson, Superintendent
and Ex-Officio Secretary

The motion was unanimously approved.

The Chairman stated that the next item is on the agenda to hold a public hearing and approve the following:

Resolved, That the Commission approve an ordinance which authorizes the sale of Starwood Court Park in Baton Rouge described as Tract A of the Ellzey Development, Inc. property located in Sections 40 and 41, T8S, R1E containing 8.541± acres, not needed for public recreation purposes, for the minimum price of \$120,000 appraised value.

Motion to approve by Mr. Jones

Second by Mr. Washington

ORDINANCE

BE IT ORDAINED by the Recreation and Park Commission for the Parish of East Baton Rouge (the "Commission"), in legal session convened, as follows:

Ms. Bernard asked if any of the expenses due to the loss of revenue would be eligible for reimbursement by the federal government. She also asked that if the expenses were eligible for reimbursement, would BREC use an outside firm to assist with the process. Mr. Wilson stated that BREC will not suffer a loss of tax revenue and that self-generated revenue may not be recoverable, but BREC would get help from consultants if necessary. Staff is capturing the expenses related to this event.

The Chairman called for the vote. The roll call vote was taken with the following results:

Yeas: 9 Mr. Benson, Ms. Bernard, Ms. Davis, Mr. Dixon, Mr. Jones, Mr. Pointer, Mr. Rhorer, Mr. Scheffy, Mr. Washington

Nays: 0

Abstain: 0

Absent: 0

The motion was unanimously approved.

Adjournment

Mr. Jones made a motion to adjourn, Mr. Rhorer seconded, and Mr. Benson adjourned the meeting without objection at 5:39 p.m.

Corey K. Wilson, Superintendent
and Ex-Officio Secretary

Lloyd H. Benson Jr., Chairman