

**RECREATION AND PARK COMMISSION
FOR THE PARISH OF EAST BATON ROUGE**
Regular Meeting – 5:00 p.m.
BREC Administration Building
6201 Florida Boulevard
Baton Rouge, Louisiana
Commission Minutes
May 22, 2025

Call to Order

A regular meeting of the Recreation and Park Commission for the Parish of East Baton Rouge (BREC) was held at BREC's Administrative Offices on May 22, 2025. The meeting was called to order at 5:01 p.m. by Chairwoman Donna Lewis. Commissioner Dwayne Rogers offered the invocation. Commissioner Rossie Washington, Jr. led the Pledge of Allegiance. Roll was taken and a quorum of Commissioners was present, including Donna Lewis, Chair; Clarice Gordon, Vice Chair; Kenneth Pointer, Treasurer; Rossie Washington, Jr.; Dwayne Rogers; Mike Polito; Nathan Rust; and Lon Vicknair. Collis Temple, III, was absent. Staff members present were Corey K. Wilson, Superintendent; Reed Richard, Assistant Superintendent of System Planning; Aneatra Boykin, Chief Administrative Officer; Andrea Roberts, Chief Operating Officer; Don Johnson, Chief Financial Officer, Jim Fleshman, Angela Harms, Darlene Jarvis, RaHarold Lawson, Robin Lott, Katrina Coots-Ward, and Ebony Allen. Murphy Foster, legal counsel, and Carl Stages, Executive Director of BREC Foundation, were also in attendance. The rest of the audience consisted of other BREC staff, sign language interpreters, media, and the public.

Public Comment

Chairwoman announced that public comment would be allowed prior to a vote being taken on any agenda action item and explained the process to be observed.

Adoption of Minutes

Chairwoman Lewis read the following resolution:

Resolved, that the reading of the minutes of the Recreation and Park Commission Special Meeting of May 13, 2025, be dispensed with, and that they be approved as written.

Motion to approve by Ms. Gordon.

Second by Mr. Pointer.

Unanimously approved.

Consent Calendar

Resolved, that the Commission approve the routine Personnel Transactions from April 11, 2025, to May 15, 2025.

Motion by Ms. Gordon.

Second by Mr. Polito.

Unanimously approved.

Presentations

Chairwoman Lewis presented Superintendent Corey Wilson with a commemorative award in recognition of his exemplary leadership and dedicated service during his tenure at BREC. This meeting marked his final appearance before the Commission in this role.

The Commission viewed a brief video highlighting various upcoming events throughout the parish during the month of June.

Reports of Officers and Standing Committees

Superintendent Wilson read the first item under Administrative Matters.

Resolved, That the Commission approve The Advocate as the Official Journal of Record of the Recreation and Park Commission for the Parish of East Baton Rouge and approve a contract from July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026 to be used for the public posting of minutes, resolutions, budgets, and other official proceedings and announcements of said commission as required by law for the price of \$.33/agate line or less and \$25 per affidavit with the same terms and conditions.

Motion to approve by Mr. Rogers.

Second by Mr. Pointer.

Approved by unanimous consent.

Superintendent Wilson presented the second item under Administrative Matters, noting that the current Cooperative Endeavor Agreement (CEA) with Baton Rouge Community College (BRCC) must be renewed. Under this agreement, BRCC maintains the areas inside the stadium and BREC maintains the general areas outside of the stadium, at no cost, in exchange for BRCC taking care of the baseball field and providing a use for the public asset located at Goldsby Park.

Commissioner Politio inquired about the condition of the park and how well BRCC has maintained the field. Superintendent Wilson responded that BRCC maintains the areas according to its own standard of care, and there have been no public complaints aside from occasional requests for major improvements such as field leveling and drainage. He confirmed that, outside of those specific concerns, the public has generally been satisfied.

Commissioner Rust asked how long the CEA had been in place. Superintendent Wilson replied that it has operated on a year-to-year basis for the past four to five years. Commissioner Rust also sought clarification on the ownership of Goldsby Park, confirming with the Superintendent that the property is owned by the State.

With no further questions, Chairwoman asked for a motion on the following resolution:

Resolved, That the Commission approve the Cooperative Endeavor Agreement with Baton Rouge Community College (BRCC) for the use of the baseball fields located at Goldsby Park, as presented; and further, authorize the Superintendent to execute the necessary documents, subject to final legal review.

Motion to approve by Mr. Pointer.

Second by Mr. Washington.

The motion was approved without objection.

Superintendent Wilson continued with the last item under Administrative Matters, explaining that this Cooperative Endeavor Agreement (CEA) with the City of Baker, involves no exchange of public dollars, but it is more so an memorialization of both BREC and the City of Baker's commitment to collaborate on several recreational assets within the city. These assets are individually owned by either BREC or the City of Baker.

Superintendent Wilson further clarified that the agreement outlines the responsibilities of each party and affirms their shared commitment to jointly program and operate the facilities in a manner that best serves the interests of the Baker community.

Chairwoman Lewis recognized Commissioner Polito's motion to approve the following resolution:

Resolved, That the Commission approve the Cooperative Endeavor Agreement with the City of Baker, as presented. Authorize the Superintendent to execute the necessary documents, pending final legal review.

Motion by Mr. Polito.

Second by Mr. Pointer.

Motion was approved by unanimous consent.

Superintendent Wilson reviewed the March 2025 Activity Report.

He then shared a visual summary of his meetings and engagements throughout April with various organizations and public officials, emphasizing his ongoing efforts to engage with community leaders across the parish. He noted that the primary focus of these meetings was advancing the goals outlined in BREC's 10-Year Master Plan.

Superintendent Wilson provided legislative updates on House Bills 649, 86, and 87. He also reported that he along with Dominique Smith, BREC's Manager of the Small Business Opportunity Program, visited the Baker Chamber of Commerce to discuss potential collaboration opportunities.

Superintendent Wilson highlighted the recent FAE Fest, which was successfully hosted indoors in the ballroom due to inclement weather.

He provided an update on summer camp registration, stating that over 81% of all available seats had been filled—an increase compared to the same time last year. He also promoted the upcoming HYPE Late Night event scheduled to take place at Howell Community Park.

To conclude his final Superintendent's Report, Mr. Wilson thanked the Commission for the opportunity to serve as Superintendent over the past six and a half years. He gave special thanks to Commissioner Pointer and Commissioner Washington, who served on the Board that selected him for the role in 2019. He says that working for BREC has been one of his greatest experiences and he intends to help out during this transition and thanked the community and community leaders.

Chairwoman Lewis opened the floor for Commissioners to offer farewell remarks to Superintendent Wilson. Commissioners Washington and Pointer each expressed their gratitude for his dedicated service to BREC and extended their best wishes for his future endeavors.

Chairwoman Lewis recognized Commissioner Pointer to deliver the Finance Advisory Committee report. Commissioner Pointer introduced Don Johnson, Chief Financial Officer, to present the action items.

Mr. Johnson presented the Budget Status Report and read the following resolution:

Resolved, That the Commission accept the unaudited monthly Budget Status Report for the month ending and fiscal year-to-date period ending April 30, 2025, as presented.

Commissioner Polito requested clarification on the term *Unexpended Budget Expenditure Authority*, asking whether it referred to budget authority that had not been spent. Mr. Johnson confirmed that it does refer to funds budgeted but not spent by the end of the fiscal year.

Mr. Johnson reread the resolution with the following results.

Motion by Ms. Gordon
Second by Mr. Pointer.
The motion was approved unanimously.

Mr. Johnson then presented the sole item under Contracts and Bids and read the following resolution:

Resolved, That the Commission approve awarding SB 1849 Cypress Bayou Green Infrastructure Project to the lowest responsive bidder, Stone 2 Construction, LLC., for the base bid of \$8,012,530.00 and concurrently accept a deductive change order to reduce the project cost by \$977,205.00 for a total contract price of \$7,035,325.00 (approx. \$5.2 million is reimbursable.)

Motion by Mr. Washington.
Second by Mr. Pointer.
The motion was unanimously approved.

Chairwoman Lewis noted that the Human Resources Advisory Committee action item for the routine personnel transactions was on the Consent Calendar.

Chairwoman Lewis recognized Commissioner Pointer for the first item under Selection of Professionals. Commissioner Pointer deferred to Reed Richard, Assistant Superintendent of System Planning, to present the following resolution:

Resolved, That the Commission approve the list of selected proposers for the 2025-2028 Capital Improvement Project List included in RFQ 231 for Architectural, Landscape Architectural and Engineering Services. Contracts over \$50,000 will be presented to the Commission for approval prior to the execution of the contract.

Motion by Mr. Pointer.
Second by Mr. Polito.
The motion approved unanimously.

Chairwoman Lewis then read the next resolution concerning the Zoo:

Resolved, That the Commission approve the Veterinary Training Agreement between BREC Zoo and LSU, where the Veterinary Services and Zoological Medicine Resident Program will provide veterinary training and animal health support to the BREC Zoo. This Agreement is for a two-year period through June 18, 2027, for an amount not to exceed \$92,026.

Motion by Mr. Rogers.
Second by Mr. Rust.
The motion was unanimously approved.

Chairwoman Lewis continued with the third item under Selection of Professionals and read the following resolution:

Resolved, That the Commission approve the proposed agreement between BREC and Southeast Louisiana Aquatics, LLC (SELA) for the provision of aquatics consulting services (assistance with start-up and management of pool chemicals at Liberty Lagoon), for an amount not to exceed \$38,700. This agreement will be in addition to a current contract between BREC and SELA for an amount not to exceed \$25,000 for the provision of lifeguard training and certifications, bringing the total amount for services provided to \$63,700.

Chairwoman Lewis noted that the original resolution amount of \$35,000 was amended in committee to \$38,700, and the total combined contract value increased from \$60,000 to \$63,700.

Motion by Mr. Pointer.
Second by Mr. Vicknair.
The motion was unanimously approved.

Chairwoman Lewis then presented the final item under Selection of Professionals:

Resolved, that the Commission approves awarding the contract for RFP 230 - Camp Transportation Services, to First Student Inc. for a period of one (1) year for the contract amount Not to Exceed \$250,000, with the option to renew for two additional 12-month periods.

Commissioner Rogers asked for and received clarification about how busses will be utilized for camps this year. Commissioner Rust asked for a copy of the contract be provided to the Commission at the meeting. After further discussion, the Chairwoman requested a copy of the contract be provided by the next day.

Motion by Mr. Polito.

Second by Mr. Washington.

Motion was approved by unanimous consent.

Unfinished Business and General Orders

The Chairwoman announced that the Recreation and Park Commission for the Parish of East Baton Rouge ("BREC") would enter into Executive Session pursuant to LSA-R.S. 42:17(A)(1) for discussion of the character and professional competence of potential candidates for the Interim Superintendent position.

Motion to enter Executive Session was made by Mr. Pointer

Second by Mr. Washington.

The motion was unanimously approved.

Executive Session began at approximately 6:05 p.m.

Ms. Gordon made a motion to reconvene the meeting, seconded by Mr. Vicknair, and unanimously approved. Chairwoman Lewis reconvened the meeting at approximately 7:15 p.m.

Chairwoman Lewis read the following resolution under Unfinished Business and General Orders:

Resolved, That the Commission vote on the selection of the Interim Superintendent.

Commissioner Rust moved to accept Janet Simmons as Interim Superintendent and further authorize the Chair and Co-Chair (Vice Chair) to negotiate and enter into an agreement to engage to begin no later than June 1, the amount not to exceed \$100,000.

Second by Mr. Vicknair.

Ms. Simmons was selected as Interim Superintendent by unanimous consent.

Chairwoman Lewis proceeded to the final item under Unfinished Business and General Orders and read the following resolution:

Resolved, That the Commission approve the establishment of a search committee to conduct a national search for the new superintendent. The committee will review the job description and recommend any necessary changes to the Commission for approval, develop a timeline, make regular reports of their progress at scheduled Commission meetings, and work with a qualified consultant firm to provide the Commission a list of highly qualified candidates to interview.

Commissioner Polito asked Chairwoman Lewis whether a list of search committee members would be provided to the Commission. Chairwoman Lewis clarified that this resolution was to approve the establishment of a search committee, and once approved, the Chair would

present the list of members. The Chairwoman asked Mr. Foster if her interpretation was wrong. Mr. Foster stated that the resolution was ambiguous could be interpreted that a list could be provided later or that the list of committee members could be provided now.

Commissioner Polito then motioned to amend the resolution with the following language:

Resolved, That the Commission approve the establishment of a search committee to conduct a national search for the new superintendent. The committee will review the job description and make recommendations of any necessary changes to the Commission for approval, develop a timeline, make regular reports of their progress at scheduled Commission meetings, and work with a qualified consultant firm to provide the Commission a list of highly qualified candidates to interview. That the search committee make-up be conditioned upon approval of the Commission.

Chairwoman Lewis expressed concern that the amendment may conflict with the bylaws and again referred to Mr. Foster for guidance. Mr. Foster confirmed that with a motion and a second, the Commission could supersede the bylaws.

The Chairwoman referred to legal counsel, Mr. Foster, for further clarification. Mr. Foster indicated that although he could not quote the bylaws verbatim, by majority vote of the Commission, *"you can do whatever you want."*

Commissioner Rust added context to the motion to amend, noting that concerns had been raised during a Commission meeting she was absent from regarding the composition of the search committee, and that the amendment would allow the Commission to review and approve the committee make-up, thus overriding the bylaws as necessary.

Chairwoman Lewis asked for clarification on whether it was permissible to supersede the bylaws. Legal counsel, Mr. Foster, responded by stating that, *"if there is a motion and a second, you may"* supersede the bylaws.

Chairwoman Lewis asked for further clarification regarding the effect of Commissioner Polito's amended motion. Mr. Foster explained that it would subject the members of the search committee to the approval of the Commission, as he understood it.

Chairwoman Lewis asked for confirmation of understanding from the Commission of the motion on the floor and proceeded with the vote.

Motion by Mr. Polito.

Second by Mr. Rust.

The motion to amend was approved with one objection by Chairwoman Lewis.

Chairwoman Lewis asked for confirmation on the timing for the submission and vote on the proposed search committee members. Commissioner Polito confirmed that it was his understanding that the Chair would present the names, and the vote on the members could take place at the next Commission meeting. Chairwoman Lewis confirmed that she had the names prepared.

New Business

Chairwoman Lewis then read the final item on the agenda under New Business:

Introduction of the proposed resolution levying the ad valorem tax millages for the 2025 parish-wide assessment roll and setting a public hearing for June 26, 2025, during the regular meeting of the Commission, at the BREC Administration Offices in Womack Park.

Motion by Mr. Pointer.
Second by Mr. Polito.
The motion was approved unanimously.

Adjournment

Chairwoman Lewis requested a motion to adjourn. Mr. Pointer made a motion to adjourn, Mr. Polito seconded, and Chairwoman Lewis adjourned the meeting at 7:24 p.m. without objection.

Corey K. Wilson, Superintendent
and Ex-Officio Secretary

Donna Collins-Lewis, Chairwoman