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 July 29, 2021. The meeting was called to order at 5:28 p.m. by Chairman Kenneth Pointer. Vice Chair Sandra Davis offered the invocation. Commissioner Rossie Washington, Jr. led the pledge of allegiance. Roll was taken, and a quorum of Commissioners was present including Kenneth Pointer, Chair; Sandra Davis, Vice Chair; William Scheffy, Treasurer; Connie Bernard; Trina Hall; Jason Hughes; Donna Collins Lewis; Collis Temple, Jr.; and Rossie Washington, Jr. Staff members present were Corey K. Wilson, Superintendent; Reed Richard, Assistant Superintendent of System Planning; Aneatra Boykin, Chief Administrative Officer; Phil Frost; Steven Knight; RaHarold Lawson; Cheryl Michelet; Mike Raby; Lester Rainey; Stephanie Trim; and Chris Marchiafava. Nicole Frey, legal counsel, was also in attendance. The rest of the audience consisted of other BREC staff and the public.

Public Comment

Mr. Pointer opened the floor for public comment on the agenda action items. He asked that anyone who wanted to speak regarding Resolution No.2 to hold their comments until the item is taken up on the agenda. He asked if there was anyone who would like to speak on any other agenda action item. Hearing none, Mr. Pointer closed the floor.

Adoption of Minutes

Resolved, That the reading of the minutes of the Recreation and Park Commission Meeting of June 24, 2021 be dispensed with, and that they be approved as written.

Motion to approve by Ms. Bernard
Second by Ms. Davis
Unanimously approved

Consent Calendar

Resolved, That the Recreation and Park Commission for the Parish of East Baton Rouge does hereby approve the Consent Calendar items.

Motion to approve by Mr. Washington
Second by Ms. Temple
Unanimously approved

The following item was approved as part of the Consent Calendar:

Acceptance of Recommendations for the Human Resources Advisory Committee
Resolved, That the Commission approve the Routine Personnel Transactions from June 10, 2021 to July 13, 2021
Presentations
Chairman Pointer recognized Superintendent Wilson who presented employee service awards to the following staff:

5 Years
Jodie Glenn
Anthony Patin

10 Years
RaHarold Lawson
James Matthews

15 Years
Mark Brabham

20 Years
Vicki Jones
Charlene Roddy

25 Years
Charles “David” Lloyd

Chairman Pointer recognized Director of Information Technology Steven Knight, acting on behalf of Chief Operating Officer Andrea Roberts, who presented a Spot Award to Kristin Hanlon, Assistant Director of Information Technology, for her exceptional customer service and teamwork on the HCM implementation and go live project.

Chairman Pointer recognized Jade Russell, with J. D. Russell Consulting, to give a presentation on the new Small Business Opportunity Program being implemented by BREC. Superintendent Wilson gave a brief explanation of why the program was developed. Ms. Russell gave an overview of the program and provide a summary of how the program would work.

The Commission viewed a brief video spotlighting the Twilight Tour at BREC’s Baton Rouge Zoo. Also highlighted were upcoming events in August such as observing the Perseid Meteor Shower at Highland Road Observatory, Swamp Flashlight Night and Duck, Duck Goose Day at Bluebonnet Swamp.

Reports of Officers and Standing Committees
Mr. Pointer recognized Mr. Wilson for the Superintendent’s report. Superintendent Wilson stated that there was one item under Administrative Matters. He then read the following resolution:

Resolved, That the Commission approve adding the following new job title, job description and salary range to the Pay Plan effective August 1, 2021.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job Title</th>
<th>Salary Grade</th>
<th>Salary Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Small Business Program Manager</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>$59,521.78 - $95,234.85</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Motion by Ms. Lewis
Second by Ms. Hall
Unanimously approved

Under Communications, Superintendent Wilson updated the Commission on how Covid-19 has impacted BREC employees and patrons. He noted that BREC recently held a vaccination event at Liberty Lagoon. The Superintendent explained that a mask mandate is in effect at all
Mr. Wilson gave a presentation providing information about the staff recommendation to roll forward the ad valorem millage rates. He told the Commission about how BREC provided services during the pandemic. He explained the unanticipated transformative projects being requested by the community. Mr. Wilson provided additional information about the impact of BREC parks on the community.

Chairman Pointer recognized Mr. Scheffy for the Finance Advisory Committee report. Mr. Scheffy recognized Lester Rainey, Interim Director of Finance, who read the executive summary and then read the following resolution:

Resolved, That the Commission accept the unaudited financial statements for the six (6) months ending June 30, 2021 (fiscal year-to-date period January 1 – June 30, 2021), as presented.

Motion to approve by Ms. Bernard
Second by Mr. Temple
Approved by unanimous consent

Chairman Pointer recognized Ms. Lewis for the Planning and Park Resources Advisory Committee report. Ms. Lewis invited Reed Richard to provide information about the agenda items.

Mr. Richard provided information about the first item and then read the following resolution:

Resolved, That the Commission accept the donation of approximately 6 acres of land along the top bank of Dawson Creek located in Sections 52 & 53, T-7-S, R-1-E, Greensburg Land District, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana described as "Dawson Creek R/W" on the map prepared by Paul C. Boudreaux, RLS dated February 6, 1976. Authorize superintendent to execute necessary documents.

Motion by Ms. Lewis
Second by Mr. Hughes
Unanimously approved

Mr. Richard provided information about the next item and then read the following resolution:

Resolved, That the Commission approve a Recreational Personal Servitude and Right of Use Agreement with CTL Holdings LLC granting a 20' wide recreational personal servitude and right of use and a 25' wide temporary access and construction servitude to BREC within the existing Dawson Creek drainage servitude for a multi-use recreational pathway for public use contingent upon final legal review. Authorize superintendent to execute necessary documents.

Motion by Ms. Hall
Second by Mr. Scheffy
Unanimously approved

Mr. Richard provided information about the next item and then read the following resolution:

Resolved, That the Commission approve a Cooperative Endeavor Agreement with East Baton Rouge Sewerage Commission (EBROSCO) granting a servitude and right of use to BREC for construction of a public recreational trail for walking, jogging, bicycling and related non-motorized recreational activities along the top bank of Dawson Creek. Authorize superintendent to execute necessary documents.
Motion by Ms. Bernard
Second by Mr. Hughes
Approved by unanimous consent

Mr. Richard provided information about the next item and then read the following resolution:
Resolved, That the Commission approve accepting the Offer of $14,720 Just Compensation from the City of Baton Rouge and Parish of East Baton Rouge for a two-year 4.6-acre temporary staging area/construction servitude in Highland Road Park for drainage improvements in the EBR Flood Risk Reduction Project, Bayou Fountain Clearing and Snagging project. Authorize superintendent to execute necessary documents.
Motion by Ms. Lewis
Second by Mr. Temple
Unanimously approved

Mr. Richard provided information about the next item regarding the purchase of property adjacent to Jackson Community Park in Central.

Mr. Temple asked Superintendent Wilson if he had any conversations with Senator Bodi White about the purchase of the property. Mr. Wilson stated he had not talked to any elected officials about this purchase. Mr. Temple stated that he wanted to be sure that the citizens and public officials of Central are aware that BREC is doing this to enhance recreation opportunities for Central.

Ms. Davis asked what the plans were for the house that is currently on the property. Mr. Richard explained that staff would have to assess whether or not it can be utilized. Mr. Temple asked about the cost of the new recreation center. Mr. Wilson stated that it would cost around $3,000,000. Mr. Temple asked about the community engagement regarding the park improvements. Mr. Wilson explained that the community leaders and Senator White are aware of the $3,000,000 of improvements at the park. Mr. Temple stated we need to engage with the community and public officials in Central to make sure know what we are doing in their community. The Superintendent told the Commission about other numerous projects in Central at the Sports Park, Frenchtown Nature Center, and the dog park. Mr. Temple asked the Chairman to invite Senator White and the Mayor of Central to the next Commission meeting.

After the discussion, Mr. Richard read the following resolution:
Resolved, That the Commission approve the purchase of 1.74± acres of land with improvements located at 12124 Sullivan Road adjacent to Jackson Community Park for the appraised value of $482,700. Authorize superintendent to execute necessary documents.
Motion by Mr. Washington
Second by Mr. Temple
Unanimously approved

Mr. Richard then gave the construction update presentation. Mr. Scheffy asked about the Lakes Project. There was a brief discussion about the project and an upcoming event to educate the public about the project and gather input.

Mr. Pointer recognized Ms. Hall for the Selection of Professionals Committee report. Ms. Hall asked Cheryl Michelet, Director of Communications, to explain the reason an amendment to the contract was needed. Commissioner Lewis asked for additional details which Ms. Michelet provided. Mr. Temple stated that community engagement is important and that BREC needs to
keep the community informed. He stated that the public needs to know more about BREC and what it does.

After the discussion, Ms. Michelet read the following resolution:
Resolved, That the Commission approve Amendment #1 to the contract (2020-000189) with Emergent Method, LLC for additional community engagement services for an increase of $18,000 from the original contract amount of $49,500 to a total not to exceed $67,500.

Motion by Mr. Washington
Second by Mr. Hughes
Unanimously approved

**Special Orders**
Chairman Pointer noted that the next item was the approval of appointments to standing committees:

Jason Hughes
Larry Bradford Recreation & Special Facilities

Darnell Waites, Mayor of Baker
Valerie Hills Human Resources

Motion to approve by Mr. Washington
Second by Mr. Temple
Unanimously approved

**Unfinished Business and General Orders**
Mr. Pointer recognized Wendy DeVall who reviewed the Service Animal Policy and then read the following resolution:
Resolved, That the Commission approve the Service Animal Policy, as presented.

Motion by Ms. Davis
Second by Mr. Washington

Mr. Pointer stated that the next item was to hold a public hearing and adopt Resolution No. 1 to levy ad valorem taxes for 2021, as adjusted after reassessment, on all property subject to ad valorem taxation by the Recreation and Park Commission for the Parish of East Baton Rouge, for the operation and maintenance and capital improvements of said Commission. Authorize the Chairman, Vice Chairman and Superintendent to execute the necessary documents.

Mr. Pointer declared the public hearing open and asked if anyone would like to speak on the item. Hearing none, Mr. Pointer closed the public hearing. Mr. Scheffy noted that the resolution should be read. Chris Marchiafava, Administrative Services and Records Manager, read the resolution as follows:

**RESOLUTION NO. 1**

A resolution to levy ad valorem taxes for 2021, as adjusted after reassessment, on all property subject to ad valorem taxation by the Recreation and Park Commission for the Parish of East Baton Rouge, for the operation and maintenance and capital improvements of said Commission.

BE IT RESOLVED, by the Recreation and Park Commission for the Parish of East Baton Rouge, Louisiana, in a public meeting held on July 29, 2021, which meeting was conducted in accordance with the Open Meetings Law and the additional requirements of Article VII, Section
23(C) of the Louisiana Constitution and R.S. 47:1705(B), that the following adjusted millage rates be and they are hereby levied upon the dollar of the assessed valuation of all property subject to ad valorem taxation within East Baton Rouge Parish for the year 2021, for the purpose of raising revenue:

- **MILLAGE**
  - **0.60** mills a tax authorized by the electorate in a special election conducted October 28, 1947, under the authority of Article 14, Section 3(b) of the 1921 Louisiana Constitution; ratified by Article 6, Section 31; for operations and maintenance; and
  - **0.40** mills a tax authorized by the electorate in a special election conducted June 22, 1954, under the authority of Article 14, Section 3(b) of the 1921 Louisiana Constitution; ratified by Article 6, Section 31; for operations and maintenance; and
  - **3.082** mills a tax authorized by the electorate in a special election conducted November 2, 2004, under the authority of Section 4570.4 B of Title 33 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes of 1950, as amended; to purchase, acquire, construct, develop, improve, operate and maintain public parks, playgrounds and recreational properties and facilities; and
  - **3.88** Mills a tax authorized by the electorate in a special election conducted April 5, 2014, for operations and maintenance and capital improvements; and
  - **1.99** mills a tax authorized by the electorate in a special election conducted April 5, 2014, to provide funds for maintaining and operating its public parks, recreational properties, and facilities and making available funds for the operating budget; and
  - **3.75** mills a tax authorized by the electorate in an election conducted November 8, 2016, to provide funds for maintaining and operating the public parks, recreational properties, and facilities and making available funds for the operating budget; and

the foregoing making a total tax of thirteen and seven hundred two one-thousandths **(13.702)** mills on the dollar of assessed valuation to meet the established liabilities and expenses of the Commission used in acquiring, developing, maintaining and operating the public parks and recreational properties and facilities of the Commission and in making available funds for the operating budget, all as provided for in the respective propositions approved by the voters in the special tax elections above referred to.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Assessor of the Parish of East Baton Rouge shall extend upon the assessment roll for the year 2021 the taxes herein levied, and the tax collector of said Parish shall collect and remit the same to said taxing authority in accordance with law.

The above and foregoing resolution was moved by Mr. Washington, seconded by Ms. Bernard, and submitted to a roll call vote for adoption, and the resolution was adopted by the following votes:

| YEAS: 9 | Ms. Bernard, Ms. Davis, Ms. Hall, Mr. Hughes, Ms. Lewis, Mr. Pointer, Mr. Scheffy, Mr. Temple, Mr. Washington |
| NAYS: 0 |
| ABSTAINED: 0 |
| ABSENT: 0 |
The foregoing resolution was signed and approved by the Chairman, attested by the Superintendent and Ex-Officio Secretary and declared to be adopted on this the 29th day of July, 2021.

Attest:  

Kenneth Pointer, Chairman

Corey K. Wilson, Superintendent  
and Ex-Officio Secretary

The Chairman stated that the next item was Adopt Resolution No. 2 to adjust and levy ad valorem tax millage rates for 2021, back to the prior year's (2019) maximum approved millage rates, on all property subject to taxation by the Recreation and Park Commission for the Parish of East Baton Rouge (BREC), for operation and maintenance and capital improvements of said Commission. Authorize the Chairman, Vice Chairman and Superintendent to execute the necessary documents.

The Chairman asked if there was anyone who wanted to make a public comment on the item. Mr. Pointer recognized Cecil Cavanaugh who spoke against Resolution 2 and commented that the public does not have access to BREC's financial statements to see what is being approved. Mark Corrick spoke next to clarify a statement made by Superintendent Wilson about how taxes were calculated when a person has a freeze on the assessment value of their home. He stated that though the home value won't go up any increase in taxes are paid by the homeowner. Chairman Pointer asked if anyone else would like to speak. Hearing none, he closed the floor for public comment.

The Chairman asked if any Commissioner would like to speak on the item. Mr. Pointer recognized Commissioner Washington who asked Superintendent Wilson about the availability of the financial statements to the public. Mr. Wilson noted that the financial statements, budgets, and audits are available to the public on the BREC website. Mr. Washington also asked for clarification about the freeze on property value. Mr. Wilson stated that the assessment value is locked in but not the millage. He further noted that like buying any product if the price is higher the tax is higher. Commissioner Scheffy noted that unlike sales tax property owners don’t have a choice about paying higher property tax.

Commissioner Scheffy commented that the two permanent taxes are higher than originally approved by the voters and for the sake of consistency those should be returned to the rate that was originally approved. Commissioner Temple stated that because of his financial background, Commissioner Scheffy understands the financial aspects of the agency better than most. Commissioner Temple suggested that Commissioner Scheffy meet with accounting department and the Superintendent to discuss how best to be efficient.

Mr. Scheffy noted that he in generally against unelected officials raising taxes except in unusual circumstances. Further the roll forward was meant to be an exception and not to be a windfall. He stated that BREC will receive about two percent in additional revenue because of growth in property values. Commissioner Scheffy offered some additional reasons that he would not be supporting the roll forward.

Commissioner Temple stated that though unelected the Commissioners they are appointed by elected officials. He stated that BREC is below the nation average in the amount of
land for parks and greenspace and needs to acquire additional property. Commissioner Temple stated BREC needs the additional resources and he that he supported the item.

Commissioner Bernard spoke against the item because BREC will receive additional funds due to the growth in the parish.

Commissioner Washington thanked the members of the public for their participation. He stated that Commissioners are appointed by elected officials. He noted the many programs and services provides to the community and the role BREC plays in natural disaster as well as the pandemic. He offered some additional reasons he would be supporting the roll forward.

Chairman Pointer offered his appreciation to everyone who offered their comments. He expressed his disappointment in some comments portraying BREC as greedy. He offered additional comments in favor of the item and then called for a motion on the item.

Mr. Washington made a motion to approve Resolution No. 2, Mr. Hughes seconded, and Ms. Marchiafava read the resolution as follows:

**RESOLUTION NO. 2**

A resolution to adjust and levy ad valorem tax millage rates for 2021, back to the prior year’s (2019) maximum approved millage rates, on all property subject to taxation by the Recreation and Park Commission for the Parish of East Baton Rouge (BREC), for operation and maintenance and capital improvements of said Commission.

BE IT RESOLVED, by the Recreation and Park Commission for the Parish of East Baton Rouge Louisiana, in a public meeting held on July 29, 2021, which meeting was conducted in accordance with the Open Meetings Law and the additional requirements of Article VII, Section 23(B)(C) and (D) of the Louisiana Constitution and R.S. 47:1705(B), that the taxing district voted to increase the millage rates, but not in excess of the prior year’s maximum rates, on all taxable property shown on the official assessment roll for East Baton Rouge Parish for the year 2021, and when collected, the revenues from said taxes shall be used only for the specific purposes for which said taxes have been levied. Said millage rates are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adjusted Rates</th>
<th>2021 Levy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0.60 mills</td>
<td>0.63 mills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.40 mills</td>
<td>0.42 mills</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Assessor of the Parish of East Baton Rouge, shall extend upon the assessment roll for the year 2021 the taxes herein levied, and the tax collector of said Parish shall collect and remit the same to said taxing authority in accordance with law.

The above and foregoing resolution was moved, seconded, and submitted to a roll call vote for adoption thereof, and the resolution was adopted by no less than two-thirds of the total membership of the taxing authority voting in favor as required by Article VII, Section 23(C) of the Louisiana Constitution and R.S. 47:1705(B). The votes were:

YEAS: 7  Ms. Davis, Ms. Hall, Mr. Hughes, Ms. Lewis, Mr. Pointer, Mr. Temple, Mr. Washington
NAYS: 2  Ms. Bernard, Mr. Scheffy
ABSTAINED: 0
ABSENT: 0

The foregoing resolution was signed and approved by the Chairman, attested by the Superintendent and Ex-Officio Secretary and declared to be adopted on this the 29th day of July, 2021.

Attest:  

Kenneth Pointer, Chairman
New Business
Chairman Pointer recognized Superintendent Wilson to provide information about the next item. Mr. Wilson read the following resolution:
Resolved, That the Commission approve the Amended and Restated Cooperative Endeavor Agreement with the Friends of the Baton Rouge Zoo, as presented.

Mr. Scheffy asked about the process for the approval of funding for the Friends of the Zoo. Mr. Wilson gave a brief explanation that the funding would be approved as a part of the budget process for 2022.

Mr. Washington made a motion to approve, Mr. Scheffy seconded and the motion was approved without objection.

Adjournment
Mr. Washington made a motion to adjourn, Ms. Lewis seconded, and Mr. Pointer adjourned the meeting without objection at 8:22 p.m.