



Audubon Nature Institute
Celebrating the Wonders of Nature

January 23, 2018

A meeting of the Audubon Nature Institute Board was held on Tuesday, January 23, at 8:00 a.m. at the Audubon Zoo, Chairman Chris Bardell presiding.

The minutes of November 28, 2017 meeting were unanimously accepted as distributed.

Finance Report

Ms. Conkerton, EVP, and CAO reviewed November 2017's Operating Budget:

She reported that overall revenue through November 2017 was running 5% lower but expenses were running about 8% under budget. Ms. Conkerton stated that the loss in revenue is mostly due to weather as there have been several cold and rainy weekends. She further stated that staff stayed on top of expenses with the biggest being keeping salaries in line and watching overtime closely.

Mr. Forman, President and CEO reported that 2017 was a rough year for tourism in New Orleans. He stated that Audubon felt that impact along with weather related issues.

NOVEMBER YTD 2017 FINANCIAL DASHBOARD						
(AMOUNTS IN THOUSANDS)						
NET OPERATING RESULTS BY FACILITY:						
FACILITY	YTD ACTUAL 2017	YTD BUDGET 2017	BUDGET VARIANCE	YTD ACTUAL 2016	PRIOR YEAR VARIANCE	TOTAL BUDGET 2017
Aquarium/EGST	7,375	6,456	919	7,486	(111)	6,292
Zoo & Park	(3,981)	(3,745)	(236)	(4,405)	424	(4,955)
Butterfly Garden & Insectarium	410	96	314	407	3	39
FMASSC	(380)	(596)	216	(850)	470	(748)
Louisiana Nature Center	(99)	(236)	137	0	(99)	(257)
	\$3,325	\$1,975	\$1,350	\$2,638	\$687	\$371

Excludes capital revenues and expenses.

President's Report

Ms. Conkerton reported that a resolution was needed stating that the Audubon Nature Institute attests that the Louisiana Compliance Questionnaire for Audit Engagements of Quasi-Government Agencies was presented to and adopted by the governing body, by request of Louisiana Legislative Auditor, Daryl G. Puper, CPA, CFE. (Dumas/Jacobs/Unanimous)

Ms. Conkerton further reported that a resolution was needed authorizing the Chairman of the Audubon Nature Institute to sign an engagement letter with LaPorte CPA's to perform Audubon's annual audit. (Jacobs/Werner/Unanimous)

Staff Reports

Dr. Kyle Burks, VP and Managing Director of Audubon Zoo and Park talked about a plan to move forward with the completion of the Audubon Park Master Plan. He stated that the plan is 90% complete and was done prior to Hurricane Katrina. He reported that Audubon will be engaging the public to gather their input with three public meetings, an online platform dedicated to the master plan with options to sign up for updates, leave comments, and complete a survey, research and park intercept surveys. Mr. Forman stated that a planning committee will be set up with Audubon Nature Institute Board and Audubon Commission members to attend the public meetings.

Dr. Burks then reported on animals at the Zoo. He stated that the zoo has a new Western lowland male gorilla named Okpara. He has been introduced to the three females in the exhibit and the hopes are that he will reenergize the breeding process for Audubon. Mr. Burks stated that a new giraffe was born at Freeport McMoRan Audubon Species Survival Center (FMASSC) at the beginning of the year as part of the Alliance for Sustainable Wildlife partnership with San Diego Zoo Global. A critically endangered Eastern Bongo was also born in late 2017. He then stated that 12 whooping cranes reared at the FMASSC were recently released into the wild joining other cranes released by the International Crane Rescue Organization.

Mr. LeClercq asked if there was anything on the Audubon Park Master Plan that would be controversial. Mr. Forman stated that there is no major construction planned and that this process will be to gather public input.

Mr. Rich Toth, VP and Managing Director of Downtown facilities reported that Audubon is working with a group called Kulture City which provides training and tools for Audubon staff to help better engage guests with special needs. The Audubon Aquarium will be the first Aquarium in the country certified in this capability. He further reported that the Aquarium is working on several maintenance items including new carpet and removal of the bleachers in the Gulf of Mexico exhibit. He then reported that two projects will open this year including an escape room and a temporary exhibit called Washed Ashore. He further reported the Aquarium will be undergoing an inspection by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums later this year. The inspection happens once every 5 years.

Mr. Forman, reported on the riverfront projects. He stated that the New Orleans City Council has approved the Governor Nicholls and Esplanade Wharf Redevelopment Project between the City of New Orleans and the Audubon Commission. Audubon along with the Convention and Visitors Bureau, Convention Center Board and the Port of New Orleans will provide \$15,000,000 to fund the project that will open up the riverfront into public park access and recreational facilities.

Mr. Forman stated that the City Council also approved the Ferry Terminal Bridge between the City, RTA and Audubon to construct a pedestrian access bridge that provides pedestrian access from Canal Street across the existing railroad tracks to the riverfront. Mr. Forman said one public meeting has already been held in regards to this project, one more is scheduled and a third will be forthcoming.

Mr. Forman reported that the Nominating Committee met on January 15 and unanimously recommends the following slate of officers for 2018: Christopher Bardell as Chairman, Poco Sloss as 1st Vice Chair, Mark Romig as 2nd Vice Chair, Willard Dumas as Recording Secretary, Bart Farris as Corresponding Secretary, Vincent Palumbo as Treasurer, Will Jacobs as Parliamentarian and Joe Jaeger as Immediate Past Chair. He further reported that there is one vacancy as Charles Rice has resigned and it was the unanimous recommendation of the Nominating Committee that Angus Cooper be elected to fill the seat. (Committee/Westfeldt/Werner/Unanimous).

Ms. Lindsey Ezell presented a 7-month-old Eurasian Eagle Owl named Mr. Miyagi. Mr. Miyagi is an ambassador animal at the Zoo and is currently being trained to participate in a free flight program for our guests.

Willard Dumas
Recording Secretary

In attendance: Bardell, Dumas, Lauscha, Sloss, Kupperman, Rowan, Brown, Palumbo, LeClercq, Jacobs, Spears, Messer, Colhoun, Van der Linden, Westfeldt, Werner, Jaeger, Wiggins, Hooper, Stall

Excused: Cazes, Charpentier, Coaxum, Perry, Quinn, Romig, Farris, Gottsegen, Long, Moss, Smith