

Audubon Commission Minutes

June 13, 2019

A meeting of the Audubon Commission was called to order on Thursday, June 13, 2019, at 4:00 pm in Presidents' Room at the Audubon Zoo by President Duncan.

Present were: Linda Baum, Kelly Duncan, Leila Eames, Frances Fayard, Ashley Francis, Lex Kelso, Bruce Hoefler, Beth Lambert, Nicole Lewis, Freddie King, Minh Nguyen, Field Ogden, Sally Shushan, Brent Wood

Excused were: Gayle Benson, Danny Conwill, Boysie Bollinger, Storey Charbonnet, Catherine Morrell, Olivia Manning, Norma Jane Sabiston, Coleman Ridley, Ravi Sangisetty, Charles Teamer

The minutes of the March 12, 2019 meeting were unanimously accepted as distributed.

President Duncan opened the meeting and noted that no members of the public were present.

Finance Report

Ms. Conkerton, EVP, and CAO reviewed the April 2019 Operating Budget (in thousands):

APRIL 2019 FINANCIAL DASHBOARD (AMOUNTS IN THOUSANDS)						
NET OPERATING RESULTS BY FACILITY:						
FACILITY	YTD ACTUAL 2019	YTD BUDGET 2019	BUDGET VARIANCE	YTD ACTUAL 2018	PRIOR YEAR VARIANCE	TOTAL BUDGET 2019
Aquarium/EGST	4,721	4,558	163	5,445	(724)	6,839
Zoo & Park	(963)	(1,028)	65	(398)	(565)	(5,702)
Butterfly Garden & Insectarium	222	234	(12)	284	(62)	387
FMASSC	(157)	(222)	65	18	(175)	(828)
Louisiana Nature Center	(104)	(123)	19	(101)	(3)	(349)
	\$3,719	\$3,419	\$300	\$5,248	(\$1,529)	\$347
Excludes capital revenues and expenses.						

Ms. Conkerton, EVP, and CAO reported that net revenue is 9% greater than budgeted and 29% lower than 2018 actual and that total revenue is 3% lower than budgeted and 3% lower than 2018 actual. She further reported that attendance through April 30, 2019, is 735,00 with a year-end target of 2.2 million. She then reported that total expenses are 6% lower than budgeted and 5% great than 2018 actual.

Ms. Conkerton further reported that the 2018 Audited Financial Statements have been completed after an audit by Laporte Sehrt Romig and Hand with no significant findings. Laporte presented the audit to the Executive/Finance/Audit Committee on May 29 and the financials were emailed to the full Commission on June 10. She asked for a motion to accept the audited financials as presented. (Shushan/Baum/Unanimous)

Ms. Conkerton then reported that a motion was needed to approve a resolution from Whitney Bank to add Kyle Burks and Rebecca Dietz as signers to all Audubon Nature Institute and Audubon Commission accounts. (Fayard/Kelso/Unanimous)

Presidents Report

Mr. Ron Forman, President, and CEO, reported that the Mayor's office has requested to extend the Governor Nichols and Esplanade Wharves Riverfront Development CEA deadlines by one year to allow for more public engagement and transition needs of TCI, the current tenant that will be moving out of the area. Other key changes to the CEA may include removing Audubon Commission's landlord obligations while TCI is on the property and adding a termination clause. The Commissioners discussed the CEA extension and modifications. A motion was made authorizing the President of the Audubon Commission to execute an amendment to the CEA Agreement between Audubon Commission and the City of New Orleans for Governor Nichols/Esplanade Wharves redevelopment as approved by Audubon's Outside Counsel. The motion was considered and approved by the Commission. (Kelso/Wood/unanimous)

Public Affairs and Legal Report

Ms. Rebecca Dietz, EVP of Public Affairs and General Counsel reported that Audubon's Community Connect program has welcomed 10,000 visitors since the program's inception in January 2019. Community Connect provides different avenues of complimentary admission to Audubon facilities for Orleans Parish residents.

Ms. Dietz further reported that a motion was needed authorizing the President of the Audubon Commission to execute a CEA Agreement between Audubon Commission and the National Weather Service as approved by Audubon's General Counsel and the President of Audubon Commission. The CEA will permit the National Weather Service to continue to operate the local weather station in its current location and to upgrade the equipment at the station, providing more accurate, relevant and reliable weather information for the New Orleans metro area. The National Weather Service will be responsible for all maintenance, repair to and operation of the station including any associated utility costs. The motion was considered and approved by the Commission. (Kelso/Wood/unanimous)

Ms. Dietz further reported that a motion was needed authorizing the President of the Commission or the President and CEO of Audubon Nature Institute to execute a contract with Crowder Gulf, selected through a public request for proposal, to provide services required for disaster debris clean up and collection. The motion was considered and approved by the Commission. (Baum/Shushan/unanimous)

Ms. Dietz then reported that a motion was needed authoring the President of the Commission or the President and CEO of Audubon Nature Institute to execute a contract with Tetra Tech, selected through a public request for proposal, for disaster management and monitoring services. The motion was considered and approved by the Commission. (Lewis/Nguyen/unanimous)

Facilities Report

Dr. Kyle Burks, Chief Operating Officer, reported that the lion exhibit is now open at the Zoo. He reported that introductions between the three female lions and one male lion are continuing with guarded success. He then reported that *Escape Extinction: Sharks*, a new family-friendly interactive experience presented by Escape My

Room is set to open at the Aquarium. He further reported that several births have occurred at the Audubon Species Survival Center including giraffe, sable antelope, and bongo. The animals are part of the Alliance for Sustainable Wildlife partnership with San Diego Zoo Global which has a goal of repopulating species that are in decline.

Executive Session

A motion was made by Wood and seconded by Ogden to enter Executive Session. (unanimous)

A motion was made by Shushan and seconded by Lambert to return to regular session. (unanimous)

Mr. Michael Deshazo asked for a motion to approve further handling of Fidelity and Deposit Company of Maryland v. Audubon Commission, Case No. 17-964, United States District Court for the Eastern District of Louisiana. The motion was considered and approved by the Commission. (Ogden/Nguyen/unanimous)

Ms. Rebecca Dietz asked for a motion to approve further handling of prospective litigation/legal issues involving the Solomon Group arising out of the Nocturnal House design/construction contract. The motion was considered and approved by the Commission. (Wood/Kelso/unanimous)

Linda G. Baum
Secretary