

# **Recreation District #1 of St. Tammany Parish**

Chairman: Nixon Adams  
Vice-Chairman: Shearn Lemoine  
Commissioner: Rick Danielson

Commissioner: John Neill  
Commissioner: deShea Richardson  
Commissioner: Barrett McGuire

Commissioner: Ed Bee  
Executive Director: Suzanne Reeder



## **Recreation District #1/Pelican Park Board of Commissioners Monthly Meeting March 19, 2025**

### **Board present:**

- **Nixon Adams**
- **Shearn Lemoine**
- **Rick Danielson**
- **John Neill**
- **deShea Richardson**
- **Ed Bee**

### **Board absent:**

- **Barrett McGuire**

### **Staff present:**

- **Suzanne Reeder – Executive Director**
- **Doug McLemore – Assistant Director**
- **Scott Goodwill – Chief Financial Officer**
- **Niki Butler – Marketing Director/Board Secretary**
- **Louisette Scott – Dept. Planning & Environmental Ed.**
- **Alex Landry – Naturalist & Environ. Ed. Coordinator**

### **1. Call to Order:**

- The Board of Commissioners Regular Meeting was called to order by Chairman N. Adams at 6:30pm. N. Butler, Board Secretary, called the roll. Five out of seven of the current appointed Board Members were present, which represents a quorum. R. Danielson joined the panel at 6:07pm, was not present for the Board Roll Call so the Board will have Six voting Members for the remaining of the Board of Commissioners Meeting.

### **2. Open agenda to propose new items:**

- S. Reeder asked for one substitution that was made to Item 6F. The FMLA policy has been updated, and a new copy has been provided. Please note that the policy number has been changed from what was originally stated. The file was originally listed as Policy 422, it is now Policy 425. Additionally, the purpose statement has been adjusted to reflect this change. No other revisions were made.
- Motion by R. Danielson to approve the changes to the FMLA policy as presented, Seconded by S. Lemoine. Vote 6-0. Motion passes.

### **3. Welcome Visitors:**

- **Vicki and Ken Winn – Pelican Park Pickleball Tournament Directors and coaches for our pickleball socials and clinics.**

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## **4. Proclamations/Resolutions:**

- Vicki and Ken Winn were present to be recognized for their significant contributions to the growth and success of pickleball in St. Tammany Parish. The proclamation honoring them was read in full by J. Neill. The proclamation recognizes Ken and Vicki for their instrumental role in the rapid growth and success of pickleball in St Tammany Parish. Their dedication has significantly expanded tournament participation, increased daily play at Pelican Park, and fostered a welcoming environment for players of all skill levels. Through their leadership, they have brought top-tier professionals such as Taylor Garicia, secured key sponsorships, and organized successful events like the recent 2025 Shamrock Showdown that brought in almost 200 players to participate. Their true passion for the sport of pickleball has helped Pelican Park become a premier pickleball destination in Southeast Louisiana.

## **5. Board of Commissioner Meeting Minutes:**

- **5a. Board of Commissioner Monthly Meeting Minutes – February 19, 2025.**
  - Motion by R. Danielson to approve the previous month's Meeting Minutes as presented with no changes, Seconded by d. Richardson. Vote 6-0. Motion passes.

## **6. New Business:**

- **6a. Wind and Hail Insurance Renewal**
  - E. Dewitt joined the meeting via live stream to provide an update on the wind and hail damage insurance policy. He explained that the insurance renewal was restructured to align with a January 1st calendar year. Dewitt presented a reduction of \$43,075, or a 12.5% savings, on the total insurance portfolio, excluding work comp and wind-hail policies. He highlighted that the wind-hail policy, which had been \$150,000 last year, will renew in July, and the work comp policy will be reviewed for further savings in the coming year. He clarified that the renewal was based on an 8.5-month policy rather than a full 12-month term.
  - **Discussion.** Board Members S. Lemoine and N. Adams asking questions about the timeframes of the premiums. E. Dewitt noted that there was a significant amount of work completed last year to restructure Pelican Park's insurance program. He explained that while the renewal for the wind and hail policy is a short-term, 8.5-month policy, it reflects a reduction in costs and a stronger risk for the park. Dewitt emphasized the importance of risk mitigation efforts, including the installation of the flock safety system and the submission of policies and procedures for abuse and molestation, which contributed to the general liability reduction. Regarding the Louisiana Citizens wind and hail policy, it was noted that this is a 12-month policy but will be rewritten in January 2026 with no penalty. The board discussed the timing for obtaining a quote for the Casting Center policy renewal, with a deadline for review by the June meeting. d. Richardson asked if we would get a return on our premium of months not used. E. Dewitt commented that, Yes, you will receive a return premium on months not used.

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- Motion by R. Danielson to Motion to approve and authorize S. Reeder, Executive Director to renew wind hail insurance with Citizens for the gyms in the amount of \$37,615, Second, by J. Neill. Vote 6-0. Motion passes.

- **6b. Auditor Compliance Questionnaire**

- Presented by S. Goodwill. The annual Compliance Questionnaire required for the audit was discussed. The primary updates for this year include changes in board member terms and updated board information, with most other responses remaining consistent with last year. To complete the process, the Board must pass a resolution acknowledging that the questionnaire has been reviewed and is in compliance.
- Resolution 2025-001 was read aloud: A resolution acknowledging receipt and compliance with the Louisiana Compliance Questionnaire for audit engagement of governmental agencies from the Louisiana Legislative Auditors Office.
- Motion by R. Danielson to adopt Resolution 2025-001: A resolution acknowledging receipt and compliance with Louisiana Compliance Questionnaire for audits engagements of Governmental Agencies from the Louisiana Auditor's Office and authorize Executive Director and Chairman of the Board to endorse Resolution 25.001. Second, by d. Richardson and a roll call vote was conducted by the Board Secretary, N. Butler:
  - Nixon Adams – For
  - Shearn Lemoine – For
  - Rick Danielson – For
  - John Neill - For
  - deShea Richardson - For
  - Barrett McGuire – Absent
  - Ed Bee - For
- With a unanimous vote of 6-0 in favor, the motion passes.

- **6c. Water Well & Storage Tank Project Bids:**

- L. Scott presented an update on the opening for the water well project that took place on February 20th, with a single bid submitted by Gottfried Construction LLC in the amount of \$1,368,125. This bid exceeds the project budget of \$1,230,000 by \$138,125. On February 27th, the Strategic Planning Committee met to review the situation and recommended rejecting the bid. A memo from Neel-Schaffer, along with the bid tabulation sheet dated March 12, was provided to the Board. Neel-Schaffer confirmed there were no irregularities in the bid but noted that it exceeded the engineer's estimated cost.
- **Discussion.** The committee members discussed that, due to the single bid received, the process lacked competition. Neel-Schaffer explained that several contractors were too busy to participate, which contributed to the lack of bids. He suggested that if the market conditions improve and become more competitive, the Board could consider rebidding the project in the future. The recommendation from the Strategic Planning Committee is to reject the current bid.

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- Motion by d. Richardson to reject the bid submitted by Motion to reject the award of the sole bidder, Gottfried Construction, LLC due to bid exceeding the Engineer's opinion of Probable Construction Cost and project budget of \$1,235,000. Gottfried Construction LLC. Second, by R. Danielson. Vote 6-0. Motion passes.
- **6d. Authorization to execute Agreement with Batture, LLC for Sand Volleyball Additional Services**
  - L. Scott presented an update on the Sand Volleyball project. During the January meeting, plans for the sand volleyball courts were presented, and there was discussion about adding a bathroom and a teams building. Batture, the company contracted to handle the sand volleyball project, worked to solicit bids from architects for these additional buildings. The most competitive proposal was submitted, and a copy of the proposal was provided at the last meeting. The scope of work has been revised to include the requested amenities, with an additional cost of \$66,550.
  - This request is for approval of the revised scope, which includes the bathroom and teams building. The total amount of \$66,550 covers fees and other associated costs. Additionally, a budget adjustment will be needed, which is addressed in the next agenda item. This adjustment accounts for the increased construction costs tied to the revised scope. **Discussion.**
  - Motion by R. Danielson was made Motion to approve and authorize the Executive Director to formally endorse the additional scope proposal from Batture, LLC. Second, by J. Neill. Vote 6-0. Motion passes.
- **6e. Reallocation of Development Fund Jobs**
  - S. Goodwill discussed his recommendation on moving the funds and presented how the adjustments will look after doing so.
  - Motion by R. Danielson to approve the reallocation of Development Funds as recommended by staff and discussed in the Strategic Planning Committee meetings as follows: reducing the Water Well/Hydraulic Study allocation to \$101,027, reallocating \$1,233,973 to increase funding for the Sand Volleyball Courts (+\$910,000) and Pickleball Courts (+\$100,000), and increasing the Unallocated Fund balance by \$223,973. Second, by S. Lemoine. Vote 6-0. Motion passes.
- **6f. FMLA Policy Approval**
  - S. Reeder provided the updated version of the FMLA Policy, in the absence of L. Thibodeaux. This is the same policy presented last month, with a slight adjustment in the policy number due to the updated draft document shared with the Personnel Committee. The only change made was to the purpose statement, which now reads:
  - *The purpose of the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) Policy is to align our current workforce needs, support employee well-being, and ensure compliance with federal regulations while promoting a healthier work environment. It also provides eligible employees with job-protected leave for specified family, medical, and military reasons.* The rest of the policy remains unchanged.

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- Motion by E. Bee approve Human Resources Policy 4.2.2 – FMLA and Additional Unpaid Leave Policy as presented, with an effective date of March 19, 2025. Second by d. Richardson. Vote 6-0. Motion passes.

## **7. Financials**

### **• 7a. Monthly Summaries:**

- The financials were reviewed by S. Goodwill and N. Adams, who praised S. Goodwill for providing accurate and comprehensive documentation, ensuring the Board remains consistently well-informed on all financial matters.

### **• 7b. Bank and Credit Card Statements:**

- S. Lemoine was absent from the previous Board of Commissioners meeting, so he has approved the Credit Card Statements for the last two months to be reviewed and approved by the Board this month.
- Motion by d. Richardson to approve the financials as presented, with the vote on the Credit Card Statements being for the last two months. Second by J. Neill. Vote 6-0. Motion passes.

## **8. Committee Updates:**

### **• 8a. Strategic Planning Committee– 02/27 & 3/13**

- R. Danielson mentioned that the Strategic Planning Committee recently met, and much of the discussion focused on the reallocation of funds and design plans for various projects, which have already been proposed. No additional matters were raised at the current meeting.

## **9. Division Monthly Reports**

### **• 9a. Administration**

- S. Reeder The insurance committee held another meeting today with Assured Partners. A date for the next meeting will be decided later.
- Exciting news regarding the NRA Million Coaches Challenge: our organization is one of 52 agencies nationwide selected for this recognition. The official announcement will be made on the 24th and will be featured at the Project Place Summit. We are competing alongside major players such as Mecklenburg County in North Carolina, the city of Los Angeles, and the city of New York. We are ranked highly, which is very exciting. We have a meeting with them tomorrow and will roll out training dates soon. These will be open to the school board, other recreation districts, and additional organizations.
- A sand volleyball survey was released to adult players, as requested at the last meeting. We received 38 responses, and those will be reviewed this week. Survey results will be shared with the Board, reflecting player interests in line with the plans already made by Louis and the team, including the addition of bathrooms. J. Neill



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asked if there was a possibility for recreational youth leagues for sand volleyball? S. Reeder replied that, Yes, the staff will definitely register for youth leagues at the sand volleyball courts.

- We are actively recruiting for several positions, including part-time roles in forecasting, concessions, park crew, and park specialists. LyKinda is reviewing applications. Additionally, we're excited about hiring a new IT position for a Guidance Information Systems Analyst. We have two new hires, Jordan and Aiden, will be joining the facility staff on a part-time basis.
- S. Reeder wanted to highlight Niki Butler's efforts with social media engagements as they are outstanding. Her Facebook reach is up 62% over last month, and LinkedIn views have increased by over 200%. Her most popular post on Facebook has reached 12,000 views. R. Danielson mentioned that he is impressed by how consistent and very well done the changes and events are very noticeable.

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- **9b. Master Planning/Environmental Education:**

- **Skate Park:** The contract with Grindline for the skate park was signed on March 7th. Biweekly construction meetings have started, and procurement is in progress. A change order for the project came in under budget by approximately \$30,000.
- **Pickleball:** The existing lighting at the pickleball courts has some inconsistencies. We're considering removing the old fixtures and adding 6 new lights to improve uniformity. This change will be reflected in the revised scope, which is expected tomorrow.
- **Sand Volleyball:** Samples of sand for the volleyball courts are being reviewed. Different options are being considered for quality and price, but the most expensive sand was included in the original budget.
- **Planetarium:** A demonstration of the portable planetarium will be held on April 21st from 10:30 AM to 12:30 PM. It will also be open to the public. Invitations are being sent to the School Board.
- **Pelican Nature Club:** The club went live today with events including birding classes and a full moon hike. Alex is leading several upcoming nature programs, including a bird walk during the Louisiana Master Naturalist Conference.
- **Other Initiatives:**
  - The 30th anniversary of the Rails to Trails Conservancy will include hikes along the Tammany Trace.
  - The City Nature Challenge will take place April 27th, with volunteers stationed at parks to assist with citizen science.

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- We are continuing partnerships with Fish and Wildlife, Lacombe, and the Punch Train Astronomy Society.
- The Pontchartrain Basin Restoration Grant started on March 1st, but no response has been received yet. No funding has been needed from our budget at this time.
- Conservation Efforts: The Louisiana Iris Conservation Initiative's (LICI) iris planting is complete, and we're featured on a tour map for local educational efforts.

## • 9c. Parks:

- **Field Lights:** Doug reported ongoing communication with Ecolight LED regarding the field lights. Sensors have been placed at three locations (Silver, Red, and Gray) to monitor electrical flow and voltage spikes that might be causing issues with the fixtures. Ecolight LED is committed to resolving the problem and will return next week to review the data. There are concerns about the warranty and history with Brilliant Efficiency, the company that provided the lights. Doug has been following up, and they are working to address warranty questions. A 10-year warranty was initially provided, and it's unclear if it resets with the new lights or if we are still within coverage. The flashing light issues still persists at the Red Fields. Doug has sent video footage of the light, and they are monitoring the situation.
- **Security System Update:** The upgrade for the alarm panel at the casting center is in progress. Submittals have been sent to the fire marshal for approval, and once completed, the system will be fully integrated, including fans and other devices.

## • 9c. Recreation:

- **Team Formation and Registration Update:** Drafts and team formations are underway in the Castine Center during the meetin, with coaches' badge photos being taken. Baseball and softball evaluations took place last week, with team formations occurring tonight. The staff, including four full-time members and two facility staff, are making significant progress.
- **Shamrock Showdown Pickleball Tournament:** Vicki and Ken Winn spearheaded the Shamrock Showdown Pickleball Tournament as the Tournament Directors as we had 180 people participated in the 2-day event. The event was originally at the Outside Pickleball Courts, but the staff had to make a quick move at one point to move the games indoors at Brown Gym when the weather did not cooperate.
- **Baseball/Softball Comparison:** Registration numbers for baseball and softball are similar to last year, with some teams seeing increases. The goal is to pull kids off the waiting list as space becomes available.

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- **Coaches and Training:** The program is in desperate need of more coaches, though there are enough at the moment. A focus is on concussion training and mandatory background checks for all coaches and assistant coaches, including fill-ins. These measures are in place to ensure the safety of participants.
- **9c. Castine Center:**
  - **Event Update:** Kevin, Catherine and Tracy have been working non-stop this week on event preparations, including scrapbooking at the end of the hall and the upcoming Cornhole event on Sunday.
  - **YouNight Event:** Great event focused on cancer awareness and featuring a fashion show, will take place Sunday. The event is expanding to include a health and wellness section, diversifying beyond fashion.
  - **Concert Band Performance:** The Covington Concert Band will perform next Wednesday inside the Castine Center. A special guest conductor will be leading the performance, and it is expected to be a memorable event.
  - **Project Graduation:** It was noted that no project graduation events are being held at this venue this year, d. Richardson comments that the schools have moved to other locations such as Urban Air, Altitude Trampoline Parks due to not having enough volunteers, so they use their staff with only minimal parent volunteers.
  - **Biddy Basketball:** The upcoming tournament, hosted in coordination with the Northshore Convention and Visitors Bureau, will take place March 29–31, with opening ceremonies the evening of March 28. This is a major event featuring 33 teams, including local participants and participants from several other states and even teams from Finland. Activities include skills competitions such as a three-point contest on Friday and the competition continuing from Saturday until Tuesday. Board members are encouraged to attend the event and will be provided with a VIP wristbands, or volunteer T-shirts for those interested in helping. There is potential for a three-year commitment for this tournament to return. J. Neill wanted to encourage other Board Members to host a few of the Finland players. John will have three 11/12-year old participants that are staying with his family and several others are looking for other families to house.

**10. Old Business: None**

**11. Public Comments: None**

**Next Board of Commissioner Meeting, Wednesday, April 16<sup>th</sup>, 2025**

**12. Meeting Adjourn:**



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**Motion to adjourn at 7:43pm by J. Neill. Second by d. Richardson Vote 6-0 in favor.**

**\*\*All attachments, item lists and Reports in Brief documents are included in the official minutes.**