

**St. Tammany Parish Recreation District #4**  
**Board of Directors ZOOM Conference Meeting**  
(unofficial/draft) Minutes

February 24, 2021

**Present:** Chairman, Al Hamauei; Vice Chairman, Gerrin Narcisse; Wendy Batiste, Shannon Menard, Steve Muller, Fabian Hartley, Antoinette Wright

**Absent:** Lucinda Roberts

**Counsel:** Laurie Pennison    **Staff:** Executive Director, Jordan Johnson; Sherry Marrero

**Guests:** Grant Schlueter and Paul Dimitrios

With the required quorum noted, Chairman Hamauei called the meeting to order at 6:37pm and led those present through the opening prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance.

**MINUTES**

With no corrections to the minutes, Wendy Batiste, seconded by Gerrin Narcisse, motioned to approve the minutes for the January 20 meeting. All were in favor. Motion passed.

**MOTION TO MOVE AGENDA ITEM**

Steve Muller, seconded by Gerrin Narcisse, motioned to move MENARD OATH OF OFFICE to the top of the agenda. All were in favor. Motion passed.

Laurie Pennison administered the Oath of Office for Shannon Menard.

Johnson introduced Grant Schlueter to discuss capital projects and finance options available to public bodies. Schlueter stated Johnson asked him to explore possibilities and legal options for capital improvements undertaken by the RD4 as opposed to paying expenditures with available cash as available. Schlueter explained millage renewals have sufficient revenues from that the tax to legally provide for issuance of bond indebtedness, secured by the millage. This would provide upfront funds for RD4 for capital improvement projects. If the board wishes to pursue this avenue for capital outlay projects, the term of this indebtedness could reach to 10 years. Schlueter advised against doing long-term borrowing for short-term assets. The process required approval by the Parish Council, as well as the State Bond Commission, and a bank willing to make the loan. A similar bond calls for \$500,000 at 2.73% interest for 5 years, with a payout of \$106,000 per year. A small State Bond Commission fee and other fees don't exceed 1.5% of the loan amount. Borrowing against a fixed millage tax allows for a minimal payout each year and leaves room for operational spending.

An additional legal option is to levy an additional millage with a bond indebtedness strictly tied to that additional millage.

**MOTION TO MOVE AGENDA ITEM**

Gerrin Narcisse, seconded by Antoinette Wright, motioned to move Paul Dimitrios/walking trail next on the agenda. All were in favor. Motion passed.

Dimitrios gave a history of a previous Recreational Trails grant application. The grant is an 80/20 reimbursable grant. Since RD4 is near the Tammany Trace, it could easily tie into the Recreational Trails project. With the current grant approval, Hamauei voiced his concern of an additional spend of

**St. Tammany Parish Recreation District #4**  
**Board of Directors ZOOM Conference Meeting**  
(unofficial/draft) Minutes

February 24, 2021

\$104,000 to make the project happen. Dimitrios stated the \$218,755 base project application can be designed in several phases to make funding feasible over time. The architect then designs the project to the district's budget.

Narcisse suggested using reserve funds on this project, which will serve the entire community. Hamauei thanked Dimitrios for pro-bono work for RD4.

Each board member, staff member, and legal counsel stated a priority of projects to be completed. Hamauei to contact Slidell City Councilman Bill Borchert for the process of obtaining CBDG grant funding for basketball courts. Hamauei will call a Building Committee meeting to create a strategic plan to prioritize projects.

**MOTION TO MOVE AGENA ITEM**

Gerrin Narcisse, seconded by Antoinette Wright, motioned to move the 2021 budget next on the agenda. All were in favor. Motion passed.

Johnson stated the 2021 budget was emailed. He stated the budget was categorized and streamlined. Johnson reviewed the budget with board members noting added and renamed line items. Gerrin Narcisse, seconded by Antoinette Wright, motioned to approve the 2021 budget. All were in favor. Motion passed.

**FINANCIAL REPORT**

Johnson emailed the finance statement for February and stated there was nothing unusual on the financial report. Gerrin Narcisse, seconded by Wendy Batiste motioned to approve the February financial report. All were in favor. Motion passed.

**DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

**Email Platform Change**

Johnson stated emails will be moved to a new platform. All board members will be assigned a new email account to keep all personal email accounts out of the public domain.

**Grants**

Johnson stated there are many grant opportunities, some of which can be handled in-house; some may need a grant writer to complete.

**Cultural Playground Update**

Johnson reported on a vision of an interactive, educational playground focusing on the Choctaw Indian and Native American heritage called the Bouchoux (squeezing pines) Village Playground. The vision includes, but not limited to, a hut replicating a native kitchen near the playground, an outdoor educational area, a garden overseen by Master Gardeners, and a stage. The park will tie into Lacombe's history as well.



**St. Tammany Parish Recreation District #4**  
**Board of Directors ZOOM Conference Meeting**  
(unofficial/draft) Minutes  
February 24, 2021

**Church/Cemetery**

Johnson updated the group on the Methodist Church's need to have someone oversee the cemetery grounds. Should RD4 obtain the church property, Johnson has laid the groundwork for a group of people to oversee the cemetery.

**2019 Compliance Documentation & Paperwork**

Johnson spoke with Debbie Mitchell, the Public Finance Advisor in Baton Rouge, who was helpful in rectifying the situation and bringing our documentation up to date. Mitchell will forward a binder with all documents when complete.

**Event Bookings**

Johnson reported calls are still coming in for facility bookings in June; baseball registrations have begun; Easter Egg Extravaganza was cancelled.

**Check Signers**

Johnson stated the need to confirm board members who will sign checks. Gerrin Narcisse, seconded by Wendy Batiste, motioned to add Antoinette Wright, Gerrin Narcisse, Wendy Batiste, and Shannon Menard to the bank signature card. All were in favor. Motion passed

**OLD BUSINESS**

**Rec Desk Website Alternative**

Research on alternatives is on-going, so no decision was made. Johnson stated Rec Desk was the best shopped solution so far. Annual fee is \$3500. Johnson reviewed amenities for the board, noting the first three months of the service are free of charge. Wendy Batiste, seconded by Antoinette Wright, motioned to approve the use of Rec Desk services. All were in favor. Motion passed. Johnson to send Pennison Rec Desk information.

**Park & Community Events during COVID-19 Phase 2**

Hamauei noted RD4 is still in Phase 2 – no change.

**PARK FENCE REPAIR**

Johnson reported Northshore Ironworks is working on repair of the damaged fence located at the back of the park that sustained damage last month.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Gym Door Quotes**

Three doors need to be replaced at the gym. The Fire Department reported the Grade 3 doors need to be replaced by Grade 1 doors. Johnson sent three quotes to board members. As no decision was made, the item was tabled.

**St. Tammany Parish Recreation District #4**  
**Board of Directors ZOOM Conference Meeting**  
(unofficial/draft) Minutes  
February 24, 2021

**Keller Field Plan Update**

Steve Muller reported copies of the print were emailed to Johnson and Hamauei. The Building Committee needs to meet on specifics on lighting, bathroom needs, etc. to place on the print.

**Community Grant for Leadership**

The STP Chamber will be hosting Leadership class. Johnson has been registered. Pennison stated \$500 grants are awarded to nonprofits, for which RD4 is not currently eligible.

**Committee Reports**

Hamauei stated the need to have more committee meetings to alleviate time spent at board meetings on committee matters. Johnson asked committee members to update him on whether committee meetings will be attended.

**No Executive Session was needed.**

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:45 pm.  
*Minutes respectfully submitted by Sharon DeLong.*