

A board meeting of the City Park Improvement Association (CPIA) was called to order on Tuesday, January 27, 2026, at 4:00 pm. The meeting was held at the City Park Administration Building.

**PRESENT:** Dale, Davis, Grenrood, Hales, King, Laborde, Lappa, Lawson, Lupo, Murray, Robin, Sims, Sterbcow, Turner, Waller, and Watler

**ABSENT:** Adams, Green, Hardie, Harris, Hilferty, Keller, Levendis, Sherman, and Solomon

**STAFF:** Rebecca Dietz, Casie Duplechain, Keith Hemel, Randy Odiinet, Gina Trapani, Lauren Clay, Brian Daly, Keith Claverie, Aubrey| Champion, Sarah Olivier, and Denise Joubert

**Guests:** Tania Hahn, Keith Tregle, and Kevin Allen

### **CHAIRS REPORT**

In the Chair's report, Paul Sterbcow called the meeting to order and thanked everyone for coming. He praised everyone who contributed to the success of Celebration in the Oaks and said it was a fabulous event.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** Anyone wishing to comment on an agenda item must sign in and specify the item they want to comment on.

Public Comment was then invited:

A motion was made to accept the minutes of the December 9, 2025, meeting, as circulated via email. The motion was seconded, voted on, and approved unanimously.

### **MANAGEMENT REPORT**

In the Management Report, Rebecca Dietz, President and Chief Executive Officer, reported:

- She recognized Lacey Watler for chairing Lark in the Park, which celebrates over 100 years of athletics at City Park. This year's event will take place at Pan American Stadium.
- Introduced Sarah Oliver, Director of Grants and Strategic Projects.

Lauren Clay, Chief Business Officer, provided an update on the Sales and Catering Request for Proposal (RFP). Clay reported that three proposals were received in response to the RFP. After a thorough review process, it was recommended to move forward with Joel Catering

She outlined the highlights of Joel Catering's proposal and reviewed additional key terms. A side-by-side comparison was presented, highlighting Joel Catering's projected revenues versus the average revenues CPC could expect if continuing to self-operate.

Additionally, they provided an analysis of the investment required should CPC choose to maintain self-operation. The transition is expected to take approximately six months.

Following discussion, a motion was made to accept the recommendation of the Selection Committee and to adopt a resolution approving a contract between Joel Catering and City Park Conservancy to operate catering services for City Park and authorizing the President & CEO of City Park Conservancy to negotiate, finalize, and execute a contract for catering services consistent with terms agreed upon by City Park Conservancy outside counsel. The motion was seconded, voted on, and approved unanimously.

## **FINANCE**

Keith Tregle, the park's independent auditor, presented the FY25 financial audit and issued a clean, unqualified opinion. He stated that they are working on the audit for Bayou Oaks Golf and hope to complete it soon. Following a discussion, Hemel stated that the joint CPC/CPIA Finance Committee recommends the audit for board approval. The CPIA board voted unanimously to approve the FY25 financial audit report.

Keith Hemel, Chief Financial Officer, reviewed the consolidated dashboard through December and reported:

- CPIA Unrestricted Cash      \$565,000
- CPIA TIF balance      \$185,000
- CPC Operating Income      \$600,000
- CPC Restricted Revenue      \$16MM
- CPC Restricted Funds      \$18.5MM
- CPC Pledge Receivable      \$12.5MM
- CPC Operating Reserve      \$2.8MM

### Government funding

- State Slot - \$720,000
- City Millage – outperformed last year
- City TIF - \$73,000

### Reviewed department over/under budget

- Celebration in the Oaks – \$676,000 over budget
- Tolmas Center/Gift Shop - \$90,000 over budget
- Concessions and Catering/Sales are below budget

### FEMA Outstanding Receivables

- Pan Am Lighting 90%    \$189,000

## **MASTER PLAN/CAPITAL PROJECTS**

Randy Odinet, Vice President and Chief Planning Officer, reported:

### **On-going Capital Improvements**

- Tad Gormley Stadium turf replacement
- Bayou Oaks Driving Range and South Course improvements
- Mirabeau Culvert replacement

We are launching a schematic design for areas on the north and south sides of the park. The amphitheater and the practice track are currently in the design process. We have a capital investment for the rehabilitation of the Maintenance Corral.

- He outlined potential opportunities on both the north and sides of the park that are either already funded or eligible for outside funding.

Following discussion, a motion was made approving the construction contract between City Park Conservancy and the selected responsive and most advantageous proposer for Mirabeau Culvert Replacement expected to exceed Two Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$250,000) but not to exceed Five Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$500,000) and authorizing the President & CEO of City Park to execute the contract and any related documents or necessary change orders. The motion was seconded, voted on, and approved unanimously.

Sarah Olivier reported that we are preparing an application to the Stateside Program of the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) for \$1.5 million. The LWCF Stateside Program is administered by the National Park Service and requires a 50% match. The proposed project will focus on improvements to the Little Lake area surrounding the Maintenance Corral.

A motion was made approving the obligation of funds to satisfactorily complete the Little Lake Recreation Project and authorizing the President and CEO of City Park to make an application to the Louisiana Office of State Parks, Division of Outdoor Recreation, to seek federal financial assistance for this project. The motion was seconded, voted on, and approved unanimously.

## **DEVELOPMENT/MEMBERSHIP**

Kevin Allen from Changing Our World provided an update on the Capital Campaign. His report included progress to date, the overall campaign timeline, cultivation highlights, and next steps.

The team is collaborating with the Campaign Committee to develop a comprehensive engagement strategy to guide the campaign's early stages. This strategy includes clarifying our fundraising pathways and strengthening outreach efforts to national funders.

## **BUSINESS**

Lauren Clay, Chief Business Officer, provided a recap of Celebration in the Oaks:

- Walking Tour Tickets sold – 98,000
- Driving Tour tickets sold - \$72,000
- Total Attendance - \$186,669
- Total Net Revenue - \$3MM

Discussions have begun regarding key focus areas for 2026

- Parking and traffic flow improvements
- Extension of the Driving Tour and adding additional substantial elements
- Working with Botanical Garden staff to create more engaging experiences within the Garden
- Replacement of outdated exhibits

The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 p.m.