



Fair Grounds Citizens Advisory Committee Meeting
Tuesday, August 5, 2014

Attendance:

Tim Bryant
Bishop Ryan Warner
Wayne Benjamin
Virgil Duplessis
Linda Landesberg
Tommy Lewis
Sandra Salmen
Capt. Jimmy Scott
Enrico Sterling
Sherry Watters
Oliver Wise
Howard Withers

Representing:

Fair Grounds Race Course
Councilmember Head
Councilmember Guidry
Fair Grounds Race Course
Councilmember Palmer
Councilmember Guidry
Fair Grounds Race Course
NOPD/Fair Grounds
Councilmember Guidry
Councilmember Guidry
Mayor's Office
Fair Grounds Race Course

Meeting is called to order at 4:09 pm by Chairperson Bishop Warner.

Bishop Warner welcomed everyone and thanked them for participating in this meeting of the Fair Grounds Citizens Advisory Committee and their commitment to the group.

Bishop Warner introduced Councilperson Susan Guidry and Stephen C. Parker, Assistant United States Attorney Eastern District of Louisiana.

Bishop Warner asked for a motion to approve the Special Meeting minutes which Sherry Watters and Linda Landesberg approved the amended minutes.

Old Business:

Tim Bryant: Introduced Stephen Parker, Assistant United States Attorney General for the Eastern District of Louisiana so that he can answer any questions or concerns about the Office of Police Secondary Employment.

Stephen Parker: Please ask any questions concerning the July 2012 mandate. This has been a process and the final product has not been reached. Judge Morgan has signed a judgment that all OPSE must be in place by September 1, 2014. It was decided that the pay the officers would receive could be flexible as opposed to one set rate.

Bishop Warner asked Mr. Parker if he had copies of the signed judgment?

Stephen Parker did and gave one to Bishop Warner and the other one to Sherry Watters and Linda Landesberg.

Linda Landesberg: Special to our ordinance No. 22,053 Proviso 12 line C will Captain Scott run the patrol?

Stephen Parker: This will not change for the first year. As of September 1st he will run the detail and all of the officers will return for 1 year. The office is looking at a rotation schedule.

Sherry Watters: What will happen if they cannot get enough officers to provide what ordinance No. 22,053 Proviso 12 states?

Tommy Lewis: Does the current staffing have to be approved?

Jimmy Scott: The entire police department was required to sign up, no one had a choice. I do not see any problem with this detail not working as it has.

Councilmember Susan Guidry: The OPSE pay rate was stagnating and now it has been made more flexible and responsive for the officers pay. They will make it fit to work with the provisos.

Stephen Parker: Officers will bid on the details and this is voluntary and employers have the right to turn down who bids on the detail.

Linda Landesberg: Why are officers given a lesser rate of pay than they are receiving now?

Stephen Parker: Councilmember Guidry has been an advocate for the police and what the rate of pay will be. Tim Bryant and John Salomone will have to crunch the numbers to determine the pay of the officers. A Federal Judge has said that police working extra details must be paid through OPSE.

Tommy Lewis: Why was the FGCAC left out?

David Waguespack, attorney for the Fair Grounds Race Course and slots said:
The Fair Grounds has not done anything negative or left out the FGCAC in this matter.

Sherry Watters: At the last special meeting John Salomone said that this has been in the works for the last 18 months, and it all was done without involving the FGCAC.

Stephen Parker: There has been no secret negotiations and the Judge cannot legally meet with your group unless it would involve a law suit.

Tim Bryant: We are attempting to be transparent and our goal is we want you to feel as though nothing has changed. We have a lot of confidence in Captain Scott and know he will try to maintain the same officers. This is my commitment.

Bishop Warner: Thank you to Stephen Parker and David Waguespack for coming to our meeting.

Neighborhood Update:

Captain Scott: Gave out detail reports on burglaries, auto theft and armed robberies that occurred in the patrol area.

Sherry Watters thanked Captain Scott for calling her and making her aware about an incident in the DeSaix neighborhood.

New Business:

Tim Bryant: We have quarter horses on the grounds and begin our 7th quarter horse meet on Friday, August 15 with a 12:30 pm post time. The post time each racing day will be 12:30 pm except for Saturday, August 16 a 4:00 pm post time. On Saturday, August 16th we will have two exotic races one for Zebra's and the other for Ostriches along with 10 quarter horse races.

The thoroughbred meet will begin on Friday, November 21. We will offer 5 Friday night events once a month during the racing season. We will race 81 days ending on Sunday, March 29th.

Bishop Warner: Can I have a motion to adjoin?

Linda Landesberg: Let us all please give Bishop Warner our condolences for the loss of his Father.

Bishop Warner thanked everyone and asked for a motion to adjoin which was made by Tommy Lewis and seconded by Linda Landesberg.

Bishop Warner informed the committee the next meeting would be on Tuesday, November 4, 2014 at 4:00 p.m.

The meeting adjourned at 5:15 pm.

* The chair would not take questions from the neighborhood representatives present and it was determined that the committee and guests would stay for those questions after the FGAC had adjourned.