



SULPHUR PARKS AND RECREATION (SPAR)
Regular Board of Commissioners Meeting
Held at the SPAR Recreation and Aquatic Center Multipurpose Room
933 W Parish Road, Sulphur, Louisiana 70663
Tuesday, May 17, 2022, 5:30 pm

The Board of Commissioners of Sulphur Parks and Recreation (SPAR) met at 5:30 pm on Tuesday, May 17, 2022, in the multipurpose room at SPAR Recreation and Aquatic Center in Sulphur, Louisiana for the regularly scheduled board meeting. The meeting was called to order and a roll call was taken. Board members present were David Devall, Doug Como, Mitch Bowers, Mike Boyette, and David Couvillon.

On a motion by Mr. Couvillon, seconded by Mr. Como, and carried, the board approved the minutes as presented for the April 19, 2022, regular board meeting.

The staff notified board that financial statements for April 2022 would be presented at the June 21, 2022, regular board meeting to allow staff additional time to complete financials. Interim Director, Laurie Koelzer, explained that it has been typical to postpone presentation of April financials due to staff involvement in hosting of the LHSAA State Softball and Baseball Tournaments.

Staff and architect, Mr. EJ Ellender recommended acceptance of the low public base bid and Alternates #1 & #2 received and opened on April 21, 2022, for Carlyss Park Hurricane Laura repair project. The low public bid received from Scott Taylor Construction and recommended for acceptance amounts of \$1,266,886.00 for the base bid, Alternate #1 totaled \$281,710.00, Alternate #2 totaled \$62,266.00, for a total contract award of \$1,610,862.00. Anticipated completion date is February/March 2023. (Board granted permission to advertise and place for public bid at the October 20, 2020, regular board meeting for permanent repairs/replacements from Hurricane(s) Laura/Delta) Ms. Koelzer informed the board that six contractors had received plans for the project but only one bid was received. She stated that a high probability existed that due to the scope of the project focusing on sports lighting and ballfield canopies that contractors refrained from submitting a bid. It was explained that Alternate #1 is not hurricane repair but instead is an opportunity to improve on existing facilities by adding air conditioning to the Carlyss gym, with the long-term goal being to add A/C to all gyms in the future. Alternate #2 is to refinish metal siding and trim to improve the esthetics and match the latest expansion and improvements at Carlyss Park. The low public bid was awarded to Scott Taylor Construction on a motion by Mr. Como, seconded by Mr. Devall, and carried. Public bids received as outlined below:

Bid Date: 4-21-2022

[] = low Bid

BIDDER	LICENSE NO.	BASE BID	ALT. #1 (Air Conditioning of Gymnasium)	ALT. #2 (Refinishing of Metal Siding, Doors, Frames, Trim of Gym, Restroom & Concession Buildings)	TOTAL (Base Bid + Alt.#1 & Alt.#2)
Gunter Construction, Inc.		No Bid	No Bid	No Bid	No Bid
Hackley Enterprises LLC		No Bid	No Bid	No Bid	No Bid
John D. Myers & Associates		No Bid	No Bid	No Bid	No Bid
Seth Priola Construction, LLC		No Bid	No Bid	No Bid	No Bid
Scott Taylor Construction	27110	[\$1,266,886]	[\$281,710]	[\$62,266]	[\$1,610,862]
Pat Williams Construction, LLC		No Bid	No Bid	No Bid	No Bid

On a motion by Mr. Couvillon, seconded by Mr. Boyette, and carried, staff was granted permission for the director or designee to issue and execute change orders as necessary not to exceed 15% greater (\$241,629.30) of the public bid of \$1,610,862 received and awarded to Scott Taylor Construction by the Board for the Carlyss Park Hurricane Laura repair project.

Concerned citizens requested that the decision to close Center Circle Pool for the 2022 season be reconsidered and allow additional opportunity for public input. At the March 15, 2022, board meeting the staff recommended and the Board voted unanimously to close pool due to inadequate power to support external temporary shower, restrooms, and ticket buildings, excessive cost for rental of temporary buildings, along with low attendance/revenue for the 2021 season. The pool house sustained major structural damages from Hurricane(s) Laura/Delta. The pool house building was evaluated for damages sustained by Charles Ladner and Associates, Consulting Structural Engineers and recommended that the building be demolished.

At the April 19, 2022, Board meeting SPAR awarded contract to Duplantis Design Group (DDG) and Mr. EJ Ellender of Ellender Architects for professional consulting services to facilitate a public process, compile pertinent data, and prepare a conceptual design, cost estimate and park plan for the existing Center Circle Park property that was damaged by Hurricane Laura in 2020. Estimated timeline as follows:

Project Kick-Off Meeting, Onsite Audit/Meetings	May-June 2022
Prepare Conceptual Plans	June-July 2022
Community Input Meeting	July 2022
Prepare Consolidated Center Circle Park Master Plan	July-Sept. 2022
Present Final Master Plan to Board	Sept. 2022

Ms. Koelzer drew everyone’s attention to a short PowerPoint prepared by staff providing an overview of sustained hurricane damage as well as to review the Center Circle Park redesign project. Ms. Koelzer explained that in less than a year, with a shortage of contractors and suppliers, SPAR was able to pool existing resources and materials to patch and repair a portion of each SPAR location to provide safe outdoor areas and recreation sports to residents of Ward Four, District Two. She mentioned that following COVID and the two hurricanes our community sustained, that SPAR prioritized a return to normalcy. Because of that priority, SPAR opened Center Circle Pool for the 2021 season by any means necessary. Now that recovery has progressed beyond the patch and repair phase, SPAR is now committed to revitalizing the entire Center Circle Park complex, including the pool, using community input to drive the design of the updated facility. She stated that through the community engagement process, facilitated by DDG, SPAR would build what the community wanted; she listed options that could be included in the new design such as: splash pads, dog park, extended walking paths, beach entry swimming pool, pollinator garden boxes, tennis courts, pickleball courts, inclusive playgrounds, etc.

Following the presentation, Mr. Bowers opened the floor to public comment for individuals that had requested to speak. Ms. Katherine Pleasant was the first speaker. Her comments were as follows:

“Katie Pleasant or Katherine Pleasant, it's 412 North Trailwood Street in Sulphur 70663. So obviously, I am concerned about the recommendation to close the Center Circle Pool and it not opening for this 2022 season. Item seven in the March 15, 2022, SPAR meeting minutes indicated this recommendation is based on structural damage to the building. As we know, and as we were told, the Center Circle Pool opened for the 2021 season with the temporary trailer and restrooms. Furthermore, expensive rentals were mentioned in the minutes, but it is unclear what the monetary amount for this is. And given that SPAR operates as a nonprofit agency this plan seems, claim seems unsubstantiated, without any sort of clarity. Members of the community should be afforded access to a recreational pool other than the SPAR waterpark. Many members of the community cannot afford to go to the waterpark regularly. However, we can afford to send our children to a safe community pool. Access to the community pool encourages exercise, friendships, and outdoor activity for all Sulphur residents, not just Maplewood. There has been information circulated and now displayed for us that SPAR has plans for Center Circle Park. These plans need to be available to the public, which seems to be the case and especially before plans to close Center Circle Pool are solidified. It recently came to my attention that plans were discussed at the April 19 SPAR board meeting. However, these board meeting minutes were not posted online for those who could not attend. Items on the agenda included firms for redesign project which only listed one nonlocal firm’s proposal. I believe the board needs to address the issue of sharing information publicly. I fully support the plan that would make better use of the space at Center Circle Park, which seems like is the plan. And I would like the community to be made aware and comments to be taken into consideration. In the meantime, however, I propose that Center Circle Pool be open

for the 2022 season, which is two months. This is a valuable resource that would otherwise remain stagnant and unused for the upcoming summer months. Today, when driving by Center Circle Park, the Duplantis firm was conducting a survey. So, it's clear that work for the redesign is beginning. I want to be clear that I speak for myself and others and support a better use of the Center Circle property. But I also want our voices to be heard in support of the Center Circle Pool opening this summer 2022. Thank You."

The board thanked Ms. Pleasant for her comments and Mr. Bowers announced the next speaker, Barry Price. His comments were as follows:

"Barry Price. 24 Eucalyptus. Lived about three blocks from the pool my whole life. 58 years old. My concern is they talked about the building needs to be torn down because of damages. But yet, they didn't see that building here on the PowerPoint. We saw everything else that had damaged but that building was not shown. We saw a fence that was torn up. I drove by the other day. I drive by there every day. And I am trying to figure out where the damage is. Just a little bit messed up on the metal roof. I'd like to know, you know if we could get that information, what structural damage is wrong with that building to say that we've got to just tear it down. Again, like I said, I have worked there, and I swam there for over 50 years. That building looks just like it did when I was five years old. I do not see where there is any damage. And there is a lot of kids that go to that pool that cannot get over here during the summer. A lot of kids use it. I drive by it every day and I see all those kids. Swimming lessons are done there. What's going to happen to those things, you know those programs? People being able to get swimming lessons. As in, you know, just the kids and the parents. You know, I like what I have heard so far about making changes, I just want to make sure that there is always a pool at that Maplewood Center Circle."

Following Mr. Price's comments, Mr. Bowers opened the floor for board discussion and response to the public comments and questions. Mr. Devall requested to address the issue first and provided the following comments:

"Before we vote on whether the pool should reopen or not, I have a few things that I would like to share. As a non-elected board member, I take the position of being on this board very serious. Over the past few days, I have taken time away from work to walk Center circle and visit with the locals that are using the area. I've also even visited local businesses to get the firsthand point of view of what this pool means to that area. I've also have had conversations regarding the pool area at rec games, which was with one of our speakers today. I was appointed by the police juror that represents District 12. That's the Carlyss area. Knowing the value of what the redesign will bring Maplewood. I'm excited about what is to come to Carlyss and other areas of Ward Four. However, what I am most disappointed in is how misinformation has divided our community. I truly feel that small town America is what holds this great nation together. And due to the mistrust and misinformation that has been circulated via social media and in the news. I feel that our community that has been through so much and stood together in the rebuild of what is ours has taken a step back. As all of you know the board was provided information a few months back with a recommendation that led to a unanimous decision or unanimous vote to move forward with the redesign, which entailed not reopening the pool at Center Circle. On May 3, I was in a meeting which took place with City Councilwoman Mandy Thomas, Police Juror Tony Tramonte, Interim Director Laurie Koelzer, and Board Member Doug Como to discuss the possibilities of reconsidering our decision. Upon the completion of that meeting, Police Juror Tramonte and I, all summarized the meeting with the idea that we are going to revisit the many challenges that SPAR has in front of us to overcome the possibilities of reopening the pool. However, I felt like not everyone at that meeting left with the same idea in mind. Shortly after, Woody Daigle started a firestorm of misinformation on social media, and that has gotten us where we are today. So where do we go from here? I extended my public interviews beyond Maplewood. Here are a few questions that I received. Do we reopen the pool knowing that we can start demo between now and school start? And once demo begins, the entire area, including the pool will be closed? Do we just move forward with the previous decision? Do we just keep Center Circle Pool as is, make the renovations needed as appropriate? And then re appropriate the funds to another location in Ward Four? Do we amend the budget of the redesign to reflect the money spent on keeping the pool open? These are all questions that I have asked. And then I have been asked when bringing up the conversation. And those of you that know me, I am not going to back off from opening up a conversation to get the knowledge needed to make a sound decision. I find it troubling to know that what was started as a civil conversation with the intent to revisit our decision has turned into someone's personal cause. Great things are on the horizon for Ward Four. I plan to continue to work with my fellow board of directors, SPAR and our police jurors to bring the community well beyond our past and into the future. That can be brighter for all of us. In order for us to get where we're going. We must all keep in mind that a community unified is much stronger than a community divided. So with that, I'll turn it over."

Board Member, Mr. Couvillon shared the following comments:

"I just want to kind of echo some of what David said. I'm a non-elected board member. I do take this seriously. I have kids from 12 to zero, I guess a third, whatever you want to call it. I'm invested in this park system for a long time. I can tell you, if you look back at meeting minutes from last year, March timeframe, we fought to open that pool last year because we wanted some normalcy back to it. Temporary trailers, I know that that was not the best conditions, but we felt like we needed to see it for the attendance. Whenever it was brought to us again this year, and there is Barry, we have report from structural engineers, I think more than one. You can see through the building from the inside; there's foundation cracks all the way through. And they said not suitable for inhabitation. Nobody can go in. Which is what drove the temporary trailers last year. And I can tell you, that is a fact. And I do not know if we can show them or not, but I think we can. So that is one of the fears. You know, and when this was brought up, they had already reached out to other firms to look for opportunities to make the place, the park better. And I will be honest, when I take my kids to the park, Center Circle was always their first one to go to. I like it. It's shaded. It is just a nice place to be. I do think that there is a price to progress, right? I mean, if Henry Ford, would have asked his customers what they wanted a long time ago, it was a faster horse. Ok, but there is going to be a change. And there is going to be some fallout from that change. Whenever we got the numbers of attendance last year, and it was a third less, operating at a 94% loss of all districts taxpayer's money. And we had the opportunity to upgrade that facility. I think that was a great opportunity to do that. I think a pool definitely should be in the future, and a beach entry sounds great. Whatever that is. But I do think it is something that we want to pursue. But I am going to tell you, if we do start a demolition, there is no, there is no option to have the pool open, if that starts in June. And if we push it back further, say okay, we open it this summer, then we will be in here next summer. Because, or maybe we won't, because a construction will have started, if we elect to continue to keep the construction development at Center Circle, which I would like to do. But that is definitely an option as well. I mean, it kind of depends on where we go from here. But I do appreciate everyone's comments. And I can tell you it was not a decision we just made on a whim. You know, we looked at a lot of information. And I do think we elected this design firm that has done this, at many places across Louisiana, actually across the whole south, this is what they do. And that is why we went with this company; to hire through EJ Ellender, which is a local person to reach out and redesign this park and make it one of the best parks in the area. So that is the vision that I see for it. And that was the basis of personally my decision. But I will address Ms. Pleasants point about sharing information publicly. And I think that was a failure we did have. And I will admit to that, and I think that is something we can address and get better at 100%."

Board member Mr. Como shared the following comments:

"I just want to kind of address some of the points that folks spoke to. Ms. Pleasant asked how much, she did not know how much money we spent last year. It was almost \$33,000, after all was said and done that, we were in the hole from operating that which is fine. I mean, you know, we wanted to get it open for everybody to have access to it. We should do a better job communicating and we are working on that. We're addressing it we're trying to move forward on that. The structural damage to the building. I mean, we have had structural engineers out their guys. It is essentially condemned; it needs to be bulldozed. It was a tough decision for us that we made back in spring. A final decision that we made back in the spring to close it, but it has been one of the decisions we had to make at that point in time to in order to make the park better for everyone. Yet you cannot have operations going on with kids playing, when you are having a construction site also. So that is all I have."

Mr. Bowers was the last board member to address the topic with the following comments:

"Thank you all, first of all, for coming and for your input. And those of you who spoke, thank you. Ms. Pleasant, I wanted to touch base on a couple of things that they didn't. And I asked you guys not to repeat yourself. So, I'm not going to repeat what everybody else said. I believe, and Laurie can touch base on it in a little bit but talking about transparency and the most recent meeting minutes. We've had multiple major tournaments come through and the staff has been pulled in a bunch of different directions. I know they usually do well, about getting the meeting minutes up. I'm sure the reason that April wasn't up yet is because they were pulled in multiple different directions for the state softball tournament and the state baseball tournament, which happened over the last, you know, three weeks respectively. Mr. Price, I want to touch base on a couple of things that you have made mentioned, I think in the initial walkthroughs, and it was a previous director, but Laurie may be able to back me up on this or give additional input here in a second. The building damage was just like you said not seen initially when we were doing walkthroughs and trying to assess damage. We were planning on, I believe, kind of reopening that until a structural engineer came and assessed the properties. And it had major structural damages that is not seen from the outside, the foundation

is messed up. And there was a big gap or something more at the bottom, we had some pictures of it. But it has major structural damage. I know that that pool is active with swimming lessons and things like that are performed. But I think, if you know, if we have to close it down, we have the pool here right outside that we can do those things and accommodate some of those. And hopefully it is just for one summer, if we can get this process going on the redesign as quickly as possible. And things are going quicker than anticipated. I think already with them coming out today and doing some of the surveying and things that ball gets moving a little quicker and it is just for this summer, you know. That's the thing that we kind of take into consideration and that was one of the points when we were making the decision. You know, another point is the safety of the building and the surrounding area, which is our number one priority for you guys is to make sure it's safe if we can open. Is it a liability issue, is our insurance carrier going to cover us if we knew that this building was damaged or condemned or had issues with it and somebody is hurt or there is an accident out there? The cost to do it, and I know we are going to take somewhere in between \$30k to \$40k loss. And while I understand you guys all live there and you are taxpayers to that area. It is a wide area and there's taxpayers in Carlyss and North Sulphur that would probably argue the other way with you guys that I don't want my taxpayer money going into something like this if it's going to be at a loss you know, when you can take that money and appropriate it somewhere else. We are responsible for all of that as well. We also have another community pool here which is literally right through that window right there. We have an Olympic sized pool and a little smaller pool for younger children or for the geriatric population to get in and do their water aerobics. And it is not significantly more expensive. I think you guys are at \$1.75 and we are at you know \$3 a person for here, whereas the waterpark is \$6 and \$8, respectively. So, we took as a board, all that information and all that data together, and we made the decision in May. And it just was not a one factor thing. It was multifactorial.

After some conversation among the board clarifying or elaborating on various public comments or questions and additional comments from unannounced guests in the audience, Ms. Koelzer thanked the board and the public guests for their comments and concerns. She also expressed her passion for SPAR and stated that all staff members take tremendous pride and personal responsibility in the facilities, programs, and events that SPAR provides to the entire community. She shared her opinion that SPAR adds incredible quality of life to the residents of Sulphur, and that without the parks and facilities provided by SPAR every resident would be negatively impacted.

Mr. Como moved to add an agenda item to revisit the decision to close Center Circle Pool, seconded by Mr. Couvillon. Following a roll call vote, the motion carried, and the agenda item was added. The roll call votes were as follows:

YEAS: David Devall, Doug Como, Mitch Bowers, Mike Boyette, David Couvillon.
NAYS:
ABSENT:
NOT VOTING:

Mr. Como made a motion to vote whether to reopen the Center Circle Pool, seconded by Mr. Couvillon. The decision for the Center Circle Pool to remain closed for the 2022 season was reaffirmed following a roll call vote. The roll call votes were as follows:

YEAS:
NAYS: David Devall, Doug Como, Mitch Bowers, Mike Boyette, David Couvillon
ABSENT:
NOT VOTING:

Notifications

- a) Change Order to the project awarded to Gunter Construction for Hurricane Laura damage to Fransch Park Gym, Recreation Room, and Office Building. Contract sum to date including this change order is \$1,574,320.08. (Board granted Director permission to issue and execute change orders as necessary not to exceed 15% greater than Public Bid awarded for \$1,497,600.00 at the June 15, 2021, Board meeting). Change Order is as follows:
 - Change Order #4 - \$5,667.99 - remove gas line, heater, shelving in storage closet, cap gas lines, patch and paint all walls and door, install new vinyl base, add new 2x4 lay in LED light fixture to closet.

- b) Change Order to the project awarded to Gunter Construction for Hurricane Laura damage to the Aquatic Center and Waterpark. Contract sum to date including this change order is \$2,429,079.13. (Board granted Director permission to issue and execute change orders as necessary not to exceed 15% greater than Public Bid awarded for \$2,385,000.00 at the March 2, 2021, Board meeting). Change Order is as follows:
- Change Order #3 - \$10,395.90 - Add vent base to both interior basketball courts, remove and replace water damaged sub-flooring and maple flooring in board meeting room, sand and finish entire floor in board meeting room. Deduct for credit of vinyl flooring un-used in administration office.
- c) Staff presented an updated organizational chart for review of filled and vacant positions. Discussion was had concerning the difficulty of finding and retaining part time staff, particularly for the position of lifeguard.
- d) LHSAA State Championships Ticket Sales for 2022.
- Softball = 9,943 (2-day event – April 29-30, 2022)
 - Baseball = 14,746 (4-day event – May 11-14, 2022)
- e) Scheduled SPAR and Community Events.
- Pelican Triathlon – Sunday, May 22, 2022 (SPAR Waterpark)
 - SPAR Recreation Girls Slow-pitch Softball registration begins Mon, May 23, 2022
 - Sulphur Library Story Times – Monday's 10-11 am June & July 2022 (The Grove Park)
 - American Red Cross Lifeguard Training - May 16-19, May 31-June 1, June 1-4, 2022 (Rec. & Aquatic Center)
 - USSSA AA & AAA Governor's Games - Sat & Sun May 21-22, 2022 (Pattison & North Frasch Complexes)
 - SHS Football Golf Scramble - Fri, May 27, 2022 (Frasch Golf Course)
 - USSSA Majors Governor's Games - Sat -Mon May 28-30, 2022 (Pattison & North Frasch Complexes)
 - USSSA State Championship Week 1 - Fri-Sun June 3-5, 2022 (Pattison & North Frasch Complexes)
 - St. Theresa Life teen Camp Scramble - Sat June 4, 2022 (Frasch Golf Course)
 - SPAR Swim Lessons - Mon-Thur June 6-16 & 20-30, 2022 (Rec. & Aquatic Center)
 - Sensory Swim - Wed June 8, 2022 (SPAR Waterpark)
 - Adult Swim - Wed June 8, 2022 (SPAR Waterpark)
 - Junior Golf Camp - Tues-Thur June 7-9 (Frasch Golf Course)
 - 2D Sports' I-10 East/West Championship - Thur-Sun June 9-12, 2022 (McMurry Park)
 - Second Saturdays in Sulphur (art camp) - Sat June 11, 2022 (Henning Cultural Center)
 - USSSA State Championship Week 2 - Fri-Sun June 10-12, 2022 (Pattison Park)
 - Frasch MGA 3 club challenge - Sat June 11, 2022 (Frasch Golf Course)
 - SHS Baseball Camp - Tues-Fri, June 14-17, 2022 (McMurry Park)
 - 2D Sports' Cowboy Classic - Thur - Sun, June 16-19, 2022 (McMurry Park)
 - Bayou Junior Golf Tour - Sun June 19, 2022 (Frasch Golf Course)
 - 7th Annual Jennie Finch World Series - Thur-Sun June 16-20, 2022 (Pattison & North Frasch Complexes)

Mr. Devall made a motion to add a special meeting date, Thursday, May 19th, 2022, at 5:30 pm, to discuss concessions for the waterpark and aquatic center that may be extended to district residents to accommodate the loss of Center Circle Pool for the 2022 season. Mr. Como seconded the motion, and it carried, following a roll call vote. The roll call votes were as follows:

YEAS: David Devall, Doug Como, Mitch Bowers, Mike Boyette, David Couvillon.

NAYS:

ABSENT:

NOT VOTING:

All business taken care of, a motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Boyette, seconded by Mr. Como, and carried.

Meeting adjourned at 6:38 pm.


Approved (Board Member)


Attested