Atchafalaya Trace Commission/
Atchafalaya National Heritage Area

Minutes: January 30, 2013 Regular Meeting

A regular meeting of the Atchafalaya Trace Commission (Commission) was held Wednesday, January 30, 2013 at 10:00 AM at the Capitol Park Welcome Center in Baton Rouge.

Commissioners present:
Ascension Parish: Charles Caillouet
Avoyelles Parish: Wilbert Carmouche
Concordia Parish: Glenn McGlothlin
East Baton Rouge Parish: Gerren Sias
Iberia Parish: Chris Burton
Iberville Parish: Gene Seneca
Lafayette Parish: Jennifer Ritter Guidry, Vice-chair
Pointe Coupée Parish: J. A. Rummler, Chair
St. Landry Parish: Pam Cannatella
St. Mary Parish: Carrie Stansbury, Treasurer
Terrebonne Parish: Patrick Thomas Gordon, Secretary

Commissioners absent:
Assumption Parish: Phillip Daigle, Sr.
St. Martin Parish: There is no appointee from St. Martin Parish.
West Baton Rouge Parish: Julie Rose

Others present:
Debra Credeur, Executive Director
Gerard Overhultz, Laissez Faire, Inc.
Pam Caillouet, Ascension Parish Resident
Charles Fryling, President, Friends of Atchafalaya
Willie Fontenot, Friends of Atchafalaya
Christopher Kersey, Baton Rouge Astronomical Society
Randy Jarreau, Civil War Committee
Randy Harrelson, Pointe Coupée Historical Society
Tracy Browning, Ascension Parish Tourism
Kayla Denova, Ascension Parish Tourism

After the Pledge of Allegiance, Chair Rummler called the meeting to order.

Agenda Approval
Charles Caillouet moved to adopt the agenda as presented. Carrie Stansbury seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Approval of September 26, 2012 Meeting Minutes
Gene Seneca moved to approve the September 26, 2012 regular meeting minutes. Jennifer Guidry seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Committee Reports

Civil War and Reconstruction Sesquicentennial Committee
Debra Credeur recognized Committee members J. A. Rummler, Julie Rose and Randall Jarreau who have worked steadily in developing the Civil War Sesquicentennial Speaker Series for the upcoming year. While some minor changes are still to be made to the schedule, the draft version was distributed
to the Commission. Twelve presentations will occur from February 2013 – January 2014 in several heritage area parishes. The presentations, featuring renowned authors and historians, cover significant area Civil War events and issues, including a concert by a musician and storyteller that will have broad appeal. Some of the parishes have combined the presentation with a larger event.

Carrie Stansbury pointed out the speaker series education format could be applied to other Heritage Area themes such as birding. J. A. agreed this would be a good theme for the future.

**Land & Water Heritage Committee**

Debra reported the status of the Land & Water project. Luke Venable is working on a timeline to use as a guide for developing the video, possibly for use in a kiosk, he demonstrated at a previous meeting. Charles Caillouet had recommended the book, *Designing the Bayou*, which Luke is using as a resource for this project. Debra reported she met with one touchscreen company that quoted $12,500 for hardware, software and development for a 23” touchscreen system, and $200/month maintenance, and she will continue to gather information for this part of the larger Land and Water tour and project.

Charles Caillouet reported on the organizations’ meetings he attended where land and water issues were discussed and distributed a brief report to the Commission. He pointed out opportunities to support conservations efforts such as those of Louisiana Wildlife Federation (LWF) and other litter abatement efforts. LWF is holding its 74th convention at Embassy Suites in Baton Rouge February 22-24. Items discussed by the Commission and guests were a Butte La Rose landing project in design phase; bayou cleanup effectiveness; working with parishes on litter control; recycling; local enforcement responsibilities; the Education Committee possibly addressing awareness and education issues. Carrie Stansbury asked if Charles Caillouet would assist with a letter Commissioners could consider using in their local communities.

J. A. introduced Christopher Kersey of the Baton Rouge Astronomical Society that spoke on dark sky conservation. Kersey talked about the role of light shields in preserving dark skyscapes, and lowering energy costs, pointing out in some areas it is hard to even discern the shape and/or points of some of the constellations or the Milky Way. Discussion ensued on the infrequency of encountering a dark sky area. J. A. distributed printed copies of the home page of the NPS night sky website, and a satellite image of the Atchafalaya National Heritage Area that contrasts light pollution with the natural dark sky.

**Diversity of Cultural Heritage Committee**

J. A. Rummler suggested the Jewish Community in the Lower Mississippi Valley as a topic of research for the Diversity of Cultural Heritage Committee, pointing out there are several adjacent communities with stories of Jewish history.

**Other Projects Update**

Debra Credeur reported on Commission business items and other projects:

- Tommy Polk resigned and Glenn McGlothin has been appointed to the Commission, representing Concordia Parish
- Cajun Coast CVB (St. Mary Parish) was recognized at the Lt. Governor’s Tourism Summit with a Louey Award for Convention and Visitor's Bureau with a Budget of $250,000-749,999. The CCVVB was honored for their collaboration in Tour de Teche and in their creation of a festival to honor the movie "Tarzan of the Apes," which was filmed in the Morgan City area in 1917.
• Superintendent Carol Clark retired January 1; Lance Hatten is Acting Superintendent of Jean Lafitte NHP & P.
• Lt. Governor’s Tourism Summit is moving to August: August 27-28, 2013 with a shortened 2-day format in Baton Rouge and August 26-28, 2014 in Kenner, LA.
• **Atchafalaya Trace Commission 2013 Meeting Schedule:**
  March 20, May 22, July 24, September 25 and November 30
• **A Birder’s Guide to Louisiana** expected to be ready by June 30 (electronic format) and we are exploring a smart phone application as well.
• **International:** I met with the tourism international representatives during Summit and continue to supply them with our DVD, especially the French one to Canadian and French reps. I received requests to consider reproducing in German and Spanish. By way of the contact us form on our website, I am receiving international requests more often. In January, requests for information came from China, New Zealand and Austria.
• **ANHA Facebook page** shows 197 direct likes with a peak reach the week of January 8-15, and a total reach of 80,049.
• Check out louisianapaddle.com and bikelouisiana.com as additional outlets for marketing outdoor recreation.

**Other Business**
Gerren Sias inquired about the additional signs to be added, which are pending until funding is confirmed. Glenn McGlothlin reported he will be in Washington, DC the following week on business and offered to deliver the ANHA DVD and brochure to offices of our Congressional delegation.

**Announcements** of upcoming parish events and meetings of various organizations were made by the Commissioners.

**Pat Gordon moved to adjourn the meeting. Gerren Sias seconded the motion and, passing unanimously, the meeting was adjourned.**