Atchafalaya Trace Commission/
Atchafalaya National Heritage Area

Minutes: January 22, 2014 Regular Meeting

A regular meeting of the Atchafalaya Trace Commission (Commission), managing entity of the Atchafalaya National Heritage Area (ANHA), was held Wednesday, January 22, 2014 at 10:00 AM at Capitol Park Welcome Center in Baton Rouge.

Commissioners present:
Ascension Parish: Charles Caillouet
Assumption Parish: Phillip Daigle, Sr.
Concordia Parish: Glenn McGlothin
East Baton Rouge Parish: Gerren Sias
Iberia Parish: Chris Burton
Iberville Parish: Gene Seneca
Lafayette Parish: Jennifer Ritter Guidry
St. Landry Parish: Pam Cannatella
Terrebonne Parish: Patrick Thomas Gordon
West Baton Rouge Parish: Julie Rose
Avoyelles Parish: Wilbert Carmouche
Pointe Coupée Parish: J. A. Rummel
St. Mary Parish: Carrie Stansbury

Commissioners absent:
St. Landry Parish: Pam Cannatella
St. Martin Parish: The St. Martin Parish position is vacant.
West Baton Rouge Parish: Julie Rose

Others present:
Debra Credeur, Executive Director
Gerard Overhultz, Laissez Faire, Inc.
Aldus Guidry, Lafayette Parish Resident
Jean Frigault, CODOFIL
Danny Belanger, Office of Cultural Development/Division of the Arts
Janet Pace, Volunteer Louisiana
Tracy Browning, Ascension Parish Tourism Office

After the Pledge of Allegiance, Commission Vice-chair Jennifer Guidry called the meeting to order at 10:08 a.m.

Agenda Approval
Wilbert Carmouche moved to adopt the agenda as presented. Charles Caillouet seconded the motion and the agenda was accepted as presented.

Approval of November 20, 2013 Meeting Minutes
Gene Seneca moved to approve the November 20, 2013 regular meeting minutes. Glenn McGlothin seconded the motion and the minutes were unanimously approved.

Education Committee
Curriculum Distribution
Danny Belanger of the LA Office of Cultural Development/Division of the Arts (DOA) reported on an initiative his agency is formulating for distributing the multiple curricula in the Dept. of Culture, Recreation and Tourism. The project includes a combination of a web portal for teachers available 24/7, orientations and trainings, an expo, regional arts councils and webinars that would distribute multiple curricula throughout Louisiana including that of ANHA. DOA has submitted a grant application to fund the project, and if funded, the funds from the grant would
Gene Seneca made a motion to participate with the Division of the Arts in the distribution of our curriculum. Charles Caillouet seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Charles Caillouet made a motion to commit up to $25,000 for Atchafalaya National Heritage Area’s share of the program. Carrie Stansbury seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Pat Gordon asked that the Commission receive a report in the future that would include who other partners are, progress and other items. Gene Seneca and Debra Credeur reported they had presented the ANHA curriculum to the faculty of Crescent Elementary School in Iberville Parish on January 17. Debra indicated that, while enjoyable, it would take a long time to distribute the curriculum using the “delivery” approach. Charles Caillouet and Jennifer Guidry said they would be willing to help with school visitations.

Educational Speaker Series
Debra reported on the last 2 events in the previous 12-month speaker series, both hosted by Pointe Coupée Historical Society. Attendance was 40 at the November event, and 36 at the January event. The latter was a combination lecture by local historians Lee and Costello, and a related exhibit supported by several community members, and was held on a Saturday.

This year’s presentations begin with a wildlife photography presentation in St. Mary Parish, and interest has been expressed about presentations on economic development supported by French culture and language; flora and fauna; and additional history-related events. Jean Robert in the audience detailed the success of a previous economic development workshop related to French culture. Debra distributed a draft of a speaker information sheet for proposed speakers. Jennifer Guidry suggested the Education Committee hold a conference call to establish and review criteria for speaker, partner and site selection, and how and by whom the ANHA will be represented at these events. Carrie Stansbury told the Commission about other State agencies’ requirements and follow-up when they partner with outside entities.

Pat Gordon made a motion that the Education Committee review the process and establish criteria for the Educational Series. Carrie Stansbury seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Natural & Outdoor Resources Committee
Leave No Trace Workshops
As a result of partnering with Leave No Trace (LNT) for Outdoor Ethics many months ago, LNT turned to ANHA for assistance when they received a Pugh Foundation grant to target the Acadiana region with education workshops in the schools. I provided the team of 2 outdoor educators with a list of schools and contacts and they will make contact and arrange their own scheduling. Gerren Sias facilitated an opportunity for the trainers to be interviewed on EBR Councilwoman Ronnie Edwards’ “Spotlight on 5: Public Affairs Show” in the spring when the trainers are here.

The training includes enjoying the outdoors responsibly; reducing environmental impact; respecting wildlife and reducing litter, and aligns with the Common Core Educational Standards.

Water & Land Heritage Trail
Debra reported working on the Request for Proposals for the development of the Water & Land Trail. The process is very structured and involves forming an Evaluation Committee of at least 5 to review the proposals submitted. There will be a scoring system to rate the proposals. After they are rated, the Evaluation Committee will meet to discuss and choose the appropriate contractor.
J. A. Rummler, Charles Caillouet, Carrie Stansbury and Jennifer Guidry volunteered to serve on the Evaluation Committee. The Committee is expected to review proposals around March 1 and meet about them around March 15.

**History & Culture Committee**

**Atchafalaya DVD**
Debra reported that the estimate for subtitling the DVD in German, Spanish and Japanese, and combining these versions into one with the existing voice-over English and French versions is $10,000.

**Charles Caillouet made a motion to proceed with this re-master of the DVD. Gene Seneca seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.**

**Sustainability Committee**

**License Plates**
Debra distributed the front-mounting license plates to the Commissioners that were shown by Charles Caillouet at the last meeting. The wholesale cost of each plate was $10 and the expected retail is $20. Debra will continue researching the process to have another entity handle the sales, similar to how the Bicentennial Commission had items for purchase.

**Foundation**
Volunteer Louisiana’s Executive Director, Janet Pace, spoke to the Commission on the evolution of the Volunteer Louisiana Foundation, formed to support the Volunteer Outreach and Americorps programs of the Louisiana Serve Commission. The Foundation raises funds for grants for National Days of Service, and makes grants as recommended by the Commission. The Foundation began when a Commissioner’s term expired and that Commissioner began the process of forming a new organization. Janet left copies of the Foundation’s bylaws with the Commission and offered to answer any questions in the future.

Debra read from the federal legislation the excerpt that limits the Department of the Interior’s obligation to the Atchafalaya National Heritage, which is 15 years from the enabling legislation or October 12, 2021, a little under 8 years away. It is expected that a non-profit or other entity would assume management of the ANHA at that time.

**Director’s Report**
Debra reviewed the 2014 Meeting Dates: March 26, May 7, July 23, Sep. 24, Nov. 5 and procedure for recording volunteer hours. Five Commissioners’ terms expire this March, and one in April and one in June. Parish presidents will receive a reappointment form in the next few weeks. If Commissioners prefer to not be appointed for another 3-year term, please let Debra know.

**The FY** 14 Federal budget was passed by the House of Representatives and the Senate just this week. NHA’s fared well and we can expect the same annual level of funding for the current federal year that ends 9/30/14, although we are awaiting official notification from the National Park Service.

**Other Projects and Opportunities:** Join 3 other Gulf Coast states in a project where visitors and others can discover lesser known, authentic attractions and events to help plan trips and learn what’s unique in the communities, sponsored by National Geographic. Enter small, unique tourist attractions on www.usgulfcoaststatesgeotourism.com, a National Geographic web site featuring what’s unique about Louisiana, Alabama, Florida and Mississippi.
SCORP: The Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation, and Tourism, Office of State Parks, Division of Outdoor Recreation is currently in the process of reviewing and updating the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP). To weigh-in on Louisiana’s outdoors, go to playoutdoorsla.mindmixer.com.

The Louisiana Folklore Society issued a Call for Presentations for the 2014 Annual Meeting
Friday, March 21 – Saturday, March 22, 2013 Dillard University, New Orleans, LA. Presentations on any aspect of Louisiana folklore, folklife, and traditional arts, as well as on folklore theory and practice, are welcome from scholars, tradition bearers, folk artists, musicians, students, community leaders, community scholars, and others interested in local Louisiana cultures throughout the state and elsewhere. Typically, presentations last 20 minutes. The conference begins with a keynote address, free and open to the general public, on Friday evening, March 21st. Paper sessions and film will take place throughout the day on Saturday, March 22. Submit a 250-word abstract (proposal/presentation description) by February 14, 2014, via email to fdecaro@tigers.lsu.edu if interested. Please note equipment needs. www.louisianafolklore.org

Capitol Park Welcome Center hosted the 3rd Annual Louisiana Marathon Jan. 19. Atchafalaya lip balm and bottles were provided to participants from 50 states and 11 countries.

The Atchafalaya Welcome Center is expected to be closed January 27, 2014 through February 9, 2014 for the sewer and water line repairs reported previously.

Other Business: There were no items for Other Business.

Commissioner Announcements
Commissioners announced upcoming events in the parishes, all of which have Mardi Gras celebrations, and reported the following news: Chris Burton: Iberia Parish is working on a Bayou Teche boat launch and park restoration. Charles Caillouet: Water Institute is directing their planning toward environmental issues. The Louisiana Wildlife Federation is hosting a photography contest and is accepting nominations for their annual conservation awards. Ascension Parish is working on a parish Recreation Plan. Efforts are underway for a cleanup of Bayou Fountain. The Atchafalaya Basin Program Research & Promo Board approved the 2015 Atchafalaya Basin Annual Plan. Charles passed around 2 books of interest: Bayou Diversity by Kelby Ouchley and Town of Atchafalaya , out of print and by another author. Carrie Stansbury: Connected with the Eagle Expo and one of the ANHA Educational series, a wildlife photography presentation will be held February 21 with a nationally known photographer. J.A. Rummler: A presentation by Kelby Ouchley on another book of his, Flora and Fauna of the Civil War, might be a good transition in our Educational Series from strictly Civil War history last year to including our other themes such as the environment. The American Woodcock Society is anticipating a name change; the new name will be in the French language. Jennifer Guidry: Bayou Teche Paddling Trail will hold the last of the public meetings in January where there will be discussions of floating dock locations as well as Bayou Teche paddlers accessing communities from the bayou. A group from Avoyelles Parish talked to the Center for Cultural and Eco-Tourism about further recreational development of Spring Bayou, and there may be some opportunities for them to work with the Rivers and Trails Conservation Assistance division, as Bayou Teche did. Gene Seneca: The museum in Plaquemine is adding the “Atchafalaya Room.” Pelicans are nesting near Intercoastal Canal in Iberville Parish. Wilbert Carmouche: The Miss-Lou Conference will be in Avoyelles Parish Feb. 25-27 and has content that will benefit small, rural businesses and areas. Wilbert is working on trail and other product development connected to Twelve Years a Slave, the book found and uncovered by Sue Eakin near Marksville.

There being no further announcements or business, Charles Caillouet moved to adjourn the meeting. Patrick Gordon seconded the motion and, passing unanimously, the meeting was adjourned.