Atchafalaya Trace Commission/
Atchafalaya National Heritage Area

Minutes: November 7, 2018 Regular Meeting

A regular meeting of the Atchafalaya Trace Commission (Commission), managing entity of the Atchafalaya National Heritage Area (ANHA), was held Wednesday, November 7, 2018 at 10 a.m. in the Capitol View Room on the 5th floor of the Louisiana State Library in Baton Rouge.

Commissioners present:
Ascension: Charles Caillouet
Lafayette: Jennifer Ritter-Guidry, Vice-Chair
Terrebonne: Mart Black, Treasurer
Avoyelles: Wilbert Carmouche, Secretary
Pointe Coupée: J. A. Rummler
E. Baton Rouge: Michael Proctor
St. Mary: Carrie Stansbury, Chair

Commissioners absent:
Assumption: Phillip Daigle, Sr.
Iberville: Clifford LeGrange
W. Baton Rouge: Angélique Bergeron
Concordia: OPEN
St. Landry: Caitlin Bussey
Iberia: Chris Burton
St. Martin: Carol Patin

Others present:
Steven Fulleen, Executive Director; Justin Owens, Assistant Director; Gerard Overhultz, Laissez Faire, Inc.; Tad Britt, National Park Service NCPTT; Wesley V. Davis, Bayou Vermilion District; and Meghan Sylvester, Iberville Museum.

As the Commission did not have a quorum at 10:00 a.m., Chair Carrie Stansbury asked those Commissioners present to join her in reciting the pledge of allegiance, followed by informal discussion. J.A. Rummler arrived at 10:36 a.m., providing the Commission with the required quorum. Carrie Stansbury called the meeting to order at that time.

AGENDA APPROVAL
Mart Black motioned to accept the agenda. J.A. Rummler seconded the motion and the agenda was unanimously accepted.

APPROVAL OF SEPTEMBER 12, 2018 MEETING MINUTES
Jennifer Ritter-Guidry motioned to approve the meeting minutes from the September 12, 2018 regular meetings. Mart Black seconded the motion and the minutes were unanimously approved.

ADMINISTRATIVE & BUDGET
The next Commission meeting is January 10, 2019.

1. Steven presented the Director’s Report, advising the Commission of the following:
   a) Fiscal year 2018 NHA funding-delivery Resolution has finally been approved and we are awaiting receipt of those finances.
   b) Justin has submitted the documentation necessary to bid out the design and manufacture of (a) six outdoor canopy tents, each of which will contain the ANHA logo and the logos of the other agencies within CRT; (b) two pop-up banners apiece intended to be used by entities within each of the 14 parishes of the ANHA which will contain imagery unique to that parish along with the ANHA logo and, where applicable, the logo of that parish’s official tourism agency; and (c) two pop-up banners containing the ANHA logo, for use by ANHA staff.

OUTREACH & EDUCATION
1. Cynthia has completed her review of the three-volume ANHA curriculum. Her report has been submitted to Richard Hartley for his review and edit. We hope to have the revised three-volume set printed by next spring.
a) Jennifer Ritter-Guidry asked Steven and Justin to send copies of each volume to the Iberville Parish Museum

2. Steven and Cynthia will attend an upcoming teacher conference with the Lt. Governor to promote the curriculum. Steven asked the Commissioners to send him any promotional items they would like displayed on our table.

3. Steven, Justin and Cynthia attended various “Atchafalaya Month” festivals each weekend in October. The festivals attended this year included the Swamp Life Expo in Grosse Tete, Sugar Fest in Port Allen, the Rougarou Festival in Houma, Shake Your Trail Feather in Breaux Bridge, and the Halloween Art & Nature Festival in Arnaudville.

4. Steven, Justin and Cynthia will travel to Atlanta in January 2019 to attend training provided by the NPS. Steven encouraged the Commissioners to consider attending, as well.

5. Steven will attend the annual astronomy presentation at BREC’s Highland Road observatory the evening of Friday, November 9, 2018.

6. Eliza Kunz, our Southeast Region NPS coordinator, visited in October. In addition to meeting with Steven to discuss the budget and our programs and activities, they went on a boat tour of the Atchafalaya Basin.

7. ANHA funded the printing of the 2019/20 BSA Swamp Base brochures.

8. SOCIAL MEDIA:
   a) The ANHA Facebook page has 3728 current likes (+477 from September), and the page has moved up from the rank of 14th to 12th in likes out of 42 NHAs. This increase is mostly due to organic reach, although a handful of posts enjoyed increased reach via paid promotions.
      i. Top Recent Post: Livonia Indian mound (reach of 33.6K with 645 likes);
   b) The ANHA Instagram account (“atchafalaya_nha”) currently has 1011 followers (+6 from September).
      i. Top Recent Post: “Paddling Lake Martin” photo by Rachel Townsend
   c) The ANHA Twitter account (“AtchafalayaNHA”) currently has 503 followers (+8 from September).

COMMITTEE REPORTS
A. Natural & Outdoor Resources –
   a. Charles Caillouet presented the Basin report, informing the Commission that the water level rose rapidly throughout September back up to 12 feet. He went on to explain that as air temperatures go down and water levels rise, oxygen levels go up, which is beneficial to the ecosystem in the Basin.
   b. Commissioner of Administration Jay Dardenne attended last month’s Friends of the Atchafalaya meeting and requested more information from the group on items they would like to see included in the upcoming State budget.
   c. The agency tasked with taking over the administration of the Atchafalaya Basin Program from the DNR (Department of Natural Resources) is CPRA (Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority).
      i. Carrie Stansbury asked about the status of all the Basin Program projects after the legislature cut funding for the program. Charles explained that, depending on how far they got through the approval process before the Program funding was cut, some projects are still pending. Some funds have been allocated, but they must go through the bond process before they can be applied to those pending projects.

B. Sustainability –
   a. Steven stressed the importance of making progress on our fledgling sustainability plans, as the NPS has requested that we do so. He went on to explain that that the Atchafalaya Trace
Commission might not be re-certified in 2021, so our non-profit structure needs to be put in place now to facilitate a smooth transition.

OTHER BUSINESS
1. Tad Britt, Chief of Archeology and Collections at the NPS National Center for Preservation Technology and Training (NCPTT), gave a presentation to the Commission on NCPTT’s efforts to mitigate and preserve numerous shell midden sites along the Gulf coast that are currently in danger of succumbing to the effects of erosion. The NCPTT seeks the Commission’s support in funding this ongoing project. Tad advised that an official request is being prepared and will be submitted shortly.
2. Steven informed the Commission that St. Landry Commissioner Caitlin Bussey has tendered her resignation from the ATC due to a recent change in employment. The search for her replacement has begun.

COMMISSIONER ANNOUNCEMENTS
Commissioners announced upcoming events and projects in their parishes:

1. **Mart Black:** The Houma Downtown Christmas Festival begins November 30 with Outdoor Movie Night in the Courthouse Square. The south Louisiana Dragway Reunion will take place November 30 through December 1. The Ducks Unlimited Banquet will take place November 8 at the Houma Civic Center. The Mulberry School will honor veterans during a program on November 9.
2. **Carrie Stansbury:** The Cajun Coast staff has, at long last, finally moved into their new office. The staff would like to pursue an interpretation project involving the creation of a virtual reality tour of a local sugar mill to give visitors the experience of touring the facility.
   a. Charles Caillouet, Jennifer Ritter-Guidry, and Mart Black each offered their recommendations on who to contact relative to filming the sugar mill, creating the 3-D digital files, and other components of the proposed virtual tour. The levee in front of the new office building has caused a trash build-up at the swamp’s edge. Steven recommended contacting Brandy Sertette at the Atchafalaya Welcome Center in Breaux Bridge for recommendations on assistance in trash removal. Jennifer Ritter-Guidry provided several additional suggestions relative to trash removal.
3. **Jennifer Ritter-Guidry:** Due to staff changes at the Center for Louisiana Studies, she advised that she will eventually be forced to resign from Commission and introduced Wesley V. Davis with the Bayou Vermilion District as her nominee to replace her. She will host a digital workshop on Dec. 10 titles “Deep South Preservation” utilizing the digital archives of the Library of Congress.

ADJOURNMENT
There being no further announcements or business, Jennifer Ritter-Guidry made a motion to adjourn the meeting. J.A. Rummler seconded the motion and, passing unanimously, the meeting was adjourned.