

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS,**

answers provided by the NORD Citizens Advisory Panel (NORD CAP)

### **PROPOSED New Orleans Recreation Department REFORM,**

amendment to the Home Rule Charter of the City of New Orleans

**VOTE OCTOBER 2<sup>ND</sup>, 2010**

1. What is the make-up of the commission? How will commission members be selected? What will their terms be?

The Chairman of the Commission shall be selected by the full Commission from the five mayoral appointments referenced below. The first Commission meeting will be held no later than January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2011. All Commission meetings, as well as any Commission documents, are open to the public. The commission will be established by ordinance of the council and will be comprised of thirteen members:

- The Mayor
- Chief Administrative Officer
- Deputy Mayor of Operations
- The Head of the City Planning Commission
- The Chair for the City Council Youth & Recreation Committee
- (5) Mayoral Appointees representing each of the (5) Councilmanic Districts and representing the diversity of the community as well as reflecting the grassroots constituency of those utilizing recreation services.
- The Superintendents of the OPSB and the RSD
- New Orleans Recreation Development Foundation representative

2. How will the Executive Director be selected?

The Executive Director/CEO position will be selected by the thirteen member governance commission. A transparent search will be executed to find the most qualified individual to lead the new recreation system in the years to come.

3. How is this effort different from privatization of NORD?

First of all, the proposed reform represents a public-private partnership and is not in any way “privatization”. The reform also represents several years of study by the community and represents the “best practices” of award-winning municipal recreation systems. This is a true private-public partnership since all meetings and documents will be subject to state open meetings laws, the composition of the Commission will include several public officials and all facilities, funding, and land will remain property of the City of New Orleans.

4. How will this new entity be financed?

Mayor Landrieu and the new City Council have pledged to significantly increase the funding of NORD in the 2011 Municipal Budget, bringing the NORD budget from \$5 million to close to pre-Katrina level. Additionally, a separate fundraising-only foundation will be formed to supplement the public sector funding. This foundation board will be comprised of any and all entities which have the ability, and interest, to add supplemental private funding to the public sector recreation funding. All foundation meetings will also be totally open to the public. This model, again patterned after “best practices”, will provide even more resources to our youth and those using New Orleans recreation. New Orleans has historically underfunded its recreation programs and, like its award-winning recreation neighbor in Baton Rouge, must find both public and private resources to create the type of recreation system we all want. A quality New Orleans recreation system will greatly benefit this community for years to come in vital areas such as crime prevention, economic development, and overall physical and mental health.

5. What will be the role and makeup of the foundation created to support this new commission?

The foundation’s sole purpose will be raising private dollars from the business community and other potential groups to supplement funding allocated in the municipal budget. The foundation will be initially led by the co-chairs of the NORD Citizens Advisory Panel (NORDCAP), which was created by the New Orleans City Council to study NORD and review programs in other cities before reporting their findings back to the City Council. The NORDCAP co-chairs are Rod West, Roy Glapion and Bobby Garon, who led meetings, met with recreational management consultants, and spoke with recreation department heads in comparable cities. The NORD Citizen Advisory Panel laid the groundwork for what now is the proposed charter amendment.

6. How will the commission coordinate with Parks and Parkways? Who will assume costs for insurance and maintenance of facilities?

Presently, Parks and Parkways maintains some portions of recreational facilities. Under the proposed structure, NORD would assume full responsibility for the maintenance of its facilities, freeing Parks and Parkways resources to take care of its non-recreational obligations. All recreation facilities will remain under the ownership of the City and will be maintained by the Commission. Parks and Parkways will continue to operate as a chartered department of the city under the able leadership of Ms. Ann E. Macdonald. Aligning recreation programming and recreation facility maintenance under one organization makes logistical sense and represents again “best practices” from around the US.

8. Given that commission seats are appointed and not elected, how will we ensure the commission's accountability to the public?

As stated above, the new recreation system will be subject to open meetings laws and public record requests, allowing community groups and citizens to be able to present ideas and give feedback to the Commission.

The Bureau of Governmental Research endorses this amendment. See the full report on their website; <http://www.bgr.org/>.