



RECREATION AND PARK COMMISSION FOR THE PARISH OF EAST BATON ROUGE

August 4, 2017

The Honorable Sharon Weston Broome
Mayor-President
City of Baton Rouge / Parish of East Baton Rouge
mayor@brgov.com

Dear Mayor-President Broome:

We received your letter of opposition to find a more sustainable location for a reimagined zoo and to create the first regional park in the BREC system at the zoo's current location. As a Commission, we have agreed to set the date for a vote on this issue at our regularly scheduled monthly meeting, on August 24. We understand how important the zoo is to our entire community and deliberately scheduled the vote to allow BREC staff more time to collect additional public input and information to help guide our decision.

Please consider this letter a vital component of that fact-finding process. We have heard your opinion, and understand that you feel it is best for the zoo to remain in its current location despite several inherent challenges, including the cost of \$110M to build and a 15-year build out. The Zoo consultants' findings clearly outlined a reimagined zoo in the current location faces a long uphill climb with timeline and funding challenges. Whether you decide to remain resolute in your support of the zoo remaining in its existing location or choose to support the consultants' recommended path forward, we hope that your public standing and recommendation will be accompanied by financial and community assistance.

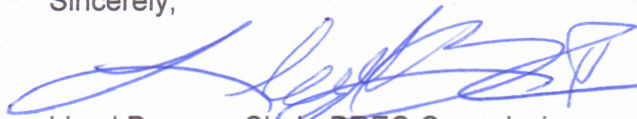
Funding will clearly be a major challenge to overcome to design and construct the zoo at the current location. We know it will be a major hurdle to raise significant private funding before asking the taxpayers to help with this initiative. Given the nature of this hurdle, any public or private funding support or ideas you could provide will be very important for us to understand how we can make the current site a more feasible option. We look forward to hearing from you prior to the August 24th commission meeting.

If you are aware of benefactors who have indicated to you that they would be interested in committing private funds to support a reimagined zoo in the current location, we would welcome any such information and be glad to meet and discuss. Please know the amenities that many in the community prefer to see at Greenwood will no longer be a viable option since more than 300 acres of the 660-acre site are wetlands and wildlife habitat areas.

6201 Florida Boulevard, Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70816
225.272.9200 | 225.273.6404 | brec.org

Please help us by sharing all potential funding ideas to the BREC Commission staff through the email address: commissioners@brec.org or by mail at 6201 Florida Boulevard, Baton Rouge, LA 70806 before August 24, 2017. We hope you will join us in making this vision a reality.

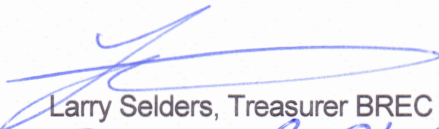
Sincerely,



Lloyd Benson, Chair, BREC Commission



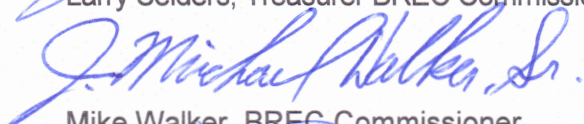
Shelton Dixon, Vice Chair BREC Commission



Larry Selders, Treasurer BREC Commission



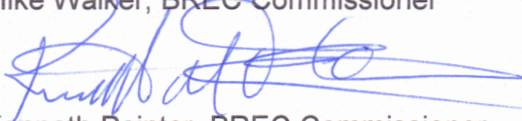
Rossie Washington, Jr., BREC Commissioner



Mike Walker, BREC Commissioner



Sandra Davis, BREC Commissioner



Kenneth Pointer, BREC Commissioner