

PARK, RECREATION & BEACHES ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

**CITY COMMISSION CONFERENCE ROOM - 8TH FLOOR
100 N. Andrews Avenue
Fort Lauderdale, Florida**

Wednesday, September 25, 2002 - 7:00 p.m.

<u>BOARD MEMBERS</u>	<u>ABSENT/PRESENT</u>	<u>Cumulative From 11/01</u>	
		<u>P</u>	<u>A</u>
Julie Cameron	P	3	6
Elizabeth Hays	P	8	1
Al Massey, Chairman	P	9	0
Jo Anne Medalie	A	0	1
John Melnicoff	P	7	2
Robert Missal	P	8	0
Timothy Nast	P	4	5
Rosalind Osgood	P	8	1
Randolf Powers	A	6	3
Victoria Pristo-Revier	P	2	1
John Rude, Vice-Chair	P	8	1
Joe Shover	P	7	2

Staff Present

Ernest Burkeen, Jr., Parks & Recreation Director
Steve Person, Recreation Superintendent
Vince Gizzi, Special Facilities Superintendent
Phil Thornburg, Parks Superintendent
Sue McAllister, Recreation Program Supervisor
Mary Ann Slough, Recreation Programmer II
Maybeth Irizarry-Binon, Administrative Assistant
Margaret A. D'Alessio, Recording Secretary

Call to Order

Chairman Al Massey called the meeting to order at approximately 7:08 p.m. Roll call was taken, and all stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Minutes

Motion made by Mr. Shover and seconded by Mr. Rude that the minutes of the June 26, 2002 meeting be approved as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion made by Mr. Rude and seconded by Dr. Osgood that the minutes of the July 24, 2002 meeting be approved as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Al Massey stated that Tom Peters had resigned from this Board due to taking a temporary job in Ecuador.

Recreation Program of the Month

Steve Person explained that they would be presenting their "Baseball Tomorrow" Program for which they received a \$55,000 grant from the Professional Baseball Program.

Sue McAllister, Recreation Programs Supervisor, distributed copies of the press release regarding the "Baseball Tomorrow" grant. This program was funded by the Major League Baseball Players Association and provided equipment, uniforms and coach training. Ms. McAllister explained they had focused on the northwest quadrant of the City because the grant criteria required that programming be provided to minority youth. She further stated that they had focused on programs for skill development training and had 540 children enrolled, and that enough equipment was provided to handle increases in enrollment.

John Melnicoff asked for clarification regarding the grant and if other cities had received money. Sue McAllister stated that the City of Miami had also received money and the grant was not only for uniforms, equipment and training, but also could be used to build and renovate facilities. She explained that this was a one-time funding process.

Ernest Burkeen explained that one of the key things the Recreation Division did was to have coaching clinics, which taught volunteers how to coach and deal with children.

Tim Nast stated he had spoken with Steve Person regarding the City taking a more active role in advertising the Little League Program, and felt this grant could aid in that endeavor.

Chairman Al Massey stated that he was glad to see a revitalization of this sport in the City.

Chairman Al Massey acknowledged John Wilkes, former Chairman and Member of this Board.

Western Tiger Football League

Dr. Rosalind Osgood explained that this football team was initially located at Carter Park and is now at Mills Pond. She stated that the money contributed by the City to this league was not enough in regard to what was needed. Dr. Osgood said that she had safety concerns regarding this new location. She reported that the adjacent Homeowners Association desired to install a fence but they did not have enough money. Also parking was a major problem in that area.

Dr. Osgood asked for a status report about the scoreboard which had been donated by the Air & Sea Show. Vince Gizzi explained that the Engineering Division is working on the plans and it would be out to bid within the next few weeks.

Ernest Burkeen explained that there were many issues regarding Mills Pond, but reminded Dr. Osgood that this location was only temporary while Carter Park is under renovation. He stated that he was very impressed with the football program in this City and possibly part of the program could remain at Mills Pond in the future.

Tim Nast stated that the teams at Floyd Hall could use more members and suggested the overflow from other places could be sent there. Ernest Burkeen stated that part of the problem is there were not enough fields available, and it was critical to get the children enrolled in these programs and involved in something positive.

Chairman Massey asked Dr. Osgood if she was seeking something specific from the Board this evening regarding this matter. Dr. Osgood stated she wanted the Board to be aware of the matter and she was satisfied with the response given by Mr. Burkeen.

Ernest Burkeen responded that he was against the fencing of any park because it did not invite individuals into the area, and felt that landscaping could be used instead. Dr. Osgood stated the fence was a compromise for the Association due to their concern with traffic overflowing into the adjacent neighborhoods.

Finally, Dr. Osgood stated the bus that transports the children to away games is in deplorable condition and asked about the liability in regard to the bus. Mr. Burkeen stated that they were presently working on this matter.

Steve Person explained the program was a volunteer-based program and was not a City program. Mr. Person stated that the program presents the City with a Certificate of Insurance to cover liability. Mr. Burkeen added that an agreement had been reached with the Police Department regarding security for the field.

Tim Nast suggested that the City meet with the various sports leagues and formalize a plan, which would give the City a good program. Ernest Burkeen stated that the problem is volunteers run the programs and they do not want the City to interfere. He believes the important thing is the kids are introduced to sports and are given a better quality of life. He stated the City would assist in any way they could, but the actual running of the leagues is up to the volunteers.

Vince Gizzi explained that when Carter Park renovation is complete there would be a main stadium field, a practice field, and another multi-purpose area that could be used for practices.

Parks Bond Quarterly Report

Vince Gizzi presented the Parks Bond Quarterly Report. Mr. Gizzi reported that there had been a groundbreaking at Carter Park, a grand opening at Croissant Park, and construction is underway at several other parks. He said the design for Bayview Park is about 50% complete and staff is continuing to work with the homeowners and the Little League Associations. Mr. Gizzi stated that the roller hockey rinks at Holiday Park are due for completion by the beginning of January, and Lauderdale Manors Community Center is presently under construction. He added that Palm Aire Village Park, located off Cypress Creek and 21st is also under construction and is different architecturally from other parks. The Prospect Road ESL site is still involved in negotiations and funding is being discussed with the County to build the boardwalk and the installation of the signs.

Mr. Gizzi explained that the CCNA Committee is continuing to develop the RFP regarding Riverland Park. Elizabeth Hays stated there had been delays regarding the RFP and money is still an issue, but the Community desires to move forward with this project. Mr. Gizzi explained that initially the Riverland Park project had \$600,000 for the park development. There was \$3 Million available for land acquisition, of which \$2.4 Million had been spent. \$1.5 Million was received from Broward County, and the funds available were close to \$3 Million. He explained that the total master plan came to around \$4 Million, which includes plans for the water playground.

Mr. Gizzi stated that construction of Riverside Park should begin in January, 2003. He reported that there were only 248 trees out of the 2,000 left to plant. Mr. Shover asked Mr. Gizzi if he would contact Mr. Dempsey to call him regarding the Adopt A Tree Program.

Chairman Massey asked for an update on the Select Committee regarding Hardy Park. Ernest Burkeen stated the problem is that there isn't any vacant property in the area. Potential spaces had been identified, but the options were very limited. Chairman Massey stressed that this was a very important matter because it is critical to keep the Federal Courthouse in Fort Lauderdale.

Joe Shover stated that it is his understanding the government is guaranteeing the replacement of Hardy Park. Mr. Burkeen explained there is a process involved and it would take years before this matter came to closure.

Elizabeth Hays stated that she is on the Board of the Fort Lauderdale Council Civic Associations as well as chairman of the Schools and Parks Committee, and it is part of her job to report on the Hardy Park matter. She explained that the residents are concerned about receiving at least an equivalent park to replace what they are going to lose. She felt that this Board needed to be included in the process, and advise the City Commission of their position on this matter.

Chairman Al Massey agreed that this was an important issue for this Board.

Tim Nast stated that there was land available north of Broward Boulevard. Ernest Burkeen replied that the Judge had decided he wanted the particular location which had been chosen, and the community stated that any replacement of land had to be within the same area. Land is available north of Broward, but not south of Broward.

Chairman Al Massey commented that there was a good reason to have the Courthouse by the South Side School because of the close proximity to the County Courthouse.

Tim Nast remarked that the Courthouse should be built where vacant land was available, and they should not take away parkland from the community.

John Wilkes stated that he was very surprised this Board had not been involved in this matter. He reiterated that parkland should never be taken away. He explained that in 2001 they asked the City to buy the adjacent 3.7 acres of land, which was the School Board site to expand the park, but no action was taken. In 1987 the Master Plan identified the necessity of having recreation within the community. He reiterated that it was this Board's job to protect park space. If the Federal government had authority by eminent domain to proceed and obtain the space for the Courthouse, they should then exert that pressure equally on acquiring the replacement park space for the community totaling 8-9 acres, and this should be a condition of the approval.

Ernest Burkeen stated he had met with the Tarpon River group and they were in agreement as to where the park should be located so as not to disrupt the neighborhood.

John Rude asked how far east the boundary went for the Tarpon River group. Mr. Wilkes replied that it used to be the railroad tracks. John Rude said he was told there was land available behind the Mercedes Dealership. Ernest Burkeen stated that he would bring a map to the Board's next meeting and explain the location of the proposed site. John Rude remarked that supposedly the deed restriction is such that the site could not be used for

any type of development, but park space was not ruled out and this could be another option to explore.

Chairman Massey asked for an update regarding George English Park. Vince Gizzi reported that the facility and dock renovations would be out to bid in approximately three weeks, and construction should begin in January 2003. Chairman Al Massey said he felt it is an emergency situation because the floor at the Center is in deplorable condition. Mr. Gizzi responded that the project is going out to bid in the very near future.

John Melnicoff asked if there was a calendar posted at the park which listed its progress. Ernest Burkeen explained that it is difficult to get the information from the Engineering Department. Vince Gizzi explained that when parks are undergoing renovation and construction, news releases are submitted to the newspapers to notify the public.

Chairman Al Massey asked for an update on the removal of the portables at the school site. Mr. Gizzi reported that he had spoken with the School Board and the portables would be removed by December.

Elizabeth Hays asked if Riverland Woods belonged to the City. Vince Gizzi stated that he was not sure about Riverland Woods, but he thought the County was going to develop the park and then turn it over to the City. Elizabeth Hays asked if Mr. Gizzi was aware of the problem involving a piece of waterfront land which had been forgotten in the deal, and she felt the City needed to make sure that this land would be included. John Rude remarked that the land consisted of approximately 80 feet of waterfront property. Mr. Gizzi said he was unaware of this situation, but would check into it. Ernest Burkeen reiterated that the City would not accept the deal unless it was given in totality.

Elizabeth Hays stated that the acoustics at the Croissant Park Community Center were very bad even though improvements had been made, and she felt that if Riverland's Community Center was to be patterned after it, then further consideration should be given to its design.

Motion made by John Rude and seconded by Joe Shover to approve the Parks Bond Quarterly Report as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

Cancer Survivor Plaza Update

Vince Gizzi reported they were still struggling with the design of the Cancer Survivor Plaza. He stated it is to be located at the corner of Federal Highway at Holiday Park, and that a designer had been hired. Plans and a conceptual rendering were shown to Richard Block who is funding the project, but they were not approved. Mr. Block suggested something more magnificent be added to the project. Mr. Gizzi stated they have a design team working on equating the Plaza with Fort Lauderdale, and possibly including a water theme. Mr. Block liked some of the potential changes, and presently sketches are being done by

Mr. Walters.

Celebration of Annexed Areas

Vince Gizzi reported the celebration annexing Riverland and Melrose Park into Fort Lauderdale was a nice event. He explained there were information booths describing City's services, games and amusements for children, and plenty of food. Mr. Gizzi stated that the County had a plan to build a community center and the City will discuss this matter with them.

Chairman Al Massey stated that Clay Shaw and Jack Siler were present at the celebration.

Elizabeth Hays complimented Suzanne Broucek and Kim Warren for attending the S.W. Coalition meeting to publicize the event. She said their efforts should be commended. Mr. Gizzi stated the flyer advertising this event had been published in three different languages, Spanish, Creole, and English.

Other Items of Interest

John Melnicoff asked for an update regarding Peter Moran's presentation regarding Croissant Park. Ernest Burkeen replied that it was very good and they were still pursuing the matter.

Chairman Al Massey stated that according to the minutes of the July Board meeting, the Swimming Hall of Fame issue was to be revisited due to not having a quorum present at that time to make a recommendation. Ernest Burkeen stated that the City Commission had accepted a plan for the City to fund the redevelopment of the site from TIF funds over a 3-4 year period for a total of \$27 Million. He felt that at this point in time, a recommendation was not needed from this Board and they only needed to acknowledge support for the project. Ernest Burkeen added that the complex had a contract with the City for the next 14 years and the new name of the facility could possibly be the Fort Lauderdale Aquatic Center.

Joe Shover asked about the drainage at Croissant Park and if the schedule is in connection with 17th Street. *Vince Gizzi* explained that this is a major project and they are going before the City Commission in November with a \$500,000 project to upgrade the ball fields and to move some of the light poles. Then they were going to include the remaining drainage project into that plan. The drainage will improve and the pipe would change from 12" to 18".

John Rude thanked the Parks & Recreation Department for the Police and Firefighters Appreciation Day and especially Kim Warren for her hard work and effort. Also he wanted

to extend an expression of sympathy to Sue Molnar for her recent loss, she had been the event's coordinator. Mr. Rude stated that in regard to Floyd Hall Stadium many people had attended workshops and charrettes and he felt that this should be placed on the Board's agenda some time in the future.

Plaque Presentation for Chairman Massey

Ernest Burkeen presented a plaque to Al Massey as the outgoing Chairman of the Parks, Recreation and Beaches Advisory Board for his outstanding service and dedication over the past 6 years.

Mr. Massey thanked everyone for their support and stated that over the past 20 years there had been two excellent directors in this Department, Tom Tapp and Ernest Burkeen. He encouraged the Board to continue to be actively involved.

Elizabeth Hays thanked Ernest Burkeen for getting out the Action Recovery Plan that would be distributed to the Council of the Fort Lauderdale Civic Association.

Motion made by Joe Shover and seconded by Julie Cameron to adjourn the meeting.

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:40 p.m.