

PARK, RECREATION & BEACHES ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

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

Wednesday, October 23, 2002 - 7:00 p.m.

BOARD MEMBERS	ABSENT/PRESENT	Cumulative From 11/01	
		P	A
John Rude, Chair	P	9	1
Julie Cameron	P	4	6
Elizabeth Hays	P	9	1
John Melnicoff	P	8	2
Robert Missal	P	9	0
Timothy Nast	P	5	5
Rosalind Osgood	A	8	2
Rany Powers	P	7	3
Victoria Pristo-Revier	P	3	1
Joann Medalie	P	1	0
Michael Natale	P	1	0
Shirley Small	P	1	0
Joe Shover	P	8	2

Staff Present

Ernest Burkeen, Jr., Parks & Recreation Director
Phil Thornburg, Parks Superintendent
Vince Gizzi, Special Facilities Superintendent
Suzanne Broucek, Recreation Program Supervisor
Earnest Jones, Park Ranger Supervisor
Kathy Connor, Planning and Grants Park Supervisor
Maybeth Irizarry-Binon, Administrative Assistant
Margaret A. D'Alessio, Recording Secretary

Call to Order

Acting Chairman John Rude called the meeting to order at approximately 7:05 p.m. Roll call was taken with a quorum present, and everyone stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Minutes

Motion made by Joe Shover and seconded by Julie Cameron to approve the minutes of the September 25, 2002 meeting. Motion passed unanimously.

Joann Medalie commented that she had been listed absent on the minutes, but since she had just been appointed to the Board, she had not yet attended a meeting. The attendance was corrected.

John Melnicoff stated that on page 3 when the Board was discussing the Western Tiger Football League, the minutes reflected, "Mr. Burkeen added that an agreement had been reached with the Police

Department regarding security for the field.” He asked if that statement was correct. Mr. Burkeen said he was not sure about the word “agreement”, but they were in consultation with the Police Department to assist the Park Rangers.

Welcome - New Board Members

Acting Chairman John Rude welcomed the new members to the Board.

Joann Medalie stated that she served on the Advisory Board for Broward County Libraries, and previously had served on the Parks and Recreation Board.

Michael Natalie stated that he had started the Homeowners Association in his neighborhood, and served as the President for three years. He also was a representative for the Southwest Coalition.

Shirley Small stated that she was the President of the Melrose Park Homeowners Association. She retired in Fort Lauderdale in 1992 after working with Manufacturers Hanover Trust Investment Banking for 25 years.

Election of Officers

Acting Chairman John Rude asked for nominations for the positions of Chair and Vice-Chair for this Board. Mr. Shover nominated John Rude for the position of Chair. Acting Chairman. Rude acknowledged that he would be honored to serve. Julie Cameron seconded the nomination. There being no further nominations, John Rude was unanimously chosen as the new Chairman.

Chairman John Rude proceeded to ask for nominations for the position of Vice-Chair. Ms. Cameron nominated John Melnicoff and Chairman John Rude seconded it. Mr. Melnicoff accepted. There being no further nominations, John Melnicoff was unanimously chosen as the new Vice-Chair.

Recreation Program of the Month (Southwest Recreation Programming)

Suzanne Broucek, Community Program Supervisor with the Parks and Recreation Department, Recreation Division, introduced Marie Rock, Community Recreation Program Coordinator for the southwest area.

Ms. Broucek stated that less than a year ago the Recreation Division reorganized the staff and the recreation programming resources into City area zones, which were the northwest, the northeast, and the southwest. The reason for this reorganization was to provide more programming directly to the southwest residents. The boundaries were basically east of Federal Highway, north to Broward Boulevard, west of 441, and south of 595, which incorporated the new annexed areas of Melrose and Riverland into the southwest programming area. Once this was done, they actually increased the number of children that were serviced in the southwest area to over 15,800 children. The new annexation area had brought in 4,500 new children. The Recreation Division was currently working out of the Croissant Park Community Center, which had just opened in June, and within the next few years Riverside and Riverland Recreation Centers was scheduled to open. She explained that their mission was to deliver the benefits of parks and recreation. These benefits would include strengthening neighborhoods, providing areas for play, improving health, and reducing stress. Ms. Broucek stated that currently their main focus is on youth and their development through fitness and sports, while providing family venues.

Ms. Broucek stated that current programming included camp, after school programs, aquatic programs, family programs and youth athletics. She showed photographs of the programs at the parks.

She stressed that fitness, forming friendships, and inspirational learning was all part of the program. The President's Council on Fitness and Health is part of the summer program and all the children were tested at the beginning and at the end of camp. Results were sent home to the parents to encourage them to continue the fitness programs. Ms. Broucek said they like to introduce new programs to the after school children, such as kayaking. Also there is a science component known as the Young Einsteins Group, which studies the wonders of nature and space. Ms. Broucek advised that they encourage reading for enjoyment and offer homework assistance. She said the children who had participated in the camp and after school programs appeared to be stronger, smarter, and more self-confident. Ms. Broucek reported that the biggest visual enhancement to the Croissant Park area was the water playground and the swimming pool. Lessons are provided to families, along with therapeutic recreation. The Swim Central Program is currently operating in conjunction with the Croissant Park Elementary School servicing many children by teaching them how to swim and be comfortable around water.

Ms. Broucek stated that the participants in the arthritis program increased their mobility and flexibility. Family programs are provided and the children are taught motor skills and coordination. She stated that they hope to do more work with the teens in the southwest area.

Ms. Broucek stated that the newest addition to the southwest area is the Divisions Youth Soccer Program, which is non-competitive, in an academy format, and of which there are 20 teams from the southwest. She explained that this was a micro -soccer program, which is the current trend. This program has smaller fields, goals and fewer children on the teams. This provides the children more touch time with the ball, which is very important. As always, the volunteer coaches are an important part of the Division's Youth Athletic Program and the program is currently operating in two languages. Ms. Broucek reiterated that their main purpose is to increase the recreational opportunity of the residents in the southwest area. Currently, they have 260 children registered in their Youth Soccer Program, of which 76% live in the southwest area, 13% come from the southeast area, 5% from the northwest, 4% were non-residents and less than 2% come from the northeast area.

Mr. Shover stated that he visits the park every day and he can attest that the place is well populated and he thinks this is wonderful.

Elizabeth Hays mentioned that The Municipal, Leadership and Education Project finds ways to improve the educational opportunities of children in the City. They are in the process of forming study groups to address these issues and wants individuals from Parks and Recreation to be involved with the project. She stated that they were pleased to hear about the science components, which was very important from an educational perspective, as well as the homework assistance. This gives the children something to do after school so they are not on the streets. She urged everyone to get involved with this program.

Mr. Melnicoff asked Ms. Broucek if there were other recreation centers that had these after-school programs and Ms. Broucek confirmed this.

Ms. Broucek stated that last month a presentation was made regarding the Baseball Tomorrow Program and passed out information regarding that program.

Broward County Greenways and Bike Plan-Update

Kathy Connor, Park Supervisor - Planning and Grants Unit, distributed brochures and a map of the Bikeway Plan to the Board members. She explained that a year ago a proposal was made to adopt the County's Greenways and Bikeways Plan. The Plan was not adopted, but a resolution was passed whereby the County made A1A a priority corridor for bikeways. She explained the reason they wanted to adopt this plan was because a master plan was not in place, and one was needed in order to apply for grant monies, such as the T-21 dollars, the transportation dollars for traffic mitigation and the construction

dollars. Two trails were being worked on at the present time. The first is located at A1A, which goes down to Galt and crosses at 41st past Bermuda Riviera. Presently they are proposing the closure of one lane on A1A on the west in order to create a greenway. The County stated they would buy one parcel for a trail location, and another one could be funded through a grant. Two other properties were purchased through the Broward County Land Preservation Bond.

Ms. Connor said the second trail is another Greenway that would go from Hardy Park to Sistrunk along the FEC corridor. Both of projects would tie into the Broward County Greenways plan for A1A, as well as the Dixie Highway Plan.

Ms. Small asked if there was a projected time frame. Chairman Rude advised that the County's Greenway was probably about a 10 to 20- year implementation, but that was for all thirty trails. The six trails they were looking to implement had about a five-year window.

Ms. Cameron asked for clarification of the A1A project. Ms. Connor advised they were not going to close a road, but just one lane on the west. She explained that they were going to narrow the tract down to the city limits and make it more pedestrian friendly.

Mr. Melnicoff asked if there was going to be anything south of Sunrise. Ms. Connor stated that they had not yet started looking in that area.

Chairman Rude advised that the County was attempting to move forward with the A1A Greenway, which would go from Deerfield south to Hallandale using the A1A corridor.

He explained that in many cases this did not involve purchasing land, but was actually an adaptive reuse of what was already in the public domain. He said that the reality was that the project would be done in segments.

Michael Natale stated that he was very interested in Riverland Woods and asked if any discussions had taken place regarding the corner of Riverland Road and 441. Ms. Connor stated that the County had already purchased the property, which is approximately 139 linear feet along the river and is presently working on creating a park for that location. There was a parcel listed that had been left out, but it had not been platted. Mr. Natale stated that he was referring to the property to the north. Ms. Hays and Ms. Connor remarked that they were of the understanding that the property was on the County's list. Ms. Connor stated that she would check on that.

Phil Thornburg, Parks Superintendent, reported that the property had not made the County's first list and when money became available it would be purchased. Mr. Natale remarked that it appeared that no one could get the property to where it could be useable.

Mr. Natalie asked about pocket parks due to an issue with a parcel that was in his particular area known as the Herman property. Ms. Connor stated that she was working on that matter. She stated that they had put in an application about two months ago for the Florida Communities Trust Grant. Mr. Natalie stated that he had been directed by his Board to talk specifically about that matter with this Board. Mr. Natale remarked that the property would be a great asset to their area.

Mr. Powers asked if there were any programs to educate children and adults on how to ride bicycles amidst the traffic in the City. Ms. Connor replied that the desire to do a Community Planning Process had been mentioned in the south area. She explained they were attempting to create a Master Plan for a 20-year vision for the Parks and Recreation Department.

Floyd Hull Master Plan Update

Ms. Connor reported that there was a program called the Urban Parks Recreation and Recovery Act,

which started in the '70's. She explained that Congress appropriated money every year for recreation, water conservation, fishing and games, which is administered through the State or the National Park Service. She explained that the Urban Parks Recreation and Recovery Act was for the rehabilitation of older facilities in urban areas such as Holiday Park, which had been built in the '40's. She stated that this was a grant process, which required a Community Planning Process. Ms. Connor stated that an executive summary had been distributed to the Board, along with the press release advertising the public workshop. She explained that basically they used their capital improvement money to upgrade facilities, and then used those funds as a match for the grant so more sites could be rehabilitated.

Ms. Cameron asked if money had been spent at Floyd a few years ago. Ms. Connor stated that The League and Floyd had raised money through ADA to put in an ADA accessible restroom. A playground was built along with a new restroom and press box. She explained that the Parks Department had rehabilitated one of the four fields at that site. Ms. Cameron asked if the work would be done in phases so that the park would not be closed to the public. Ms. Connor confirmed that the work would be done in phases.

Tim Nast stated that the facility had not been built by the City, but was built by volunteers. Chairman John Rude thanked Mr. Nast for his input in the planning process and stated that he and Floyd had been instrumental and valuable in obtaining a better picture of what was involved.

John Melnicoff asked what amount of money would be involved in this project. Ms. Connor stated they were not sure yet, but CIP had \$900,000 allocated for the improvements. Mr. Melnicoff asked if any impact fees were going to be used. Ms. Connor explained that the fees had to be used for pedestrian nexus between the new development and the project being done, but it could not be used on rehabilitating a facility. It could be used for an addition to a facility in order to meet the impact of growth.

Creation of Anne Murray Park

Chairman John Rude introduced Bruce Owenby, Chairman of Broward River Trails; Kevin Carter, Chair of the Environmental Outreach, and Joe Belavant.

Joe Belavant showed a photograph of a pocket park at the south end of 7th Avenue on New River, which Anne Murray had taken care of for many years. He mentioned that 27 years ago she had began the Clothing Bank for the Broward School District. He said she was very active in many organizations and they felt it would be a token of appreciation for all her hard work and dedication to the community.

Chairman John Rude explained that the term pocket park was new and historically Fort Lauderdale did not want to take on parks that are smaller than one acre. He hoped they could take the street ends and begin legitimizing those uses.

Bruce Owenby stated that a pocket park afforded some relief to the community and did not bring in an excess amount of traffic.

David Rose, President of the Tarpon River Civic Association, stated that Tarpon River supported the idea of honoring Anne Murray. He stated they had five of these type parks in his neighborhood and they were not a burden to the City because the neighborhood maintained them.

Chairman John Rude explained that the street ends were substandard unimproved right-of-ways that had been reclaimed for another use.

Julie Cameron asked if the community shouldn't be the one to name the park. Chairman John Rude stated that ultimately the City Commission would decide on the naming.

Maybeth Irizarry-Binon distributed "Procedures on Naming Parks" to the Board.

Chairman John Rude stated they were presently in uncharted territory and this would have to be approved by this Board before going to the City Commission.

Tim Nast asked how many dead-ends there were in the community, and felt these were great areas for the neighborhoods. Chairman John Rude replied that in the Tarpon River area there were five other sites. He stated that he was aware of 9 other sites throughout the City. He explained that 13 sites had been identified on the North Fork leaving Downtown Fort Lauderdale heading to the Swap Shop.

Chairman John Rude stated that he did not want this Board to focus on the naming of the park, but to stress the creation of these types of parks for the communities. He said that he wanted Ms. Murray to live for many more years, but did not feel it was appropriate to wait on this matter.

John Melnicoff stated that he thought neighborhoods' taking care of such areas was a great idea, but he felt that this Board should not be involved in the naming of a park, and suggested they only make a recommendation.

Ernest Burkeen stated that due diligence needed to be conducted before this matter was discussed any further. He explained this was not part of the inventory because it was not a park, but was land being used as such, and he felt staff needed to research the matter and report back to the Board.

Elizabeth Hays stated that she was not sure of the area they were referring to for designation and asked for further clarification. She asked how a "pocket park" was being defined. Chairman John Rude explained that it was public domain that was not used for higher and best use.

David Rose stated that they had done a master plan in his neighborhood, which had been completed in 1989, and approved by the City Commission, and there were five pieces of public right-of-way land. These areas provided access to the water for people who did not actually live right on the waterfront.

Tim Nast stated that since they were not actually supposed to be naming parks, he asked if Ms. Murray could just adopt the park. Chairman John Rude stated that could be possible, but the idea was just to bring the matter up for discussion. Mr. Nast stated that if care is put into the pocket parks, it would prevent people from using those lands as a dumping ground for trash.

Chairman John Rude asked for a consensus of the Board regarding this matter.

Ernest Burkeen reiterated that staff needed to do some research on this matter and suggested that information be brought back to the Board at a later date.

Elizabeth Hays stated that possibly staff could call the places an "area" instead of a "park" and a different designation could be given to these pieces of property.

John Missal suggested that word could be put out to the public about adopting these small pieces of land since many communities were unaware of this fact.

Scott Park, Tarpon River Association, thanked the Board for their public service.

Old/New Business

John Melnicoff asked the status of the Beach Renourishment Program. Ernest Burkeen explained that he did not have any further information at this time.

Joe Shover asked if the Board would consider holding the November/December meeting on December 11th instead of December 4th. It was the consensus of the Board to hold the meeting on December 4, 2002.

Julie Cameron welcomed back Ernest Jones. Mr. Jones offered to conduct a tour of the new and old Board members of the parks and familiarize everyone with the various locations.

Julie Cameron asked if there was any further information on the Holiday Park Airplane. Vince Gizzi, Superintendent of Special Facilities, stated that the plane was still in Homestead and was not a priority. He explained they had begun refurbishing it, and he would provide some pictures at the next meeting showing the progress on the plane.

Tim Nast asked for an update on Hardy Park. Ernest Burkeen stated that the development regarding the Courthouse was on hold, and they were still pursuing the grant from the County to purchase the school site. It appeared that the Federal government might consider another location.

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:30 p.m.