

**PARKS, RECREATION & BEACHES ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES**  
**City of Fort Lauderdale**  
**100 North Andrews Avenue**  
**8th Floor Conference Room**  
**Wednesday, May 28, 2003**

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<u>BOARD MEMBERS</u>	<u>ABSENT/PRESENT</u>	<u>Cumulative from 11/02</u>		
		<u>P</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>E</u>
Julie Cameron	P	4	2	0
Elizabeth Hays	P	6	0	0
Robert Hoysgaard	P	4	1	1
Antonia Martinez	P	5	1	0
Joann Medalie	P	6	0	0
John Melnicoff, Vice Chair	P	6	0	0
Robert Missal	A	4	2	0
Timothy Nast	A	2	3	1
Michael Natale	A	5	1	0
Rosalind Osgood	P	4	1	1
Randy Powers	P	5	1	0
Victoria Pristo-Revier	P	4	1	1
John Rude, Chair	P	6	0	0
Joe Shover	P	5	1	0
Shirley Small	A	4	2	0

**Staff Present**

Phil Thornburg, Parks Superintendent  
Earnest Burkeen  
Kathy Conner, Parks Supervisor  
Vince Gizzi,  
Maybeth Irizarry-Binon, Administrative Assistant  
Lisa Edmondson, Recording Clerk

**Call to Order**

Chairman John Rude called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Roll Call was taken and all stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Approval of Minutes**

*Motion made by Mr. Shover, seconded by Mr. Hoysgaard, to approve the minutes of the April 23, 2003, meeting with a correction to page three, last words in the second paragraph, change from "District Three" to "District Four." In a voice vote, all voted in favor of the motion.*

### **East Broward United – Soccer Club**

Jaime Guerin, Secretary of East Broward United Soccer Club, introduced himself and Charles Freitas, the Club's President. Mr. Guerin made a presentation regarding their accomplishments in the past year and their plans for the future years. Mr. Guerin said they saw a void in the City of Fort Lauderdale and eastern Broward County as far as recreation, and the children being able to bring their games up to a more competitive level. Their mission is to create a positive learning environment and to teach superior soccer skills. Mr. Guerin advised they contacted one of the top, licensed coaches in the United States to implement a coaching clinic to train many of the new coaches in recreational soccer this year. He added that a partnership with the City of Fort Lauderdale has been established and the City has been very helpful. The first year update and report was presented to the Board. He added that the girls' games are played at Mills Pond and the boys' games are played at Wimberly Field in Oakland Park.

Mr. Freitas advised that both the children and the parents desire the higher level of soccer. He added that tryouts are held, most of the children are from Fort Lauderdale or Oakland Park, and the registration is \$250 the first year, which covers uniforms, referees, etc. He added his gratitude to the City of Fort Lauderdale for their support. The Board congratulated Mr. Freitas and Mr. Guerin, and a plaque was presented from the East Broward United Soccer Club to the City of Fort Lauderdale. Mr. Freitas informed the Board they would be competing in a national tournament next week.

### **David Deal Play Day**

Mr. Deal spoke about the 50<sup>th</sup> Annual David Deal Play Day, which is a day for children and adults to come together to compete for prizes. Events such as swimming, track & field, checkers, etc., are held for both youth and adults. This year the Play Day will be held at Oswald Park and some of the events will include physical fitness components. Weeks before the event, programs are passed out in order for recreation leaders to start working with the children. There will be a parade and opening ceremony, recognizing a pioneer family who helps with the cause. The Miami Heat wants to attend and do a motivational speech on safety, giving pointers on basketball. Golf putting, tennis, and many other events are planned. The event will be held August 6, 2003. Approximately 1,500 to 2,000 children are expected. There will be activities and mini-olympics for ages six and under. Mr. Deal thanked the City for its continued support of this Play Day and added that on August 9, 2003, there will be a concert and swim meet at the Swimming Hall of Fame.

### **Cajun Festival Report**

Debbie Dunbar, City Festival Events Coordinator, handed out packets highlighting the event, the program book and a nine page e-mail article from Gary Hayman. Ms. Dunbar stated they are going international this year. Due to the heat every year, misting tents are being considered for

next year. As a promotion, Charmin brought air-conditioned restrooms to the site which everyone talked about. Ms. Dunbar also handed out a letter from Terrance Simien, Inc., one of the performers this year, commenting on the authenticity of this event. Additionally, a Visitor's Survey and results was handed out to the Board. Ms. Dunbar advised that approximately ten hotels were filled over the weekend and approximately \$1 million a day is spent throughout the area. Approximately \$400,000 was brought in and the City will net between \$50,000 and \$75,000.

Chair Rude congratulated Ms. Dunbar, the staff, and volunteers for the fantastic job they did. Ms. Dunbar said they were showcased on "Deco Drive" this year. The Board commented on the usefulness of the program book. Ms. Dunbar said they find the survey helpful in planning future events and they try to improve or change as many items as possible on the list. She went through the list and commented on several of the items.

Mr. Hoysgaard commented that when people are happy, they tend to participate in the survey. He added that more volunteers are needed to help with the surveys. The Board discussed surveying issues such as the best time to take the survey, comment cards to be returned, development of on-line surveys, etc. Ms. Dunbar advised that approximately 1,000 surveys were completed and that the demographics are used to obtain sponsors, as well as improve the festival.

### **Florida Trust Grant 1.2 Million for South Side Park**

Kathy Conner advised they have been officially notified the City is being awarded a grant toward the purchase of the South Side School. The Commission memo is being prepared requesting the City accept the grant, and they will then negotiate with the School Board to agree on a price.

### **Other Items of Interest** (This item taken out of order)

Mr. Hoysgaard presented a fax he received outlining the legislation enacted regarding the use of warning flags on the beach. The legislation states that when an international standard is set, the State of Florida will adopt the standard. He added that an international standard is expected to be set in approximately two weeks. Mr. Burkeen advised the Board that when the Health Department tests the beaches, they generally notify the press first of the findings, and unfortunately the City is not directly notified.

### **George English Park Update**

Mr. Gizzi introduced Terry Snedeker, one of the City Architects. Mr. Gizzi advised there are three issues at George English Park:

- Baseball Field
- Roller Hockey Rink
- Existing Recreation Center

Through the parks bond program, originally there was \$500,000 to spend at George English Park and through grants and impact fees, they were able to leverage the spending to approximately \$2 million. A tennis court and the roller hockey rink were added, as well as improvements to the parking lot, new basketball courts, and playground equipment. The portables have been removed by the School Board and they are obligated, by contract, to take care of the drainage, sodding, irrigation and fencing of the baseball field area. The City is planning a multi-purpose field. The School Board provided the City with \$150,000 for lighting and to construct dugouts.

Mr. Gizzi advised that the two roller hockey rinks at Holiday Park will be enough for the program. George English Park has one roller hockey rink, and there has been a suggestion it be turned into a small extreme skate park with portable equipment. Mr. Gizzi said the ball field will be completed by September, with the exception of the lights; and the tennis courts have been completed. Mr. Gizzi advised there will be staff monitoring the activities at the skate park. Mr. Burkeen stated the operation of the facility is not complete at this time. The Board discussed the need for a skate park at this location and Mr. Gizzi advised if the needs change, the equipment could be moved to another location.

Mr. Snedeker advised the City has undertaken a project to do renovations at George English Recreation Center. During demolition, unknown damage to the building was found. After an assessment was made, it was determined that continuing renovations would double the cost. The building will be torn down and a new facility constructed, which would be relocated at the west end of the parking loop, between the tennis courts and the parking area. Due to budgeting constraints, the facility will be built in two phases. The first phase will include the tennis operation with sales and pro shop, an office for personnel, and restrooms. A breezeway will run between the structures, and the second phase will include a recreation/meeting room with kitchen, and another office. Construction of Phase One is expected to begin in the next year, and then a couple years later, Phase Two will be added when the City can fund the project. Mr. Snedeker added that the picnic pavilions will be closer to the playground area. Dr. Hays questioned the existing use of the building, and what the uses will be when the new buildings are completed. The Board discussed the location of restrooms and pavilions. Mr. Snedeker suggested staying away from a two-story structure due to the cost of installing an elevator, adding that it would be out of scale due to the size of the park.

James Rampe, member of the Board of Governors for the Coral Ridge Homeowner's Association, advised that they have met with the staff and architect, and have several recommendations to present to the Board. He advised that of the children who were surveyed regarding the skating ramp, only five of them live within the boundary of the neighborhood. They are also concerned about the additional traffic the basketball courts and extreme skating will bring to the neighborhood. Additionally, Mr. Rampe advised the Principal of Bayview Elementary School is opposed to the extreme skating because the school currently uses the hockey rink for exercises. Mr. Rampe stated they have a petition in opposition to the extreme skating from all of the neighbors on S.W. 12<sup>th</sup> Street, which he will supply to the Board. Mr.

Rampe advised that the Coral Ridge Homeowner's Association will be sending a formal letter to the Board stating their opposition to extreme skating at the park, and added they have the support of Commissioner Teel regarding this matter.

With regard to the baseball field, Mr. Rampe advised it was their understanding that when the ball field was rebuilt, it would be to regulation Little League softball standards. The proposed temporary base cutouts are not Little League standards. Mr. Rampe suggested the outfield could be used for other activities, but they would like to see the ball field developed as a regulation Little League softball field.

Mr. Rampe advised they are in favor of a new building, but would like to see it built in one phase, as this would be less expensive in the long run. He also mentioned he spoke with the City Manager and there are no current or future funds designated for a Park Manager position, therefore, the office designated for this purpose could be eliminated.

Jim Cushman, who lives directly across the street, spoke in opposition to the extreme skate park. Mr. Cushman said the adjacent school utilizes the park during and after school. He added the traffic is something they have always had to deal with, and opposed any additional traffic being added to the area. Mr. Cushman felt another park, such as Holiday Park or Mills Pond Park, would be a better venue for an extreme skate park.

Bill Ciani, a member of the Coral Ridge Homeowner's Association Board, reiterated Mr. Rampe's concerns regarding the baseball park. He felt the Little League field is beneficial to the area.

The Board discussed an appropriate location for an extreme skating park, and staff believes an ideal location would be downtown or near the beach. Mr. Burkeen advised the extreme skate park is only a proposal at this time.

Mr. Gizzi advised they spoke with the Principal and physical education teacher at Bayview and they are in support of the multi-purpose field, which the school would utilize if the extreme skate park is built.

Mr. Melnicoff informed the residents that this Board is concerned with providing activities for children. It was clarified that the main concern of the residents present is that they do not want the extreme skate park.

Chair Rude clarified that this is the first night of dialogue regarding this matter, and requested the Homeowner's Association provide the information previously mentioned.

**Other Items of Interest** (This item was revisited)

Chair Rude advised the letter regarding Riverland Isles is being sent out. Mr. Rude requested the

Board look at the Parks & Recreation magazine he provided and mentioned there is an article regarding extreme skating parks and the liability issues.

Dr. Hays was concerned about the Riverland Woods issue that was pulled off the list by Commissioner John Rodstrom and was not going to be considered. She feels it is important they be at the meeting on June 5, 2003, to let them know this item is an important issue. Dr. Hays reported the Riverland Woods groundbreaking was a very successful event.

Dr. Hays inquired as to a date when the wall lights on the beach will be installed. Mr. Burkeen advised they do not have a date at this time, and said it is an engineering issue.

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

**Handouts:**

1. Article - "Ft. Lauderdale the Ultimate CZ Festival" by Gary Hayman, published May 16, 2003
2. Program - 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Cajun-Zydeco Crawfish Festival
3. Letter dated 5/21/03, to Debbie Dunbar from Terrance Simien, Incorporated
4. Survey and Results - 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Cajun-Zydeco Crawfish Festival
5. Fax dated 5/22/03, to Bob Hoysgaard from Rec & Parks, Subject Beach Flags
6. Article – "Distress Syndrome" by Cynthia Barnett, June, 2003, issue of Florida Trend
7. Flyer – Florida Recreation and Park Association Foundation, Inc.
8. Memorandum No. 03-789 to Mayor and Commission from F. T. Johnson, Subject Parks, Recreation and Beaches Advisory Board Recommendation to Purchase Riverland Isles Parcels
9. Memorandum No. 03-781 to Mayor and Commission from F. T. Johnson, Subject Broward County Land Preservation Advisory Board Meeting