

PARKS, RECREATION & BEACHES ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES
City of Fort Lauderdale
100 North Andrews Avenue
8th Floor Conference Room
Wednesday, July 23, 2003

Cumulative from 11/02

<u>BOARD MEMBERS</u>	<u>ABSENT/PRESENT</u>	<u>P</u>	<u>A</u>
John Rude, Chair	P	8	0
John Melnicoff, Vice Chair	P	8	0
Julie Cameron	P	6	2
Elizabeth Hays	P	8	0
Robert Hoysgaard	P	6	2
Antonia Martinez	P	7	1
Joann Medalie	A	7	1
Robert Missal	P	5	3
Timothy Nast	A	2	6
Michael Natale	P	5	3
Rosalind Osgood	A	4	4
Randy Powers	A	6	2
Victoria Pristo-Revier	P	5	3
Joe Shover	P	7	1
Shirley Small	P	5	3

Staff Present

Ernest Burkeen, Parks and Recreation Director
Phil Thornburg, Parks Superintendent
Stephen Person, Recreation Superintendent
Lori Dimeolo, Administrative Assistant
Maybeth Irizarry-Binon, Administrative Assistant
Beth Roberts, Recording Clerk

Call to Order

Chairman John Rude called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. Roll Call was taken and all stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Minutes

Motion made by Mr. Shover, seconded by Ms. Cameron, to approve the minutes of the June 25, 2003. Mr. Hoysgaard made a correction to Other Items of Interest on page 5 by stating what he

was referring to is that the sidewalks that are broken need to be attended to, notwithstanding the budgetary issues. In a voice vote, all voted in favor of the motion.

Athletic Field Usage

Mr. Person presented graphics showing how the fields are heavily used and explained there are not enough fields to accommodate all requests. Many of the fields are owned by the School Board such as Floranada, and the City has an agreement with the School Board to use the fields when the schools are not utilizing them, which is usually after 5:00 p.m. Many communities want to have the fields for themselves, such as Floranada and Bayview. Mr. Person reiterated they do not have enough fields available to accommodate the communities and added that the issue of travel teams using the fields is compounding the problem. In order for a travel team to use the fields, they must show their rosters in order to determine if there are any Fort Lauderdale children on the team, and their use of the fields is limited. Mr. Person added that it would be a great help if the County constructed fields.

Mr. Melnicoff asked where the youth will play when Bayview is under construction. Mr. Person responded they would use Floranada and Holiday Park. Ms. Cameron asked what Lockhart Stadium is being used for. Mr. Person and Mr. Burkeen advised that high schools and F.A.U. use it for football, in addition to the Orioles and high schools that use it for baseball.

Dr. Hays asked about the cost of field rentals. Mr. Person advised there are seasonal permit fees which are approximately \$50 for one season of Little League. Dr. Hays remarked that she has concerns regarding the fact that Sunland School doesn't have a field but uses Carter Park instead. She said this could be a problem because the school does not have control over who is in the park. Mr. Person advised that use of the fields is usually after school hours. Mr. Person said he spoke with the Principal of Sunland Elementary, and it was determined that they could not share the fields. He explained that School Board regulations states that the school children need to be isolated from any other activity, while under the supervision of the school.

Department Budget Information

Mr. Burkeen informed the Board about the budget presentation and public hearing which took place on July 22nd. He advised the department is \$700,000 over budget, \$300,000 of which was due to the watering of parks and medians. Several new parks were added this past year and required maintenance and staffing. Mr. Burkeen stated that although initial costs projections of the new parks had been made, they do not know what the actual costs are until the completion of the first fiscal year. Mr. Burkeen stated the department was asked to eliminate approximately \$1.7 million from next year's budget. This was accomplished by freezing approximately 20 vacant positions, closing the stadium at the end of this year, and shaving some money off special events. Mr. Burkeen added that throughout the year, special events occur which were not in the original budget, such as the Melrose Park Grand Opening, which cost approximately \$18,000,

and the Police/Fire Appreciation Day, which cost approximately \$15,000. The department also looked into changing mowing patterns, and closing the pools at Sunrise and Fort Lauderdale because they are School Board facilities. However, according to the events at the budget hearing, it is possible that there will be no pool closings or changes to the current mowing schedules. Mr. Burkeen feels the department is in pretty good shape and the Commission acknowledges the importance of the Parks and Recreation Department.

Dr. Hays inquired about additional costs accrued by the department because there was no summer school this year. Mr. Burkeen said they had no idea registration would be so huge for summer programs. This meant that additional staff had to be hired. Dr. Hays asked about freezing positions for next year. Mr. Burkeen advised they are currently in a hiring freeze until October 1st, and after that time they will be in a hiring freeze until April 2004. Dr. Hays inquired about using volunteers during these difficult times. Mr. Burkeen advised they can use volunteers, but an additional person needs to be hired to coordinate and train the volunteers. In addition, Mr. Burkeen said that all volunteers must have background checks.

Mr. Hoysgaard asked about other items contributing to being over the budget this year. Mr. Burkeen advised it was mainly concentrated in the Parks Division with the watering and overtime expenses due to special events and maintenance. Mr. Hoysgaard inquired about fireworks. Mr. Burkeen advised they have eliminated the fireworks for next year unless the event is sponsored at a cost of at least \$35,000, plus any entertainment costs. Mr. Hoysgaard asked what festivals are to continue. Mr. Burkeen informed the Board that the Cajun and Blues festivals will be held next year, but this year's Blues festival will be scrutinized, as it is not as successful as the Cajun festival. He added the Cajun festival continues to grow.

Mr. Burkeen advised the Board that the department's budget this year was approximately \$30 million and next year it is anticipated to be around \$27 million.

Mr. Hoysgaard mentioned that with regard to the Boat Show, Kaye Pearson pays the bills and this event does not cost the City anything. He feels this should be used as an example for such events.

Ms. Pristo-Revier inquired about an Adopt-A-Park program. Mr. Burkeen advised that Mr. Thornburg has previously discussed establishing an Adopt-A-Park program, but someone needs to be assigned to coordinating this project and volunteers. He added they could look into finding someone to attempt this task on a trial basis.

Condition of Jimmy Evert Tennis Courts

Mr. Person reported that the Commission approved the funds to resurface the tennis courts and the work is expected to begin August and continue into September. Mr. Burkeen informed the Board they applied for an irrigation grant with the South Florida Water Management District and even though they did not get it this year, Lori Dimeolo will be in touch with S.F.W.M.D. to ascertain how to approach the grant writing process to obtain the grant in the future. Mr. Person

advised that court resurfacing occurs approximately every two years at a cost of approximately \$64,000-\$66,000. Mr. Burkeen advised that clay courts are higher maintenance and the longer the City waits to resurface, the more it would cost. Mr. Burkeen added that the Jimmy Evert Tennis Courts are unique and reminded the Board that the boys 14 and under National Tournament was held there this past year. Mr. Person advised the tennis program recovers approximately 88% of its operating costs; however, the maintenance of the courts is a capital cost.

Ms. Cameron commended the department on the tournament, but recommended additional water fountain facilities. Mr. Burkeen advised they could provide another alternative, such as coolers, during peak events. The Board commended Whitney Kraft for the great job he did hosting the tournament.

Riverland Isles Funding Status

Mr. Thornburg supplied the Board with a copy of the Land Preservation Advisory Board Rankings. Approximately one-third of the sites approved by the Board were in the City of Fort Lauderdale. Chairman Rude and Mr. Thornburg thanked everyone for their efforts in having the District Commissioners at the meeting and felt this assisted in getting these parks in front of the County Commission.

Mr. Melnicoff inquired about Coral Ridge Park. Mr. Thornburg advised it is nine lots on the south side of American Golf. He added the plan is to purchase the lots in order to keep them from being developed and possibly making it a passive park.

Dr. Hays advised the Board that some citizens in the southwest area have begun a writing campaign regarding the parks and have received some positive responses. She urged the Board members to do the same with the County Commission. Mr. Thornburg and Chairman Rude agreed these efforts would be of assistance.

Ms. Cameron inquired about the status of South Side School. Mr. Thornburg advised there has been no final decision on the price, but it is still being discussed with the Commission, School Board, and staff.

Ms. Pristo-Revier inquired about the North Fork property. Chairman Rude advised he understands Audubon purchased the property from the Housing Authority.

Mr. Natale thanked the Board for their help in completing the Riverland Isles project and asked for the location of the Chula Vista Park. Mr. Thornburg advised it is on the northeast corner of 31st Avenue and 17th Street. The Board discussed people interested in donating towards the development of a passive park at this location.

Mr. Thornburg explained the "total" column designates the number of votes the projects received from the Board members. Mr. Thornburg also explained the "Amount Requested" is the

estimated value of the property and this figure does not reflect the appraisal value.

FRDAP Application for Riverland Park Development

Ms. Dimeolo informed the Board FRDAP is the Florida Recreation Development Assistance Program, which is an annual grant program funded by the Department of Environmental Protection with money appropriated from the Governor's budget each year. The application is due in September and this year the City is applying for a maximum grant of \$200,000 for Riverland Park. Ms. Dimeolo passed around the proposed site plan and list of approximate project cost estimates, which total \$400,000 including the \$200,000 grant monies.

Motion made by Dr. Hays, seconded by Ms. Cameron, to approve the FRDAP grant application. In a voice vote, all voted in favor of the motion.

Under discussion, Ms. Dimeolo advised the pool is not listed because Broward County Swim Central is paying the entire \$1.5 million for the pool and some of the associated facilities. Ms. Dimeolo further advised the design phase is approximately 30% complete and the current overall estimate for Phase I is approximately \$4.8 million, including the pool. Site work at Riverland Park is expected to begin in August. The Board discussed various aspects of the proposed site plan. Mr. Shover inquired about funding for the balance of the park. Mr. Burkeen advised the remainder of the funds come from a variety of sources.

Other Items of Interest

Mr. Hoysgaard requested the agenda reflect whether the items on the agenda are for discussion, action, etc.

Mr. Hoysgaard inquired about when the two areas of cracked concrete will be repaired at South Beach. Mr. Thornburg advised he does not know at this time, but will advise the Board. Mr. Thornburg added these areas of concrete were cracked by the demolition crew when they knocked down the restrooms. Mr. Hoysgaard handed out a letter he wrote dated July 17th, and requested the Board members read the letter, deferring discussion on this item until the next meeting.

Mr. Hoysgaard advised there is no word on the warning flags for the beach. He advised that following a discussion with a lifeguard, it was determined the flags belong on the top of the new lifeguard towers and not at the lower levels on the beach.

Mr. Hoysgaard also provided copies of Skate Parks 101, a supplement to the Parks & Recreation Magazine.

Motion made by Mr. Hoysgaard, seconded by Mr. Shover, not to hold a meeting of the Parks, Recreation and Beaches Advisory Board in August. In a voice vote, all voted in favor of the motion.

Dr. Hays asked about the progress of Cancer Survivor's Plaza. Mr. Burkeen advised they are still in discussions with Mr. Block regarding the park.

Dr. Hays inquired about the lights on the wall along the beach. Mr. Thornburg advised this is a budgeted item and is being reviewed by the Engineering Department.

Dr. Hays inquired about the pedestal for the airplane at Holiday Park. Ms. Irizarry-Binon advised the Board that the design of the pedestal is being reviewed by the Engineering Department and the projected dedication is scheduled for Veteran's Day.

Mr. Melnicoff advised that Starlight Musicals have been very good this summer and invited everyone to attend. He also inquired about the air-conditioning unit in the gym at Holiday Park. Mr. Thornburg stated it is working.

Mr. Melnicoff asked about Coral Ridge Country Club. Mr. Burkeen advised they are inquiring as to whether or not the property has been sold, and if not, they will look at the numbers to see if it will work. They will look into selling revenue bonds to purchase the entire site, if it is available.

Dr. Hays asked Mr. Burkeen which items he wished had not been cut from the department's budget for next year. Mr. Burkeen said all the items are important, but the inability to fill positions impacts the department the most.

Mr. Melnicoff suggested the Parks and Recreation Department promote itself more at the City Commission meetings. He further suggested presenting a videotape of the various events and activities.

Chairman Rude requested the Board and staff to listen for any news regarding future plans for Lockhart Stadium and bring any information they have back to the Board.

Chairman Rude received correspondence from Joe Campanella, a Fort Lauderdale citizen, regarding sister cities and wanting to do a flag courtyard in the City.

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Handouts:

1. Broward County Land Preservation Program, Open Space Phase 5, Land Preservation Advisory Board Rankings
2. Riverland Park Development Phase I, Project Cost Estimate (DRAFT)
3. Riverland Park Proposed Site Plan – Phase 1
4. Letter dated July 17, 2003, to Mayor Jim Naugle from Robert Hoysgaard
5. Skate Parks 101, A Supplement to Parks & Recreation Magazine