

PARKS, RECREATION & BEACHES ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES
City of Fort Lauderdale
100 North Andrews Avenue
8th Floor Conference Room
Wednesday, September 24, 2003

<u>BOARD MEMBERS</u>	<u>ABSENT/PRESENT</u>	<u>Cumulative from 11/02</u>	
		<u>P</u>	<u>A</u>
John Rude, Chair	P	9	0
John Melnicoff, Vice Chair	P	9	0
Julie Cameron	P	7	2
Elizabeth Hays	P	9	0
Robert Hoysgaard	A	6	3
Antonia Martinez	A	7	2
Joann Medalie	P	8	1
Robert Missal	A	5	4
Timothy Nast	A	2	7
Michael Natale	P	7	2
Rosalind Osgood	A	4	5
Randy Powers	A	6	3
Victoria Pristo-Revier	P	6	3
Joe Shover	P	8	1
Shirley Small	P	6	3

Staff Present

Ernest Burkeen Jr., Parks and Recreation Director
 Phil Thornburg, Parks Superintendent
 Stephen Person, Recreation Superintendent
 Vince Gizzi, Special Facilities Superintendent
 Earnest Jones, Park Ranger Supervisor
 Sue McAllister, Recreation Program Supervisor
 Mary Ann Slough, Recreation Program Coordinator
 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 Ms. Pristo-Revier, seconded by Vice Chair Melnicoff, to approve the minutes of the July 23, 2003 meeting. In a voice vote, all voted in favor of the motion.

1. Recreation Program of the Month (Summer Camp Programs)

Ms. Sue McAllister and Ms. Mary Ann Slough gave a slide presentation of the department's 2003 summer camp programs providing a breakdown of camp locations, number of participants, the types of activities provided such as swimming, arts, sewing, and recycling; training procedures, registration, fees, volunteers, grants, and field trips. She stated that the camps had been very successful providing activities for over 1,600 children per day. The David Deal Play Day teen concert had drawn 2,000 participants without incident.

Dr. Hays inquired regarding availability of the summer camp food program to the general public and was advised by Ms. McAllister that anyone under the age of 18 along with their families had been welcomed for lunch, whether or not they had been registered in summer camp. Dr. Hays asked what the City should be asked for from the School Board, in regards to funding support in order to supplement these programs as they are a financial burden on the City. Mr. Burkeen responded that for the last 20 years, the City has planned summer activities and it has been difficult to get a response from the School Board. Therefore the City takes the initiative to provide the services they feel are needed by the community. Dr. Hays expressed concern over the schools isolating themselves from the general community.

Mr. Burkeen thanked his staff for their exemplary work on the summer programs.

2. Alternative Uses for Ft. Lauderdale Stadium

Mr. Vince Gizzi reported that the City Commission is recommending cutting stadium operations, although two studies have indicated that the stadium provides a positive \$30 million annual economic impact to the City.

Mr. Gizzi indicated that the stadium is old and requires ongoing maintenance. He stated that the stadium was built for baseball, and it is quite costly to convert the stadium for alternative uses. The City Commission is looking into private management, and an RFP is being prepared to investigate that possibility. Mr. Gizzi added that alternative uses of the stadium include use by a Cricket organization or having the Baltimore Orioles take over its operations. Currently, the City provides \$350,000 in annual subsidies to the stadium.

Mr. Gizzi reported that the stadium needs significant roof repairs, seat replacement, and additional renovations to meet ADA compliance. Mr. Burkeen confirmed that currently plans to undertake these projects are not available due to lack of funding.

Chair Rude expressed his concern that should the stadium close, he would not want to see it replaced with retail shops or offices, but rather ensure that the property is retained as park space.

Dr. Hays felt that the Board should go on record regarding the stadium, and indicated that the

\$350,000 would be better served by financing recreational programs within the City.

Mr. Burkeen suggested that there be more discussion on this issue. He remarked that Fort Lauderdale has a tourist-driven economy and the Baltimore Orioles are an attraction that promotes the City as a tourist destination.

There was general discussion regarding funding possibilities, including a tourist tax, issuing a bond, and privatization

3. Department Budget

Mr. Burkeen stated that the City Commission would meet the following Friday regarding the City budget, and suggested that members of the Board attend because the Parks and Recreation Department funding would be discussed. He added that the City is considering eliminating the fireworks display unless sponsorship arrangements can be made.

4. Other Items of Interest

The Board's November/December meeting was scheduled for December 3, 2003. The 2004 meeting schedule was discussed. Ms. Irizarry-Binon will provide the Board with a finalized schedule.

Mr. Natale inquired regarding funding for Bass Park and was advised by Mr. Burkeen that that issue would be going back on the City Commission agenda for further discussion.

Mr. Gizzi stated that arrangements were being finalized for returning the airplane to Holiday Park. It is anticipated construction of a new pedestal will be awarded within the next 6 months. The airplane is currently located at Fort Lauderdale Executive Airport.

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 7:55 p.m.