

PARKS, RECREATION & BEACHES ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES
City of Fort Lauderdale
100 North Andrews Avenue
8th Floor Conference Room
Wednesday, December 1, 2004

<u>Board Members</u>	<u>Attendance</u>	Cumulative from 10/04	
		<u>P</u>	<u>A</u>
John Rude, Chair	A	1	1
Joann Medalie, Vice Chair	P	2	0
Agnes Burrows	A	1	1
Elizabeth Hays	P	2	0
Robert Hoysgaard	A	1	1
Jim LaBate	A	1	1
Timothy Nast	P	1	1
Michael Natale	P	2	0
Victoria Pristo-Revier	P	1	1
Joe Shover	P	2	0
Shirley Small	A	0	2
Andrew DeGraffenreidt, Sr.	A	0	2

Staff Present

Phil Thornburg, Parks & Recreation Director
Vince Gizzi, Special Facilities Superintendent
Earnest Jones, Park Ranger Supervisor
Mary Ann Slough, Recreation Program Coordinator
Maybeth Irizarry-Binon, Administrative Assistant
Jamie Opperlee, Recording Clerk

Guests

Ted Robertson
Ann Turner
B. Harman
Rudy Herman

Call to Order

Vice-Chair Medalie 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

Dr. Hays pointed out the follow corrections to be made to the October minutes:

- Page 3, the paragraph that began “Mr. Natale asked how much...” The end of the last sentence should read, “...they would give one or two public presentations.”
- On page 5, the paragraph that began “Dr. Hays congratulated Mr. Thornburg...” The land discussed at the end of that paragraph is not in Shady Banks and that reference should be removed.
- On page 4, Mr. Adams is quoted as saying one parking plan in the North Beach area called for the sale of blocks of parking spaces to motels for use by their guests. Dr. Hays asked Mr. Thornburg to check if this was one of the options being considered.

Motion made by Dr. Hays, seconded by Mr. Natale, to approve the minutes of the October 27, 2004 meeting as amended. In a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

1. Naming of Herman Property

Michael Natale

Mr. Natale introduced the Herman family, Ann Turner and Rudy Herman, who spoke about their mother and distributed photographs of the family. Ms. Turner described the family’s dream of establishing a legacy in memory of their mother to benefit the community.

Mr. Thornburg noted that the Board could wait until later in the evening when a quorum might be present to vote on a recommendation to make to the City commission. Dr. Hays felt that if they did not get a quorum this evening, they should vote on the naming at the next board meeting. Dr. Hays felt this naming was an appropriate recommendation and thought Ms. Turner should be invited to address the City Commission as well.

Mr. Shover stated that he agreed with Dr. Hays and recommended that the minutes reflect the Board’s approval of the concept of the naming of the Herman property and their intention to hold a vote during the January meeting.

2. Park Rangers Presentation

Earnest Jones

Ranger Supervisor, Earnest Jones, gave a presentation on the Park Ranger program covering the following topics:

- The Rangers and their function
 - City-wide program began in 1981
 - Safety, Security, and public Relations
 - Not police officers; not authorized to make arrests
 - Direct communication with police, fire, and other departments
 - Top priority: human safety
- Goals and objectives
 - Deter acts of vandalism and destruction

- Provide assistance and information
- Patrol parks and recreational facilities
- Positive interaction with the public
- Effective and timely response to park emergencies
- Ensure a safe environment for visitors
- Current priorities
 - Completion of bond projects
 - Concentrating on larger parks and facilities
 - Shifting of personnel to respond to needs due to staff reductions
 - Response to park emergencies

Ranger Jones stressed that the rangers concentrate on quality of life issues.

Ranger Jones explained that they had received some additional funding for personnel, but changes in staff locations, shifts and utilization of part-time personnel are in place in order to provide quality service. Dr. Hays wanted to know how the PRAB could encourage additional funding for next year to get the program back to where it should be. It was determined that Ranger Jones should return to a future Board meeting and the Board members would decide what recommendation is needed for next year's budget.

Ranger Jones noted that certain areas of concern have slowly increased since the cutbacks in staff, notably homelessness and vandalism. Vice Chair Medalie suggested that Ranger Jones compile data on these issues to present to the City Commission. Dr. Hays agreed that this would lend credence to the Board's stand that more funding was needed.

Mr. Shover stated that he was pleased to see a tangible result of the tax increases that he supported.

Dr. Hays said she had heard that there was an increase in problems at Riverwalk. Ranger Jones stated that there was now a bicycle ranger assigned to Riverwalk on a daily basis.

Vice Chair Medalie thanked Ranger Jones for his presentation and his continued cooperation with the Board.

3. Parks Bond Status

Vince Gizzi

Mr. Gizzi announced that the program was winding down and he would only present one more report on the issue. He described the progress at various parks:

Bayview Park:

- Project worth \$ 700,000 to 1,000,000
- Should be completed by 2006 season

Holiday Park

- Installation and rededication of the Sabre Jet was complete

Carter Park

- Goal was to complete by January 17, 2005 – Martin Luther King Day
- Still in the works:
 - Ball fields
 - Concession stands
 - Pool area and building
 - Reception Center
 - Gymnasium
 - Park landscaping

Riverland Park

- Completion date: March 2005
- Still in the works:
 - Pool building
 - Recreation center
 - Learn-to-Swim pool
 - Water playground
 - Park facilities
 - Pavilion and play area

Riverside Park:

- Completed on April 17, 2004 and
- First Serve summer program was very successful

Mr. Gizzi wanted to correct the report in its statement that CDBG funding had been tentatively approved for the water playground; they were still investigating other funding sources for the water playground.

Mr. Gizzi added that the George English Tennis Center project was going out to bid in January; Commissioner Teel had been instrumental in obtaining funding for the recreation center that was originally planned for phase two, but would now be included with the tennis center project.

Dr. Hays asked about the concrete pad at the temporary fire station; Mr. Gizzi explained that staff trailers were already there and carport facilities for the fire engines would be installed soon. These carports included concrete pads for the engines. Dr. Hays stated staff should consider whether the pads should be left at the park to be used as patios after the new fire station was completed. Mr. Gizzi replied that staff would make this determination once the Fire Department vacates the property.

Dr. Hays pointed out that new budget money would be needed to fund maintenance of the new facilities. Mr. Thornburg replied that the money for Riverland Park maintenance was already in the budget; the newer parks' maintenance monies were not budgeted yet. They did have two to three years to work on this.

4. Master Plan

Mary Ann Slough

Recreation Program Coordinator, Mary Ann Slough demonstrated the portion of the City web site that concerned the Recreation and Open Space Master Plan updates. Information was available regarding:

- The Master Plan
- The Space Imaging Team, the major consultant for the Master Plan
- Land Design Innovations, the company doing the impact fees and other studies
- Kittleson & Associates, the company designing the signage
- Public information, i.e. meetings, presentations, progress reports, GIS data, and agendas
- An online survey on the Master plan
- City parks map

The project schedule could be viewed in detail. Ms. Slough noted that they were still working on cost estimates and impact fee proposals. The impact fees process would take approximately one year. The rest of the study should be complete by March.

Mr. Thornburg explained that developers pay impact fees as the developments are built to compensate for the impact these developments have on the surrounding community. The fees will be used for recreation and open space projects. The City is currently re-examining how the impact fees are derived, since the fees were last updated 25 years ago.

Mr. Nast asked when the new impact fees would go into effect. Ms. Slough replied that this is an ordinance issue. First, the study must be approved, and then the ordinance language is developed. Mr. Thornburg added that there will be public hearings and the issue would come before the City Commission. Mr. Thornburg stated that, he believed the fees would go into effect during the beginning of next year.

5. Beach Wall Fiber Optics Status

Phil Thornburg

Mr. Thornburg announced that on November 1, the City Commission approved this item and the Engineering Department was given the go-ahead to enter into a contract with the firm to install the fiber optics on the beach. There was some concern about the integrity of the electrical system after the recent hurricane season, which kept the Engineering Department from setting a firm date for project completion.

6. “How Cities Use Parks for...Green Infrastructure”

Phil Thornburg

Mr. Thornburg distributed copies of the article “How Cities Use Parks for Green Infrastructure”.

7. Other Items of Interest

Mr. Thornburg confirmed that there was a willing seller letter for the property located at State Road 441 and Riverland Road. He agreed to check on the progress of this process.

Dr. Hays remarked that the plane dedication on Veterans Day was a very nice ceremony and a nice gesture on the part of the City for Veterans Day. She also requested an update on Cancer Survivors Plaza in January; Ms. Irizarry-Binon agreed to prepare that for the January meeting. Mr. Gizzi stated that the park design Mr. Block had approved was valued at \$1.5 million but he had only donated \$750,000. He planned to request more funding from the block family.

Dr. Hays asked if anyone from the City was attending the FRPA Marketing Initiative meetings. There were specific meetings for staff that staff would attend. Mr. Thornburg stated that the City was seeking Board help to find someone to attend. There was a meeting on December 8 and the goal of this meeting was to get their input on the best way to promote Parks and Recreation in the community. Dr. Hays suggested Mr. Thornburg contact Genia Ellis, President of the Council of Ft. Lauderdale Civic Associations and he agreed to call her.

Mr. Shover read portions of a letter he had received from Commissioner Hutchinson regarding the Southeast 13th Street median's paving.

"I know you may have been deeply concerned about the Southeast 13th Street median and the issue of the public right-of-way. I also know that many of you have been receiving emails from Cal Deal, a new resident of the Poinciana Park area describing the new paving. First of all, I need everyone to understand that the church got a legal permit and were perfectly within their right to create the parking spaces. The problem was with our City process.

The current legislation allows the City Engineer to arbitrarily make a decision about the use of public right-of-way without having to go through the Property and Right-of-Way Committee and that is what happened in this case. There was no illegality, just a bad process. What we must concentrate on now is changing the legislation to ensure in the future if we change use in a right-of-way, we must be heard by the Property and Right-of-Way Committee, then the property owners within 300 feet and the civic association in the area will be notified and a sign depicting the time and place of the right-of-way meeting will be clearly visible in the right-of-way in question.

Fortunately, in the case of Southeast 13th Street median, we have the opportunity to craft a compromise. The Poinciana Park neighborhood, led by President Karl Vlockner, is willing to come to the table with church property owners and their district commissioner to broker a compromise for a win-win situation for all concerned. The Poinciana Park neighborhood is what the community is all about.

It is a perfect example of a mixed-use neighborhood, with a church, school, businesses and residences, all within easy reach of one another.

I believe our group will set a shining example of community collaboration and will bring a solution back to the Commission that leaves everyone satisfied. I understand that this is to come up at the December 7 meeting of the Commission, and for that reason, I ask that it not be put on the [PRAB] agenda until after the December 7 meeting.”

Mr. Shover had seen other correspondence from a resident to the City Attorney stating that the ability of the City Engineer to make decisions regarding land use in the right-of-ways applied only to utility facilities. Mr. Shover felt it prudent to allow the City Commission and the City Attorney to complete their actions. If the issue was not resolved, Mr. Shover wanted it to be brought before the PRAB.

Dr. Hays had learned that the parties had gotten together but no compromise had been reached. She felt it important that this not be allowed to happen again.

Ms. Medalie felt the new City Manager should be invited to attend a PRAB meeting; Mr. Thornburg agreed to invite Mr. Gretsas.

Mr. Nast wanted to be sure the naming of the Herman property was dealt with in a timely manner. Mr. Thornburg stated that the naming recommendation could be included when the agreements regarding the property between the City and County were brought to the City Commission, probably in February.

Mr. Thornburg distributed copies of the City of Ft. Lauderdale Parks and Recreation Newsletter.

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

Handouts

1. Three handouts regarding the SE 13th Street paving
2. FRPA marketing initiative information
3. Parks Bond Status Report
4. City of Ft. Lauderdale Parks and Recreation Newsletter