

**PARKS, RECREATION & BEACHES ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES**

**City of Fort Lauderdale**

**100 North Andrews Avenue**

**8th Floor Conference Room**

**Wednesday, July 26, 2006 – 7:00 p.m.**

<b><u>Board Members</u></b>	<b><u>Attendance</u></b>	<b>Cumulative 1/06 – 12/06</b>	
		<b><u>Present</u></b>	<b><u>Absent</u></b>
Andrew DeGraffenreidt, Sr.	P	4	3
Mark Hartman	P	6	1
Elizabeth Hays	P	7	0
Robert Hoysgaard	P	6	1
Jim LaBate	A	4	3
David McNulty	P	4	3
Joann Medalie, Vice Chair	P	7	0
Timothy Nast	P	6	1
Michael Natale	A	4	3
Robert Payne	P	6	1
Victoria Revier	A	3	4
John Rude, Chair	P	7	0
Joe Shover	P	6	1
Shirley Small	P	4	3

**City Staff**

Phil Thornburg, Parks & Recreation Director

Terry Rynart, Parks & Recreation Assistant Director

Vince Gizzi, Special Facilities Superintendent

David Miller, Recreation Superintendent

Gerald Roberts, Recreation Coordinator

Jon Quinton, Recreation Programmer II

Debbie Bylica, Recreation Programmer II

Stephanie Brady, Recreation Programmer

Maybeth Irizarry-Binon, Administrative Assistant

Lavya Vassor, Recording Secretary

**Guests**

Andrew Beebe, Big 105.9 FM

Cindy Stoddard, Comcast

Jim Rassmussen, SunTrust Bank

Kim Crowe, SunTrust Bank

Pauline Lyn, Bank of America

Linda Birdsey, Broward Center for the Performing Arts

Debbie Apolinario, Las Olas Riverfront

## **Call to Order**

Chair 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 of June 2006 meeting**

Mr. Shover said the minutes should indicate that Mr. Shover displayed the key to the City he had been given, not that Chair Rude presented it to him.

**Motion** made by Mr. DeGraffenreidt, seconded by Mr. Hoysgaard, to approve the minutes of the June 28, 2006 meeting as amended. In a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

## **1. Sponsor Recognition**

Phil Thornburg

Mr. Thornburg had plaques for the following sponsors, thanking them for their sponsorship of City events:

- ❖ Winn Dixie - David Deal Play Day and corporate sponsor
- ❖ Big 105 - 4<sup>th</sup> of July event
- ❖ Comcast - 4<sup>th</sup> of July event and Noon Tunes
- ❖ Coca-Cola - Many events
- ❖ SunTrust Bank - Jazz Brunch
- ❖ Bank of America - Starlight Musicals
- ❖ Performing Arts Center - Jazz Brunch
- ❖ Las Olas Riverfront - Jazz Brunch
- ❖ The Michael Irving Foundation – Carter Park donor

Mr. Thornburg thanked the representatives present for their time and effort in contributing to these events.

## **2. Featured Recreation Program**

David Miller

Junior Beach Lifeguard Program

Recreation Superintendent, David Miller explained that the program introduced youngsters to the skills required to be a beach lifeguard. Mr. Jon Quinton, Recreation Programmer, gave a PowerPoint presentation on the program.

Mr. Quinton explained they had created the program this spring as a feeder program for the Beach Patrol to introduce minority teens to Ocean Rescue opportunities. Skills the children

learned included: basic ocean water rescue; use of weight boards and kayaks; search and rescue techniques; proper scanning and vigilance; weather and surf conditions.

Mr. Quinton related the following statistics:

- ❖ Drowning deaths of children under age 5 in Florida are more than double the national average and are higher than any other state in the nation.
- ❖ Drowning is the leading cause of accidental death for children under 4 in Florida.
- ❖ Minorities are twice as likely to die from drowning than whites.
- ❖ For every child who drowns, 4 others are hospitalized and many suffer brain damage.
- ❖ Fort Lauderdale had the highest incidence of drowning deaths in Broward County.
- ❖ Drowning death statistics:
  - 1998: 70
  - 1999: 66
  - 2000: 68

Mr. Quinton informed the Board that Mr. Payne, Parks and Recreation Board member, was the first black beach lifeguard in Fort Lauderdale.

Mr. Quinton reminded the Board of the 1962 march from Sunland Park [now Carter Park] to the Fort Lauderdale Beach to protest segregation at the beaches. The protests continued, and several blacks were arrested for swimming at Fort Lauderdale Beach.

Mr. Quinton explained that a total of 40 youths from the Carter Park area were enrolled in the Junior Beach Lifeguard Program. The program lasted 8 weeks, and an average of 15 kids attended each session. Upon completion, kids were awarded program participation certificates and authentic uniforms.

Dr. Hays noted that there were many minorities who lived close to the ocean, but had never been to the beach. She informed the Board that at the last City Commission Conference Meeting, Commissioner Moore noted the lack of lifeguard stands at the north end of the beach, where many minorities used the beach. Commissioner Moore wanted to provide lifeguards to protect that area.

Mr. Payne clarified that he was the first “recognized” black lifeguard; there were other black lifeguards.

Mr. Hartman stressed the need for surf-trained lifeguards, so he felt this program was extremely important. Mr. Quinton explained to Mr. Hartman that the kids were trained using United States Lifeguard Association standards, which are used by the Fort Lauderdale Beach Patrol. At the community pools, kids were trained using American Red Cross standards. Training did not include CPR. Mr. Hartman said there was a lot of interest in this sort of innovative program; he advised Mr. Quinton to take his presentation to the Florida Recreation and Parks Association Conference, and the regional and state conferences.

### **3. Department Budget Update**

Phil Thornburg

Mr. Thornburg reported that the Parks and Recreation proposed budget had increased slightly over \$1.4 million for next year. This included improved beach maintenance, with additional staff and equipment. Additional money was also dedicated to increased background checks, cleaner facilities, more efficient park maintenance, median and landscape maintenance and replacing the tree canopy lost to hurricane damage. Mr. Thornburg stated the public budget hearings would be held on September 6<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>.

Dr. Hays was concerned that infrastructure maintenance of the beach was not specifically in the budget. She urged Board members to discuss this concern with their Commissioners. Dr. Hays was also concerned about the lack of Park Rangers. She said the Commission was considering outsourcing this job to save money. This was another concern she felt Board members should communicate to their Commissioners.

Mr. Thornburg stated that infrastructure was maintained by the Public Works Department, and was funded in the Capital Improvement Program and Beach CRA. Ms. Medalie felt that lack of maintenance resulted in much higher costs in the long run, when repairs were no longer possible and replacement was required.

Mr. Hoysgaard felt the Board should have a “plan of action” regarding the budget, specifically the Park Rangers issue. Mr. Hartman felt they must get information to the Commission about what the Park Rangers’ responsibilities were. He felt the Commission must currently lack this information if they were considering using “rent-a-cops” in place of rangers. Mr. Hartman felt it was “unconscionable” that the Commission was considering this just to save money. Dr. Hays said she had distributed copies of the 5-year Ranger Report to the Commission, and she did not know if they had ever seen the 2-year comparison that Ranger Supervisor Jones had provided to the Board.

Mr. Nast felt that when a job such as this was contracted out, it was “probably not going to be done as well.” He noted that parks become more valuable by the minute, and he could not believe the Commission was considering replacing all of the rangers except Supervisor Jones. He agreed that the Board must present something to the Commission explaining what they would lose if the rangers were replaced.

Mr. Shover asked if Chair Rude and Mr. Thornburg could form a committee to present the Board’s concerns to the City Commission. Mr. Thornburg said that since the Board worked for the Commission, they would be able to do this, but as he worked for the City Manager, he would not. Dr. Hays noted there would be problems with a committee as well; this must be a “whole Board” decision.

### **4. Director’s Report**

Phil Thornburg

Mr. Thornburg distributed a memo regarding the presentation of an award to Parking Services.

Mr. Thornburg distributed a spreadsheet describing the Board members' term limits and asked them to check this for accuracy.

### **Other Items of Interest**

Mr. Nast announced that Floyd Hull Stadium had recently hosted the Southeast Big League Baseball Championship and the South Broward team had won. He hoped this would help them gain back the World Series.

Dr. Hays distributed an article on park volunteerism and another on safe parks.

Dr. Hays said she had attended the David Deal Play Day and noted the kids had a wonderful time.

Dr. Hays said the issue of park fees had come up at the Commission Conference Meeting, and the Mayor gave the impression he might be willing to consider increasing fees. She encouraged Board members to discuss this with their Commissioners.

Mr. Hartman reminded the Board that July was National Parks and Recreation Month. He distributed copies of the Middle River Terrace newsletter that had several article about parks.

There being no further business before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 8:09 p.m.

Handouts:

1. Parking services memo
2. Board members' term limit spreadsheet
3. Park volunteerism article
4. Safe parks article
5. Middle River Terrace newsletter