

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

**City of Fort Lauderdale  
100 North Andrews Avenue  
8<sup>th</sup> Floor Conference Room  
Wednesday, March 28, 2007 - 7:00 p.m.**

<b><u>Board Members</u></b>	<b><u>Attendance</u></b>	<b>Cumulative 1/07-12/07</b>	
		<b><u>Present</u></b>	<b><u>Absent</u></b>
Ed Angelbello	P	2	1
Curtiss Berry	P	2	1
Sean Fee	P	3	0
Mark Hartman, Chair	A	2	1
Robert Hoysgaard	P	3	0
James LaBate	P	1	2
Larry Mabson	P	1	0
JoAnne Medalie	P	3	0
Michael Natale, Vice Chair	P	3	0
Robert Payne	P	2	1
Betty Shelley	P	3	0
Shirley Small	A	1	2
Jay Verkey	P	3	0
Matthew Weiss	P	3	0

### **Staff**

Phil Thornburg, Parks and Recreation Director  
Suzanne Broucek, Recreation Program Supervisor  
David Miller, Recreation Superintendent  
Terry Rynard, Assistant Parks and Recreation Director  
Aisha Fraites, Public Information Specialist  
Ken Roland, Pool Operations Coordinator  
Casey Eckels, Recycling Program Coordinator  
Earnest Jones, Park Ranger Supervisor  
Stacey Daley, Administrative Assistant

### **Guests**

Althia Cummings  
Dr. Elizabeth Hays, Council of Fort Lauderdale Civic Associations

### **Call to Order**

Mr. Natale called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m. Roll call was taken and all stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **Approval of February 2007 Minutes**

**Motion** made by Mr. Berry, seconded by Mr. Payne, to approve the minutes of the February 2007 meeting. Board unanimously approved.

#### **1. Director's Report**

Phil Thornburg

Mr. Thornburg informed the Board that he had spoken with the City Attorney's office regarding the Sunshine law. Mr. Stewart advised the Board to consult their Better Meetings handbook that had been distributed to them. If any specific questions arose, they should consult the City Attorney.

Mr. Thornburg asked Board members to email specific questions to him; he would consult with the City Attorney and report back to the Board member.

#### **2. Recreation Program of the Month** Aquatic Training Programs

David Miller

Mr. Miller introduced Ken Roland, Pool Operations Coordinator, to give a presentation on the aquatics programs.

Mr. Roland thanked Mr. Payne for teaching him to swim.

Mr. Roland announced there was a nation-wide shortage of lifeguards and they had begun a recruitment program. Incentives included:

- Training
- Opportunities for advancement
- Fun-filled work environment

Mr. Roland said they had a monthly lifeguard training class to provide a feeder system for new lifeguards. He noted that their lifeguards often went on to become firefighters and police officers and that being a lifeguard created a good work history. This was a natural progression, as they were professional lifesavers.

Mr. Roland felt the new uniform had provided a professional look and demeanor.

Mr. Roland showed a photo of Lawrence Upchurch, a new recruit from Dillard high School.

Mr. Roland stated he was a Water Safety Instructor/Trainer with the American Red Cross in many disciplines:

- Water safety instructor/trainer
- Lifeguard instructor/trainer
- Emergency response instructor/trainer
- First aid instructor/trainer

➤ CPR instructor/trainer

Mr. Roland said one of his goals had been to provide recruitment and mentorship. He informed the Board that lifeguard training requirements included the ability to swim 8 lengths, non-stop, within 4 minutes.

Mr. Roland said they had offered the following training over the last year:

- CPR for the professional rescuer
- CPR for recreation staff
- First aid for the recreation staff
- Lifeguard training
- Water safety instructor training

Mr. Roland stated they were also training people in the use of an Automated External Defibrillator [AED].

Mr. Roland said they made their presentation to the schools to sign kids up for the courses.

Mr. Roland described the Every Child a Swimmer Program. It was formed by Gene Harold Martin and was run out of the Fort Lauderdale Aquatic Complex. Mr. Roland was the international vice president of this organization. Mr. Roland explained this program was a cooperative effort between the Fort Lauderdale Firefighters and the lifeguards.

Mr. Roland reported that 4,000 people died from accidental drowning in the United States each year. The largest segment of the population affected was the 0 to 4-year old age group.

Mr. Roland informed that Board that this program had been the pilot for the Swim Central Program. In the Swim Central program, kids were brought in from the City's elementary schools for swim lessons. This was offered on Sundays in Bass Park from 2 to 3 p.m.

Mr. Roland said the Swim Central and Learn to Swim programs worked hand-in-hand to prevent drowning. The Swim Central effort highlighted free swimming lessons for elementary-aged kids. Mr. Roland pointed out that no child who had gone through this program had ended up as a drowning statistic.

Mr. Roland reported that, since 1999, Swim Central had taught 14,437 kids to swim. The County total was approximately 29,000; so, they had trained half of the total.

Mr. Roland stated the Learn to Swim effort was available at the City's eight swim facilities and was open to residents and non-residents alike. This began with the parent and child classes, taking children as young as 6 months old to toddlers, levels 1 through 6. Mr. Roland said they also offered aquatic school to train swim instructors in the winter and the spring.

Mr. Roland said the lifeguard/instructor program trained people to train lifeguards. This began this month and was a 40-hour course. Mr. Roland said a nationally known instructor/trainer, J.D. Hills, would head this course.

Mr. Roland noted that AEDs were installed at all of the City's pools and the AED course was included in their aquatic school. Mr. Roland added that scholarships were available for all of the aquatic school courses.

Mr. Roland said they used music and mascots to attack the drowning prevention problem and introduced the Board to the mascot he had created, Lucky the Dolphin. Mr. Roland said he had been appalled when he learned the drowning statistics for the area and had created the mascot to give kids an icon to identify with. He used music to motivate them.

Mr. Roland used 4 concepts of learning:

- **Motivations**
- **Association**
- **Repetition**
- **Senses**

Mr. Roland explained that he would visit schools to inform kids and get them interested in the program and then bring them to the pools to teach them the skills.

Mr. Roland said their goal was to get to all of the elementary schools in the area, public and private. This was made possible through the Children's Service Board grant that funded Swim Central.

Mr. Thornburg said Swim Central was school-driven and depended on the principal's decision to add it to their curriculum and that Mr. Roland worked hard to encourage schools to incorporate this into their curriculum.

Mr. Fee asked if the City had enough lifeguards. Mr. Roland said the shortage had been critical for the last three years, but they hoped to be fully staffed as of this year. Mr. Roland explained that the requirement for hiring was the lifeguard training, which included CPR and first aid, but they also included WSI. The minimum age for a lifeguard was 16; minimum age for an instructor was 17.

Mr. Roland informed the Board that starting salary for lifeguards was \$8.50 per hour.

Dr. Hays said the County paid for the pool at Riverland Park through Swim Central and the pool was cross the street from Riverland Elementary, making it very convenient for the school to utilize the Swim Central program.

Dr. Hays remembered hearing from the swim team group that went to Washington DC each year and she note that there had been special recognition of this group at the last City Commission meeting. She felt this was an excellent program for the older kids. Mr. Mabson asked about the ratio of kids in the program from the City's schools and from outside the school system. Mr. Roland said a significant number came from the City's schools.

Mr. Natale remarked on the incredible number of kids – 14,000 – who had been taught to swim.

Mr. Ken Roland, City of Fort Lauderdale Pool Operations Coordinator, gave a PowerPoint presentation. A copy of the presentation slides are attached to these minutes.

**3. Plaque Honoring William Dandy**  
**Civic People's Park**

Phil Thornburg

Mr. Natale reminded the Board of last month's recommendation for a plaque in Civic People's Park in honor of William Dandy.

Mr. Thornburg said this request had come from Commissioner Moore and some Board members and invited the Board to make a motion pursuant to this.

**Motion** made by Mr. LaBate, seconded by Mr. Hoysgaard, to honor William Dandy with a plaque in Civic People's Park. Board unanimously approved.

**4. Recycling in the Parks**

Terry Rynard  
Casey Eckels

Ms. Rynard introduced Casey Eckels, the City's Recycling Coordinator, who explained the current recycling program and some plans for the future.

Ms. Eckels distributed literature to the Board and informed the Board that the City's motto for her program was "Recycle Fort Lauderdale at home, at school, at work, at play." The parks' part of this was the "at play" piece and included all events, recycling in the park and on the beach. The literature she distributed concentrated on recycling in the parks.

**Alpha Underground Container Pilot Program**

In 2003, Ms. Eckels said they had instituted the Alpha Underground Container Pilot Program and pictures of these were included in the brochure she distributed. She explained that these containers were aesthetically pleasing, took very little space on the surface and drastically reduced collection costs. They had installed 7 of these in the beach area, in 2005, and had only needed to be serviced 7 times in the last two years. The average collection time on these containers was about every three weeks.

Ms. Eckels said the pilot had been so successful they had decided to install 12 more containers in pairs for garbage and recycling cans and bottles. Three would be installed in Mills Pond Park, two in Holiday Park and one in Carter Park. The plan was to continue installing at additional parks each year.

#### Jazz Brunch Recycle Works

Ms. Eckels said the recycling at the Jazz Brunch was taken over by the Harbordale Civic Association. She explained that this had been known for years as Recycle Corps, an organization comprising representatives from all civic associations that worked with Ms. Eckels to promote recycling. They had criteria for the different things they worked on each year and points were awarded as goals were achieved. The points translated into dollars at the end of the year that were awarded to the civic associations.

Ms. Eckels explained that, on Monday, the name was changed to Recycle Works. Recycle Works of Harbordale had taken over the Jazz Brunch approximately 18 months ago and worked with parks staff to set up containers prior to the Brunch. They also sorted recyclables out of the trash containers and talked to people about recycling. They had gone from collecting one 65-gallon cart of recyclables to collecting seven.

Ms. Eckels said even if events were not places where they could not realize great reductions in trash, it was an opportunity to increase public awareness. Everywhere people saw recycling taking place reinforced the idea wherever they went: at home, at work, at school and at play.

#### Summer Starlight Festivals

Mr. Eckels said they had a very effective recycling program at the summer Starlight Festivals for four years. Ms. Eckels remarked on what a family-friendly event this was. At this event, they set up an information table for recycling and she had recycling bins with wheels for kids to pull through the event inviting people to recycle. This year, Ms. Eckels said, they would have glow-in-the-dark T-shirts to distribute to the kids. She said this event had realized some real reductions in trash: approximately 25 cubic yards over the 6-week Starlight Festival period.

#### Gay Pride Festival

This year's festival was the first time the festival contacted Ms. Eckels regarding recycling and was spearheaded by her Recycle Works contact in Middle River. The waste stream for this festival had been diverted by half: 31 cubic yards.

#### Parks Recycling Policy

Ms. Eckels said she and Ms. Rynard were working on a policy for the Parks and Recreation Department and the Recycling office to work together to establish standards and goals to maximize recycling and minimize waste on every front of operations. This effort would be named "The Lean and Green Program" and Ms. Eckels intended to use it as a pilot for the rest of the City Departments to adopt. These efforts would translate to savings in short term yearly budgets and would also role model responsible

government behavior dedicated to protecting and preserving long-term health and environment for generations to come.

Mr. Weiss asked what the cost savings were involved. Ms. Eckels said each ton of recycling diverted \$92 and generated revenue for that commodity. The revenue varied, but they did make money on everything they recycled. She explained that Broward County had some of the highest disposal rates in the United States because they were part of a partnership of 26 cities whose garbage did not go to the landfill, but to a Waste to Energy plant. She stated these were "very high tech and cost an arm and a leg" and noted that they were "the right thing to do" because they kept garbage from going to a landfill, which could threaten the aquifer, and they had enormous EPA controls. This was why it behooved them to recycle as much as possible, to save that \$92 per ton.

On the curbside program, they had diverted 6,300 tons of recyclables last year from the waste stream. This translated into enough money through the avoided disposal and through the revenue to completely pay the recycling contract and put another \$200,000 back in the general fund.

Ms. Eckels explained that the Lean and Green Parks program would increase employee participation.

Ms. Medalie asked what plans were in the works for the commercial areas of the beach. Ms. Eckels said they had written a grant proposal for the State Innovative Grant for beach recycling. Their proposal was currently rated high and Ms. Eckels felt there was a very good chance of approval. This was a \$300,000 grant that they planned to use for a program designed for the beach, but it was up to the beach development people to decide whether to implement it.

Mr. Hoysgaard remarked that some homes west of the Intracoastal had recycling bins, but none of the condos east of the Intracoastal had them. Ms. Eckels explained that curbside homes that paid for sanitation through their water bill included recycling. Apartments and condos that contracted privately for the sanitation were in a different category.

Ms. Eckels explained that there was a program for people that wanted to establish recycling and the City had an ordinance making it mandatory for apartments and condos to provide on-site recycling. The City had never pursued the apartments and condos as a police action because this was not their M.O. They preferred to provide education, support and partnerships. She agreed to work with anyone who phoned her that they were interested in establishing a program where one did not currently exist. She reminded the Board that although there was a cost involved, the condo would save on the waste diversion and save enough on the waste to pay for the recycling.

Ms. Eckels informed the Board that every one of the 45,000 homes in the City had curbside recycling and some smaller multi-family units were on the same program. Ms. Eckels explained that after hurricane Andrew, Miami-Dade had stopped recycling,

but misrepresented it to residents and had caused a P.R. nightmare. This caused lingering suspicions that recyclable materials were just sent to landfills. Ms. Eckels assured Mr. LaBate that all recycling put out in the bins was actually recycled. She said she knew where the facility was and had checked on it.

Dr. Hays asked what percentage of all of the residential buildings on the beach actually recycled. Ms. Eckels said they did not know; she knew who was on the City program and something about what other contractors were picking up. This was because they privately contracted for garbage service, as a business did.

Ms. Eckels said the City had a low bid rate on service for the carts used for collection and an agreement with the contractor to allow apartments, condos and businesses to piggyback on this rate. She said those who participated in the program received education, carts, and technical support to launch the program and comply with the law. Ms. Eckels said they intended to send a letter informing condos of their intent to enforce the mandate and to offer help instituting the program.

Dr. Hays felt they needed to know the numbers that were not recycling, because this represented lost revenues. Ms. Eckels clarified they were losing money on the commodities revenue; the condos were losing money on the avoided disposal. Ms. Eckels estimated 15% of multi-families were in a program.

Mr. Weiss remarked that the loophole was that any multi-family over four units could not contract with the City for recycling or trash and private contractors charged \$30 to \$35 per recycle container. Ms. Eckels said the rate they could get through the City's partnership program was \$12.50 per container. This program rate had existed for four years.

Ms. Eckels showed the Board the Recycle Fort Lauderdale home page on the City's website, which provided information on how to get started with the program.

Ms. Eckels stated they had a workplace program that now had 125 businesses receiving services, including Citrix, several downtown architects and attorneys and the City's downtown infrastructure.

Ms. Eckels reported that Recycles Works had given away \$20,000 last year to 16 associations. She noted that this was worth it to the City for the information the associations provided to the community and their volunteer work at events

Ms. Shelly felt people not complying was the problem. She noted the need for covers for the paper recycling to keep it dry.

Mr. Berry asked Mr. Thornburg if someone separated garbage from recyclables after park events. Mr. Thornburg informed him they did not.



Ms. Eckels said she agreed with Ms. Shelly that education was an ongoing process and the more opportunity people had to recycle, the more it would become a way of life.

Ms. Eckels said they had recently upgraded their curbside program and advised Board members to phone customer service at 828-8000 and tell them they wanted to participate in the upgraded recycling program. She explained that staff would replace one blue bin with a green bin specifically for mixed paper.

## **5. Water Restrictions**

Terry Rynard

Ms. Rynard explained that they were under a phase 1 water restriction, which called for a 15% reduction. The restrictions were:

- Existing landscaping could be watered between 4:00 a.m. and 8:00 a.m. three days per week, alternating by odd/even street addresses
- New landscaping could be watered between midnight and 8:00 a.m.

Ms. Rynard felt confident they had the irrigation systems set citywide.

Mr. Thornburg said they had notified all City employees working the night shift to monitor the City irrigation systems and alert them if they found any operating improperly or at the wrong time.

Ms. Rynard said there were exemptions for when the City tested or checked the system for up to 10 minutes per week, per zone. They were also permitted to water ball field infields on low pressure a couple of times per week.

Mr. Hoysgaard reminded Mr. Thornburg of a section of traffic island on Broward Boulevard in Victoria Park that he had noticed today was operating at an odd hour.

Ms. Rynard confirmed for Dr. Hays that hand watering at low pressure with a hose having a closeable nozzle was permitted from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. on the same days automatic watering was permitted.

Dr. Hays asked if the City was considering more drought-tolerant plantings in anticipation of the restrictions' lasting. Ms. Rynard said the City's landscape designers were working on Xeriscape; they were phasing out high-water plants to be replaced with more native plants. They were also switching to Bahia grass, which required less irrigation.

Ms. Rynard said they had already been working on landscape changes to reduce water usage before the restrictions went into effect, because it was the right thing and because the City spent a lot of money on water.

Mr. Angelbello felt that lack of water at City parks could create a hazard for youth playing at the park and asked if the City had the ability to suspend the water restrictions

to address this. Ms. Rynard said they could not change the restrictions, but they tried to keep the fields as soft as possible.

**6. Board Comments**

Michael Natale

Mr. Natale introduced Mr. Larry Mabson, new Board member.

Mr. Mabson stated Commissioner Moore appointed him.

Mr. Verkey said they were trying to get sign-ups for the Jaguars and asked if the City could help.

Mr. Payne said he was glad to see work finally being done on the gym floor at Carter Park.

Mr. Hoysgaard said he was thrilled to meet Ms. Eckels, "The Recycle Goddess."

Ms. Shelly reported she had taken the park tour with Ranger Supervisor Jones last week and she had been very impressed with the small neighborhood parks.

Mr. Angelbello thanked the City Parks Department and park rangers for the cleanup efforts at Holiday Park. Mr. Weiss agreed.

Mr. Fee noticed the backstop had been replaced at Croissant Park. Ms. Rynard informed him that they would replace the backstop at Hardy Park next.

Mr. Berry was glad so many Board members showed up for their meetings, allowing them to attain a quorum.

Mr. Thornburg introduced Aiesha Fraites, Public Information Specialist for Parks and Recreation.

Mr. Fee asked if the plane would return to Holiday Park. Mr. Thornburg said it would return, but he did not know when; it had sustained hurricane damage and required body work.

Mr. Natale thanked Ms. Rynard and staff for their continuing efforts Riverland Woods Park regarding the fencing and security issues.

Dr. Hays said she had participated in Walk Lauderdale in Holiday Park and there was a reasonable turnout there.

Mr. Thornburg distributed the 2006 Overview from the Mayor's State of the City address the previous week.

Mr. Thornburg also distributed a white paper by the Trust for Public Lands.

**7.     Adjournment**

Michael Natale

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