

**PARKS, RECREATION, & BEACHES BOARD MINUTES  
CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE  
100 NORTH ANDREWS AVENUE  
CITY HALL, 8<sup>TH</sup> FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM  
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 2010 – 7:00 P.M.**

**Cumulative Attendance**

<b>Board Members</b>	<b>Attendance</b>	<b>Oct 2009- Sept 2010</b>	
		<b>Present</b>	<b>Absent</b>
Mark Hartman, Chair	P	9	0
Sean Fee, Vice Chair	P	7	2
Curtiss Berry	P	9	0
Betty Shelley	P	7	2
John Verkey	A	6	3
Matthew Weiss	P	7	2
Robert Payne	P	7	2
Larry Mabson	P	7	2
Jeffrey Cannon	A	5	4
Marilyn Markus	P	6	3
Bruce Quailey	P	8	1
Cindy Bucher	P	6	2
Joe Bellavance	A	7	2
R.L. Landers	P	8	1

Currently there are 14 appointed members to the Board, which means 8 would constitute a quorum.

**Staff**

Stacey Daley, Administrative Assistant  
Terry Rynard, Assistant Director, Parks and Recreation Department  
Tim McGovern, Community Outreach Coordinator, Parks and Recreation  
Gerry Roberts, Park Ranger Supervisor  
Brigitte Chiappetta, Recording Secretary, Prototype, Inc.

**Communications to City Commission**

None.

**Roll Call**

Chair Hartman called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Roll was called and it was noted a quorum was present.

**Approval of Minutes (June 23, 2010 and August 25, 2010)**

Assistant Director Rynard advised that Jim Koeth of Planning and Zoning had submitted some minor changes to the June 23 minutes. She also noted that the City Clerk's Office has advised the word "Advisory" should no longer be included in the Board's official title.

**Motion** made by Mr. Berry, seconded by Vice Chair Fee, to approve the June 23, 2010 minutes as corrected. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

Assistant Director Rynard submitted some changes to the August 25 minutes as requested by Jenni Morejon, Planner.

**Motion** made by Mr. Mabson, seconded by Mr. Payne, to approve the August 25, 2010 minutes as corrected. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

## **1. Department Report – Assistant Director Rynard**

Assistant Director Rynard noted that some members will be "termed out" the following month, and a small appreciation ceremony will be held for those members leaving the Board. Mr. Angelbello, Mr. Cannon, Chair Hartman, and Mr. McCormick will be termed out at that time, and a new Chair and Vice Chair for the following year will be elected.

The City's budget was approved at the September 21 City Commission meeting. Assistant Director Rynard pointed out there will be "some service impacts," but there will be no layoffs. Medians and parks will have grass cut on a slightly longer cycle, and the lake at Snyder Park will be closed to swimmers. Vacant positions in the Department will not be filled. She concluded that this is a "best-case scenario" in the current economic climate.

Mr. Weiss requested an update on Peter Feldman Park. Assistant Director Rynard advised it is "well under construction" and is "on an 80-day schedule." Features include a trellis, a walking trail, and a "very urban-looking" playground. She estimated it will likely be completed in the next three months.

Vice Chair Fee asked if the concession stand will be redone at Floyd Hall Stadium. Assistant Director Rynard replied this is being done with FEMA funds from Hurricane Wilma. Other changes to this facility include closing off some of the covered grandstands and adding two new restrooms.

## **2. Upcoming Events – Assistant Director Rynard**

Assistant Director Rynard introduced Tim McGovern, Community Outreach Coordinator for the Department, who would discuss upcoming events with the Board.

Mr. McGovern advised 2010 has been “a great year for special events,” and recognized the contributions of Staff and volunteers in achieving this. He distributed a list of upcoming special events that provided a brief synopsis of each event, including Dolphin Days, Jazz Brunch, Cinema by the Sea, and Halloween at Snyder Park.

Assistant Director Rynard pointed out that Halloween at Snyder Park will feature a kids’ area with bounce houses and a Candy Castle; a haunted trail; and the backfield, which will include food and beverages, musical performances, and illusionists. The charge will be \$25 for adults and \$10 for children.

Ms. Bucher asked if there is the possibility of an event featuring RC racing cars. Mr. McGovern replied there has been an event at Mills Pond Park.

Mr. Qualey asked if the Department had looked into hosting the Red Bull Air Races. Assistant Director Rynard said there have been “initial conversations” regarding this event, but noted that most venues for this event have “viewing from multiple sides” rather than over open water. A member of the Department is still talking to Red Bull about this possibility.

Vice Chair Fee commended the Department for planning so many activities despite their budget cuts. Assistant Director Rynard recognized Jan Beth Idelman, who has helped raise funds for many of the events, for her hard work.

Mr. Qualey asked if there has been any news on the Air and Sea Show. Assistant Director Rynard said she had no new information, but would look into this before the next meeting.

### **3. Field Permitting Priority – Assistant Director Rynard**

Assistant Director Rynard explained that previously, athletic fields were scheduled for “the athletic event that was in season at the time.” Seasons were defined so that specific sports were assigned a certain number of months or weeks. This caused some sports communities to ask that each sport “have an equal amount of in-season time,” as not all sports received the same number of months.

Schedules and seasons were revisited, and the Department has arrived at what they feel is a more equitable manner of scheduling, although Assistant Director Rynard advised it does not address every concern. The new schedule is also set up so there is no “overlap” between soccer and football, as these sports often share the same space.

The proposed seasons are as follows:

- Baseball/softball season: February-July

- Football: July 1-November 30
- Soccer: December 1-April 30
- Rugby: November-April
- Cricket: May-September

She explained that this does not mean all sports cannot be played year-round, but the seasons determine priority use and in-season rates. She also recognized Mr. McCormick for providing important feedback on soccer, and noted that its season doesn't "line up" with the actual soccer season: a more accurate season would run from August to February. The season was changed to avoid a conflict between soccer and football scheduling.

She asked for the Board members' input on the proposed seasons.

Mr. Weiss asked if the seasonal sports would have priority at all parks. Assistant Director Rynard said yes, explaining that City-run programs always receive first priority. Second priority goes to City-sponsored groups that have a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the City, which means they have an agreement with the City while in season. Third priority goes to City-sponsored groups out of season, and fourth goes to City-sponsored adult groups (with an MOU) in season. Final priorities go to adult groups out of season, followed by "all other organizations" that do not fall into any of the above categories.

She noted that City-sponsored groups with MOUs must have 60% of their membership based in Fort Lauderdale. It is possible for a City-sponsored group to lose its agreement by violating it in some way, such as failing to pick up trash at a location or not meeting the 60% requirement. The Department enforces a three-strike policy with regard to this.

Vice Chair Fee noted that once the football programs, for example, have used the fields for some months, "the fields are dead" when the next program uses them despite the Department's work at maintaining them. He felt a solution could be to not "blanket-permit Holiday Park" specifically for recreational soccer for a time period. He said this would also result in "additional revenue" for the Department, as the programs would not be using County parks instead of City ones. Mr. Weiss recalled a similar system had once been in use for baseball.

Assistant Director Rynard said this was a valid point, and she would work with others in the Department to ensure that unused fields could be opened up to other users.

Mr. Weiss added that some leagues "have trouble fielding teams" in some of their divisions. Assistant Director Rynard agreed that there has been discussion of consolidation within some leagues; however, she emphasized that the City would not dictate this consolidation.

Vice Chair Fee asked if there has been talk of establishing parks whose fields are solely dedicated to a single sport. Assistant Director Rynard replied that the best way to maximize field space is through multi-purpose fields: when there is overlap, “the sport that the field is built for has the priority.”

Vice Chair Fee asked if Hardy Park is used for sports programs. Assistant Director Rynard said the Department does not sell permits for this field, as Hardy Park “doesn’t have good permit turf.” Vice Chair Fee suggested that adding more lights and appropriate turf to Hardy Park would increase its attendance and bring more people to the Downtown area. Assistant Director Rynard agreed that this was included in the Master Plan.

Mr. Weiss pointed out that the concession stand at Holiday Park is used during football season and is “pretty much closed” at the end of football season. He felt the City was missing an opportunity for more revenue if the concession stand was also used during soccer games. Assistant Director Rynard recalled that a football team had kept its concession open at Croissant Park during the previous soccer season, but “it didn’t make any money.” She noted, however, that this could be because people attending soccer games were not used to having a concession open during games.

Mr. Landers asked how the concession stand at Mills Pond Park had a permit to sell beer during softball games. Assistant Director Rynard said the Board and the City Commission had both approved this decision some years ago, as Mills Pond Park had been “designated as our adult sports complex” and was an appropriate venue for the sale of adult beverages. She added that this complex “brings in a lot of revenue.” The concessionaire provides the City with 30% of their revenue.

She concluded that the proposed seasonal schedule is “not a perfect answer,” but seems to be an improvement over the former method.

Vice Chair Fee commented that the seasons seem to be “based on football,” and asked if this was on purpose. Assistant Director Rynard answered the Department had looked at permits for both City-based and travel teams; they had also looked at the soccer schedule, which was “August to May.” They had arrived at December through April in order to give more time to scheduling soccer, although she noted that they had attempted to avoid scheduling soccer and football at the same time. The seasons had been determined “when the majority are permitted.”

Mr. Weiss said he would not agree to the proposed schedule, as baseball, for example, has run “for a long time” from February 1 to July 15. Assistant Director Rynard pointed out that no sport is allowed more than five months to its season, as this would entitle the programs to “an in-season rate and in-season priority.”

The five months' limitation is based on field space, as well as on "the length of the seasons that you already had." She suggested February 1 to June 30 as a potential compromise.

Mr. Weiss asked who else would use a baseball field between July 1 and July 15, asserting that "nobody" would be doing this. Assistant Director Rynard explained that baseball programs could still use these fields, but the priority would be different. She added that the rate of "\$4 a day for a field" was reasonable.

Vice Chair Fee said a potential problem is for soccer programs to "pay in-season rates when they're out of season," as games are not often scheduled in April. Assistant Director Rynard pointed out that according to permits, fields are requested in April by soccer teams.

Mr. Weiss asked if Floyd Hall is subject to the proposed schedule agreement. Assistant Director Rynard said they were, as their contract agreement states that football season is over when baseball season starts, and when baseball season is over, football season starts.

Vice Chair Fee said the issue is that "football wins," as the multi-purpose fields are "already torn up" when soccer begins on them. He explained this was why he advocated designating some parks as sites for football only or soccer only.

Assistant Director Rynard advised there are five football fields and five football teams, and if these locations are designated as "football only," nothing is gained for the soccer programs. She reiterated that there is "no perfect answer" for all scheduling issues.

Vice Chair Fee noted that while it would be beneficial for soccer programs to move that season up to November 1, "there's no fields for them to play on," as the only fields available would be those not in use by football programs.

Mr. Mabson asked if the various auxiliaries could "come together" and arrive at a solution. Assistant Director Rynard said there has been one such meeting, but it remains difficult to reach an agreement.

She added that many requests by the Board, such as those for additional lighting or playing turf, have been requested under the Capital Improvement Program, but have not been funded.

Vice Chair Fee asked how many programs do not pay permit fees. Assistant Director Rynard said she was only aware of two such programs, which are baseball and football at Floyd Hall Stadium.

**Motion** made by Vice Chair Fee, seconded by Mr. Berry, to approve the scheduling priorities on field usage, with the amendment to the softball and baseball season of February 1 to June 30. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed 10-1 (Mr. Payne dissenting).

Mr. Mabson said he was not comfortable voting on the above issue because he had “no direct interest” involved, and felt he should abstain from the vote. Ms. Markus stated this was her position as well. Assistant Director Rynard offered to find out whether or not abstention was possible.

#### **4. Board Comments / Communications to the Commission – Chair Hartman**

Chair Hartman distributed copies of relevant news articles from the *New York Times Magazine* and the *Sun-Sentinel*.

Mr. Quailey asked if there had been further developments on the prospective water park that had been presented at a previous Board meeting. Assistant Director Rynard said there was “nothing new,” although the City Commission had approved the related land use change, which the Board had previously voted to approve as well. She concluded that approval of the proposed park is “a long way off” at this time.

Mr. Quailey asked what would be the “downside” if the water park failed, explaining that he was concerned with the feasibility of the numbers presented regarding the park. He noted that proceeding with this use could eliminate the possibility of “something that would be better for the City” in the long term. Assistant Director Rynard advised this had been discussed by the City Commission as well.

Mr. Quailey noted that while the City offers many opportunities for several different sports, it does not have “public golf.” He stated many parents have said they would like to see a facility at which their children can learn golf. He felt the City should consider the potential cost of operating a golf program, particularly as compared with the costs of operating other sports programs. Chair Hartman agreed “golf is... at least as appropriate” a consideration for the City as a water park. Assistant Director Rynard said she could assemble information on the programs’ cost recovery if he wished. Ms. Markus said she was also interested in the cost and feasibility of a public golf course for the City.

Mr. Berry referred to p.5 of the August 25, 2010 minutes, and explained that what he wished to say was the Downtown Development Authority and the operator of the railroad should consider putting “a decorative metal” on Lester’s Bridge. He stated it is currently “an eyesore.”

Mr. Mabson asked if the City has discretionary funds to enter into a partnership with a private industry and bring an activity to the City. Assistant Director Rynard said when a program is proposed, the Department determines what its expense would be, whether it fits with their mission, and if a sponsor is available for the program. She said they “will listen to any idea.” The City uses the tools available through the Public Information Office to advertise the program to the City, including inserts in utility bills and advertising on the City’s website.

Mr. Berry asked if Carter Park could be used as a venue for sports programs. Assistant Director Rynard said its facilities are used during football season, as well as “in-house programs” and baseball programs.

## **5. Adjournment**

There being no further business to come before the Board at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 8:42 p.m.

[Minutes prepared by K. McGuire, Prototype, Inc.]