

**PARKS, RECREATION, & BEACHES BOARD MINUTES  
CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE  
100 NORTH ANDREWS AVENUE  
CITY HALL, 8<sup>TH</sup> FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM  
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 26, 2011 – 7:00 P.M.**

**Cumulative Attendance**

<b>Board Members</b>	<b>Attendance</b>	<b>Oct 2010- Sept 2011</b>	
		<b>Present</b>	<b>Absent</b>
Matthew Weiss, Chair	P	3	0
Sean Fee, Vice Chair	A	2	1
Joseph Bellavance	P	3	0
Curtiss Berry	P	3	0
Cindy Bucher	P	2	1
Tommy Knapp	P	3	0
R. L. Landers	P	2	1
Larry Mabson	P	3	0
Marilyn Markus	P	1	2
Robert Payne	P	3	0
Bruce Quailey	P	3	0
Betty Shelley	P	2	1
Richard Zaden	A	1	1

Currently there are 13 appointed members to the Board, which means 7 would constitute a quorum.

**Staff**

Stacey Daley, Administrative Assistant  
Terry Rynard, Assistant Director, Parks and Recreation Department  
Gerry Roberts, Park Ranger Supervisor  
Gina Rivera, Grants and Special Projects Coordinator  
Brigitte Chiappetta, Recording Secretary, Prototype, Inc.

**Communications to City Commission**

None.

**Roll Call**

Chair Weiss called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and roll was called. All stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Approval of Minutes**

**Motion** made by Ms. Markus, seconded by Mr. Berry, that the minutes be approved as corrected.

It was noted that on p.2, paragraph 1, the individual requesting clarification of voting procedure was Mr. Mabson, not Mr. Quailey.

In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

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

Assistant Director Rynard reported that the New Year's Eve event in partnership with the Orange Bowl was very successful. The Police Department estimated attendance at between 35,000 and 40,000.

The City's Centennial birthday party is scheduled for Sunday, March 27, 2011. The Parks and Recreation Department has taken the lead in putting this event together. She said the event will be along the same lines as the New River Street Dance, with several booths, music, and various activities. More information will be available in February.

The St. Patrick's Day event is also being planned in part by the Department. The parade will begin at noon on March 12. Assistant Director Rynard encouraged the members to have their neighborhood or nonprofit groups and other prospective participants apply online to appear in the parade. The Grand Marshal will be Winnie Amaturio.

Mr. Verkey has resigned from the Board due to work obligations.

Assistant Director Rynard noted that Item 3 on tonight's Agenda, Alternative Programming, will be moved to the February meeting, as both Community Programming Supervisors are ill and cannot attend.

The Department has received two Parks for People grants. Assistant Director Rynard explained that these grants must be used on properties that are acquired through the County Safe Parks & Bonds program. The grants are \$75,000 each for Lewis Landing, Gore-Betz, South Middle River, and Hortt Parks, and \$50,000 for Feldman and Harbordale Parks. The grant will add shade structures over the playgrounds. She recognized Ms. Daley for her work in writing these grants.

A group of 175 volunteers from New York has asked to work at Carter Park for a day. The Department has provided the group with a list of potential projects to undertake. Shade structures are also an item on this list of projects.

Assistant Director Rynard provided a handout sent by a private citizen to the Board members. The issue is a golf course in Deerfield Beach.

## **2. Hott Park Conceptual Plan – Assistant Director Rynard**

Assistant Director Rynard introduced Tim Hager, Julie Hager, and Dave Clancy, representing the Shady Banks Neighborhood Association. She showed a visual of the Shady Banks neighborhood, including the existing park, playground, baseball court, and baseball field. Former school buildings had been used for facility maintenance and a staffing location. The proposed trail, volleyball and tennis courts, and community building do not exist at this time.

She advised that the property was acquired through Broward County Bond funds, in partnership with the County and with an agreement to allow the School Board to continue to use the location for two years. The two years will be up in April 2011; after reviewing options for the site, it was noted that most of the buildings are very old and do not meet current Code. The Department has met with the neighborhood and agreed to get rid of the old buildings and place a community facility in the Park. There is currently enough money to demolish the buildings, and, with the grant money, place shade structures on the playground.

She said the current design is only conceptual at this point, and noted that the new buildings will meet as many Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standards as possible, including natural light wherever possible. Parking will be available behind a private home near the property. Code also requires an 8 ft. concrete wall between the park and the private homes abutting the property. Assistant Director Rynard said the Department may request a variance to this requirement, as their first preference would be to screen the homes from the park with native landscaping and hedges or with other fencing.

Mr. Bellavance asked how much it cost to acquire the park. Assistant Director Rynard said the cost was \$4 million to acquire almost 5 acres, and over half the funding came from the County.

Mr. Berry asked why the existing structures had to be demolished. Assistant Director Rynard explained that the building used by the school board is not secure and could present health issues due to mold and asbestos. Renovating the building would require great expense. In addition, she explained that the funding for parks acquired through the County must be used within five years, and the City is already two years into the process.

Mr. Clancy and Ms. Hager advised that the community voted unanimously to demolish and replace the buildings. Assistant Director Rynard added that the proposed community building would be less than 2000 sq. ft.

Mr. Landers asked why a wall is necessary. Assistant Director Rynard said a wall is required by Code when a park abuts residential property. Mr. Mabson said

some communities had concerns about buffering traffic and other impacts from the park from affecting residential homes.

Assistant Director Rynard noted that the Bill Keith Preserve is also located in the Shady Banks neighborhood and is currently under construction. The invasive plant removal on this property, which was a condition of the City receiving the property from the County, was done over the course of a year and was performed by volunteers from the community. This saved the City approximately \$100,000. She recognized the Shady Banks neighborhood as “excellent park partners.”

Mr. Clancy expressed concern with the erosion of the shorelines at the Bill Keith Preserve. He estimated that over the last few years, the preserve has lost roughly 10 ft. due to erosion. Assistant Director Rynard said a plan development is currently in the permitting process to address this situation. She expected that some funds may be left over from construction, which could be used toward restoration.

**Motion** made by Mr. Berry, seconded by Mr. Payne, to approve the drawing as shown. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

#### **4. Accreditation**

Assistant Director Rynard introduced Gina Rivera, Grants and Special Projects Coordinator, who would discuss national accreditation for the Parks and Recreation Department.

Ms. Rivera explained that accreditation is handled through the Commission for the Accreditation of Parks and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA). The process involves documenting the Department’s compliance with 144 standards that were established to accredit parks and recreational agencies throughout the nation. Currently there are 97 accredited agencies nationwide, 18 of which are in Florida. Fort Lauderdale, Miami, Tampa, and Walton Manors are all pursuing accreditation.

Ms. Rivera said the accreditation process would mean the Department is on the same level as other professionally accredited agencies throughout the nation. Currently the Department is compiling data on its processes into a manual, so when CAPRA visits the City, they can easily see where the Department stands with regard to its documentation. They can also determine if the City meets the necessary criteria. The documentation manual is planned to be complete by April 2011, and CAPRA’s visitation team will arrive in July and spend three to four days with the Department.

Ms. Rivera showed the Board a brief video about the accreditation process.

Chair Weiss asked how much the accreditation process costs. Ms. Rivera said the initial application fee is \$100, and the final application will be \$3300 for five years. The Department will be re-assessed in five years.

Mr. Mabson noted that there are several internal benefits for the Department, and asked if there are extended benefits to accreditation as well, such as a greater ability to bring in outside funding or grants. Assistant Director Rynard said the Department will be eligible for more grants if it is accredited, which is particularly helpful when City budgets are tight.

Mr. Mabson asked if there are grants specifically tied to accreditation. Ms. Rivera said there are National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) grants that ask if a Department is accredited, and Assistant Director Rynard added that many federal government grants ask this as well.

Mr. Mabson asked what Departments in Florida are currently accredited. Ms. Rivera said Broward County, Boynton Beach, Del Ray Beach, and Miami Beach are accredited, among others.

Mr. Qualey asked if the total cost takes Staff time into account. Assistant Director Rynard said Staff devotes a great deal of time toward this effort, but this does not figure into the total cost. Mr. Qualey asked what kind of feedback has been heard from Staff. Assistant Director Rynard advised that the process is laborious, but many individuals have already noticed the progress the Department has made over the last few years.

Mr. Payne asked if this is the first time the Department has applied for accreditation. Assistant Rynard said it is, although she recalled that the Department received a Gold Medal in the 1990s. She pointed out that they have applied for the Gold Medal again in recent years, and accreditation is considered in this application.

Chair Weiss asked if the Department is given a chance to correct any faults during the visitation process. Ms. Rivera said at times a Department may be lacking in a particular area, and they are given the opportunity to find the additional documentation they need.

Assistant Director Rynard concluded that when the visitation team arrives in July, the Board members will be given an opportunity to meet and talk with them so they can hear how the Department measures up against other agencies around the country.

## **5. Board Comments**

Ms. Shelley asked if there is “a crime element in Oswald Park.” Assistant Director Rynard said some cars have been broken into, but this is a widespread issue. Mr. Roberts noted that since there has been an increased presence of Rangers in the parks, these break-ins have occurred less often.

Assistant Director Rynard advised that there is an unjustified perception of some parks, including Oswald Park. She pointed out that it is “on the lower end” of occurrences of break-ins or vandalism.

Ms. Shelley commented that Ruggedfest has been held at Tradewinds in the past, and suggested it could be held at the stadium in the future. Assistant Director Rynard said hopefully this can be worked out, as there is insufficient parking to hold this event at Oswald Park.

Mr. Berry asked if the parking lot is lighted at night or fenced in at Oswald Park. Assistant Director Rynard said the lot is lighted but is not fenced in.

Mr. Payne asked if the Department has considered bringing more Park Rangers to patrol the parks where athletic tournaments are held. Mr. Roberts said they are beginning to look at strategies for detailing Rangers to specific events so they are present during the planning stages and have a public safety overview of the event. Assistant Director Rynard advised that this is not a parks issue but an economic issue.

Chair Weiss requested that the Board hold a vote on moving the meeting time from 7:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. on a trial basis. He suggested that if the trial does not seem to work for the members, the meeting could be restored to its original time.

**Motion** made by Mr. Berry, seconded by Ms. Shelley, to have a trial for 60 days or two meetings to start at 6:30. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed 9-1 (Mr. Payne dissenting).

Ms. Daley said she would check to ensure that the room is available at 6:30 and would communicate this to the members.

## **6. Communications to the City Commission**

None.

## **7. Adjournment**

There being no further business to come before the Board at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.