

**PARKS, RECREATION, & BEACHES BOARD MINUTES
CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE
100 NORTH ANDREWS AVENUE
CITY HALL, 8TH FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 23, 2011 – 6:30 P.M.**

Cumulative Attendance

Board Members	Attendance	Oct 2010- Sept 2011	
		Present	Absent
Matthew Weiss, Chair	P	5	0
Sean Fee, Vice Chair	A	3	2
Joseph Bellavance	P	5	0
Curtiss Berry	P	5	0
Cindy Bucher	P	4	1
Tommy Knapp	A	4	1
R. L. Landers	P	3	2
Larry Mabson	P	5	0
Marilyn Markus	P	2	3
Robert Payne (6:34)	P	5	0
Bruce Quailey	P	5	0
Betty Shelley (6:44)	P	3	2
Richard Zaden	P	3	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
Brigitte Chiappetta, Recording Secretary, Prototype, Inc.

Communications to City Commission

None.

Roll Call

Chair Weiss called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. Roll was called and all stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Minutes

Motion made by Mr. Berry, seconded by Ms. Markus, to approve the minutes of the February 23, 2011 meeting. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

1. Department Report – Assistant Director Rynard

Assistant Director Rynard said the St. Patrick's Day Parade had been very successful, with an attendance estimated at 22,250. She thanked the Board members who had been in attendance and distributed pictures of some of the floats, including a birthday cake float that will be used again for the Centennial birthday party.

She continued that Centennial trunk exhibits are being unveiled this weekend at the Fort Lauderdale Historic Society. On Saturday, March 26, Centennial Beachfest will last from 8 p.m. to midnight and will feature several small bands and a fireworks display at midnight. The City's official birthday party is on Sunday, March 27, from noon to 8 p.m. along the Riverwalk. She encouraged the Board members to attend these Centennial events.

Mr. Payne arrived at 6:34 p.m.

Assistant Director Rynard moved on to "Park Snapshots," stating that North Fork Riverfront Park is located off 18 Avenue and was acquired through the use of County bond money. It is a native area with wetlands, mangrove preserves, a waterway, and an observation platform. She added that it had formerly been the site of a dump and was cleaned up by the owner before the City acquired the land. She concluded that it is a hidden treasure.

It was noted that former Director Phil Thornburg has left the Parks and Recreation Department. Assistant Director Rynard is presently in charge of the Department.

Mr. Landers thanked Assistant Director Rynard for providing a list of the names and locations of City parks. Mr. Roberts stated he or another Park Ranger would be happy to take any of the Board members to any park they wished to visit. He estimated a good tour of any park would last two hours.

2. Current Park Development Projects – Assistant Director Rynard

Assistant Director Rynard provided a brief overview of the Department's current projects. The playground at Southside Elementary School will receive lighting and a small pavilion beside the playground. This project was funded with the assistance of several grants.

Another project nearly complete is the Bill Keith Preserve, located in the Shady Banks neighborhood. Assistant Director Rynard encouraged the members to visit

this park, which will be dedicated within the next two months. The neighborhood had lobbied to prevent this site from being developed into a storage area for boats, and the City purchased and developed the property as a preserve.

Small improvements have been made to Coral Ridge Park, including climbing rocks for children. As with all pocket parks, the Department works closely with the neighborhood to develop a park with the features they want.

Ms. Shelley arrived at 6:44 p.m.

Assistant Director Rynard praised the work of City Landscape Architect Tom White, who has designed many recent parks so they fit into the character of the surrounding neighborhood. She cited Peter Feldman Park as an example, as this was a “very urban-looking” park, and Bill Keith Preserve, which is a very native, natural area.

Other recent events include the official opening of Dolphin Isles Park on March 5; Peter Feldman Park is open for use but the grand opening has been postponed until some of the work on Sistrunk Boulevard is complete. Harbordale Park has gone out to bid and should be finished over the summer. More improvements are expected at Oswald Park, which will be the City’s first spray playground, and more playground development will be done and equipment installed at Twin Lakes North Park.

Mr. Quailey requested clarification of what makes a spray playground. Assistant Director Rynard explained that this playground will feature recirculated, filtered water coming from different kinds of play equipment. This is a very active type of playground and there was strong support from both the community and the District Commissioner to install these features. The goal is to complete the park by the time school is out on June 8.

Mr. Zaden asked if any of the new park projects will incorporate the bicycle sharing program. Assistant Director Rynard said the program’s principals are working with the Department, and there are some locations that will include these kiosks, including the Beach Community Center and an area on Riverwalk.

Mr. Berry requested an update on Hortt Park. Assistant Director Rynard said the bid was awarded to bring down the former school buildings at the beginning of summer.

3. Park Ambassadors – Chair Weiss

Chair Weiss distributed a handout listing the parks located in each of the four districts, and displayed a map of the parks’ locations throughout the City. Assistant Director Rynard clarified that some sites highlighted on the map are

parks and schools adjacent to one another: the City has installed playground equipment in park areas that are owned by some schools. The neighborhoods still have free access to these parks during non-school hours. These locations include Floranada, Croissant, Warfield, Walker, and Lauderdale Manors Parks.

Chair Weiss said he had arranged the list of parks into districts in case any member would like to report back to his or her District Commissioner if there are any issues at specific parks. As Park Ambassadors, the members would select some of the parks from the list and visit them once a month. They are then asked to report to the Board regarding what is going on at the parks, and advise Assistant Director Rynard if they see any problems.

Assistant Director Rynard asked that any members who saw safety issues or other problems that should be dealt with immediately should call or email her before the next Board meeting. This would help her address any issues as soon as possible.

The members discussed the list of parks by each district and divided them up among each other for visitation.

Ms. Shelley recalled when she had first joined the Board, the members had visited many of the parks, accompanied by Park Rangers. Chair Weiss said he would like to schedule a trolley tour of the parks with many of the members, although he noted that they would not be able to discuss Board business during the tour due to the Sunshine Law.

Chair Weiss concluded by asking the members to visit the parks they had selected, and then discuss them at next month's meeting. He suggested in the future, they could trade some parks among each other so each member could have visited every park in the City within a year.

4. Board Comments – Chair Weiss

Ms. Markus advised that she would be resigning from the Board due to health and time concerns. She said she had greatly enjoyed her time on the Board, and provided Assistant Director Rynard with a copy of her letter of resignation.

She also provided Chair Weiss with copies of two articles advocating the purchase of land for public golf courses in Fort Lauderdale.

Mr. Mabson said he had spoken to a resident regarding the acquisition of some land on 31 Avenue; the resident had asked to know the status of land that had been discussed as a potential acquisition by former City Commissioner Carlton Moore. He had invited her to attend a meeting and had offered to find out this information if she could not attend.

He added that the resident was also affiliated with a nonprofit recreational group that deals with golfing, and was trying to find an area that would partner with the organization and allow them to use golfing facilities in the Fort Lauderdale area. Assistant Director Rynard advised that there was a small golfing area available at Oswald Park, and said she would be happy to discuss the issue with the resident.

With regard to the area former Commissioner Moore had wanted to acquire, Chair Weiss said he recalled the Commissioner had wanted to put a small golf course on the 31 Avenue site. Assistant Director Rynard said she would check the status of any discussions regarding this parcel.

Mr. Landers recalled there had once been discussions of locating a golf course or driving range at Fort Lauderdale Stadium. Ms. Markus observed that there are currently no public golf courses located in the City.

Mr. Berry asked if the playing field at Croissant Park could be eliminated, as he was not aware that anyone used the field. He also said it would be preferable to locate a basketball court outside at Croissant Park, as the noise from indoor play made it difficult to hear inside the building. Assistant Director Rynard said the field at Croissant Park helps provide the Department with multipurpose space.

Mr. Mabson asked if the members could receive ID cards identifying them as Board members. Assistant Director Rynard agreed these would be a good way for Park Ambassadors to introduce themselves, and said she would look into this.

Mr. Berry asked if the Board meetings would continue to be scheduled at 6:30 p.m. Assistant Director Rynard recalled that the Board had voted to meet at this time on a trial basis in February and March, and asked the Board to decide if they would prefer to keep this meeting time or return to the original 7 p.m. time.

Motion made by Mr. Berry, seconded by Mr. Payne, to return to 7. In a voice vote, the **motion** failed 2-9 (Chair Weiss, Mr. Bellavance, Ms. Bucher, Mr. Landers, Ms. Markus, Mr. Payne, Mr. Qualey, Ms. Shelley, and Mr. Zaden dissenting).

Motion made by Mr. Berry, seconded by Ms. Shelley, to continue at 6:30. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

Mr. Qualey asked that the estimated amount of park space per person in the City be brought to next month's meeting.

5. Communications to the City Commission – Chair Weiss

None.

6. Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Board at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 7:36 p.m.

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