

**PARKS, RECREATION, & BEACHES BOARD MINUTES  
CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE  
100 NORTH ANDREWS AVENUE  
CITY HALL, 8<sup>TH</sup> FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM  
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 27, 2011 – 6:30 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	6	0
Sean Fee, Vice Chair	P	4	2
Joseph Bellavance	P	6	0
Curtiss Berry	P	6	0
Cindy Bucher	P	5	1
Tommy Knapp (6:35)	P	5	1
R. L. Landers	P	4	2
Larry Mabson	P	6	0
Robert Payne (6:35)	P	6	0
Bruce Quailey	P	6	0
Betty Shelley	A	3	3
Richard Zaden	A	3	2

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 6:31 p.m. Roll was called and all stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Approval of Minutes**

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

## **1. Department Report**

Assistant Director Rynard advised that an RFP for a proposal to further develop the Aquatics Complex was recently sent out; only one response was received. The respondent, Recreational Design Concepts (RDC), has come before the City Commission as recently as the previous week with an update on their proposal. At present, the City Commission has sent RDC back again to bring more information, as there is still a question regarding whether their proposal will be sufficient to meet parking and traffic requirements on A1A. Due to the size of the project, it will be a public/private partnership.

Mr. Payne and Mr. Knapp arrived at this time (6:35 p.m.).

Assistant Director Rynard continued that the development includes two Olympic-sized pools, a competition dive well, a private area for restaurants, museum space for the Swimming Hall of Fame, and a wave house. The existing pool must be redone, and the existing bleachers are closed because they are beyond repair. The improvements would continue to draw the competition-level swimming already featured at the site, and would attract even more competition swimming to help the facility sustain itself.

She stated that the City Commission is doing a good job of ensuring they have every available piece of information before making a decision about the project, and there has been a good deal of public input as well. RDC has not been awarded the contract at this time. Full details about RDC's proposal are attached to last week's City Commission Agenda.

Assistant Director Rynard explained that the Swimming Hall of Fame is a private organization that rents space at the Aquatics Complex. The facility itself is owned by the City and is under the jurisdiction of Business Enterprises. She explained that the facility needs improvement due to its age, and one question currently facing the City Commission is how much money should be spent to sustain it.

Mr. Quailey asked if the Board would be able to advise the City Commission. Assistant Director Rynard suggested that the members review the information available, including RDC's presentation and the City Commission's concerns. She said Director of Business Enterprises Cate McCaffrey can address the Board and provide an overview of the discussions thus far. She would also look into whether or not RDC might be willing to do a presentation to the Board.

Vice Chair Fee recalled that at one time, other nearby cities had tried to convince the Swimming Hall of Fame to relocate. Assistant Director Rynard said she felt the Hall of Fame is comfortable in their present location and has a good relationship with the City Commission.

Chair Weiss noted that RDC has built similar facilities in nearby communities to bring large events to those towns; however, he pointed out that there are only so many major events to go around, and was not certain that Fort Lauderdale will be able to bring enough events to the City.

Assistant Director Rynard handed out park snapshots of Fort Lauderdale Beach Park, part of which lies within the beach redevelopment area and receives CRA funding. The CRA has helped Parks and Recreation in funding events and improvements on the beach. The park includes the Memorial Playground and a dozen volleyball courts. There are approximately 10 million visitors each year to the Fort Lauderdale Beach.

Sweeting Park, located on Sweeting Estates, features a fishing pier on one fork of the New River. This is a very small park that runs between the river and the roadway.

The Holiday Park Activity Center, which was recently redone, features gymnastics and other activities. The City has an agreement with a group who rents the space at the Activity Center and provides programming. There are yoga and aikido facilities at the Center as well.

Assistant Director Rynard concluded that the first of a series of landscape workshops was held the previous week. The workshops are held in conjunction with the Environmental Department and the University of Florida Extension Service. The first installment was a great success, with over 100 people in attendance. The workshop focused on "Florida-friendly" landscaping, xeroscaping, and making ecologically sound decisions. Five more workshops are scheduled in the City.

Mr. Bellavance noted that there is no shade left on the beach because many of the trees formerly planted there have been removed. Assistant Director Rynard explained that the trees were not native and were hazardous in storm conditions. There are plans to replant native trees on the beach in the future. She noted that coconut palms, while not technically native trees, are "almost native" and weather storms well. The Department will continue to plant these trees.

Ms. Bucher asked for clarification of the walkway width at Fort Lauderdale Beach Park. Assistant Director Rynard said the existing walkway is 7 ft. wide; the new walkway planned for the area will be 13 ft. wide. The new wall will be as tall as possible to keep the sand on the beach without obstructing the view. Landscaping is also being added to the new parking lot in order to meet current Code requirements. The CRA and Parking Fund are assuming most of the cost of the improvements. The project is tentatively expected to be complete by October 2011.

Assistant Director Rynard said the standard for park acres per person is 3.95 acres per 1000 people; Fort Lauderdale has 4.04 acres per 1000, which is slightly over average. She pointed out that one reason for this is the City's high seasonal population. The City is slightly low in gym space, but remains near average in most categories. She noted that there is a great deal of adult activity in the City, which often competes with children's activities for field space. The City does a great deal of sod replacement to maintain its fields.

Chair Weiss asked if beach space is included in the park space estimate. Assistant Director Rynard said it was. She added that the statistics attempted to include a seasonal population estimated at 181,000, which she characterized as "a weak calculation" of this group.

Mr. Knapp requested an update on the former American Golf Course property. Assistant Director Rynard said at the City's most recent inquiry, the owner was not interested in selling the property. The site is currently zoned for park space. Mr. Quailey said he was in contact with the primary property owner and hoped to be able to report in more detail on this topic in the future.

Assistant Director Rynard continued that board/committee member training will be held on May 5 at 5:45 p.m. She encouraged all members to attend.

She concluded that former Board member Marilyn Markus has resigned, and there are openings for interested individuals to become members.

Mr. Bellavance requested an update on Tunnel Top Park. Assistant Director Rynard said this park is in the final phase of construction, which primarily involves landscaping. Once the contract has been awarded, this phase lasts approximately six to seven weeks.

Mr. Bellavance also requested an update on the playground at Hardy Park. Assistant Director Rynard said an archaeological assessment was done on the property, which determined that further archaeological studies would be necessary. The Historic Preservation Board had learned a cemetery was once located on the site, although Assistant Director Rynard noted that records indicate everything has been moved. She stated that the project is expected to proceed again soon.

Ms. Bucher reported that she had visited her chosen parks as a Park Ambassador. She said Riverland Woods Park is very quiet, with an excellent playground and parking area, but noted that the gravel is wearing down near the water in the boat ramp area. Assistant Director Rynard said this will be paved with part of the grant funding received to repair the ramp.

Ms. Bucher continued that Benson Park, which has four flag poles, has a fence that is falling down. Assistant Director Rynard said this is a Code violation and will be reported. Ms. Bucher also noted there is currently nothing surrounding the basketball court, which is close to the street. She concluded that Sunset Park, which is part of Sunset Elementary, is a very enjoyable and well-maintained park, and all areas are in use.

Ms. Bucher asked when the name of Civic People's Park was changed to Elizabeth Hayes Park. Assistant Director Rynard recalled that the Board had voted in favor of the name change some time ago, following a presentation by members of the community. Ms. Bucher advised that there are individuals who were not pleased that the name of the park was changed, and asked if they could address the Board on this issue. Assistant Director Rynard said this could be placed on an upcoming agenda. Mr. Mabson recalled that research had been done before the name of the park was changed, and explained there was no intent on the Board's behalf to act rashly.

Mr. Mabson reported that he had visited Bass Park, and its visitors had been pleased that progress is being made on the pool construction. He noted that there was a desire for a multi-purpose center at this park, which would allow for indoor basketball and other activities. He asked if there are any plans for the vacant northwest corner of the park. Assistant Director Rynard said she would find out if there is a Master Plan for Bass Park.

Mr. Mabson said there were questions regarding the playground at Oswald Park. Assistant Director Rynard said the surfacing is being replaced, and a "sprayground" is being added over the summer. Mr. Mabson advised that there is a parking problem at Oswald, as the rugby team has been parking on the grass. He suggested that a vegetation buffer could be added to prevent this problem from recurring. Assistant Director Rynard said this issue has been addressed with the team in question.

Mr. Mabson concluded that while he had not spoken to anyone at Lincoln Park, there did not appear to be any issues. He noted that "Little Lincoln," which is across the street from the park, is very heavily used. Assistant Director Rynard agreed that the upkeep of this area is a challenge. There were no issues to report from Riverland Park.

Mr. Mabson continued that there was interest in adding onto the existing social center at Joe Carter Park to increase space for activities. Assistant Director Rynard said there have been discussions regarding the need for very large, centrally located multi-purpose facilities, possibly at Carter and Holiday Parks, although there was currently no funding for these proposed facilities. She advised that it was unlikely that a second storey could be added onto the existing

building for structural reasons. There has also been a long-standing capital improvements request for an amphitheater at Carter Park.

Mr. Mabson suggested that priorities for Carter Park could be revised to better match the funding dollars available. Assistant Director Rynard said most improvements are done out of the operating budget at present, and noted that one proposed improvement at Carter Park includes replacing old picnic tables.

Mr. Mabson concluded that he had seen very colorful and “upscale” shading at one park, and advised that adding shade structures at other parks might encourage attendance in the summer. Assistant Director Rynard said shading is a continuing goal for the Department, and asked the members to keep her apprised if they became aware of grants for the addition of shade structures.

Mr. Landers stated he had visited 15 parks, and would bring written comments on these visits to the next Board meeting. He noted that no name plaque was visible at Cliff Lake Park, and that there is little park space in addition to the lake itself. Assistant Director Rynard said she would look into this, as there may be a reason for the lack of a sign.

Mr. Berry asked if the existing light bulbs would be removed from the buildings at Hott Park before demolition proceeds. Assistant Director Rynard said she would check with the Building Department to determine guidelines.

## **2. Stranahan Park Landscape Conceptual Plan**

Assistant Director Rynard explained that the Fort Lauderdale Women’s Club owns a corner of the property at Stranahan Park. They have worked with master gardeners to develop a botanical garden around their building, and would like to extend this garden throughout the park. She showed a rendering of the conceptual plan, which will continue to allow for both open sidewalks and green space in the park. The garden would feature mostly native plants, and no trees would be removed.

She continued that the Women’s Club has applied for grant funding for the next phase of planting, and there is interest from Calvary Chapel Church to adopt the area for service hours and to assist with planting the garden.

Mr. Landers noted that there continues to be an issue with homeless individuals in Stranahan Park, and felt this could create a problem for the proposed garden. Assistant Director Rynard pointed out that any individual can be in the park at any time, and advised that this concern should not prevent improvements to the park.

**Motion** made by Mr. Mabson, seconded by Mr. Berry, to support the project that was presented in the manner and method described. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

### **3. Board Comments**

Chair Weiss thanked the Board members for their comments on the Park Ambassadors program. He suggested that a map could be brought to meetings to more easily pinpoint the parks' locations.

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

None.

### **5. Adjournment**

There being no further business to come before the Board at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

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