

**PARKS, RECREATION, & BEACHES BOARD MINUTES  
CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE  
100 NORTH ANDREWS AVENUE  
CITY HALL, 8<sup>TH</sup> FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM  
WEDNESDAY, MAY 25, 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	7	0
Sean Fee, Vice Chair	P	5	2
Joseph Bellavance	P	7	0
Curtiss Berry	A	6	1
Cindy Bucher	P	6	1
Tommy Knapp	A	5	2
R. L. Landers	P	5	2
Larry Mabson	P	7	0
Robert Payne	A	6	1
Bruce Quailey	P	7	0
Betty Shelley	P	4	3
Richard Zaden	P	4	2

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

**Staff**

Terry Rynard, Assistant Director, Parks and Recreation Department  
Gerry Roberts, Park Ranger Supervisor  
Cate McCaffrey, Director of Business Enterprises  
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**

Ms. Bucher requested that the April 27, 2011 reflect that there are four flagpoles in Benson Park.

**Motion** made by Mr. Zaden, seconded by Mr. Quailey, to approve the minutes of the April 27, 2011 meeting as amended. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

## **1. Department Report**

Assistant Director Rynard said Coral Ridge Park was opened on Saturday, May 18. She said it was a very successful opening event with good community turnout.

The City Commission has approved negotiations with their first choice of a new City Manager, who is very interested in community involvement and neighborhoods.

The Great American Beach Party will be held on Saturday, May 28, beginning at 11:30 a.m. Activities will include a car show, an art fair, games, and other entertainment. The Black Daggers Parachute Team will perform at the event. New markers will be placed in the pavement to recognize five local individuals. This is the second year of the Great American Beach Party. Assistant Director Rynard invited all the Board members to attend the event.

She continued by providing park snapshots of Flamingo Park, a passive park that includes three large signature oaks, and Collee Hammock Park, located along the river and often used for weddings.

Assistant Director Rynard concluded that Teen Lifeguard Candidate School will be held by the City to train potential lifeguards. It is not necessary to be 18 to attend, although lifeguards must be 18 to work for the City.

## **2. Aquatic Complex – Update**

Cate McCaffrey, Director of Business Enterprises, advised that an RFP was sent out more than a year ago for the redevelopment of the Aquatic Complex. Only one response, by Recreational Design Construction (RDC), was received. Because it was the only response, this proposal did not go through the normal Selection Committee process; instead, Staff brought the proposal before the City Commission, and has done so a number of times since. There have been questions regarding the cost to the City, the size of the proposal, and other considerations. The proposal includes sufficient aquatic facilities for the City to continue to be “a mecca for the swim and dive community,” as well as a home for the International Swimming Hall of Fame.

While the proposal addresses these requirements, there are still outstanding questions, particularly with regard to financing. The Beach CRA has recommended that up to \$25 million could be put toward this project. The City

Commission would still like to determine whether or not the proposal would work with respect to the impact on traffic and parking. Staff is working with RDC to answer these questions, although Director McCaffrey noted it is difficult to do so without a site plan. RDC has hired a traffic consultant with whom Staff is working to try to give the City Commission a better understanding of the proposal. RDC is also meeting individually with City Commissioners.

She noted that RDC is working to make their design less costly, although figures for prospective changes have not yet been submitted to Staff. This issue will come before the City Commission again at its June 21 Conference Agenda meeting to provide an update, including RDC's suggestions for the management of the facility.

Director McCaffrey explained there are many policy issues involved. The City has an agreement with the International Swimming Hall of Fame that will expire in 2015; this agreement must be addressed as part of the proposal discussions in order to determine how that facility would be run, as the Hall of Fame is an integral part of the site. She emphasized that the City has not yet accepted this proposal and is trying to find out whether or not it will work.

Mr. Zaden asked what other uses would be featured on the site. Director McCaffrey said other aspects of the proposal include a wave house, restaurant and retail space, and use in D. C. Alexander Park. The public portion of the project would include a parking structure. In addition to CRA funds, there is the possibility that County funds may be available.

Mr. Zaden asked if the proposal includes allowing the Boat Show to continue to use the property. Director McCaffrey said while the proposal does not specifically mention the Boat Show, the RFP was very clear that, if the City accepts the proposal, there must be a development plan including specific stakeholders, such as the Boat Show.

With regard to the revenue brought to the community by the Aquatics Complex, Director McCaffrey advised that the City's operations at the existing facility brought in roughly \$580,000 during the last fiscal year. Its operating costs are approximately \$1.6 million.

Mr. Quailey asked if a feasibility study would be done on the economic benefit of the proposed new facility. Director McCaffrey explained this may not be done prior to the acceptance of a proposal, as it is difficult to predict these effects without a site plan.

Mr. Quailey asked if figures from the International Swimming Hall of Fame are included in these estimates, as that is a private entity. Director McCaffrey said the City is responsible for maintaining that facility as well; the agreement allows

for revenue sharing from the Hall of Fame's net profits, although in practice, once their expenses have been deducted there is "nothing to share." This is not figured into the \$580,000 estimate.

Mr. Quailey asked for more information on RDC. Director McCaffrey said their proposal, references, and past projects are available online. The company is based in Oakland Park.

Ms. Shelley asked if there have been cancellations of competitions at the Aquatic Complex. Director McCaffrey said there have not been cancellations, although some questions were asked prior to the Y Nationals. This issue was solved with the use of temporary bleachers; however, the Y has made it clear they would not like to return under the same circumstances. She confirmed that this is the biggest event of the year at the Complex.

Mr. Quailey asked if the City Commission is looking for the Board's input on this issue. Assistant Director Rynard said the Board may advise the Commission, although she noted that the proposal is in its preliminary stages. Mr. Quailey commented that he felt the Aquatic Complex has been "tremendous for the whole community." It was noted that the original Aquatic Complex was built in 1965.

### **3. Holiday Park – Proposed Dog Leash Areas**

Assistant Director Rynard advised that this Item was removed.

### **4. Dr. Elizabeth Hays Civic Park**

Assistant Director Rynard explained that members of the community have asked to address the Board regarding the renaming of this park. She advised that she had looked into the history of the park's original naming: it had gone through a preliminary voting process in District 3, and three names were proposed for the park. The three prospective names were sent to the City Commission, and the District 3 Commissioner at that time had met with members of the community before returning to the Commission with the recommendation of Civic People's Park. The name was approved by the City Commission by a 5-0 vote.

Marge Dupuis said she was one of the original directors of the Sunset Civic Association and had worked on the Park Committee when the park was named Civic People's Park. She explained that after Mr. Bucher's death, several people had wanted to name the park Rodney Lee Bucher Park, as he had worked very hard to establish the park. The prospective names were ultimately brought before the PRBB, which voted 8-4 to name the park Rodney Lee Bucher Park.

Ms. Dupuis continued that between October and December 1999, she could not find a record of what had happened regarding the name of the park; however, the

naming was brought back to the Board in December. The Board was again given the choice of three prospective park names, and Bucher Park again received the most votes. The District Commissioner listened to both sides of the issue and communicated with Ms. Bucher regarding the naming of the park. Ms. Bucher had provided the Commissioner with a letter stating her feelings on the issue.

The community of Sunset met in January 2000 and the Commissioner informed them that the park would be named Civic People's Park in order to "recognize people who had given their time and efforts to the City in a civil capacity" rather than to recognize a single individual. Plaques would be placed in the park in honor of several civic activists, including Mr. Bucher. After further discussion, the Sunset community accepted this name.

Ms. Dupuis concluded that she was before the Board because the park was named to honor all civic activists rather than an individual. She did not feel the name change was appropriate, and requested that the Board reinstate the name Civic People's Park.

Mr. Landers asked what the name of the park is at present. Assistant Director Rynard explained that the Board recommended changing the name to Dr. Elizabeth Hays Civic Park in 2009. This change was approved by the City Commission.

Ms. Dupuis asserted that there were no public meetings held in the Sunset community regarding the change of the name. She said she had gone before the City Commission to request that her Commissioner look into the matter, and he had advised that she and other interested parties speak to the PRBB.

Kathleen Hauck stated she also served on the original Park Committee and helped count the votes for names. She said the votes were unanimously in favor of Bucher Park. She felt that the individuals who had requested the 2009 name change were a group of people who had originally wanted the park to have a different name.

Chair Weiss commented that the president of the Sunset Civic Association was one of the people who had come before the Board with this request. Ms. Hauck stated this was because the president at that time was a friend of Dr. Hays.

Chair Weiss noted again that the Board's discussion on the renaming of the park was reflected in the March 2009 minutes. Ms. Dupuis said no one in her neighborhood had been aware of the prospective change at that time. She felt if the park was named after a single individual, it should be named after Mr. Bucher; otherwise she said the name should be changed back to Civic People's Park.

Dennis Ulmer, former president of the Council of Fort Lauderdale Civic Associations, said he knew of the controversy surrounding the naming of the park from attending District 3 meetings. He had asked the Commissioner if the neighborhood had an issue with potential renaming. Mr. Ulmer was told they did not. He added it was his understanding that the plaques would continue to be placed in the park in honor of civic activists, and recalled that there was discussion of beginning a wall in the activists' honor, as space was becoming scarce.

Assistant Director Rynard noted that the current name of the park is Dr. Elizabeth Hays Civic Park, as the Board, as well as one proponent of the name change, were adamant that the park continue to recognize the contributions of civic leaders. She noted that the proposed wall has been requested as a capital improvement project for the last three years, although it has not yet been funded.

Chair Weiss asked if the Sunset Civic Association had held a meeting at which the name change was discussed in 2009. Ms. Dupuis and Ms. Hauck said there had been no such meeting.

Mr. Mabson asked who had originally presented the prospective name change in 2009. Assistant Director Rynard recalled that it came from the City Commission at that time, as well as from a member of the Council of Fort Lauderdale Civic Associations.

Mr. Bellavance requested further clarification of the park's original naming. Ms. Dupuis said while Bucher Park received the most votes, some individuals had been unhappy that another name was not chosen, and the Commissioner at that time had presented the name Civic People's Park to the Sunset community.

Mr. Zaden asked if either Ms. Hauck or Ms. Dupuis was a current member of the Sunset Civic Association Board. Ms. Hauck said she is currently a member, and the Association's officers have not changed "for the past 10 years." She did not know how many people were members of the Association.

Mr. Zaden explained that his concern was that Ms. Dupuis and Ms. Hauck were the only people requesting that the name be changed back, while other members of the Association or the community might be content. He suggested that they bring the issue before the Sunset Civic Association once again, or then approaching their City Commissioner. Ms. Dupuis said the City Commissioner had referred them to the PRBB. Mr. Zaden said the potential issue was that the Sunset Civic Association had made the request to change the park's name, and it would not be appropriate to change it back at the request of two individuals.

Mr. Mabson explained that the Board is in a difficult position, as they had acted to honor the wishes of the official representatives of the Civic Association. He

recalled the pros and cons of renaming were discussed at some length, and advised the Board was not aware of anything that had happened regarding the naming or renaming outside the Board meeting.

Ms. Shelley noted that Dr. Hays' memorial service was held in the park in question, and asked why this would be done if Dr. Hays had not been a member of the Sunset community.

Ms. Bucher said the Commissioner had given the Sunset community, as well as the Sunset Civic Association, a unique opportunity to vote on the original name of the park. She asserted that by changing the name of the park, the history of all the individuals who were involved in the original process was taken away.

Mr. Qualey asked how many people are currently involved with the Civic Association. Ms. Bucher said she is currently not involved in the Association and did not know this number.

Ms. Hauck named a handful of people who currently attend association meetings. Mr. Qualey asked why so few are now involved. Ms. Hauck said there had been a great deal of "stress and...animosity" that made people want to be less involved.

Mr. Mabson asked if a list of current and former officers of the Association was available. Ms. Hauck said it was. Mr. Mabson asked if Ms. Dupuis and Ms. Hauck were suggesting the recent Association president was one of the people opposed to the original name of the park. Ms. Hauck and Ms. Dupuis said they were. Mr. Mabson asked if there was any documentation available that could confirm this. It was stated that few people who were active in the Association at that time remain active today.

Mr. Mabson said the Board could not resolve the issue tonight, and explained he was asking for more information so they could determine if an acceptable compromise may be reached. He noted that there are also individuals who want the park's name to remain as it is now.

Chair Weiss closed the public hearing at this time and thanked the members of the public who had addressed the Board.

**Motion** made by Mr. Landers, seconded by Mr. Bellavance, to table [the Item].

Vice Chair Fee stated he was very uncomfortable with the situation. He noted that sufficient information is not always available at Board meetings to "make an educated decision" regarding the naming or renaming of a park. He felt groundwork should be laid to bring more information to light before a name change is brought to the Board again, and recalled that the members were under

the impression that Civic People's Park was "a generic name," as they did not know the history behind the name.

Ms. Shelley said the Board has had a similar discussion regarding the renaming of a park, and said the issue seems to be "small groups of people" who are involved in naming a park. She agreed the Board does not always have enough information to make a decision.

Assistant Director Rynard said there are guidelines for renaming parks. She referred to the March 2009 minutes, which state that public meetings are required prior to renaming; one of the individuals who spoke in favor of renaming the park said while there had been no public meeting, that individual did not think there would be any opposition to the change.

Mr. Landers and Mr. Bellavance **withdrew** their **motion** and **second**.

Mr. Quailey asked if the Sunset Civic Association could be invited to address the Board and present whatever information is available regarding the naming and renaming. Chair Weiss said the membership of that Association may have changed since 2009, which may give a very different perspective to the issue.

Mr. Bellavance commented that communities usually take the initiative to name parks in their neighborhoods. He asked if the proposal to rename the park had come from the community or from the City. Assistant Director Rynard said the request came from a City Commissioner; the people who spoke to the Board were the president of the Sunset Civic Association and three other individuals.

**Motion** made by Mr. Mabson, seconded by Mr. Quailey, to table until the Board can get sufficient information to make a reasonable decision as to how to proceed.

He added that some necessary information would be regulations governing how parks are named, as well as information on the individuals who presented the renaming to the Board in 2009 and information from the City Commission regarding who spearheaded the renaming. Assistant Director Rynard said she could share all the information on record, including naming guidelines and the appropriate procedure for naming parks. She was not certain that she could provide additional information.

Mr. Mabson asked if the Board may amend the guidelines for naming parks. Assistant Director Rynard said she would look into this. Mr. Mabson concluded that if the Board can gather all relevant information on the issue, they can then decide if the guidelines should be amended to prevent future issues.

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



## **5. Park Ambassadors**

Mr. Landers distributed a handout on the parks he has visited as a Park Ambassador. He explained that he plans to eventually visit all the City's parks.

He asked if Smoker Park is a City or County park. Assistant Director Rynard said it is owned by the County, but the City has an agreement to maintain it. Mr. Landers added that repair work is being done at Croissant Park, and while its field looks good, it needs a new fence.

Mr. Quailey advised that the fence at Bayview Park is roughly 10 ft. short, which could be a potential safety issue. The gap is next to the playground area.

Vice Chair Fee commended the Department on keeping all the fields in good condition at Holiday Park, and for manufacturing some safety equipment instead of purchasing it. Ms. Shelley said all the parks she has visited are being well-maintained by the City, and also commended the Department on their upkeep. Assistant Director Rynard cautioned that maintenance could become more difficult as the rainy season begins.

Mr. Landers requested an update on Hardy Park. Assistant Director Rynard said exterior work has been shut down until the case goes to the Historic Preservation Board. It remains a challenging issue.

## **6. Board Comments**

Mr. Bellavance asked if the City would own any relics found at Fort Lauderdale Beach. Assistant Director Rynard said they would be owned by the County, but would be on permanent loan from the County to the City.

Chair Weiss said he would like to discuss the Little League Football gambling issue on next month's Agenda. He explained he would like to determine if the Board can help tighten the regulations to address this problem. Assistant Director Rynard said Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) for all sports will now include a zero-tolerance clause with regard to gambling.

Mr. Mabson requested an update on the reciprocal agreement between the City and the Broward County School Board. Assistant Director Rynard said this was approved by the City Commission; she would look into whether or not the School Board has approved renewal.

## **7. Communications to the Commission**

None.

## **8. Adjournment**

There being no further business to come before the Board at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

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