

**PARKS, RECREATION, & BEACHES BOARD MINUTES
CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE
100 NORTH ANDREWS AVENUE
CITY HALL, 8TH FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 26, 2011 – 6:30 P.M.**

Cumulative Attendance

| Board Members | Attendance | Oct 2011- Sept 2012 | |
|----------------------|-------------------|----------------------------|---------------|
| | | Present | Absent |
| Matthew Weiss, Chair | A | 0 | 1 |
| Sean Fee, Vice Chair | A | 0 | 1 |
| Joseph Bellavance | P | 1 | 0 |
| Curtiss Berry | P | 1 | 0 |
| Cindy Bucher | A | 0 | 1 |
| Brad Hubert | P | 1 | 0 |
| Tommy Knapp | P | 1 | 0 |
| R. L. Landers | P | 1 | 0 |
| Larry Mabson | P | 1 | 0 |
| JoAnn Medalie | P | 1 | 0 |
| Robert Payne | A | 0 | 1 |
| Bruce Quailey | P | 1 | 0 |
| Betty Shelley | A | 0 | 1 |
| Angela Ward | A | 0 | 1 |
| Richard Zaden | P | 1 | 0 |

Currently there are 15 appointed members to the Board, which means 8 would constitute a quorum.

Staff

Stacey Daley, Administrative Assistant
Terry Rynard, Assistant Director, Parks and Recreation
Brigitte Chiappetta, Recording Secretary, Prototype, Inc.

Communications to City Commission

None.

Roll Call

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. Roll was called and all stood for the Pledge of Allegiance. It was noted that a quorum was present.

Motion made by Mr. Landers, seconded by Mr. Mabson, to appoint Mr. Berry as acting Chair. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

Approval of Minutes

Motion made by Mr. Zaden, seconded by Mr. Bellavance, to approve the minutes of the September 28, 2011 meeting. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

1. Department Report

Assistant Director Rynard welcomed new Board members Brad Hubert and JoAnn Medalie. Mr. Hubert has previously served on the Planning and Zoning Board, the Northwest Progresso-Flagler Heights Redevelopment Board, and the Executive Airport Board. He has lived in Fort Lauderdale since 1974. Ms. Medalie serves on the Centennial Celebration Committee and is a former member of the Parks, Recreation, and Beaches Board. She has also served on the Community Appearance Board and the County's Library Advisory Board.

Assistant Director Rynard advised that the Better Meetings Academy will be held on November 7, 2011 at 5:45 p.m. The City Clerk's Office and City Attorney's Office conduct these meetings to review how business is conducted on advisory bodies and the responsibility of their members. They also address regulations such as the Sunshine Law. She encouraged the Board members to attend.

The Holiday Park Activity Center will feature a mural designed and painted by students at the Art Institute. Members were provided with a copy of the design for their review. The rest of the building will remain blue.

Frank Snedaker, City Architect, will provide an update on the Southside School project at the November 30 Board meeting.

The dedication and opening of the Bill Keith Preserve will be held at 9 a.m. on November 19 at Shady Banks. Assistant Director Rynard advised that the surrounding community has been instrumental in the clearing and development of the Preserve. A bench will be dedicated in memory of Mike Chamberlain, a member of the neighborhood who took a leading role in the work on the park. The Preserve features a gazebo, a boardwalk, and park benches.

The City's recent reading initiative led to children reading nearly for 20,000 minutes during the week of October 17-22. The goal for the year is 8000 hours. Children are encouraged to read for 20 minutes each day in City after-school programs.

Assistant Director Rynard reported that Guthrie-Blake Park, located south of Broward Boulevard, is a one-acre block park with streets on all sides. The playground features a stand of sand pines. The playground is due for replacement, hopefully within the next two years.

The Sailboat Bend Preserve, located off 14 Avenue, is another City park that was actively developed by its surrounding neighborhood. A canoe launch area will be opened there within the next few months. This Preserve is home to a great deal of bird wildlife.

2. Elect Chairman and Vice Chairman

The members agreed by consensus that Board elections would be tabled until the November meeting.

3. Update on Park Development Projects

Assistant Director Rynard reported that the South Middle River Park should be completed by the end of November, and Harbordale Park is expected to be complete by the end of the year. Both new parks were purchased and developed with County bond money and park impact fees. The grand opening of South Middle River Park is scheduled for December, and Harbordale Park will open in January 2012. Both facilities will include playgrounds, paths, fitness equipment, and pavilions. Their respective neighborhoods were very supportive of the parks and took an active role in their development.

The “sprayground” water playground is nearly complete at Oswald Park. Assistant Director Rynard anticipated it would open within the next two weeks.

She advised that the City has ended its agreement with the architect who submitted the original master plan for the Southside School; Mr. Snedaker will complete the design phase of this project and make any necessary changes or modifications. The playground/pavilion restroom area will soon be redeveloped. The sidewalk has been installed and the fence taken off the front of the park, and the open space will be replaced with a soil mix and Bermuda turf to create a multi-purpose field. The City is working with neighborhood association leaders to develop a mulch trail, a butterfly garden, and flower beds in the park.

Mr. Bellavance asked if the sidewalk will be wider. Assistant Director Rynard confirmed that the fence will be taken down, which will allow for some widening of the sidewalk. The new design will open up the view into the park.

Mr. Landers asked what would be done with the fire station. Assistant Director Rynard advised that this facility may be moved to another location. Mr. Landers observed that the land use plan for the park would not have allowed for the presence of a fire station. He provided copies of information on the redevelopment of Hardy Park, stating that the Board should have been able to give input to the City Commission on the project. Assistant Director Rynard agreed that the Board should have been allowed input on this; should the

location of the fire station in the park be pursued, she felt the Board should be part of the process.

Mr. Landers stated he had received the information on the proposed fire station through the Broward County Historical Society, who provided him with newspaper articles on the subject.

Mr. Hubert asked if maintenance costs were taken into consideration with regard to the design or redesign of parks. Assistant Director Rynard stated that these costs are considered: for example, while Bermuda turf is more expensive to maintain, it will still be installed in Hardy Park due to the community need for more multi-purpose space.

Mr. Quailey asked if grant money was available for park improvements. Assistant Director Rynard explained that the Department is always looking for grant funding for improvements: for example, they can apply for grant money through the County Safe Parks and Land Preservation Bond for parks purchased with bond funds. She cited improvements funded with grant money in Coral Ridge, Gore-Betz, Southside, and Mills Pond Parks.

There are also grants available through the Neighborhood Capital Improvement Program (NCIP), although these funds are not typically used in parks but to improve neighborhood features such as swales and entrances. These projects are driven primarily by the neighborhoods, although the Department often agrees to maintain improvements made in parks.

Mr. Bellavance asked if Nova Southeastern University plans to lease the former Southside School property. Assistant Director Rynard stated this project remains a work in progress, and Mr. Snedaker would be better able to answer some of the questions about this redevelopment.

4. Update on Reorganization Plan

Assistant Director Rynard advised that the Parks and Recreation Department has nearly doubled in size due to the City's Departmental reorganization. They now oversee Facility Maintenance, Sanitation, and Business Enterprises. Assistant Director Rynard will oversee most of the maintenance, administration, and grant responsibilities, while former Director of Business Enterprises Cate McCaffrey will oversee most of the functions previously handled by that department. Parks and Recreation will also handle property and real estate for the City.

Assistant Director Rynard pointed out that similar functions previously held by multiple departments will now be consolidated to increase efficiency. For example, beach cleaning services, which were originally taken care of by Parks and Recreation, a Sanitation crew, a contractor hired by the CRA, and Marine

Facilities, will now be reduced at an estimated savings of \$100,000 per year. While there may be challenges with cross-training, a single crew will be able to take on multiple jobs. She stated she was in favor of the reorganization, as it allows for shared responsibilities and efficiencies.

Mr. Berry requested that the handout provided by Mr. Landers be attached to the meeting minutes.

5. Park Ambassadors

Mr. Quailey said he had visited four parks during the past month. He has spent a great deal of time at Bayview Park, and visited Coral Ridge Park, which he said is very well-maintained. Jack and Harriet Kaye Park is also well-maintained, with landscaping and shaded areas. He concluded that George English Park, which is heavily used, now features lights on the ball fields. Mr. Quailey noted that few parks in this area are located on a waterway, and noted that the mangroves in this park block the view of the water. Assistant Director Rynard advised that the mangroves are heavily regulated.

Mr. Quailey added that some shade trees could improve the running trail in this park. He concluded that he was very impressed with the maintenance of the parks, particularly as the budget is limited. Assistant Director Rynard said the playground surface in George English Park will be upgraded, and "tot turf," climbing structures, and shade fixtures will be added. Mr. Zaden pointed out that some of the sidewalk on the south side of the tennis courts has developed mold.

Mr. Mabson said he had visited Bass, Warfield, Joe Carter, and Riverland Parks and had seen no problems at these locations.

6. Board Comments

Mr. Bellavance stated that the monument located at 9th Avenue and 7th Street will be moved to the greenway at Lewis Landing, although he felt it should be moved to the center of the park. This issue will go before the Development Review Committee (DRC) in November. He added that a barbecue is planned for this area, but noted that all residents may not be in favor of this. He felt this would encourage people to cook out in this area almost every weekend.

Assistant Director Rynard said a gazebo will also be added to this location, and if the barbecue created a problem for the neighborhood, it could be removed. Mr. Bellavance advised that some members of the community are circulating a petition against the addition of the gazebo and barbecue. Assistant Director Rynard recalled that this plan had been presented at neighborhood meetings before the Department applied for grants; they have now received grants that are specifically tied to the planned amenities. She added that the conceptual plan

was approved by the Board, and concluded that concerned individuals can bring their concerns to the Board.

Mr. Quailey congratulated Mr. Knapp and the Strikers on their successful season. The Board recognized them with a round of applause.

Mr. Berry noted that he had recently learned at a City Commission meeting that \$83,000 is planned to be spent on fireworks, the majority of which would go toward the use of a barge. He felt an area of the beach could be roped off instead of spending this money. Assistant Director Rynard explained that the City's fire Code requires any non-close-proximity fireworks to be set off at a minimum of 750 ft. from all directions. Other suggestions, such as the use of close-proximity fireworks or an alternate location, were discussed as options; however, it was determined that sponsorship money would be sought to help offset this cost. She estimated that the barge accounted for \$35,000-\$40,000 of the total expense.

Mr. Berry continued that the prefab buildings at Floyd Hull Stadium were attractive; however, he expressed concern that their steel bases would be susceptible to rust. He also asked if there was a possibility that a soccer field could be added to Gore-Betz Park. Assistant Director Rynard said there is an open space at this park that could be used for soccer, although a field would not be installed for organized play, as the park is intended for neighborhood use.

Mr. Zaden requested that the Board be informed before the issue of the fire station at Hardy Park is brought before the City Commission again.

Mr. Knapp said he had researched the possibility of bringing sand soccer to Fort Lauderdale Beach Park, as this is a very popular and cost-effective sport. If facilities are installed, they could also serve as commercial facilities for hosting tournaments. He urged the Board to consider this possibility, and distributed information on sand soccer to the members. Assistant Director Rynard stated she would research this further and bring more information back to the Board.

It was noted that the Board would not meet during the month of December, and will hold their combined November/December meeting on November 30.

Mr. Quailey said he has heard no new information on the American Golf Course. He pointed out that this would be a way to maintain more green property in the City.

Mr. Mabson recalled there had been discussion at a previous meeting of the feasibility of building a multi-purpose structure capable of seating 3000-5000 people, which could be used by organizations seeking venues of this size. He felt the City could benefit and be competitive if there was such a structure. He

advised that the design of War Memorial Stadium prohibits some uses, although the facility is the right size. Assistant Director Rynard agreed that the Long-Range Strategic Plan also advocates the addition of this size of facility.

Mr. Mabson advised that many groups are currently using the facilities at Nova Southeastern University, or are going elsewhere. He explained that national martial arts events require a specific amount of space that is not currently available in a Fort Lauderdale facility. He noted that the gymnasium at Dillard High School, for example, is an appropriately sized and structured facility.

7. Communications to City Commission

None.

8. Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Board at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 7:41 p.m.

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