

Parks & Recreation Advisory Board

Minutes

August 5, 2009

Board Attendance Record

Ann Dever (63/72)
Bill Coy (54/65)
William Dryburgh (65/71)
Eugene Leapley (40/44)
Amber Gunderson (14/21)
Carl Johnson (0/2)
Maria Greenberg (1/2)

Present

Ann Dever
Bill Coy
William Dryburgh
Eugene Leapley

County Representatives

John Jackson, Director
Commissioner Bob Starr, District 1
Mike Koenig, Business Services Manager
Joanne Larson, Recreation/Athletics Manager
David Milligan, Support Services/Park Manager
Angie Patteson, Cultural Resources Manager
Jacqueline Vazquez, Business Services Supervisor
Mike Norton, Recreation Coordinator
Kathy Harriott, Administrative Assistant I

Guests

Lewis Gilbert, Musco Lighting

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 1:02 p.m. A quorum was not present.

Ann Dever, Chair expressed concern regarding the absence of Amber Gunderson and Carl Johnson. Bill Dryburgh believes that Amber is away at college and will need a replacement. He has also heard that Carl Johnson has resigned from the advisory board. Ann Dever requested that Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources staff contact the Commissioners Loftus and Cummings to have new members appointed.

I. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

A motion was made by Bill Coy and seconded by Bill Dryburgh to approve the minutes from the June 3, 2009 meeting. A vote was taken and the minutes were unanimously approved.

II. Division Reports

Administration/Business Services – Michael Koenig, Business Services Manager

Concessions

- ♦ The mobile concession vendors at Englewood Beach (Liberty Concessions) and Port Charlotte Beach (Jack's Dogs) started July 1st.
- ♦ We have received proposals for ice vending at several locations, including Port Charlotte Beach, Spring Lake, Englewood Beach, Placida Boat Ramp, Tringali Park, and Ainger Creek Boat Ramp. This contract is pending award. The bids came in at \$18K - \$36K annually for all these locations.
- ♦ Recreation Equipment Rentals are being solicited for Bayshore Live Oak Park, Port Charlotte Beach, Englewood Beach, Oyster Creek Regional Park, Sunrise Park, Hathaway Park, Spring Lake, Cape Haze Pioneer Trail, Cedar Point Environmental Park, and Bay Heights Park for canoe/kayak, bicycle, fishing equipment, beach chairs, beach umbrellas, and beach inflatable rentals. The RFP may include the sale of sundry items and accessories that compliment the rentals. The specs are in purchasing and we anticipate the RFP will be on the street either this week or next week.

Trash Can/Bench Advertising

- ♦ The specs for the trash can/bench advertising RFP are in the works. We need to be very specific on what is expected with these specs. What we don't want is alcohol or tobacco advertisements.

Marketing

- ♦ We are working on reducing the amount of flyers being produced for individual programs. We are going to start using Calendar of Events for each facility. Instead of a separate flyer for each program, we will have a calendar of events for the month for each facility.
- ♦ Next years Program Guide is in development.
- ♦ Press Releases process has changed. We will submit calendar of events to the paper, which are events which have no charge. Once a week, in the Sunday classified, events that do have a fee will be printed.
- ♦ We are investigating new ways to use the CLASS software system, including direct email advertising for those customers who have given us their email address and have indicated that they do want to be emailed with new programs.
- ♦ We will be stepping up our efforts with the Chambers of Commerce. We want to be a good partner with them and start attending their meetings.

Comments –

Bill Coy stated that he has heard great feedback on the two food concession vendors at Port Charlotte Beach and Englewood Beach. People are very happy with it.

Bill Dryburgh asked if we are using Channel 20 for advertising. The answer is yes, we still advertise there.

Eugene Leapley stated that trash collection at the parks is not being implemented well. He also suggested that we rent canoe/kayak lock downs at the parks for people who do this often and don't want to drag their canoe/kayak back and forth from home to the parks. Mike Koenig thinks it's a great idea. It might have some liability issues, but he will look into it. Commissioner Starr asked if we have a revenue projection for the current food concessions at Englewood Beach and Port Charlotte Beach. Mike Koenig reported that current revenue projections are for \$27,000

Recreation/Athletics – Joanne Larson, Recreation/Athletics Manager

Summer Camp

- ♦ This is the last week of Summer Camp. The total registrations were 576 children with a total attendance of 2356. We ran camp a little different this year. Instead of having to sign up for the whole session, we made weekly sessions available. We have reduced the use of buses. Fewer but bigger field trips were done this year. So far there have been no problems with camp. In addition to regular camp, we have specialty camps: Fish and Wildlife Camp at Tringali and Junior Lifeguard Training at Oyster Creek Pool.

Aquatics

The department ran 4 two-week swim lesson sessions this summer with participants ranging from 6 months old to adult. There are additional sessions beginning in the Fall.

J.M. Berlin/Rotary Skate Park 2nd Annual Birthday Bash

Celebration will take place on August 22, 2009. We are partnering with Mrs. Berlin. We already have a band and we have received some donations for prizes.

Skate Park RFP

We are putting the management of the J.M. Berlin/Rotary Skate Park and Carmalita Skate Park out for an RFP. If there are no responses or if negotiations don't work out, we will no longer staff either skate park, as of the end of this month. They will still be open, but not staffed. We will post that in order to use the skate park; you must use a helmet and sign a waiver. We can check at different times of the day to see if people using the park have signed the waiver. If not, we tell them where to go to sign the waiver. If they violate this rule a second time, they will be banned for three months. A third time, the ban will be 6 months. A fourth time, banned for longer.

Special Events

Joanne handed out a list of projected special events for 2010.

Comments –

Ann Dever mentioned that the Rotary should be informed of the upcoming changes at the J.M. Berlin/Rotary Skate Park.

Cultural Resources – Angie Patteson, Cultural Resources Manager

Angie introduced herself as the Cultural Resources Manager and discussed some of the programs at the libraries and Historical Center.

- The summer reading programs were huge. Mid-County Library ready program was averaging 150 or more every single week.
- The History Camps struggled this year.
- The Florida Folk Art Exhibit, “Just Above the Water” is on exhibit at the Historical Center.
- Historical Marker Program - Our 9th Historical Marker, First Home Site in Punta Gorda, was dedicated last month. The 10th Historical Marker will be next month at the location of the First Punta Gorda Bank. The 11th Historical Marker will be Indian Springs Cemetery. After that, the program is out of money. We are working on donations and sponsorships for future Historical Markers.
- Punta Gorda Library is closed for renovation. 80 – 85% of the cost of the renovation is being paid for by the Friends of the Punta Gorda Library. They are replacing carpet, shelving and reorganizing work areas to make them work more efficiently.

Support Services/Parks – David Milligan, Support Services/Park Manager

- David has earned the LEED Accredited professional designation. LEED is Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design which is a very popular designation in the green movement right now.
- The recycling program has been rolled out at 18 parks. Waste Management picks up once a week at these sites. Our recycling volume is way over expectations at Englewood Beach. It is a very popular program.
- South Gulf Cove community MSBU is very active in parks and beautification. They have funded the design of their first neighborhood park, San Domingo Park. There was an RFP for the design of San Domingo Park. The bidders have been ranked and will be going to the BCC next week. It is entirely MSBU funded.
- The four most popular park locations in South Gulf Cove have had exotics removed. This was MSBU funded. They will be mowed on an irregular basis. They are undeveloped parks with the vegetation reduced for easier access.
- Substantial Completion Inspection has been completed on the improvements at the South Gulf Cove Boat Ramp Park. A restroom, half basketball court, and picnic area have been added. Playground will be installed this month. It should be opened to the public by the end of the month. This was funded with impact fees.
- El Jobean Boat Ramp renovation Southwest Florida Water Management District permit has been approved. Once the Hayward waterway dredging project is completed, there will be a complete renovation of the boat ramp and parking.
- Comprehensive Plan revisions are in the works. The department has worked to develop the Parks & Recreation element. The major change is the way we evaluate the level of

service. We no longer will just go by acreage. We will be assigning point values to amenities at the parks. You can view the draft of the Comprehensive Plan at www.SmartCharlotte2050.com. There will be public meetings on the Comprehensive Plan soon. If the board wishes, we can have a more detailed discussion on the Comprehensive Plan at a future meeting.

- **Comments –**

Ann Dever asked the status of the Rotary Centennial Park, which the Rotary has put aside \$11,000 for this park. Where does this stand with the road re-alignment? Do we have any park land left? David has a meeting regarding this next week with Kelly Slaughter and Chuck Koontz to see what we have to work with.

Bill Dryburgh asked if we have been able to find a replacement kayak launch for the Pirate Harbor launch in South County. We have not yet.

III. New Business

Vice-Chair Election

Since Joe Karpach has not been re-appointed, we need to vote on a new Vice-Chair. There is not a quorum, so there can't be a vote. Bill Coy has volunteered to stand in as un-official Vice Chair until we have a quorum. Bill Dryburgh seconded this and the unofficial vote was unanimous. Bill Coy will sit in as Vice-Chair in case the Chair can't make it.

Introduction of John Jackson, Director of Parks, Recreation & Cultural Resources

John introduced himself and gave his background in Parks & Recreation. He has been a director for 23 years. He has a Bachelors and Masters in Leisure Services and Studies. He is very happy with the quality of the staff and the facilities.

Discuss field trip ideas for October meeting

Ann Dever suggested that we delay the October field trip until November or January. She believes we should have a workshop on how the advisory board works, what their roles are, Roberts Rules of Order and the Sunshine Law in order to help the new members and the new director settle in.

FRDAP Grant Application – Charlotte Flatwoods

David Milligan reviewed the park and what we we would like to do. The department is preparing to apply for a 50% match FRDAP grant for improvements to Charlotte Flatwoods Environmental Park. There is currently a trail system at the park. There are 29 threatened or endangered species at this location. It is designated on the Florida Birding Trail. The department wants to improve the trail around the main marsh, build three elevated observation towers, add handicapped parking, interpretive kiosks, picnic tables and benches.

Comments –

Bill Dryburgh asked if there were any bald eagle nests. There are not.

Eugene Leapley asked why we are trying to do this when we are broke. He thinks this is a bad move.

Commissioner Starr asked how much is the grant for? It is for \$200,000. He believes that people will not go for it.

Eugene Leapley stated that the land will be there when we have money again. Why can't we wait? David Milligan stated that we have to pursue improvements per FCT requirements.

Bill Dryburgh applauds the department for doing this. We need to keep working to draw people to the area and it is a great tourism opportunity. It will be money well spent to get residents to stay and to draw tourism.

FRDAP Grant Application – Stockade Building

The Old Stockade Building is located at Carmalita Park in Punta Gorda. It was constructed in 1941 and used as a stockade. We actually have the original plans for the building. In the 1950s it was used as a nursing home and as a ceramic shop. David quoted from the historical assessment report, "The building lacks significant architectural merit, but remains, in its original appearance, an excellent representation of its original use and function." The land was purchased from the City of Punta Gorda in 1982 and the building has been used for storage. The link to early law enforcement in Charlotte County is significant enough to submit to the National Historic Register. It is suitable for rehabilitation. It would be used, mostly, by the horse clubs. There will be a meeting room, which will be available for anyone to rent and use. We don't have any cost estimates yet.

IV. Old Business

Smoking Ordinance update

We are in a holding pattern on the ordinance. The State Attorney does not believe the ordinance is enforceable.

Charlotte Harbor Event & Conference Center RFP

The BCC has chosen SMG as the bid winner for the management of the Charlotte Harbor Event and Conference Center. Negotiations are starting soon and will be handled by Kelly Shoemaker. In the meantime, we are still running the Event Center as usual. We will still have opportunities to program the building.

V. Sports Council Update

Advisory Board representative needed for both Youth and Adult Sports Councils

It was decided to wait until we have a full advisory board to determine who the representatives will be.

Youth Sports Council Update

The leagues have been asked to report at the next meeting regarding what they are willing to do as in-kind services to help with maintaining the fields. We will then revise the agreements

Adult Sports Council Update

There is still very low attendance at this meeting. They have moved to Quarterly instead of monthly meetings.

VI. Member Issues

Eugene Leapley has heard rumors that we are planning a new regional park and he wanted to see if this is true. John Jackson said that this is not true.

VII. Director's Report

Budget

We are still finalizing the budget, but we have managed to save \$1.44 million or 11.9%.

VIII. Citizen Input

Louis Gilbert from Musco Lighting introduced himself. He was here to meet with David Milligan and decided to sit in on the meeting.

IX. Announcements

The Punta Gorda Library will be closed for renovations at 5pm on Saturday, August 1st and will reopen at 10am on Tuesday, September 15th.

X. Upcoming Events

- ♦ August 8, 2009, from 7:00 p.m. to 11:00 pm. – Disco Swim – South County Regional Park Pool
- ♦ August 29, 2009, from 10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. – Summertime Sizzle Food & Cooking Expo – Charlotte Harbor Event & Conference Center

Meeting Adjourned

Motion to adjourn the meeting was made at 2:20 p.m. by Bill Dryburgh, seconded by Bill Coy, and the vote was unanimous.

Attachments: Special Events Worksheet

Copy: Commissioner Robert Skidmore, District 1
Commissioner Adam Cummings, District 2
Commissioner Robert Starr, District 3
Commissioner Richard Loftus, District 4
Commissioner Tricia Duffy, District 5
Mr. Roger Baltz, County Administrator