

Parks & Recreation Advisory Board
Minutes
May 7, 2014

Board Attendance Record

William Dryburgh (108/118)
Katherine Ariens (30/32)
Maria Greenberg (44/48)
Paul Bigness (5/12)
John Hitzel (43/46)
Fred Pazona (29/36)
Roger LePage (6/7)

Present

William Dryburgh
Katherine Ariens
Maria Greenberg
Fred Pazona
Roger LePage

County Representatives

Tommy Scott, Director
Andy Stevens, Parks & Natural Resource's Manager
Joshua Moye, Assistant County Attorney
Maureen Broderick, Recreation Manager
Mike Norton, Recreation Coordinator
Bonnie Blair, Administrative Assistant II

Guests

Mary Sprague
Doug Gammie

Call to Order

Chair Bill Dryburgh called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

1. Chairman announced opportunity for public input on agenda items

- None

2. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

Minutes from the March 5th regular meeting and April 2nd Field Trip, 2014, were unanimously approved.

3. Division Reports

March and April reports were distributed by email to members before the meeting.

- No comments

4. New Business

- Pickleball – Mike Norton, Recreation Coordinator
 - Mike Norton relayed information about the sport of pickleball as described in the handout in the meeting packet.
 - Pickleball came to Charlotte County in 2009 with less than 100 playing; currently about 500 playing.
 - Naples, Florida has a pickleball facility for tournaments that brings in \$300,000 in economic revenue a year.
 - At Gilchrist Park in Punta Gorda, there is a conflict on the tennis courts between the two groups of players.
 - Blended lines work well at the Tringali Recreation Center, which is inexpensive to provide at other locations. Currently, there is no dedicated facility for pickleball.
 - Senior Games at South County Regional Park, at the tennis courts; 109 players in

- 2012, 157 players in 2013 and 149 players in 2014.
- There is strong demand for outdoor courts in our area:
 - i. McGuire Park (Parkside) tennis courts are an option
 - 1. Pro's –
 - a. Would bring a positive element to the park
 - b. Large enough to hold tournaments
 - c. Centrally located
 - 2. Con's
 - a. Surface and parking inadequate for a tournament
 - b. Adjacent to housing, noise is a problem
- Fred Pazona suggested that there are several locations that could accommodate pickleball. Mike Norton responded Carmelita Skate Park, South County Regional Park and McGuire Park.
- Tommy Scott mentioned that the Parks Master Plan will identify locations. A regional tournament is in the initial stages for the Event Center in 2015.
- Tommy Scott stated he is going in the direction of relining existing tennis courts but is relying on the Parks Master plan for direction.
- Doug Gammie spoke in favor of a dedicated space to bring in pickleball tournaments. Many of our players have gone to many tournaments. Tommy Scott mentioned that we are willing and able to support tournaments.
- Commissioner Truex inquired as to where the biggest growth in the sport is located; Mike Norton replied at South County Regional Park where it is most established, then Harold Ave. where it was just started and at Gilchrist Park.

5. Old Business

▪ **Private Access to Public Park**

- Tommy Scott mentioned that there are issues related to this access and distributed a map of the area in question.
 - Granting access would present a precedent; others would request access for their parks also.
 - Violates the contract with the Florida Community Trust which might open a possible audit of all grant monies; we might have to pay back the grant affecting future grant monies.
- Mary Sprague stated that she reviewed the grant agreement for Oyster Creek Regional Park and the Trust had no objections; she has been trying to get access from 1999 – 2006. She stated the mobile home park has the same type of access already.
- Andy Stevens mentioned that the zoning of the park has changed to an Environmental Park and he disagrees with the public access; 19 homes is not public access. Ms. Sprague has other access options but there is no parking available.
- Maria Greenburg stated that if the County Attorney's Office does not support access because of the grant and a fine may be involved and going back to amend the grant would also set precedence, then she is not in favor of granting this request.
- Fred Pazona, Katherine Ariens and Roger LePage agreed they are sympathetic.
- Mary Sprague said if there is a formality not already done, she is willing to do it. She will do whatever it takes. The precedence will still be there.
- Commissioner Truex has been looking into this issue; the challenge is the layers ... application to FCT, new policy, what will the policy look like, requirements, criteria, land management; it all needs to be in place before the BCC can vote for this. A lot more work needs to be done.
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MOTION: *Motion to rescind the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board's approval of Mary Sprague's request for private access to a public park, due to the legal opinion of the County Attorney's Office, was unanimously carried.*

6. Sports Council Update

- Next meeting is May 14, 2014.
 - Maria Greenberg stated the council spoke about the lightening detector options
 - Tommy Scott mentioned that pricing is being finalized and soon parks, with programming, will be considered; we are looking doing it at pools.
 - Tommy Scott has concerns about installing them in every facility.

7. Member Issues

- Dr. Patel contacted Katherine Ariens, and Tourism, regarding a Bollywood type concert June 21st at the Event Center; tickets are \$30, \$40 and \$50 and profits will be used to enhance what Charlotte County has to offer, and to help promote the East Indian wares and music.
- Bill Dryburgh commented that the Event Center bookings are up. Maria Greenberg mentioned that prom was held at the Event Center and it looked beautiful.

8. Director's Report – Tommy Scott

- **Update on Parks Master Plan**
 - Tommy Scott mentioned that stakeholder meetings, focus groups and public meetings produced an underwhelming response.
 - A survey on the County website is now running.
 - We are not going to slow down, moving forward with FGCU and the NRPA database.
 - Katherine Ariens mentioned that you can be assured that you did everything possible to get the information out.
 - May 13th – concession stands to the BCC for approval.
- Attendance Issues
 - We need all members to attend the monthly meetings; when we don't have full membership, it is difficult to conduct business
 - Commissioner Truex will follow-up with Paul Bigness, his appointment to this board.

9. Citizen Input

- none

10. Announcements

Fred Pazona mentioned that he will be up north and miss the June and August meetings; will be back for September.

Meeting Adjourned

Meeting adjourned at 2:35 p.m.

CC: Commissioner Ken Doherty, District 1
Commissioner Chris Constance, District 2
Commissioner Bill Truex, District 3
Commissioner Stephen Deutsch, District 4
Commissioner Tricia Duffy, District 5
Raymond Sandrock, Administrator
Kelly Shoemaker, Deputy County Administrator