

PARKS & RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD
Minutes of November 20, 2008 meeting
Coral Gables Youth Center
405 University Drive

MEMBERS		J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	APPOINTED BY
Joan I. Valdes		R	P	P	P	P								Mayor Donald D. Slesnick II
Darby Plummer		R	P	P	P	P								Vice Mayor William Kerdyk, Jr.
Robin Symons		R	P	P	P	E								Commissioner Maria Anderson
Haydee Polo		R	P	P	A	P								Comm. Rafael "Ralph" Cabrera, Jr.
Marty Steinberger		R	P	P	E	E								Comm. Wayne "Chip" Withers
Martha Serola		R	P	P	P	P								City Manager David Brown
Manny Seage		R	P	P	A	P								Parks and Recreation Advisory Board

A = Absent
C = Cancelled
E = Excused absence
P = Present
N = No quorum
R = Recessed
S = Sick

STAFF:

Fred Couceyro
Parks & Recreation Director

Norma-Milena Gavarrete
Parks & Recreation Administrative Assistant

Tricia Spencer
Recording Secretary

GUESTS:

1. Darby Plummer called the meeting to order at 8:10 a.m.
2. Approval of Board minutes from November 20, 2008 meeting – Darby Plummer - The minutes of the November 20, 2008 Board meeting were unanimously approved by the Board.

3. Updates on Board items to City Commission – Fred Couceyro

- Venetian Pool – Fred said that he looked into the GOB Bond Agreement and saw that there was a stipulation in there that had to do with access to County residents where you could not limit access nor discriminate in fees for County residents. You could not charge a non-resident a different fee than a city resident for the Venetian pool admission fee, however, for programming and other activities you could. It is not a problem in most of his facilities, but at the Venetian pool it is a huge problem because of the difference in admission. So the solution was to take a large amount of money that was from the City Capital funds being used to restore the Country Club Prado, take the \$750K Venetian pool money and apply it towards Country Club Prado instead. The county agreed to this and approved it, so now the city money is going to be used to do the Venetian pool.
- Salvadore Park – Fred said that the same rule applies for this park but the difference is that Salvador residents and non-residents rate of tennis play is only a \$1.25 difference and the percentage of play time is more like a ratio of 90:10 for residents whereas at the Venetian pool it is the other way around; it's a difference of \$7.00 and that's a big difference.
- Little Gables & High Pines – Fred said that the Commission discussed on Tuesday that they would like a report based on having some neighborhood meetings with both areas Little Gables and High Pines. In Little Gables there is a park called San Jacinto Park on discussion and High Pines which have a lot of “use” zones which are covered by Matheson Hammock Park and Riviera Park, but we would still need a park land in there.
- Matheson Hammock Park – Fred said that there have been some issues with this park. It currently has two projects going on, one on the West side and one on the Eastern part of Old Cutler in the regular park. **On the West side**, the county would like to add a small pavilion and restrooms to make it a small campsite for small groups to use, however, there are some issues with the neighbors in that area because they do not want to allow access on School House road which goes into their neighborhood and then into the northern end of the park. Currently there is a parking lot on Old Cutler and there is a walking trail that takes you into the park; neighbors have concerns about the walking trail though: 1) The trail is very scary 2) It is long; about half a mile 3) Accessibility issues. It is non-accessible and the issue with that is they are still looking for accessible parking on the School House road side; the neighbors there are very much against this. There was a neighborhood meeting at Fairchild Tropical Gardens which Fred attended, along with about 100 residents plus county park users and there was a disagreement between people who want to use the park and people who live there. The County Commissioner stated that it was the county's intention to put a small, up to 10 space parking lot at the side of the park area on School House road to make it more accessible, however, the residents had a problem with that. Also, the residents have petitioned to have a guard house and are now going to have one placed on School House road. **On the Eastern side** of Old Cutler they have put in a RFP for a 240 boat Dry Dock storage which is causing a lot of problems. They are doing that because the county is besieged with need for boat storage and there are only two places where they have found that they

can put it due to the manatees; Matheson Hammock is one of them. Already, there are people on the waiting list. The problem with that from the City stand point is the ability for them to put in another 240 boats in there because on weekends around 1:00 p.m. and 2:00 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays the park is closed because so many people go in their boats there now.

4. City Projects Update – Fred Couceyro

- Shades – Fred said that they have started working on them. They have set up the search for the lines for them to put the poles in. They are working right now in Sunrise Park so the poles should be up probably by the end of this week. They were going to do Phillips Park next but Fred told them to hold off on doing work there because this week they finally got the swings, so he wants to put the swings in there first before putting the shades up.

- Sunrise Park – Fred said that he received all of his updates from Public Works and all of the plans have been approved except for one thing, the structural department. Building & Zoning requested to do soil borings, so they have hired a company to do the drilling to get the soil borings. Once the tests for the soil borings come back and they are fine, we would not have to do anything else to the soil and we could put in the new trellis. Fred also said that he has asked them to look at what it would cost to include the playgrounds in this project because this project was for the trellis, the power lines, fixing the basketball courts and for anything else we have money left for. Fred said that he would like to purchase the playground equipment from the same company he used when he purchased the equipment for the War Memorial Youth Center because this playground probably gets the most use, it's the oldest and with an exception to the panels when they get old, the structure is fine.

- Salvadore Park – Fred had his tennis professional Robert Gomez be an unofficial project manager of that project so that he could take a look at everything. There were some issues with the old sub-contractor. The sub-contractor started having problems with their own business and so the general contractor had to bring in a new sub-contractor to complete the job. The good news about that is the general contractor brought in the sub-contractor we always wanted and it is not going to cost us more money. Fred said that the first courts will be ready in time for the Jr. Orange Bowl tournament. The general contractor has also agreed to delay completing the rest of the courts until after the New Year so that it would not interfere with the tournament.

- Riviera Park – Fred said that he has been working with the school and residents and has been getting ready to give them an agreement but he is still waiting on the formal document from the City Attorney to give to them. The price is going to be an upward of \$6,200 - \$6,300 for the year which works out to be only \$500 per month considering they only use it for six months. Fred came up with this formula by looking at a percentage of maintenance cost while trying to get it as close to 50% to what the maintenance cost is for the park outside of capital monies that we put into the park. With the construction Public Works is looking at the award being submitted to a winning bidder in January's Commission meeting.

- Venetian Pool – Fred said that they have already started working on the ADA bathrooms and they are looking by January as well to awarding the interior work; the \$750K part for the leaks, expansion joints, chlorination systems and the injection wells.

5. Old Business – Darby Plummer:

- DYL Project: - Fred said that there is no update on the land swap.

6. New Business – Darby Plummer:

- Skate Parks – Fred said that he has the old skate park design but he probably has to go to the city wide meetings to discuss whether the city will welcome the skate park. There are some challenges that have come up with skate parks. Reasons for this have been varied – some are financial, some are safety issues, controlling access to the park, and some have been due to the unruliness of participants including vandalism and graffiti. He said this is all something to consider as the Board moves forward in the future and considers a skate park for Nat Winokur Park.

- Holiday Events/Decorations – Fred said that the upcoming Holiday Tree Lighting is set for Friday, December 5th 2008 at 7:00 p.m. Breakfast with Santa is on Saturday, December 13th 2008 at 8:30 a.m. and a City Hall party on Saturday, December 13th 2008. Holiday Park has started putting up decorations already and this year they are concentrating a bit more on cosmetic improvements.

Date and time of next meeting – The next Parks and Recreation Advisory Board meeting is scheduled for Friday, **January 23rd, 2009**. The meeting will start at **8:00 a.m.** and will be held in the **Conference Room at the Youth Center**, located at 405 University Drive.

No **Park of the Month** was scheduled at this time.

7. The meeting adjourned at 9:17 a.m.