

City of Coral Gables

405 Biltmore Way
Coral Gables, FL 33134
www.coralgables.com



Meeting Minutes

Thursday, September 8, 2022

8:00 AM

Youth Center, Conference Room

Parks and Recreation Advisory Board

Chairperson Monica Segura
Vice Chairperson Carlos Rua
Board Member Nicolas Cabrera
Board Member Ellen C. Chasens
Board Member Laura Hernandez
Board Member Bruce Lecure
Board Member Jennifer A. Marques
Board Member Ruben Rodriguez

CALL TO ORDER

Meeting began at 8:07am

ROLL CALL

Present: 7 - Chairperson Segura, Vice Chairperson Rua, Board Member Hernandez, Board Member Marques, Board Member Rodriguez, Board Member Lecure and Board Member Cabrera

Excused: 1 - Board Member Chasens

a. Roll Call and Excused Absences

A MOTION TO EXCUSE THE ABSENCE OF ELLEN CHASEN WAS MADE BY BRUCE LECURE. MOTION WAS SECONDED BY LAURA HERNANDEZ. ALL IN FAVOR, MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

b. Approval of August Meeting Minutes

A MOTION APPROVING THE AUGUST MEETING MINUTES WAS MADE BY RUBEN RODRIGUEZ AND SECONDED BY JENNIFER MARQUES. ALL IN FAVOR, MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

a. General Updates

Director Couceyro opened his report with a discussion on youth program staffing levels. He explained we had a great summer and there were difficulties with staffing and keeping our staff minimums in our programs. He believes there is an issue with attrition of part-time staff and projects there will be attrition with full-time staff. As a result of these staffing issue the Human Resources department will be conducting a city-wide compensation study to help better place the City in a position to be more competitive in the job market. Board member Ruben Rodriguez posed a question regarding internships and if those translate to jobs. Director Couceyro responded to the effect that often here is opportunity for interns to become employed with the City but they do not always remain local.

Director Couceyro also discussed the Florida Recreation and Parks a few of the honors that our department received including Katherine Anderson and Mitchell Zuriarrain who graduated from the Abrahams Jones Leadership academy. Director Couceyro explained that it is intense process creating business plans and presentations and an overall great exercise for individuals who have the desire to move up in the organization. He also recognized Carolina Vester who is an instructor in this course and mentioned his appointment to the board of directors for FRPA. Director Couceyro explained he will also attend the national conference and be recognized for his accreditation team contributions.

Director Couceyro continued his report discussing all upcoming special events and sharing the details of that events. The events include Pumpkin Patch which will be held at Ponce Circle Park on October 15th, Lamar Louise Curry Ribbon Cutting also on the 15th of October, and Adventure Day which will be held on October 22nd at Salvador Park. Board member Charlie Rua asked the question of pumpkin patch funds being donated to a school and assistant director Vester explained that was through the partnership with the Coral Gables Community Foundation who the primary sponsors of the vent in were the past. Currently, the Community Foundation is not operating in the same capacity for this event. Carolina Vester also discussed the upcoming Dog Swim at Venetian Pool, the AAC Halloween bash, The great pumpkin float and the haunted house at the youth center which may last two days. Assistant Director Vester also discussed the upcoming Country Club event which include a pollinator event for kids with treats and a ribbon cutting and an adult wine mixer for all members with no cost associated to guests.

b. Special Events

c. CIP Updates

Country Club updates on the pool so that it can be prepared for September 15th. Director Couceyro also discussed all the ongoing capital improvement projects going on in the club to prepare for the country club's grand re-opening. Board member Reuben Rodriguez brought up the topic of opening earlier for gym use. Director

Couceyro responded because of staffing shortages we really must look at demand and usage before making operational changes. In addition, board Chair Monica Segura brought up the discussion of the overall landscaping and condition of the property around the Country Club. She asked that it be addressed, assistant director Vester explained there is a planting master plan City wide being conducted by Greenspace management and these concerns will be addressed by that plan.

Le Parc Café- Chair Monica Segura brought up ongoing issues with Café section she brought up issues with existing equipment and damaged pieces that are hindering the operations of Le Parc. Monica explained that the quality is overall not what was expected to be given to patrons of the country club. She explained that she feels that we as an organization are setting ourselves up for failure by not addressing these issues. Assistant director Vester explained although there is a lot of issue if we would've not opened immediately, it may have impacted the overall opinion from the public.

Phillips Park a grant was applied for, and we will be receiving funds for Phillips Park as a commission priority.

Toledo & Alava grant has been received and we are working on the design process. Community meetings will be scheduled after the design concept has been completed. Funds for this will be officially received at the next commission meeting.

Blue Road open space grant has been received and we are working on the design process. Community meetings will be scheduled after the design concept has been completed. Funds for this will be officially received at the next commission meeting.

Lamar Louis Park has been completed and the ribbon cutting will be held on October 15th in partnership with the Coral Gables Garden Club.

Pierce Park renovation will now include a new playground structure and the park is scheduled to open right after the holiday season.

Venetian Pool concession stand can now proceed with the bidding process.

The Granada Golf course pro shop is now under construction and the temporary trailer has been installed. Parking at the pro shop will need to be closed off. Windows have started to be delivered. Pro shop build-out and the demolition of the restaurant side should be completed in approximately 220 days. The two spaces will now have separate utilities.

NEW BUSINESS

OLD BUSINESS

a. Follow-up on Salvadore Park Ranger

Chair Monica Segura brought up the topic of the park ranger for Salvador Park and how Fred handled the Commission meeting very well and placed a request in-formally for rangers whose primary role is enforcement. The long term plan would be to have enforcement officers but now for a short term solution we will need to look into our own budget and see if we have existing positions that can be transformed within divisions to cover the peak times the park is in use. Board member Jennifer Marques asked if it would be possible to pay extra for a Park Ranger when booking a birthday party pavilion to help cover the costs of additional staffing and provide the user with a sense of exclusivity. Staff seemed opened to this idea and will look into possibly adding this feature.

Director Couceyro discussed that he will be taking a deeper look at the budget to see if and where we can allocate more funding to have more staff for parks pressure cleaning and maintenance. Chair Monica Segura wanted to reiterate that once the dog park area of Salvadore is opened and the need for staff will increase.

b. Follow-up on the Garden of the Lord

Director Couceyro delivered a follow-up to the Garden of the Lord agenda item from the last meeting stating that City staff has been dealing with this item and there is an environment activist trying to stop any development however tours of the site found no evidence of exotic plants, but the two large oaks will be preserved. There are also no evidence of human remains in the garden. The developer will be able to move forward.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

b.Coach Phil's use of the golf course

Chair Monica Segura brought up that the parents who have enrolled their children in the golf program at Granada would like for the existing golf instructor to remain since recently hearing he was leaving for another location due to not being able to use the course any longer. Director Couceyro clarified that due to the success in the program, he has exceeded the \$25,000 the city is allowed to spend as a hired instructor. To retain him as an instructor making more than \$25,000, we will need to go to RFP and open it up to other instructors to also bid which staff is currently working on. Other issues due to the success of his program are there is limited teaching space for the size classes the instructor draws and no designated teaching facility. We can not allow for the program groups to play the course at the same time as the public because it would slow game play for social play at peak tee times. With the redesign of the Granada Proshop, a classroom space will be created for the golf program and with taking on the Country Club, programming should increase. Monica asked if there are any other alternatives if the instructor remains limited to class size. Staff shared that there is an entire golf school over at the Biltmore golf course that they could participate in.

ITEMS FROM THE SECRETARY

Board member Laura Hernandez wanted to see if there was any interest from the Board in alternating meeting dates and times to the evenings. Feedback provided was any other times in the evening would need to be after 6pm. No further action was made. Meetings will remain the same.

The next meeting is scheduled for October 13th, 2022 at 8am.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 9:10 am

NOTE