

PARKS & RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD
Minutes of June 26, 2009 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	N	P	P	P	P	P	P	Mayor Donald D. Slesnick II
Darby Plummer	R	P	P	P	P	N	P	P	P	P	P	P	Vice Mayor William Kerdyk, Jr.
Emilio Monte	R	P	P	P	E	N	E	E	P	E	E	P	Comm. Maria Anderson
Jorge Guarch	R	P	P	A	P	N	P	P	P	P	P	P	Comm. Rafael "Ralph" Cabrera, Jr.
Marty Steinberger	R	P	P	P	E	N	P	P	E	E	P	E	Comm. Wayne "Chip" Withers
Martha Serola	R	P	P	P	P	N	P	P	P	P	P	E	City Manager Patrick G. Salerno
Manny Seage	R	P	P	A	P	N	P	E	P	P	P	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

Tricia Spencer
Recording Secretary

GUESTS:

1. Darby Plummer called the meeting to order at 8:04 a.m.
2. Approval of Board minutes from May 14, 2009 meeting – Darby Plummer - The minutes of the May 14, 2009 Board meeting were unanimously approved by the Board.
3. Welcome of New Board Members

Fred welcomed the new members to the Board and said that most of the Board has been selected for the new term with the exception of Vice Mayor Kerdyk's appointee. Haydee Polo and Robin Symons are no longer on the Board. At the next meeting the Board has to vote for a new chair and vice chair; the Board also needs to vote for a Board-As-A-Whole

member. The Parks & Recreation Advisory Board also appoints a Youth Advisory Board member so if you have anyone in mind that you would like to appoint please let me know. The Boards & Committees Seminar was scheduled for September 18th and September 19th but that date has been changed; we will send out a new invitation to this seminar to all board members. All existing board members also need to fill out a Financial Disclosure.

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

Country Club Prado – There is an initial agreement for Coral Gables Grand to operate the Country Club. The old Country Club module was not working so they are renovating it and bringing a new restaurant called Nove 7 that will be serving antipasto, home made pastas, brick-oven pizzas and steaks. The Parks & Recreation Department has been taking care of the pool and tennis courts at Country Club Prado during its closure.

The Palace is building an independent and assisted living facility in Coral Gables. It is going to be built one block away from Miracle Mile.

Riviera Park – There has been an ongoing issue with the usage of this park. The Riviera Neighborhood Association does not want the Riviera Day School to use the park. There is going to be a community meeting held so that all the neighbors could express their opinions on this matter.

5. City Projects Update – Fred Couceyro

- Riviera Park – Going to Bid. Shades have already gone up; this is going to be a non-traditional playground with rocks and climbing statues. There is going to be a fitness trail and a gazebo in the middle.
- Rotary Park – Met with Builders. It is going to be a small playground with a walkway and benches. The same company that won the bid for Sunrise Park also won the bid for this park.
- Salvadore Park – Finished tennis courts; the next step is to start fixing the playground.
- Venetian Pool – It will be closing again in the Winter to do Phase II of the renovations to fix the chlorination system, the injection wells and the expansion joints.
- Biltmore Golf Course – The sand buckets are still there; the t-boxes are better than it was eight months ago. Fred had a discussion with Club Car the golf cart company, and most likely the old carts are going to be turned in for new ones and we will start a new lease in October.

Jorge said that he was extremely pleased with the Biltmore Golf Course and he added that if we continue to upkeep the golf course at a certain level, then the cost to play there is okay.

Dr. Seage inquired about who sets the rates at the Biltmore Golf Course.

Fred replied that the contract already as a set rate, within those rates they could set a Miami-Dade County fee and a Resident fee and the City has to approve it. If the City rejects these rates then they will go back to use the 2004 rates.

Joan suggested that guests who play with Board members at the golf course should get a discount.

Fred said that a former attorney/resident has a problem with Board members and City employees' receiving perks such as free admission into these facilities. He thinks that it is a benefit that should be taxed.

6. Old Business – Darby Plummer

Darby brought the new Board members up to date on various Parks & Recreation items:

Marjorie Park – This was a new piece of property that was bought. Fred added that this park was in the shape of a triangle and that they have resodded the park. He continued to say that a lot of people are using the park for dogs and it is becoming an issue. Code Enforcement has gone out to the park and said that they did not see anyone walking their dogs, however, a resident took a picture of someone walking their dog in the park and sent it to Fred. We also had Code Enforcement go out to Riviera Park to hand out citations and the residents complained to City Officials.

Emilio wanted to know if there are any plans for a dog park.

Fred replied that he would love to have a dog park but would first need a piece of land that is about 2 acres. Riviera Park, Ponce Circle Park, Young Park & Country Club Prado are pet friendly parks. Fred went on to say that they have installed trash dispensers at Pittman Park for residents who walk their dogs at that park.

Darby suggested that we look into a property downtown to create an urban downtown. She also suggested that we should have a skate park there as well with a water component.

Fred said that he had the designs for a skate park, the design was about \$100k with a lot of the cost being the concrete. He also added that skate parks are different now because there's an inherent risk and the only liability would be negligence.

Darby said that Parknership gave us money for parks; however, people want to live near a park but don't want to live next to a park. She went on to say that Riviera Park is in a hot bed now because the neighbors don't want anything in that park.

DYL Project – The DYL project is dead, the land swap became an issue.

7. Discussion on Park of the Month – Darby Plummer

No discussion on park of the month. Venetian Pool was selected as Park of the Month for our next meeting. Fred suggested that they check out the new bathroom and the flooring which was recently done.

8. New Business – Darby Plummer

Fred said that the budget for this upcoming fiscal year was presented to the City Manager showing 4 different cuts ranging from 0%, 3%, 5% and 10%. Since then we have had to increase some of our fees, three full-time employees will be laid off and many part-time employees as well. We are trying to cut back on a lot of things such as the amenities we offer however, still maintaining our services we provide. This year's 4th of July celebration has been cancelled and it is not in the budget for next year either. We are going to tweak the Egg hunt and we are not changing the Holiday Park and Tree Lighting event.

9. Date and time of next meeting – The Board will be on hiatus in the month of July. The next Parks and Recreation Advisory Board meeting is scheduled for Friday, **August 14th, 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.

10. The meeting adjourned at 9:20 a.m.