

**PARKS & RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD**  
**Minutes of January 25, 2008 meeting**  
**Coral Gables Youth Center**  
**405 University Drive**

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

Judy Kries  
Recording Secretary

**GUESTS:**

None

1. Darby Plummer called the meeting to order at 8: 08 a.m.
2. Approval of Board minutes from December 14, 2007 meeting – Darby Plummer - The minutes of the December 14, 2007 Board meeting were unanimously approved by the Board.
3. Update on Board items to City Commission – Fred Couceyro
  - a. Fred Couceyro said regarding the operations resolution for the Youth Center facilities that was passed by the Commission, the field was closed for the last two weeks in December and it made a big difference. The crew fertilized the field twice at the beginning of each of the two weeks. The first week they filled in the holes. In some areas you can see a lot of growth. Fred Couceyro said we need to do this every winter. He said the only group that has an issue with the resolution is an adult group that plays soccer at the Youth Center on Sundays. They have

been using Phillips Park and we are looking at some other alternatives, such as using the field at Coral Gables High School.

- b. Fred Couceyro said an item that just passed the Commission was that Public Works was able to change a project that they had slated for capital into the security bond which will help us. It gives us \$75,000. The funds will be used to install security cameras to monitor the front areas, the entrances, and to provide turnstile access at the Youth Center. This is phase one of a two phase project. We still need another \$75,000 to complete the project. The cameras will be monitored through the Police Department.
- c. Fred Couceyro said another item that had an interest for us was the resolution concerning art in public places where the developer pays the City for donating art to put into public places. Sometimes the art will be in front of a building that we develop, or it could be in a City park. A long time ago 12 sculptures were donated to the City. Three of those sculptures are going to be placed in Ingraham Park. When he receives the design, he will get it to the Board.
- d. Fred Couceyro said the Commission talked about holiday decorations in the City. He said he is working on that project.
- e. Fred Couceyro said several Requests for Proposals are coming up in the next year. He will be asking members of the Board to sit in on the various negotiations.

#### 4. City Projects Update – Fred Couceyro

- a. Shades – Fred Couceyro said at the last meeting that the purchase order has been issued. He said when the contractor applied for permits, they found out the surveys needed to be updated. Public Works has done new surveys.
- b. Youth Center Lights – Fred Couceyro said the contractor sent us the plans for the Youth Center lights. We have the box lights now on the basketball court which use a 30 foot candle and which have never been adequate. The new lights are canisters that will be using a 50 foot candle which is perfect. The lights will not affect the neighborhood any more than they do now because they have shields. They will be using our existing poles and our existing electric. This will save us \$10,000 to \$15,000 in energy costs over the next ten years.
- c. Salvadore Tennis Center – We bid it all out. All the bid projects are in Fred Couceyro's Office in case Board members wish to review them. We are waiting on the bid period to end. We split them up - courts, lighting and fencing. It could be all one vendor or it could be three vendors.
- d. Sunrise Harbor Park – Fred Couceyro said we have issues with the park. The wood components are deteriorating and need to be replaced with metal ones. We

may need to come up with funds for the two playgrounds that need to be included in the scope of the project. One possibility is seeking funds through the Parkership Committee, the fund raising arm of the Coral Gables Community Foundation for park projects.

- e. Venetian Pool - Fred Couceyro said we have two major issues at Venetian Pool, one is expansion joints and the other is chlorination. Tests were conducted and the pool lost 5 ½ inches of water in an 8-hour period due to leaves getting into the expansion joints. The major portion of the GO Bond funds will be directed toward repairs to the expansion joints and the chlorination system. Public Works is working with the contractor on these items.
- f. Land Acquisitions – Fred Couceyro said we are still looking for land to acquire. At present, there are two lots at 4650 Alhambra under consideration. The price of these lots has recently come down. We need at least an open space park in the area. The Board said if the park is presented to the neighborhood, it should be presented as a potential playground area.
- g. Greenprinting Agreement – Fred Couceyro said the agreement is in the City Attorney's Office being reviewed. Once it is approved by the City Attorney and signed by the City Manager, we can go ahead with it.
- h. Egg Hunt - Fred Couceyro said due to a conflict with the Farmers Market at Merrick Park, the main portion of the Egg Hunt will be moved to Ponce Circle Park.
- i. Senior Programs - Fred Couceyro said the senior programs are doing well. We have about 20 programs in place at University Baptist Church, some drawing more interest than others. We are doing our Annual Lunch for seniors at the Coral Gables Country Club for about 200 people and this event is already sold out.
- j. Venetian Pool Doggie Swim - Fred Couceyro said the day before the pool closes for maintenance, pool staff has scheduled an event called the Doggie Swim. There was one complaint, filed by a resident, to the Board objecting to the event. The Board discussed limiting the number of dogs permitted at the event.
- k. Daddy & Daughter Dance at Venetian Pool - Fred Couceyro said it is a very popular event that always fills up.
- l. Partnerships with Schools - Fred Couceyro said we are working on partnership agreements with Coral Gables High and Ponce Middle School. We have agreed to let the Coral Gables High Drill Team use our facilities here. Their baseball team will be doing clinics for our baseball coaches and girls softball coaches. We would also like to use their softball field for our adult softball league.

- m. Basketball Program - The basketball program was discussed. Fred Couceyro said there were a few complaints by parents, mostly about playing time for their children. He hopes to correct this by using a score sheet method, which would help equalize playing times. Because of the budget cuts, we have less staff and more parents coaching. We are working on parent oversight and plan to use more parents as volunteer coaches. There is a need to have clinics for these volunteer coaches. Fred Couceyro wants certification for all coaches.
  - n. Youth Center Concession - Darby Plummer asked how the Youth Center Concession is doing. Fred Couceyro said Art Centurion is doing well with the operation. We are above estimates for the slow period and have not had any complaints.
5. Discussion on Park of the Month – Riviera Park – Fred Couceyro handed out a copy of the new Site Plan for Riviera Park. He said the architect will have to do another meeting with the community because things have changed from what the neighbors wanted. On the south side of the park in the parking area next to Riviera Day School, the sidewalk will be moved in 6 feet to accommodate angle parking because the swale on the park side of San Remo Avenue is not large enough for a car to angle in. This is being done because it is a traffic and safety issue. Fred Couceyro said the neighbors do not want this to happen but if you are going to develop the park by adding the gazebo and play areas, he said the additional parking is necessary. There was discussion about having no meter parking after 3:00 p.m. Fred Couceyro will discuss the Board's request with the Parking Director. The architect suggested having a fitness trail on the Publix side of the park. Fred Couceyro said this can only be done if we take out the gazebo because there is not enough money to do both the gazebo and the fitness trail. He said it will be up to the neighbors to decide. Fred Couceyro said a big thing with the neighbors is that there be a lot of trees. They want the play areas, they want to fix the lighting, and they want to fix the walkway. The Board thinks the park will be very nice.
6. New Business – Darby Plummer
- a. Annual Report – Darby Plummer requested that Board Members review the Annual Report and come to the next meeting with suggestions, additions and/or comments so that the report can be turned in. Her e-mail address is: [td4plummer@aol.com](mailto:td4plummer@aol.com).
7. Date and time of next meeting –The next Parks and Recreation Advisory Board meeting is scheduled for **Friday, February 15, 2008**. 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**.
8. The meeting adjourned at 9:08 a.m.