

City of Coral Gables

*405 Biltmore Way
Coral Gables, FL 33134
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Meeting Minutes

Thursday, December 9, 2021

8:30 AM

The Board meets the second Thursday of every month.

Parks and Recreation Advisory Board

CALL TO ORDER

@ 8:09am

ROLL CALL

a. Roll call and Excusal of Absences

A MOTION TO EXCUSE THE ABSENCES OF ELLEN CHASENS (VIRTUALLY PRESENT) AND LAURA HERNANDEZ WAS MADE BY BRUCE LECURE AND SECOND BY CHARLIE RUA. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Present: 4 - Chairperson Segura, Vice Chairperson Rua, Board Member Marques and Board Member Rodriguez

Absent: 3 - Board Member Chasens, Board Member Hernandez and Board Member Valdes

b. Vacant Seat- Vice Mayor Mena

Board Member Joan Valdes has resigned from the Parks Board because she is moving out of the City. Board Chair Monica Segura shared with the Board that she has two potential candidates that she has reached out in attempts to fill the vacancy. She will confirm and forward their contact information to staff.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

A MOTION TO APPROVE THE NOVEMBER MEETING MINUTES WAS MADE BY JENNIFER MARQUEZ AND SECONDED BY CHARLIE RUA. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

b. Event Calendar

Assistant Director Carolina Vester began her report by recapping our events that took place beginning with the annual Tree Lighting. She gave the Board a breakdown of how we did the ticketing process and the series of events that lead the City to decide on piloting a new barricade system. If they City likes the new system, purchasing sets could be upwards to \$100,000 per set. But if purchased, there might be an opportunity to rent the barricades for privately ran community events.

Staff received complaints about how far away the stage was for general admission tickets, so staff will look into the pricing for projecting the event and Santa's arrival on screens near the stage.

Carolina shared with the Board that this will be the last year for the holiday Christmas tree and the City is currently in the process of purchasing a new one. Commission will be presented options some time in February.

Our Hot Chocolate with Santa events are scheduled to take place in December and will be resident only events.

Board Chair Monica Segura and other board members brought up difficulties they experience when using the online Playgables.com system to register for programs or to purchase tickets. Assistant Director Carolina Vester and Administrative Assistant Sarah Espino, explained to the Board that due to internal department policies for resident verification, it limits how the system can be used. But the software company periodically provides updates so staff will look into what website-based updates are available.

The Harvest Market will finish now in December and after the holidays, the Farmer's Market will begin in January. Carolina shared with the Board that the Business Improvement District also hosted a Holiday Market however that event is not associate to the Community Recreation ran events and coincided with the Holiday Tree Lighting which led to a lot of patron confusion for ticketing.

Continuing with events, Carolina briefly reviewed the upcoming Jr. Orange Bowl Parade, Movies Under the Gables Moonlight featuring Elf, Parents Night Out, My Squad's Magical Wintery Fun for our Special Populations demographic, and the Annual Luncheon at the AAC.

a. General Department Updates

The assistant director also spoke to the Board about a new part time work position at the AAC that will be filled by a candidate through the Best Buddies program. This position will be a paid position and has been approved by the city administration.

Assistant Director Carolina Vester also added to the meeting that with the lack of staff to fill part time vacancies, we had begun working with the HR department to put together a compensation plan for wage increases for part time staff to make the department more competitive. This increase of pay rates would add between \$400,000-\$500,000 to our budget for part-time salaries. It has officially been approved and will begin dating back to November 22nd, 2021.

c. CIP Updates

Administrative Supervisor Mitch Zuriarrain quickly went over capital improvement projects that are currently underway.

Granada Golf Course Pro-Shop Renovation for the Interior renovation & ADA compliance is in the design phase and expected to start construction in March. Bidding process has begun.

Lamar Louise Curry Park is moving forward and John Bell Construction will be starting work soon after the repairs to the street and sidewalk drainage were made.

Pierce Park renovation is now in the bidding phase. Assistant Director Carolina Vester shared a brief history of Pierce Park, the McFarland district and the African American culture of the park and neighboring community.

The Venetian Pool concessions stand is now in the permitting stage and will begin construction soon.

Maggoire Park is in the process of receiving six-foot sidewalks to create access to the park for walking pedestrians and bicyclists.

Phillips Park is in the design phase and will be broken up in to three separate construction phases.

Blue Road Park, Venetian pool pumps, the Granada rain shelters, and the Bark Park of the Underline were briefly spoke about.

The ribbon cutting of the groundbreaking to the second phase of the Underline happened last week.

The Camp WILD pilot program will be hosted at the Girl Scout House located near the Ruth Bryan Owen waterway. This program will be ran by Special Populations Coordinator Ericka Kofkin and is an inclusionary camp.

NEW BUSINESS

a. Park Rental Application and Permit Process

Board Chair Monica Segura brought up the agenda item pertaining to the park rental application and rental process. After recently trying to rent a pavilion for an event from the Youth Center, the process became very cumbersome, and the customer service was not satisfactory. Monica is suggesting to staff to have notaries on site and to have a laptop or kiosk available in order to complete the insurance requirements. This will allow for renters to ask for assistance if needed and not have to make multiple trips. Assistant Director Carolina Vester shared with the Board that we are already working with the IT department for a Kiosk at the Youth Center so this item will be addressed when the kiosk is installed. Staff hopes to have something in place and the process revised by January.

Monica also shared that the day of the rental, there was no posted signage stating that the pavilion was reserved for her party, and this left her in an uncomfortable position of having to ask park goers to vacate the space. She is requesting that signage or notice be placed to avoid this happening again to other renters. Assistant Director Carolina Vester did explain to the Board that with staff shortages and the uptick of park rentals from pre-covid years, it has become more difficult for staff to be present at the parks to vacate the pavilions. However, we will try our best to have all park rangers informed with a schedule of all upcoming rentals to help aid in servicing and monitoring each rental. Signage will also be posted.

Board Chair Monica Segura also requested that the insurance process be revised. There are too many steps and for the average renter, and it's not clear on how to pull the appropriate insurance for the type of rental that is taking place. She would like to know the history of the insurance requirements for pavilion rentals and the need for the type that is required.

Board member Ellen Chasens brought up the lights at Salvadore Tennis Center again sharing that the lights remain on and bright enough that park-goers are in the park well after dusk. Carolina stated that the lights are on a photocell and will turn on automatically when its dark enough. Staff will investigate the after-dusk usage of the park and see how we can proceed with limiting that usage. But as it remains, we are short on staff and unable to assign designated park attendants to close all the parks.

Board Member Jennifer Marquez asked about the potential of additional bathrooms at the parks we use for rentals. Staff shared that at this time there are no plans for additional bathrooms. However, as we progress with the park's maintenance matrix, there has been a line item added that includes security cameras. As each park is renovated or constructed, cameras will be added and could then lead to residents wanting restrooms in the parks as we could then avoid vandalism or vagrants.

Board Member Bruce Lecure wanted to know if the City pressure cleans the sidewalks or walkways of all the parks. He then asked specifically if Lisbon Park is cleaned routinely. Administrative Supervisor Mitch Zuriarrain along with Carolina Vester stated that the interior of the parks and the playgrounds are pressured

cleaned on a quarterly basis. We have also purchased an industrial tow-behind pressure washer although we still are waiting on the approval of additional staff to use this equipment. However, the Community Recreation department's maintenance crew only services 23 of the 62 parcels of land and Lisbon Park is maintained by the Greenspace Management Division of the Public Works Department. Carolina said that we will inform the Assistant Director of Public Works for Landscape Services Deena Bell-Llewellyn, of the maintenance needs of Lisbon Park on behalf of Bruce.

OLD BUSINESS

a. Alternating Board Meeting Times Beginning in January

A MOTION TO KEEP THE SAME DATE AND TIME FOR BOARD MEETINGS WAS MADE BY RUBEN RODRIGUEZ AND SECONDED BY CHARLIE RUA. A BRIEF DISCUSSION WAS HAD. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Board Chair Monica Segura shared with the Board that she had group discussions with Commissioner Menendez and Commissioner Anderson along with other board chairs regarding board member benefits and what would be most impactful for users. A survey will be sent out gaging parking usages versus the current board benefits at park facilities.

Board member Ellen Chasens voiced her support of maintaining the current benefits of free usage of the Venetian Pool, the tennis centers, and the golf courses.

ITEMS FROM THE SECRETARY

Next meeting is scheduled January 13, 2022 at 8am

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 9:22 am

NOTE