

# **PARKS & RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD**

## **Minutes of January 16 2015, Meeting**

**War Memorial Youth Center**

**405 University Drive,**

**Coral Gables, Florida 33134**

<b>MEMBERS</b>	<b>J</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>APPOINTED BY</b>
Alisa Weiner	P	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	P	P	P	P	Mayor Jim Cason
Valerie Gelnovatch	P	P	P	P	N	N	N	E	P	P	P	P	Vice Mayor William Kerdyk, Jr.
Kirk Menendez	P	P	P	P	N	N	N	P	P	P	P	P	Comm. Patricia Keon
Robert Ruano	P	P	P	P	N	N	N	P	P	P	P	A	Comm. Vince Lago
Marty Steinberger	P	E	P	P	N	N	N	P	P	E	A	P	Comm. Frank C. Quesada
	V							V	V	V	V	V	City Manager Cathy Swanson-Rivenbark
Carlos Hernandez	P	P	P	P	N	N	N	P	P	P	P	P	Parks and Recreation Advisory Board

A = Absent

B = Not on Board at Time of Meeting

C = Cancelled

E = Excused absence

P = Present

N = No quorum

R = Recessed

S = Sick

V = Vacant position

### **STAFF:**

Fred Couceyro  
Parks and Recreation Director

Sarah Espino,  
Acting as Administrative Assistant

### **GUESTS:**

Cynthia Birdsill  
Economic & Cultural Development Director

- 1. Robert Ruano called the meeting to order at 8:24 a.m.**
- 2. Approval of Board minutes of December 18, 2014 meeting – A motion was made by Alisa Weiner to approve the minutes of December 18, 2014 with no changes made. Motion to approve was seconded by Kirk Menendez and was passed unanimously by the Board.**
- 3. Approval of Excused Absences – Robert Ruano made a motion to not excuse the absence of himself, Robert Ruano. Motion was passed unanimously by the Board.**

#### **4. Update on Board Items to City Commission**

Fred Couceyro began with updates about Miracle Mile Street Scape project that is moving forward. They have started a steering committee that will help move the project along. They had an initial meeting with many people from the city; he was included in the meeting, just to start the dialogue on what the entire city scape improvements will be. He will keep the board updated and informed as they move along.

Robert Ruano brought up the question whether bike lanes will be added to Miracle Mile is being discussed. Fred notified the board that there have been discussions about bike lanes and they are determining whether to put lanes directly on Miracle Mile or have connectivity to the Mile. Kirk Menendez asked who has the ultimate decision. Fred said a committee comprised of people from the BID, Chamber, community people at large and the two staff members on the committee are Glen Kephart and Carmen Olazabal. Comments about the project should be sent to Glen so he can forward them to the engineering and design team. Robert Ruano asked if planning meetings are public, Fred does not know if initial steering meetings will be public but the meeting he attended was just a staff meeting. Jessica Keller was suggested for board member Robert Ruano, to follow up with on upcoming meeting information. Discussion took place on possible ways to incorporate bike lanes in to the Miracle Mile City Scape. Fred Couceyro stated that once the project team has gone further into the plan, they will meet with all the boards and if the board has any ideas, those can be submitted to Fred. There has yet to be a discussion specifically on bike lanes. No commissioners were present at the initial staff meeting but everything will have to be approved by the Commissioners. No Motion was made on the topic, but a request to put bike paths on the agenda was made by Robert Ruano. Fred will convey to Glen Kephart that the Parks and Recreation board is very interested in the bike path issue. Once Fred receives information it will be shared with the board. More discussions on design and incorporating the bike lanes were had. Bike Safety courses were suggested by Carlos Hernandez. Robert Ruano will be meeting with Jessica Keller and the police department on enforcement and education in preparation for bike month in March.

Alissa Weiner asked if there was a discussion on the Charrette, Fred Couceyro responded that there was a mention of it without any resolution to the topic. The meeting Fred Couceyro attended was an introductory meeting with city staff members who will be resources to the project.

Adult Activity Center negotiations are progressing. The center will be approximately 10,000 square feet with a walkthrough to both areas of the center. There will be a big meeting area for exercise classes and another area with administration offices and small class rooms, with a media lab. More information will be given to the board as it progresses. Discussion was about the negotiations of the contract with buying back leased property. Seniors have been speaking with Kirk Menendez and seem to be under the assumption that they will be able to drop off their cars with valet parking and not have to pay. He has asked for this information to be passed along to find resolution. No opening date to the Adult Activity Center has been set. Youth Center will continue to have programs for active adults. Discussions with seniors have taken place about what programming will be put in the Adult Activity Center.

Big Toy event took place on January 10, 2015. Fred Couceyro had minor complaints from a few parents who wanted to ride in lifts with their children, and this was not allowed due to safety concerns. Fred hopes to continue the event next year and would like to look for outside people to participate and have different vendors. Discussion about charging for city events was had. Carlos Hernandez feels that charging a nominal fee for community events should be explored. Perhaps charge a few dollars for ride bands that are given out for entry.

There was a discussion on recycling. Alisa Weiner asked about putting pictures for depicting what can be put in recycling receptacles. Discussion continued on possible solutions. Alisa Weiner also brought to Boards attention that the Farmers Market activities list should be posted online.

## **5. Upcoming Special Events**

Farmers Market begins on January 17<sup>th</sup>, 2015 and will be held for eleven weeks until March 28<sup>th</sup>, 2015. Discussion about what is being offered at the event took place.

Festival of the Arts will have its inaugural start on January 24<sup>th</sup> thru the 25<sup>th</sup>. Located on Giralda Avenue between Ponce de Leon & Le Jeune Road. Admission is \$10.

The Adult Bike Program at the Youth Center to promote 50+ year old adults to be active will start on January 17, 2015 and will run through the duration of Farmers Market. Carlos Hernandez suggested some kind of health care be provided if seniors were to fall. Fred Couceyro will pass the information along to Jessica Keller.

Daddy Daughter Dance- February 6, 2015

Bike Walk Coral Gables – March 1, 2015

Bike to Work Day- March 6, 2015

Carnival on the Mile- March 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> 2015

## **6. New Business**

**Presentation of proposal for donated sculpture to be placed in Fewell Park--Cynthia Birdsill --** Cynthia Birdsill, Director of Economic Sustainability and Cultural Arts, presented to the board the proposal of having a donated sculpture be placed in Fewell Park. The piece being considered is being donated by Cuban artist Leonel Matheu. The marble piece representing a paper boat, which he uses in a lot of his work, represents the journey many Cubans made to South Florida throughout time. Cynthia discussed with Mr. Fewell a couple years ago to put a sculpture in his park, and Cynthia thinks that it would look nice in Fewell Park located off Coral way and Granada. She has presented the proposal to the Landscape Advisory Board that voted in favor of the piece and will further present it to Arts Advisory Panel and Cultural Development Board. An exact location for the piece has not been finalized but will work to find a suitable place; without a lot of vegetation. Passive parks in the City are being most considered. Fewell Park is very tranquil, wooded, secluded, pretty, has pathways and benches. Sculpture will add character to Fewell Park. Time line once approved will depend on Public Works constructing a base, so a couple months after approval should be needed. **Motion was made by Carlos Hernandez, seconded by Kirk Menendez to recommend to the Commission to approve the donation from the artist and the placement in Fewell Park.**

Alisa Weiner asked Cynthia Birdsill a question about the Jazz event, stating that last year they had recycling bins but they did not this Wednesday when she attended. Cynthia will check with Public Works about the bins.

Cynthia Birdsill discussed the Wednesday Jazz Series that kicked off this week, stating that it's a wonderful way to spend your lunch hour. Lovables sells a boxed lunch and the event will have two Sunday performances as well. They will usually be around 4 PM February 13<sup>th</sup> and March 15<sup>th</sup> 2015.

Robert Ruano inquired about the Coast Guard fighting in World War II and the missing branch of the Coast Guard on the memorial at the Youth Center. Kirk Menendez googled and in fact the Coast Guard was not a part of World War II.

Kirk Menendez has nominated Jerry Jones as a potential candidate for the open Recreational Specialist position at the Coral Gables Youth Center. This nomination was also agreed upon by Robert Ruano, Marty Steinberger, and Valerie Gelnovatch. Fred stated that Mr. Jones will be considered and will be interviewed.

Alisa Weiner asked if there is a parks and open spaces map available. Fred Couceyro said that online on the Coral Gables website there is a map. He also has a master plan map that he offered to board members if they wanted to pick one up after the meeting.

Robert Ruano inquired about the pine rock land property near University of Miami. Years ago, there was a discussion with the owner of the property; she was not interested in selling the property to the City. Discussion of other pine land properties was had. Fred Couceyro said he will follow up with information on the property.

Kirk Menendez requested a copy of the Parks and Recreation old master plan. Fred agreed and would work with Valerie on this.

Robert Ruano inquired about why the roof of the pump room at the Venetian Pool is being redone after only one year. Fred Couceyro notified the board that the previous job was done poorly and to keep with the uniformity of the new roof being put on, it needed to be done.

Valerie Gelnovatch inquired about grant writing for our master planning. Fred Couceyro has no grant staff within parks and recreation division. Valerie Gelnovatch has suggested finding a company that can assist with this.

Alisa Weiner asked about Phillips Park that was mentioned at the last Commissioner's Meeting. Capital requests have been submitted to redo the park and redeveloping the park is needed at the now 15 year mark. Carlos Hernandez requested that Phillips Park be added to the next agenda.

## **7. Old Business**

No new information has been found on the leases. The City Attorney is now doing the research on the Youth Center and the Granada golf course.

## **8. Date and Time of Next Meeting**

The next Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Meeting will be held on **Friday, February 20, 2015 at 8:15 a.m.** at the **Coral Gables War Memorial Youth Center** in the **Conference Room**.

**9. Adjournment**

**Motion to be adjourned was made by Marty Steinberger and second by Kirk Menendez. The meeting adjourned at 9:37 a.m.**