

PARKS & RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD
Minutes of June 19, 2015, Meeting
War Memorial Youth Center
405 University Drive,
Coral Gables, Florida 33134

MEMBERS	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	APPOINTED BY
Alisa Weiner	P	P	B	B	C	P	B	B	P	P	P	P	Mayor Jim Cason
Valerie Gelnovatch	P	P	P	P	C	P	N	E	P	P	P	P	Vice Mayor William Kerdyk, Jr.
Kirk Menendez	P	A	P	P	C	P	N	P	P	P	P	P	Comm. Patricia Keon
Robert Ruano	P	P	P	P	C	E	N	P	P	P	P	A	Comm. Vince Lago
Marty Steinberger	P	P	P	P	C	P	N	P	P	E	A	P	Comm. Frank C. Quesada
	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	City Manager Cathy Swanson-Rivenbark
Carlos Hernandez	P	P	P	P	C	P	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
Mitchell Zuriarrain,
Administrative Assistant

GUESTS:

Donna Spain- Historic Preservation

Jorge Casuso- Economic & Cultural Development

1. **Marty Steinberger called the meeting to order at 8:29 a.m.**
2. **Approval of Board minutes of April 17, 2015 meeting – A motion was made by Kirk Menendez to approve the minutes of April 17, 2015 with no changes made. Motion to approve was seconded by Carlos Hernandez and was passed unanimously by the Board.**
3. **Approval of Excused Absences – Robert Ruano**
4. **Proposed Location for Leonel Matheu sculpture**

Jorge Casuso from the Economic & Cultural Development department explained that the already approved sculpture could not go in Robert Fewell Park as originally planned. Mr. Fewell has expressed that he would prefer a more traditional sculpture in the park, the next proposed location for the sculpture would be Cartagena. Jorge Casuso expressed that the reasoning for moving the sculpture there is because the park is being renovated as well as it is a prime location for fisherman and watercraft to see the sculpture since the park sits on a waterway. Carlos Hernandez expressed a concern as to where exactly the sculpture is going to go because he warned the board that if it is on the opposite side of the Coco Plum entrance it can become a resting place for all the fishermen and paddle boarders who frequent that area. He strongly recommended that the City take a look at the use of the area before placing it. Fred Couceyro the director of Parks & Recreation expressed that he felt it should go closer towards the pedestrian walkway bridge, Donna Spain from the Historic Preservation department also agreed. At 8:37 a.m. Carlos Hernandez motioned that the sculpture be moved to Cartagena Plaza circle, pending a review of the actual location. This was seconded by Alisa Weiner and passed by the board unanimously.

5. Update on Board Items to City

a. Fee Resolution

Fred explained that the commission had approved the new fee structure, he continued with explaining that the fees are set on a five year plan. Some of the fees are increased by five percent yearly and others are increased by a dollar amount yearly. Special events needed to be revised after the first reading as well as the Granada Golf Course which will be renovated before the end of summer. On the second reading the fee schedule was approved.

b. Special Events/Alcohol Sale

Fred Couceyro was asked by the commission to review the cost for special events and the sale of alcohol. This came about because a special event requested to begin the sale of alcohol on a Sunday at 11:00am; the Special Events Board agreed to begin the sale of alcohol at noon. Fred explained that he put in an item to the commission which corrected the oversight and stipulated that any event that comes before the Special Events Board cannot sell alcohol prior to noon on Sundays. That was passed by the commission; the commission also asked that Fred review special events making sure they are being moved around throughout the city especially the 5k runs. Fred has worked on several alternate routes with the help of the Police Department routes so that all the 5k runs are not clustered around the Granada Golf course.

c. Town Hall Meeting

Fred informed the board on the town hall meeting on June 16th, explaining that commissioner Lago will be holding these meetings four times a year so that certain projects can be highlighted and explained to the residents. During the meeting Fred reviewed the Parks & Recreation Mater Plan as well as the Granada Golf Course renovation.

5. Granada Golf Update

Fred updated the board on the status of the renovation, multiple greens have been removed and the fairway has been sprayed down killing all of the grass. The trenching has begun for the cart path extensions also improvements to the landscaping around the pro shop. Several changes to which would benefit the overall project, Jr. Tees will be instituted. Fred tied in information about his meeting with a non-profit organization which does special needs golf called GIG. He hopes to incorporate a special needs program into the renovated golf course plan.

6. Upcoming Special Events

Fred updated the board on the 4th of July Celebration, the question was asked if anything has changed. The City has added more time to the fireworks show making the show 25 minutes instead of the 20 minutes last year. Fred also expressed the fact that he wants to bring in interactive activities for children but at the same time staying away from anything that would damage the course. The board expressed that they would like for the celebration to remain traditional, Valarie Glenovatch expressed the idea of a 4th of July parade which would march from the Youth Center to the celebration as a way to engage kids and the neighborhood. Fred expressed that he would look into the possibility of something like that.

7. Status of Athletic Fields

Kirk Menendez inquired about the status of the Youth Center field and Fred informed the board that the artificial turf project will not be happening and the previously approved project of renovating the field and irrigation will proceed as planned. Carlos Hernandez asked about the status of Phillips park, Fred explained it should be fully operational all that is pending is the installation of new bulbs for the field lights. Carlos also asked when the Youth Center field will be re-opening, Fred explained the field is scheduled to open the first week of school and the soccer program will be focusing mainly on conditioning prior to the opening of the field. Fred explained other options for fields, speaking on the option of Ponce Middle School as a viable option.

8. New Business

a. Update on Baseball Vendor

Carlos Hernandez asked for an update on how the Blue Devils contracted baseball program did this season. Fred responded with the how excellent the vendor did and how well they worked despite the stops and starts with field renovations. The Youth Center would like to continue to use them and expand the program to the smaller age groups. Fred explained that the vendors are doing well especially with specialized instruction; the neighborhood trend is in specialized instruction. Kirk Menendez explained that he spoke with several parents saying across the board parents and kids alike were very happy with the program.

b. Senior Center Membership

Alisa Weiner brought up the conversation on Adult Activities Center membership which was talked about during the last Senior Advisory Board. Fred explained that the Adult Activities Center contract has been signed and is moving forward, Fred brought clarity to what was talked about at the meeting. Stating that Letty Ellis the Adult Activities Coordinator had discussion which touched on the idea that any type of event would have a registration requirement, but any change in the fee structure or any additional fees would be ultimately have to be approved by the commission.

c. Venetian Pool Update

Alisa Weiner updated the board on how the Lifeguard staff at Venetian pool has become a platinum safety staff. Also she mentioned that a renovation of lower patio fountain is needed. Carlos Hernandez brought up the issue of parking at the Venetian Pool, Fred explained that parking staff has been placed in the area to direct people and give tickets on weekends. The board continued to discuss possible parking options and shuttling options citing available parking at both the Granada Golf, Salvador tennis center and the Merrick house. Marty Steinberger referenced using the trolley as a viable option to alleviate the parking situation.

d. Bike Lanes

Kirk Menendez made the request that the City send an expert to look at and analyze the newly created bike path which runs along Sevilla toward 57th avenue during rush hour traffic because he believes during this time the area where Anastasia merges with Sevilla cars are backed up for blocks causing traffic and a dangerous situation for bikers who may be using that path. Many drivers who frequent that route are used to using the right hand side to expedite their turns at both traffic lights since the new bike lane prevents drivers from doing that Kirk believes that it promotes a hazard for bikers. Fred assured Kirk that he would reach out to Jessica Keller in the Public works and have her look into the situation since she is in charge of the project.

9. Old Business

a. Youth Center Master Plan

Fred sent out the master plan and requested feedback from the board. Kirk Menendez referenced that although the current plan is to reference current uses, maps, and planning documents but he feels the City should look back on the original plans as a point of reference. Fred explained that he wants to look and forecast what the facility needs to look like two decades from now. Fred explained that a lot of development and thought to see what the neighborhood will need as it changes over the years so that it can better serve the residents. Kirk explained that closing a small portion of Riviera in order to combine the Youth Center and library properties, as originally planned, would create more fluidity throughout the Youth Center and allow for patrons to access both safe from traffic. Kirk explained that the key to the entire master plan should a restructuring of the entire facility along with memberships and to remember that the key in his opinion is to create a sense of community. Allowing the facility to create an environment which establishes community and is not so segmented, allowing kids to “hang out” more, meet up with their friends and have more options for play. Carlos Hernandez interjected with how an extended visioning workshop is necessary, along with designing a fee structure for the Youth Center membership which will be more family and community friendly.

10. Date and Time of Next Meeting

The next Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Meeting will be held on **Friday, July 17 , 2015 at 8:15 a.m.** at the **Coral Gables War Memorial Youth Center** in the **Conference Room**.

11. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 10:01 a.m.