

City of Coral Gables

405 Biltmore Way
Coral Gables, FL 33134
www.coralgables.com



Meeting Minutes

Thursday, August 13, 2020

8:15 AM

The Board meets the second Thursday of every month.
Coral Gables Youth Center, 405 University Drive, Coral Gables, FL
Parks and Recreation Advisory Board

CALL TO ORDER

at 8:21am

ROLL CALL

Present:

Kirk Menedez

Nancy Leslie

Charlie Rua

Felix Parado

Wilfredo Fernandez

Monica C. Segura

Carlos Hernandez

Absent:

Desmond Gonzalez

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Motion to approve the March minutes was made by Wilfredo Fernandez and second by Monica Segura. Motion passed unanimously.

I. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Director Fred Couceyro began his Director's report by going over how they were able to open the larger parks that were over an acre which included golf courses and tennis courts. These locations met all the requirements to reopen according to CDC guidelines. Basketball courts which would have required extra staffing to ensure guidelines were being followed, were not included in the opening. Smaller parks have not been open yet. All staffing is being used to max capacity monitoring the parks and enforcing the CDC Guidelines of spacing and social distancing.

Fred goes over how staffing was split between an ALPHA / BRAVO scheduling rotation; one week in the office and the other week work from home.

A Summer Care program was put together using the CDC guidelines and childcare safety guidelines which worked out well, however was cut down to a four-week program due to a spike in cases in Dade-County. We will be continuing virtual programming and will expand to virtual study hall for parents who don't have anywhere for their kids to go and they will be put in a room with the tools needed for school with staff supervises.

Wilfredo Fernandez asked about the capacity of Virtual Study Hall and IT capabilities. Fred responded that 32-40 kids will be allowed at a time with the necessary Tech support from our IT department for the needed capability to the WIFI connection. Sports offering in the fall will be non-contact, which will be called "skills & drills". Which will currently be held for outdoor sports.

The City Manager cancelled the re-openings of the Venetian Pool and the Fitness Center expressing an abundance of caution. These facilities will be re-evaluated every few weeks as cases decline.

Fred went over virtual events that have taken place since the COVID closures. These events included the very successful Easter event, virtual Farmers Market, virtual Memorial Day, and virtual Fourth of July, crafts and cooking. The virtual events have been very successful for campers as well since second session was suspended.

Revenue has dropped due to restrictions and lack of activities. Budget will be reduced. Kirk Menendez asked about Youth Center Memberships. These memberships are being paused and will be extended for the time the closure has taken place.

Felix Pardo asked how the City is dealing with contracted vendors. Fred told the board that we are trying to redesign programs to allow these contractors to continue to work but unfortunately, they are taking a large financial hit without the collection of revenue. Kirk Menendez brought up County parks that are allowing programming and how they started weeks prior. Fred reminded the Board that although the County has allowed contracted sports programs to continue, the City decided to wait until the Fall for case numbers to hopefully decline.

Kirk also asked about the upcoming end- of- year events. Events will be offered virtually or adhering to CDC guidelines in the Fall. October's Hunted House will be more of a drive through trick-o-treat style event where families can drive through and pick up candy bags for the kids. The Tree lighting will depend on the County opening playgrounds. Pictures with Santa will most likely not be possible. Fourth of July won't be ready by next year. Until proper vaccine and treatments are more available to hold such a mass gathering, the event cannot take place. We are looking at drive through movies or movies in the park with designated spots on the grass that will comply with social distancing.

II. NEW BUSINESS

a. Lamar Louise Curry Park Presentation

Fred then spoke to the board on current capital improvement projects.

A presentation on Lamar Louise Curry park was shown with the conceptual design plans of the green space. A community meeting will be held later this evening and the board was encouraged to join.

Nancy Leslie gave a brief background on the funds that are being donated from the estate of Lamar Louise Curry in conjunction with the Garden Club. Fred confirmed and because of this donation, the Garden Club will be heavily involved with landscape selections around the park. Park needs to be completed by 2021.

Design plans for the park includes sidewalks, entrance trellis, and rubber pathways going through the park to access planters which the Garden club will continually landscape. An ADA pedestrian bridge will also be included to lead guests over a dry rock river landscape feature. The park will be completely fenced, and all finishes will be made to blend in with the Venetian Pool.

Carlos Hernandez asked where the orange Thought Bubble bench will go. Carolina and Fred notified the board that the bench will be relocated to a green space nearby. Kirk Menendez asked if the existing landscape and trees will be removed. There is a plan to incorporate some of the trees or relocate trees to different areas.

A discussion was held about removing an entrance gate on Toledo, but Felix and Carlos wanted to be clear that a gate is needed on Toledo in order to help residents safely access the park due to traffic. Carlos Hernandez also recommended that traffic flow should remain two-way and not converted to the suggested one way on Toledo. Recommendation would be no trucks down Toledo instead.

Fred does not anticipate this park to be dog friendly so the proposed pet waste station will be located outside the fence.

Carlos Hernandez wanted more clarification on additional traffic signalization. Carolina answered traffic signalization refers to access to the park with stripping on the floor for a crosswalk and not additional street

signals. This project will not deal with traffic access around the park, just access to the park.

Carolina and Fred wanted to be clear with the community and the board that there will be a month-long period where they can email their concerns or suggestions about this process to ParksProjects@coralgables.com. Our department does not want the community to think that we are fast tracking these projects without their input because of COVID.

Estimated Project cost \$300,000 and founding source included \$200,000 from the Lamar Louise Curry Trust. Estimated Completion: December 2021.

A Motion to conceptually approve park design as shown was made with the stipulation that with any parking, and/or sign or traffic flow changes effecting the park, the design will have to come back to the board for approval unanimously. Motion was made by Carlos Hernandez, second by Wilfredo Fernandez. Motion passed unanimously by the board.

b. Salvador Park Inclusive Playground Expansion Presentation

Following the presentation of Lamar Louise Curry Park, the Salvador Park Inclusive Playground Expansion proposal was presented.

The City was awarded a grant of \$175,000 from the Florida Recreation Development Assistance Program (FRDAP). The southwest block of the park is prone to mud with limited sun due to tree overhang, so the proposed expansion would include this area.

Features that will be incorporated include a zip-krooz assisted track, which allows a child to zip down from one side to another. The entire grass area will be artificial turf. An OmniSpin Spinner, We-Saw and Rhapsody Musical instruments will be possible additions. New park features will include interactive play mounds and perimeter light bollards with water fountain to name a few. Improvement of the restrooms and replacement of benches will occur; air conditioning will not be added to the restrooms at this time. Drainage and grating of the field will occur prior to any additions.

Felix Pardo made the request that the new water fountain that is proposed for the park we add a chilling unit. He also asked about maintenance of the park to keep leaves and debris off the new turf. Fred and Carolina expect higher maintenance and have incorporated in maintenance routes with park staff.

Estimated cost \$800,000 including the \$175,000 from FRDAP Grant.
Estimated completion: December 2021.

Felix Pardo made a motion to accept the proposed conceptual design for the Salvador Park Inclusive Playground Expansion, motion was second by Monica Segura. Motion passed unanimous by the board.

III. ITEMS FROM THE SECRETARY

The next scheduled meeting will be September 10, 2020 at 8:30am.

ADJOURNMENT

at 9:58 am.

NOTE