

City of Coral Gables

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



Meeting Minutes

Thursday, October 13, 2022

8:00 AM

Youth Center, Conference Room

Parks and Recreation Advisory Board

Chairperson Monica Segura
Vice Chairperson Carlos Rua
Board Member Nicolas Cabrera
Board Member Ellen C. Chasens
Board Member Laura Hernandez
Board Member Bruce Lecure
Board Member Jennifer A. Marques
Board Member Ruben Rodriguez

CALL TO ORDER

Meeting began at 8:06am

ROLL CALL

Present: 6 - Chairperson Segura, Vice Chairperson Rua, Board Member Marques, Board Member Rodriguez, Board Member Lecure and Board Member Cabrera

Excused: 2 - Board Member Chasens and Board Member Hernandez

a. Roll Call and Excusal of Absences

A MOTION TO EXCUSE THE ABSENCE OF LAURA HERNANDEZ AND ELLEN CHASENS WAS MADE BY BRUCE LECURE AND SECOND BY CHARLIE RUA. ALL IN FAVOR; PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

a. Approval of September Meeting Minutes

A MOTION TO APPROVE THE SEPTEMBER MEETING MINUTES WAS MADE BY JENNIFER MARQUES AND SECOND BY RUBEN RODRIGUEZ. ALL IN FAVOR; PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

a. General Updates

Director Couceyro began his report with general updates within the department. Fall programming has been underway and the start of our event season has begun.

The Country Club pool is almost ready to be opened and the club will host its first external rental this weekend. The café is still open and operational and is in the process of obtaining a beer and wine license. With the start of rentals, the club should be generating revenue to cover expenses.

Miami Dade County early voting will take place at the Youth Center. Operationally, they will have to contend with our upcoming event the Nightmare on 405 haunted house which is scheduled for Monday October 31st.

b. Special Events

Our event season will kick off with the Pumkin Patch at Ponce Circle Park which used to be at Pittman Park but due to size was moved to accommodate event goers. The event is scheduled for October 15th from 2pm-6pm.

Lamar Louise Curry Park ribbon cutting will also be happening Saturday October 15th at 5:30pm.

Adventure Day will take place at Salvadore park October 22nd from 11am – 2pm and the following day an exhibition demo of Power Soccer by the US National team will take place at Jayce Park.

Our scheduled Halloween events will begin with the Halloween Bash at the AAC on Friday October 28th, the Venetian Pool Pumpkin Float Saturday, October 29th, Movies at the CG Cinema featuring the Omen, and the Nightmare on 405 on Monday October 31st.

We are still waiting to hear from the Commission if the Community Recreation department will be taking over any of the events the Business Improvement District use to host since they have now been dissolved.

Director Couceyro also shared with the Board items that have recently been brought up at Commission. Fred was asked to put together a proposal on Pickleball and how we can increase opportunities to play within the city. The proposal outlined current available spaces that could be used for temporary or mobile courts and the possibility to construct a new court at Kerdyk Family Park that has an open grass area. Future park renovations at Phillips Park will include the construction of dedicated pickleball courts. Another idea was to reach out to the Dade County School board to use their land to construct courts in exchange for shared usage.

The other item that Fred has been speaking on at Commission is the temporary dog area at Catalonia Park. Construction will begin shortly at Catalonia will begin soon. During the discussion an additional lot was brought up by Commissioner Anderson that could be used as a off leash dog area. The area is the acre lot located across from the Coral Gables Library on the opposite side of where the houses are located. Fred expressed that we would look into the location as a possible dog area.

Upcoming events that the City will be issuing permits for include Harvest Market which is now run by Board member Nicolas Cabrera and a separate company, World Cup Watch Party at Fritz & Franz, and the Chili Cookoff hosted by the CG Rotary Club.

c. CIP Updates

Administrative Supervisor Mitch Zuriarrain updated the Board on Park's capital improvement projects that are underway.

Granada Pro shop demo has been completed. Window install and buildout will begin shortly. The restaurant side of the pro-shop will need to go to a community input meeting to vet the concept design for approval.

Pierce Park is on track. Surfacing will be installed in the next two weeks.

Venetian Pool Concession redesign is expected to begin during the closer period of the pool.

Venetian Pool bottom and assessment testing has taken place and we will not move forward at this time with concrete replacement of the vessel. We will however repaint the pool vessel is a new material that is expected to hold up better than previous products used. Due to the nature of the pool and the time that it sits dry, Diamondbrite is not a suitable solution. A sample of the material coating was passed around to the Board.

Philips Park is in the finalization of the conceptual design plan based on the feed back from the community meetings and input from the School and Community Relations Committee. We will have a separate meeting for the school next door.

Blue Road Open Space is in the design phase. City Commission is dictating the design elements to be in the park, but the concept design will go to a community input meeting.

Lamar Louise Curry Park is complete, and the ribbon cutting will be at 5:30pm on Saturday October 15th.

Nellie B. Moore Park and Cooper Park are in the concept design phase.

Salvadore Park bollards will be replaced in the next two weeks.

NEW BUSINESS

Board Chair Monica Segura brought forward an article that was published in a Boston paper about the use of artificial turf in Boston. Boston Mayor ordered that no new artificial turf fields be installed over concern about PFAS chemical compounds. Other areas of concern for the use of artificial turf included injuries, surface heat, and the perks of having natural grass. Director Couceyro started looking into the article and consulted turf manufacturers that we have used to install at our playgrounds and parks. There seems to be an agreement with what evidence science has come up with about new turf and that there are no significant dangers as of now. However, Fred and staff will continue to look at alternative options for playgrounds and fields as more information and products become available. We will present both natural grass and turf options to the community with the upcoming renovation of Phillips Park.

Board member Ellen Chasens asked if the article mentioned how the PFAS were being spread. There has been no definitive testing, so they do not know how it transfers to users.

The discussion continued to site perks to natural grass and the upkeep of the grass in parks and high traffic areas. Admin Assistant Sarah Espino circulated the article to the Board via email.

Board member Ruben Rodriguez asked if there were any major design changes to Phillips Park since the Community meeting. Director Couceyro said that there has been a heightened interest for pickleball courts so they will be included in the design, along with tennis and basketball courts. Parking will not be included however we will look to utilize the MOU we have with the adjacent public school.

OLD BUSINESS

Board Chair Monica Segura asked for an update on Le Parc café and information on the new Advisory Board. Director Couceyro shared that there will be a new advisory board for the Country Club beginning in January. All board members will need to be members of the club and a resident to be appointed. The board was created to have a dedicated board to that building that will provide support and be a sounding board to staff on what its members desire from the club. It will also aid us when the club tries to be accredited.

Le Parc continues to operate. New equipment and machinery are in the process of being ordered. However, the existing equipment in the front of house limits the café staff on what can be displayed or sold based on holding temperatures. This equipment repair or replacements will take place first. Hours of operation are still the same but when the beer and wine license is obtained, hours will be extended. The Le Parc bathroom was also addressed. The cleaning company that is used at the club has been helping Le Parc during operations and have been instructed on safe cleaning practices while food is being served.

The POS system that Le Parc is currently using is the same system that the Community Recreation department is using however it cannot be designed for restaurant style purchasing based on hardware needs and will be replaced with a new software that can be integrated with our City's financial system. This new software will allow for Uber Eats, Door Dash, and for pool side dining.

Board Member Jennifer Marques asked how the Country Club's Social event went. Assistant Director Carolina Vester shared with the Board that it went very well and had over 150 RSVPs.

Salvadore Park dog run is expected to begin construction in December/January. Board Chair Monica Segura asked will additional help or staffing be available at the park with the expected influx of park goers due to the dog area. Fred hopes that we will be able to fully staff our other facilities and use part time staff looking for additional hours to help monitor the park until dedicated park positions are created. However, like other business and departments in the City, we are having a very hard time filling part time positions. Monica Segura brought up the comment at commission about the additional staff member to help with Salvadore maintenance of the clay courts. Fred explained that position was not funded as a new needs since

we still not have been able to fill the already existing vacant position. We are still conducting interviews.

The conversation on additional dog park areas in the city continued amongst the board. Director Couceyro mentions a commercial lot that will temporarily be used for a year as a dog park that the City will help maintain but the developer will build out the space. Board member Ellen Chasens asked if any areas dedicated for larger dogs will be created since most of the private sites discussed have a 20lbs weight limit. The Underline dog park will have designated space for both small and large dogs, however most of the new privately owned dog areas limit weight due to the size of the constructed green space.

Board Chair Monica Segura shifted the discussion to Ponce Circle Park and asked if the fountain area will be repaired in time for the Pumpkin Patch event. Fred expressed that work-orders have been generated and they should have it repaired within the next few days.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

ITEMS FROM THE SECRETARY

The next meeting will be Thursday November 10th, 2022 at 8am.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 9:04am.

NOTE