

VERO BEACH RECREATION COMMISSION MINUTES
Tuesday, November 13, 2018 – 4:00 p.m.
City Hall, Council Chambers, Vero Beach, Florida

PRESENT: Chairman, Richard Yemm; Vice Chairman, Sue Dinunno; Members: Bobbi Burdick, Alternate Member #1, Greg Holtan, and Alternate Member #2, Garrett MacMillan (arrived at 4:05 p.m.) **Also Present** Recreation Director, Rob Slezak; Assistant Recreation Director, Patty Howard; Assistant City Attorney, Stefanie Beskovoyne; and Senior Administrative Assistant, Rita Hawkins

Excused Absence: Judy Jones

Unexcused Absence: Brooke Malone

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Yemm called today's meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. and the Senior Administrative Assistant performed the roll call.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A) September 11, 2018

Mrs. Burdick made a motion to approve the minutes of the September 11, 2018 Recreation Commission meeting. Mr. Holtan seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

4. NEW BUSINESS

None

5. OLD BUSINESS

A) Parks and Recreation Master Plan by Outside Consultant

Mr. Rob Slezak, Recreation Director, stated that he has some information regarding the Master Plan and he will cover his items first and then he will provide them with the recommendations from the City Manager and the Engineering Director, because they could not attend today's meeting. Mr. Slezak said he will cover the items the Recreation Department is looking at for the future. He explained that the future of the Playgrounds looks like it will be covered through private funding. Mrs. Burdick asked Mr. Slezak for more information on that. Mr. Slezak explained that they have found enough contributions from foundations to pay for it all. Mrs. Burdick asked if that is for new capital projects or for maintenance. Mr. Slezak replied that it is for new capital. Mr. Holtan asked if it is the same group that was doing one (1) playground at a time. Mr. Slezak replied no, that was Go Play Vero and they did a wonderful job. He explained that they have had the Whitaker Trust for a long time and now every year they can use the money they earn in interest to pay for upgrades and repairs to the different facilities. He said that

they have the funding for work to be done at Royal Palm Pointe this year and a new playground at Troy Moody Park for next year.

Mrs. Burdick asked what work is being done at Royal Palm Pointe. Mr. Slezak explained that they will be doing some work on the building and possibly paying for some fencing.

Mr. Slezak stated that the Charles Park addition is the biggest item of all the Parks. Every year they put it in the five (5) year plan and eventually they will get the work done on that four (4) acre piece of land. Mr. Yemm asked if the request for the engineering work to be done on the Charles Park extension has been submitted as part of the plan. Mr. Slezak stated that it was removed, but he will put it back in for next year's budget. The second big item is the Dodgertown property. They believe that the Dodgertown and the Power Plant properties need to be community driven and then the Recreation Commission and the City Council can guide it along to make it happen. He said that the Recreation Department is trying to generate more revenue to pay for itself and it is a difficult to do. They try to provide recreation for those who might not otherwise be able to afford it. He explained that they found a couple of things to help offset some of their costs. One thing they are exploring and working on is naming rights. Ms. Stefanie Beskovoyne, Assistant City Attorney, put together a nice draft, and they are passing it through the required City Departments and then they are hoping the City Council will approve it. Right now they have been approached by three (3) groups or organizations who are very interested in the possibility of naming rights of City facilities. They are also trying to raise funds by charging for the rental of the small pavilions and to use the Royal Palm Pointe fountain. They put out signs in late October and they are getting a lot of feedback from the public, so he is not sure how long that will stay in effect. He said that Mr. O'Connor and Mr. Falls would like the Recreations Commission's ideas before they come to a future meeting.

Mrs. Burdick said they have given them ideas before. Mr. Slezak suggested putting them down on paper and presenting them.

Mr. Yemm stated that they have never defined what a Master Plan would involve. Mr. Slezak said that is correct and he believes that is what Mr. O'Connor and Mr. Falls are looking for.

Mr. Yemm said it is important to everyone if they are going to use a consultant and they go to the City Council to recommend they do a request for a proposal. It helps if they can narrow the scope of what they will expect of a consultant. Mr. Slezak said the idea was brought up about having a community workshop so the public can provide their input on what they would like to see for the Parks and the Recreation Department facilities. If they have a Pre-Master Plan meeting with the public and they combine their ideas with the Recreation Commission they can submit it to Mr. O'Connor and Mr. Falls.

Mr. Yemm said the suggestion or recommendation for a Master Plan came from some of the City Councilmembers and some significant people in the community, but nobody defined what they are looking for in a Master Plan. It was brought to the Recreation Commission so they can set up parameters and take it back to the City Council. He thought they would have a discussion with the City Manager, the Planning Director, and the Engineering Director and use their experience to set up the parameters.

Mr. Slezak said he thinks it is important to have the ideas presented from the public before they invite the City staff to a Recreation Commission meeting. Mr. Yemm said it sounds like they

need to have public workshop. Mr. Slezak said that is what he was hearing from Mr. O'Connor and Mr. Falls this morning.

Mrs. Burdick asked if they should include the Dodgertown and the Power Plant properties. Mr. Slezak said he would include everything and allow the public to speak on all of the Recreation facilities and Parks.

Mrs. Dinunno said she would be surprised if anyone showed up. The Recreation Commission invited the public to give their ideas for the Power Plant site and nothing was done with it.

Mr. Yemm said they came up with a list of recommendations and two (2) years later it was disregarded. They can make a recommendation, but he believes the City Council will be surprised on how much a consultant will cost. The consultant will cost about \$100,000 and will come in with great ideas, but if the City has no way of funding the projects what good is it. He believes that money should be used to update, improve, and maintain the Parks and facilities.

Mrs. Dinunno said it will be hard to get the public to attend a meeting between now and the end of the year. It will be after the first of the year before they have the City Council settled in.

Mr. Yemm said he believes they need to try to get public input, but he does not want to spend a lot of time spinning wheels either. They need to come up with a plan of where they want things to go and how they want to address it and then move it forward to the City Council. The realization is the cost of bringing in a consultant and he believes they will have a hard time justifying it.

Mrs. Burdick said it looks like Mr. Slezak is basically on his own for getting money for the operation of the Recreation Department.

Mr. Yemm said his recommendation is to set up a Public Workshop in January or February. Their next meeting following the workshop will involve the City staff to formulate a recommendation based on all the input from the public, the Commission, and the City staff. Their recommendation will be written up and submitted to the City Council.

Mr. Slezak said they can provide a full list of all the Park and Recreation areas and ask for input or suggestions on all of them.

Mr. Yemm stated that if they have a recommendation they can put it in writing and submit it to the City Council at a City Council meeting, so they can elaborate on it and answer any questions. This way the Recreation Commission's part of the Master Plan will be complete and it will be up to the City Council on how they want to proceed. He asked the Commission members if they agreed that this is the procedure they want to adopt. The other Commission members agreed.

6. RECREATION DIRECTOR'S MATTERS

A) Recap of the October Gymnastics Mini Session

Mrs. Patty Howard, Assistant Recreation Director, stated that the gymnastics mini session was very popular and she would recommend doing it again if the schedule allows for it. She reported

that the last gymnastic registration for the Christmas Drama was on November 3, 2018 and they filled up in 45 minutes. Every single class is full to capacity.

Mr. Yemm asked what is the percentage of City verses County participants. Mr. Slezak replied that it is 60 percent County and 40 percent City. Mrs. Howard said that the County residents pay a lot more and they receive a lot of scholarship requests that they try to accommodate.

Mr. Yemm asked if the programs are paying for themselves yet. Mr. Slezak stated that if they are not including paying for the staff then yes, so the rate of return is better than the average they have ever seen before.

Mr. Yemm said it would be great if they could find space to expand, because the demand exceeds the availability. Mr. Slezak said as a long-term goal that would be great.

Mrs. Dinunno asked if they have given up on the blue building on the Power Plant property. Mr. Slezak replied no, but they will have to wait until they have closure on the electric utility sale. The building is still being utilized, so they are in a transition period and he does not know where they stand.

Mr. Yemm asked if the Dodgertown facility has been emptied out. Mr. Slezak explained that is has been cleaned, but it is not empty and they are still using it. They are working on it, but they are also waiting on some final decisions.

B) Recap of the Halloween Parade

Mrs. Howard reported that the Halloween Parade was held on October 27, 2018 in downtown. They had 500 to 600 people who participated. Mr. Slezak said that they had a very creative bunch of people this year and many of them said they will be back next year. He explained that next year's Halloween Parade will be a giant event, because it is on the actual day of Centennial Anniversary of the City.

C) Christmas Drama

Mrs. Howard announced that the Christmas Drama will be on December 20th and 21st at 6:00 p.m. both evenings. The performances will be held at the Vero Beach High School Performing Arts Center and she hopes to see everyone there.

7. CHAIRMAN'S MATTERS

Mr. Yemm stated that they need to set a date for the public workshop. Mrs. Burdick asked if they want to schedule a separate meeting or have it in conjunction with their regular meeting.

Mrs. Dinunno suggested having it in the evening about 6:00 p.m. so that the people who work can attend.

Mr. Yemm said that they will probably cancel their regular meeting when they have the workshop. Mrs. Dinunno asked if they can hold their regular meeting at 6:00 p.m. The Administrative Assistant replied that she will check to make sure that is okay.

Mr. Yemm said they could have it on the second Tuesday in January or February, which will be January 8, or February 12. The Commission members tentatively selected January 8, 2018 at 6:00 p.m. to hold their regular meeting/public workshop.

8. MEMBER'S MATTERS

Mrs. Dinunno explained that there have been a lot of complaints on facebook about the amount of litter on the beach and the lack of signage about not littering. Mr. Yemm asked if there is a City Ordinance about leaving litter on the beach. Mr. Slezak replied that there is an Ordinance. He explained that the large signs at the main entrances to the beaches probably say "Do not litter", but probably not at every crosswalk going to the beaches. Mrs. Dinunno said they would not have to give out many citations for the word to get out. Mr. Slezak said the problem is enforcement and the lifeguards cannot be the ones to do that.

Mrs. Dinunno said that on the Dog Park facebook page there have been some comments of the potential loss of some of the Dog Park property to the Marina. Ms. Beskovoyne stated that she is probably just reading something on facebook and it is a rumor. Mrs. Dinunno said she was not clear on everything, but there have been discussions about the City leasing the Marina so there might be some truth in the talks. Mr. Slezak stated that he will send a note to Mr. O'Connor to see if there is any truth to it.

Mrs. Dinunno explained that the Art Club will be doing a mural at the Water Treatment Facility. They will not be starting it until after the Under the Oaks Art Festival, because they want a much more detailed mural involving the ecosystem.

Mrs. Dinunno stated that they had their first planning meeting for the Under the Oaks Art Festival and the new permit costs were brought up. The group was a little defensive, but they were okay with the increase as long as part of the money goes back into improving the Park. Mr. Slezak replied that the Parks are part of the General Fund, so some of that money will go back into the Parks.

Mrs. Dinunno stated that an ongoing problem they have during the Under the Oaks event has been the cleaning and stocking of the women's restroom. The women refuse to let the Grounds Maintenance Department close the restroom for a few minutes to clean and restock the supplies. The facility is always a mess by midday. Mr. Slezak replied that he will try to get an attendant to clean the restroom twice a day, but someone from the event might need to step in and assist with closing the restroom.

9. NEXT MEETING DATE

A) Next Recreation Commission Meeting Date – December 11, 2018

The next Recreation Commission meeting is scheduled for December 11, 2018.

10. ADJOURNMENT

Today's meeting adjourned at 4:37 p.m.

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