



SOUTH AREA PARKS AND RECREATION

South Area Advisory Board

REGULAR MEETING
September 19, 2005

A regular meeting of the Parks and Recreation Department, South Area Advisory Board, was conducted on Monday, September 19, 2005, at 7:00 p.m. at the South Area Parks and Recreation Conference Room, 1515 Sarno Road, Melbourne, Florida.

MEMBERS PRESENT

John Corelli, Chairman
Joan Lewis, Member
Jerry Jagrowski, Member
Mary Ann Bowman, Member
Ted Whitlock, Member
Mary Goelz, Member

MEMBERS ABSENT

Ramona Birmingham, Member
Robin Tibbitts, Member

STAFF PRESENT

Jack Masson, Deputy Director, Parks and Recreation
Bill Ross, Senior Construction Coordinator, Parks and Recreation
Jeff Whitehead, South Area Parks Operations Manager
Jerry Gust, South Area Maintenance Superintendent
David Moore, South Area Maintenance Superintendent
Lisa Grizzle, South Area Recreation Superintendent
Barry Portnowitz, South Area Recreation Superintendent
Lisa Nicholas, South Area Administrative Secretary

PUBLIC

Al Genchi, ChallengeSports

MEETING CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Corelli called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. Ms. Nicholas called the roll, and Mr. Corelli noted that a quorum was present and that the meeting would be conducted.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Members were provided with a copy of the minutes from the May 16, 2005, meeting. After review, Ms. Bowman made a **MOTION** to approve the minutes as written, and Mr. Whitlock seconded.
UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

STAFF REPORTS

Mr. Portnowitz reported that the South Area Parks and Recreation Department had a very successful summer. Day camps were filled to capacity, and numerous events were going to be conducted in the next couple of months. Ms. Grizzle noted that the summer had been busy with referendum projects. Wickham Park was to be receiving two new sets of restrooms, and renovations were planned for the campground area. The very popular Oktoberfest was also rapidly approaching.

Mr. Corelli inquired as to whether the Festival of Lights holiday event would still be held, and Ms. Grizzle responded that the event was conducted through the Rotary and that it was the club's intention to continue with the event.

Ms. Grizzle further noted that Long Point Park was still recovering from last year's hurricanes and informed the Committee that a mural project, which was constructed by summer camp participants, had recently been unveiled at Juan Ponce de Leon Landing.

Mr. Whitehead introduced David Moore, the newest South Area Parks Maintenance Superintendent, and welcomed him to the Department. Mr. Moore indicated that he was pleased to be a part of the team and that he and his staff had experienced a very busy season with ballfield maintenance and associated projects. Mr. Moore further indicated that there were a couple of issues pertaining to the sidewalk at S.P.R.A. Park but that modifications had to be delayed until November of 2005 because of various turtle-related activities.

Mr. Jagrowski inquired as to the condition of the buildings at POW-MIA, and Mr. Ross responded that the one building at the south end had been undermined and that the porch had to be demolished. Mr. Ross further noted that it would be important to look at the building from a structural standpoint.

Mr. Gust reported that referendum projects were continuing at Palm Bay Regional Park and that the maintenance building was just about completed. Mr. Gust further noted that the multi-purpose fields were being irrigated so that sprigging could begin. Mr. Gust referenced the renovations that were being conducted at Micco Park, noting that the restrooms had been demolished and the pavilion and playground removed on an in-house basis. On the recreation side of things, Mr. Gust noted various fall activities that were going to take place at the South Mainland Community Center (SMCC). It was also mentioned that the lighting at SMCC was installed and functional.

Mr. Corelli inquired into the lampposts at Flutie Athletic Complex, and Mr. Whitehead replied that all of the lampposts had been removed.

Mr. Whitehead requested that Mr. Portnowitz begin a PowerPoint presentation that had been prepared. The first slides were of POW-MIA/Pineda Landing facing south. The next set of slides was of the Wickham Park soccer fields and retention area. Mr. Corelli noted that there was an issue with regard to vegetation in the retention ponds and that Stormwater Utilities had been charged with removing it. Mr. Whitehead indicated that the appropriate staff were aware of the problem but that no timetable had been established.

Mr. Whitlock inquired as to whether there were plans to expand the dog park area, and Mr. Whitehead responded that there were no such plans at the present time. Mr. Corelli asked if there were an issue with standing water in that area, and Mr. Whitehead indicated that there was.

It was noted that the pavilion in the youth area had been completed and that it was heavily utilized by numerous youth groups.

The PowerPoint presentation continued with slides of the dog park area at Palm Bay Regional Park, Spessard Holland's new decking and the mural at Ponce Landing. Slides of Kiwanis Park at Geiger Point ensued, and Mr. Masson noted that it was the most destroyed of all of the parks and that just about every component had to be repaired. Flutie Athletic Complex would be receiving two new concession stands – one for soccer and one for softball. Mr. Whitehead explained the slide of the "Superbowl Field" at Rodes Park, which staff had created, that made the cover of a national magazine.

It was noted that new windscreens had been ordered for Hoover Middle School.

Mr. Jagrowski inquired as to whether the name of Pineda Landing would be changed to POW-MIA, and Mr. Whitehead responded that there have been numerous requests from veterans not to change the name. Mr. Corelli asked about the progress of the projects, and Mr. Whitehead and Mr. Masson concurred that the projects were at approximately 75% to 80% complete. Mr. Jagrowski asked about the status of the fishing pier at Suntree Rotary Park, and Mr. Masson replied that the Department was in discussions with the vendor in order to determine if the numbers were still applicable.

Mr. Whitehead reported to the Board that Mr. Chuck Nelson had been reassigned from his position as Director of Parks and Recreation to Special Assistant to the Assistant County Manager but would remain a valuable asset and resource within the Parks and Recreation Department. Mr. Whitehead further noted that Mr. Don Lusk would be serving as Interim Director of Parks and Recreation and that a search would be conducted for a permanent director within 30 to 45 days.

Mr. Whitehead also informed the Board that the YMCA and the Boys and Girls Clubs had recently presented information to the Palm Bay Regional Park Citizens Advisory Committee for the purpose of potentially partnering with the County for the operation of the new community center. Mr. Whitehead remarked that both the Palm Bay Regional Park Citizens Advisory Committee and the City of Palm Bay Recreation Advisory Board, at different times, voted unanimously to allow the County to manage and oversee operations at the new community center. Mr. Whitehead did note that partnering with one of these organizations, or perhaps another entity, in the future may be a possibility.

Mr. Ross provided an update on projects at Wickham Park, noting that there had been a pre-bid on the bandshell and that three restroom/shower buildings were ready to be put into place. Mr. Ross explained that negotiations with regard to the equestrian area were ongoing and that a sizeable change order had been presented.

Mr. Ross informed the Board that the progress at Viera Regional Park was less than desirable, stating that four individuals had walked off the job in order to go to Louisiana and Mississippi. Mr. Ross also conveyed that materials were not only extremely expensive but were also becoming increasingly difficult to obtain. Mr. Ross continued that most of the site work had been completed and that Six Mile Creek had been rerouted.

Mr. Jagrowski inquired into the status of the POW-MIA project at Wickham Park, and Mr. Ross responded that staff was still waiting for a proposal from the architect/engineering firm for Phases 3 and 4, which would include the Veterans Memorial, visitors center and the rangers' station. Ms. Bowman asked about the status of the archery clubs at Wickham, and Mr. Whitehead replied that a location was actively being sought and that the possibility of locating property that could support both the archers and the Indian River Kontrol Society was being considered.

Mr. Masson indicated that, on September 15, 2005, community centers for South Beach Community Park, Viera Regional Park and Palm Bay Regional Park had gone out to bid. Mr. Masson reiterated the remarks of Mr. Whitehead with regard to the unanimous vote of both the Palm Bay Regional Park Citizens Advisory Committee and the City of Palm Bay Recreation Advisory Board to allow the County to oversee and manage the operations of the community center at Palm Bay Regional Park.

OLD BUSINESS

Mr. Masson embarked on a discussion of an ongoing situation at Canova Beach Park concerning the demolition of an existing structure as opposed to renovation of that structure.

The Irene Canova Referendum Committee was scheduled to meet simultaneously with the South Area Advisory Board at the Board's September 19 meeting. Despite numerous attempts by Parks and Recreation staff to ensure a quorum, only one member from the Irene Canova Referendum Committee, Ms. Mary Ann Bowman, was present. For several months, a quorum of the Irene Canova Referendum Committee could not be established, in part due to two vacancies existing on the Committee. Efforts were made to seek new members for the purpose of filling the vacancies but were not successful.

The primary item of business on the agenda for the Irene Canova Referendum Committee was to render a decision on the demolition of Patsy's Shell Shop as opposed to making renovations to the structure. This issue had been discussed previously, at length, by the Committee, and it had been determined that demolition of the current building was the better course of action. However, various concerns raised by the public precluded the project from advancing.

Mr. Ross presented historical information to the members of that Board on the issue of demolition versus renovation. Initially, it was felt that the structure could undergo renovations and be salvaged; however, as the building was examined more closely, it was realized that it had sustained more extensive damage than was originally thought. Mr. Ross reported that a completely new roof would have to be installed, and the interior would have to be gutted and completely refurbished. It was determined that to do all of the necessary renovations would cost approximately \$200,000, while construction of a brand new building would be just over \$300,000 for a facility that would be twice the size (1,000 square feet compared to 2,000 square feet). Furthermore, construction of a new facility would allow for the building to be moved back from Highway A1A. The present structure is right at the edge of A1A and poses a myriad of safety concerns.

Ms. Bowman provided additional chronological information and stated that the Irene Canova Referendum Committee had been quite active and convened numerous times to discuss the situation. The Committee toured the building multiple times and felt that it was not only precariously close to A1A, but that it would also be difficult to conduct programs in the facility as it was configured. Ms. Bowman stated that, for the money, a new building just made better sense.

Mr. Masson further noted that the more intensely staff explored the building, the more hazards were discovered. In addition to the necessary new roof, there was a mold issue, and the bearing walls holding the structure together could not have been removed, thereby making it extremely difficult to host a large number of people.

Mr. Masson presented information on other potential concerns with demolishing the current structure: One concern was that the family perhaps had certain requirements for preserving the buildings, but when the attorney for the Kosinski family was questioned about such stipulations, he replied that there were no special conditions resulting from the donation. Furthermore, various public citizens have indicated that they believe the family will be pleased with a new building. Another concern was that appropriate recognition of the donation and history would not be able to be accomplished in the new building, but it very easily could be.

It was noted that the Irene Canova Referendum Committee had previously determined that it was a sound idea to approve Parks and Recreation staff's conceptual plan for demolishing the current structure.

Because a quorum of the Irene Canova Referendum Committee could not be attained and staff was prepared to advance the project, it was requested that the South Area Advisory Board take formal action on staff's conceptual plan. Mr. Jagrowski made a **MOTION** to approve the conceptual plan, and Mr. Whitlock seconded. **UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.**

NEW BUSINESS

Although there was no new business, a couple of questions were raised by Board members.

Mr. Corelli noted that more homes were being constructed in Brevard County and more families were moving to the area and questioned what impact, if any, this would have on paying off the referendum. Mr. Masson replied that it was up to the discretion of the Brevard County Board of County Commissioners, on an annual basis, whether it wanted to retire the bond early by increasing millage. Mr. Masson also remarked that all projects are exceeding their anticipated costs but that six or seven years ago, no one could have predicted all the events that had transpired.

Mr. Whitlock asked if individuals were allowed to live in the parks. Mr. Masson replied that Wickham Park has a number of homeless individuals; but, insofar as registered campers (in trailers or mobile homes, etc.), guidelines established by the state set forth that campers cannot exceed a 180-day-stay in the park. With regard to individuals camping in tents, the maximum stay is two weeks. Mr. Masson informed Mr. Whitlock that if he were aware of a particular situation that was in violation of these stipulations, staff would be happy to investigate.

PUBLIC INPUT

None.

ADJOURNMENT

Seeing no further business, Mr. Corelli called for a motion to adjourn. Ms. Goelz made a **MOTION** to adjourn, and Mr. Jagrowski seconded. **UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.** Mr. Corelli adjourned the meeting of the South Area Advisory Board at 8:28 p.m. and noted that the next meeting would be on Monday, November 21, 2005.