



SOUTH AREA PARKS AND RECREATION
Palm Bay Regional Park Citizens Advisory Committee

REGULAR MEETING
January 26, 2006

A regular meeting of the Parks and Recreation Department, Palm Bay Regional Park Citizens Advisory Committee, was conducted on Thursday, January 26, 2006, at 7:00 p.m. at the Palm Bay Community Center, 1502 Port Malabar Boulevard NE, Palm Bay, Florida.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Barry Morin
Clifford Barber
Dudley Anderson
Kate Hehn, Designee for Steve Riser
James Gaines
Keiron Jackman

MEMBERS ABSENT

Ted Whitlock
Bruce Wecshler
Jerry Sandy

STAFF PRESENT

Jeff Whitehead, South Area Parks Operations Manager
Jerry Gust, South Area Maintenance Superintendent
Rick Schuh, Park Supervisor, Palm Bay Regional Park
Fred Poppe, Park Supervisor, Rodes Park
Lisa Nicholas, South Area Administrative Secretary

PUBLIC

Chad Shoultz, City of Palm Bay
Barrington Brown, City of Palm Bay
Lawrence McCalla
Jason Ritter
Barbara Ritter
Wilson Matias
Roy Dinham
Derald Grice
Paul Garzon
Christine Matzok
Keith Farquharson
Washburn Brown

MEETING CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Morin called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m. Ms. Nicholas called the roll, and Mr. Morin 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 October 27, 2005, meeting. After review, Mr. Jackman made a MOTION to approve the minutes as written, and Mr. Barber seconded.

UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

STAFF REPORTS

CONSTRUCTION

Mr. Schuh reported that the construction at Palm Bay Regional Park was approximately 95 percent completed. Sprigging the ballfields would be a major task, but the three restroom buildings and the maintenance building were finished. The back restroom still had a bit of work left to be done, and the concession buildings were nearly finished. A new drain was being installed on the east side of the soccer field and should be completed within two weeks. Brush was being cleared on the west side of the cricket area, and a count would be taken for amenities such as benches and soccer goals.

CRICKET AREA

Mr. McCalla asked about the status of the cricket area, and Mr. Gust responded that, unfortunately, the project manager for the construction of that facility was not present. Mr. Whitehead noted that, because some additional funding had recently been approved for numerous construction projects by the Board of County Commissioners, construction of the cricket building would be able to commence. Mr. Schuh added that the firm of BRPH had been awarded the contract for construction at Palm Bay Regional Park and that the firm had plans for the community center and cricket building to begin in one to two months.

Mr. Anderson requested a financial breakdown of the project to date to include original costs and what the costs were at present.

PLAYGROUND

Discussion about a playground ensued. Mr. Gust indicated that, because of the additional moneys that had been allocated by the Board, the playground could be installed at a cost of approximately \$100,000 to \$110,000 for the equipment. Mr. Whitehead suggested that the Committee should begin to think about the different age groups that should be targeted and how many components the playground should contain. Mr. Whitehead noted that staff could research different options and bring information back to the Committee, along with various configurations.

Mr. Gaines noted that one portion of the playground could be geared toward younger children, while another component could accommodate older children. Mr. Whitehead indicated that, if the playground were to be installed in one component, then only one safe zone would have to be addressed. An inquiry was raised with regard to relocation of the current playground, which is very old and outdated, and Mr. Schuh responded that it would cost approximately \$17,000 to move it to a new locale. Mr. Whitehead indicated that he would not recommend installing a playground near a basketball court.

Mr. Barber inquired as to who is responsible for the design of the playground, and Mr. Whitehead responded that Parks and Recreation staff was responsible for the design and that a number of configurations, as well as catalogues, could be brought to Committee members for their review and input.

Mr. Jackman stated that very small children do not necessarily need many amenities on a playground and suggested that the majority of funds for the playground be spent on equipment for older children.

DOG PARK

Mr. Morin inquired about the progress on the dog park. Mr. Gust indicated that it is three acres and that quotes were being obtained for fencing. Mr. Whitehead informed the Committee that the County Commissioners have required that Parks and Recreation begin charging for use of the dog parks and that any dog park must be attended by staff. Two part-time and one full-time staff would be required at the dog park at Wickham Park, and at least the same number would be required at Palm Bay Regional Park's dog park. Mr. Whitehead stated that staffing requirements would not be attainable for Palm Bay Regional this budget cycle, even if the area was ready for use.

OLD BUSINESS

A question arose concerning the drainage on the soccer fields, and staff responded that the issue was being rectified.

Mr. Whitehead introduced Mr. Chad Shoultz from the City of Palm Bay's Public Works Department and reminded the Committee that Mr. Shoultz had been present at the Committee's September 2005 meeting for the purpose of presenting information on the City's intention to install a pedestrian bridge in the northwest area of the park for alternate access into the park. Mr. Shoultz then introduced Barrington Brown, also from the City's Public Works Department.

Mr. Shoultz noted that the City of Palm Bay had applied for Transportation Enhancement Funds, which were awarded to the City for use in 2006. The Palm Bay Recreation Advisory Board voted on and approved three projects, one of which was the pedestrian bridge at Palm Bay Regional Park. Mr. Shoultz presented large illustrations for the Committee to view. Mr. Shoultz stated that the pedestrian bridge would connect Krassner Drive to the park and would provide individuals in Palm Bay an alternate way to get into and out of the park.

Since the September meeting, the consulting firm (Post, Buckley, Schuh & Jernigan, Inc.) had submitted plans to the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) for approval, which was anticipated to be granted by the end of January. One of the primary concerns raised by the Committee at the September meeting was how to keep motorized vehicles off of the pedestrian bridge, and Mr. Shoultz indicated that two bollards would be installed at each end of the bridge, approximately 36 inches apart from each other, in order to reduce the likelihood of motorized traffic.

A question was raised with regard to lighting on the bridge. Mr. Shoultz responded that PBSJ had been instructed to research various lighting options and provide the City with some ideas and also noted that lighting was not originally a component of the project.

The City was anticipating that construction of the pedestrian bridge would begin by summer 2006.

Mr. Whitehead inquired as to who would be responsible for maintaining the structure, and Mr. Shoultz responded that the onus would be on the City. Mr. Gust indicated that the bollards would be a welcome addition and asked how wide the bridge was going to be and where the bollards would be placed. Mr. Shoultz responded that the bridge is eight feet wide and that the bollards would be strategically placed.

There was a question as to whether there would be a fence or gate to lock in the evening, and Mr. Shoultz replied that the City had not yet received a recommendation from PBSJ on that concept but there was really no practical way to do that. Mr. Shoultz further noted that the City of Palm Bay was not intending to install a lock or gate but that such action could potentially be taken by the County if so desired.

A member of the public inquired as to whether there would be an alternative exit for motorized vehicles to vacate the park in an emergency situation, and Mr. Whitehead responded that it is generally the policy of Parks and Recreation to have one way into and out of the park for security reasons.

Mr. Morin asked whether Malabar Road would eventually be widened, and Mr. Shoultz responded that it would at some point in the future.

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Whitehead indicated that interviews for a new director for the Parks and Recreation Department would begin the following week.

PUBLIC INPUT

A member from the public asked if the dog park would be well separated from where children would be playing, and staff responded affirmatively. It was then asked whether certain types of dogs would not be allowed, and Mr. Whitehead replied that all types of dogs would be allowed, but if particular dogs demonstrated aggressive behavior, they would be removed and not be permitted to return.

Members of the Palm Bay Youth Soccer (PBYS) organization thanked staff for working on the drainage situation and indicated that they had heard a rumor that the soccer fields were going to be utilized for other activities. Mr. Gust responded that such information was just a rumor and that the County was in the process of purchasing goals and sprigging the new fields. PBYS members then informed staff that they had been awarded two weekends during the State Cup in early April and also for the finals in mid-June. Mr. Gust indicated that it would be better to not utilize the fields as early as April but that June should not be problematic.

A member of the Brevard Caribbean American Sports and Cultural Association (BCASCA) asked why the portable toilets had been removed, and Mr. Schuh replied that they would be replaced and had just been removed temporarily because of the construction.

Paul Garzon asked whether the County would be willing to purchase a lightning detection system, and Mr. Whitehead responded that if the County were to do that, the County would be responsible for monitoring the system at all times, and liability just skyrockets. Mr. Garzon then asked if there was any lighting that could be utilized and staff responded that there was not because poles that are not wind-bearing cannot be used anymore.

Mr. McCalla commended the staff of Parks and Recreation for their efforts to provide opportunities for the children of the community.

ADJOURNMENT

Seeing no further business, Mr. Morin called for a motion to adjourn. Mr. Jackman made a MOTION to adjourn, and Mr. Gaines seconded. **UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.** Mr. Morin adjourned the meeting of the Palm Bay Regional Park Citizens Advisory Committee at 8:40 p.m.