



SOUTH AREA PARKS AND RECREATION

Wickham Park Advisory Committee

REGULAR MEETING **January 4, 2006**

A regular meeting of the Parks and Recreation Department, Wickham Park Advisory Committee, was held on January 4, 2006, 6:30 p.m., at the site of Wickham Park, 2500 Parkway Drive, Melbourne, Florida.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Ken Baker
Ben Elliott
Eleanor Munton
Karen Kilianek
Thomas Seaman
Carol Mulligan
Ralph Earrusso
Bill Connor
Greg Welsh
Cheryl Palmer
Sally Richardson

MEMBERS ABSENT

R.L. Jones
Lauren Milne
John Corelli
Greg England

STAFF PRESENT

Jack Masson, Deputy Director, Parks and Recreation
Bill Ross, Senior Construction Coordinator
Jeff Whitehead, South Area Parks Operations Manager
Jerry Gust, South Area Maintenance Superintendent
Josh Henderson, Park Supervisor III, Wickham Park
Jessica Breault, Park Supervisor II, Wickham Park
Vickie Rogers, Office Assistant, Wickham Park
Lisa Nicholas, South Area Administrative Secretary

PUBLIC

Julie Pritchard
Debbie Pavone
Jennifer Fountain
Gord Pye
Bonnie Pye

MEETING CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Baker called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. Ms. Nicholas called the roll, and Mr. Baker 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 November 2, 2005, meeting. After review, Mr. Earrusso made a **MOTION** to approve the minutes, and Mr. Connor seconded.
UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

STAFF REPORTS

Mr. Henderson introduced Ms. Breault, the new Park Supervisor II for Wickham Park, and indicated that, aside from having vacancies for two rangers, the park was fully staffed. Mr. Henderson also indicated that the Rangers' Station had recently been painted and that, beginning sometime in the near future, patrons would start being charged for using the dog park. Additional staff (two part-time permanent employees and one full-time permanent employee) had been approved for the dog park and would be advertised soon.

Mr. Ross indicated that two restrooms had been completed, along with the youth area pavilion. Additionally, three shower/restroom/laundry buildings had been ordered for Loop A, Loop B and the youth area. The shower building in the campground was going to be replaced. The amount of showers and restroom facilities would be the same but would be upgraded and include air conditioning. Because these buildings are prefabricated, three were able to be obtained for just about the price of one.

Mr. Ross noted that the covering for the amphitheatre had been delivered and that the contractor had the permit. The amphitheatre would be ADA accessible, and there is a back wall to enclose the stage. Mr. Ross indicated that the contractor should be finished with the building in a couple of months, ahead of time for the event.

Mr. Masson raised the issue of horse barns and noted that there were various obstacles such as problems with funding and with contractors and subcontractors. In addition, an 18,000 square-foot community center and POW/MIA Remembrance Plaza are intended to be constructed at some point in the future. With regard to the horse barn, Mr. Masson noted that, with input from the Committee, the original design of the barn had changed considerably. Just under \$600,000 had been allotted for the barn, and the budget ended up being \$1.6 million. Building 48 permanent boarder stalls would not be possible, but the project could perhaps be implemented if additional funds became available. A shell could be constructed and utilized for day stalls. Construction would be phased-in in an effort to decrease costs.

A member of the public, Jennifer Fountain, stated that she had been a boarder since 1999 and agreed to vacate the premises in order to get a new barn. The horse boarders had been told at that time that the money was available and were given a time frame of one year, which turned into two years. Boarders have now been out of Wickham Park for more than two years, and Ms. Fountain asked why the barns were not being put back.

Ms. Mulligan inquired as to whether there would be a possibility for wooden barns or anything at this point and expressed a desire to come back to Wickham Park. Debbie Pavone, a member of the public, stated that she voted for the referendum and that it had been a hardship to move her horse, which ended up being hurt. Ms. Pavone remarked that her horse had been safe while boarded at Wickham. Mr. Masson stated that the design the Committee collectively agreed upon was not achievable and could therefore not be done.

Mr. Seaman noted that the impact of all of the storms had caused a delay of construction projects throughout Brevard County and had affected the availability of materials and so forth. Mr. Masson remarked that, across the board, the cost of materials had increased 35% to 40%. Ms. Palmer stated that City of Melbourne has experienced similar difficulties and that materials were scarce and labor was increasingly difficult to obtain.

Mr. Masson indicated that the stalls that were now being considered would be day stalls for one- or two-day shows and stated that the County could make more money on weekend shows. Ms. Mulligan indicated that this was the first time she had heard a scenario like this.

Mr. Masson called on the Committee to make a recommendation and stated he would follow the recommendation of the Committee. Ms. Palmer noted that, even with the difficulties with

construction, other projects still seemed to be advancing, such as the amphitheatre, and inquired as to what the Committee could do to assist the equestrian boarders. Mr. Masson responded that other projects had indeed been impacted, such as the community center. Only one bid was received for construction, and it was well above what was approved.

Ms. Palmer made a **MOTION** to have staff go back to the drawing board and meet with the equestrian boarders within 60 days and come up with a new plan. Ms. Mulligan seconded. **UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.**

Mr. Welsh noted that day stalls could be made permanent by enclosing them eventually and that perhaps the Committee did not need to start over. Mr. Baker indicated that the motion could actually delay the process. Ms. Pavone asked whether staff could go back to the contractor and see what could be obtained for the amount of money that was had. Ms. Mulligan asked how many stalls staff had in mind with phasing in, and Mr. Masson responded 32. The project would consist of four barns with eight stalls each.

Ms. Palmer asked what the time frame would be, and Mr. Masson responded that he was not certain. Mr. Ross noted that the only firm number that he had for the budget itself was \$245,000, which was for materials only. That figure was locked in and a deposit had been made. That amount would more than double with installation, and concrete was reported to be \$144 per yard as of January 1, 2006.

Ms. Fountain noted that the boarders themselves had attempted to repair the former barns and that, although the barns were old, they were good. Ms. Fountain stated that the boarders just want to have their barns returned. Mr. Masson indicated that the Committee process greatly altered the original intent of the project and that the costs became greater. Out of the three bids that were received, the lowest was \$1.1 million, and the allocated budget was \$600,000.

Ms. Richardson noted that the issue was an emotional one but that emotions could not be taken into account. The Committee must now just move forward and determine what will make the majority of members happy.

Mr. Gust noted that a new plan would require new architect and engineering costs, and Mr. Masson noted that the contractor was still in the picture. Staff would determine what could be done with the resources available.

Mr. Whitehead stated that he recently had an onsite meeting with Mr. Seaman and Mr. Elliott with regard to the bike trails and commended them for their volunteer efforts on clearing all of the foreign objects from the trails.

Ms. Palmer asked if there were anything new with regard to the archery club, and Mr. Whitehead responded that a six-month Memo of Understanding (MOU) had been signed and that a new location was still being sought.

Ms. Kilianek inquired as to what was happening with the vegetation in the stormwater pond, and Mr. Whitehead responded that the Stormwater Department was well aware of the situation. Mr. Whitehead indicated that he would contact Stormwater again.

OLD BUSINESS

Ms. Kilianek asked about the feral cats, and Mr. Henderson responded that there were actually fewer cats in the park, probably due to the fact that less food was being put out. Mr. Henderson also noted that cats not in the feral cat colony were being trapped.

Mr. Seaman inquired into the status of the repair of the door of the men's restroom and noted that it was still closing forcefully. Mr. Henderson responded that his staff had fixed it the day after it was discussed previously and agreed to have staff check it again.

NEW BUSINESS

None.

PUBLIC INPUT

Gord Pye indicated that he was upset with the restroom/sewer situation and that nothing had happened. Mr. Pye stated that things had degraded over the past four to five years and that, when it rains, there is an inch of water on the floor. Mr. Seaman asked whether a tarp would provide a quick fix or whether a pipe may need to be unclogged. Staff responded that issues would be looked at.

Mr. Baker asked how the Lightfest went, and Mr. Henderson reported that, although there had been some minor vandalism, the event went well and was enjoyed by many participants. Mr. Masson remarked that the event had received a lot of good press.

Ms. Kilianek raised the issue of volunteers, and Mr. Masson indicated that Parks and Recreation utilizes more volunteers than any other Department because of all of the specialized interests. Mr. Henderson noted that he always has a list for Eagle Scout projects and commented that, during the spring and fall semesters, volunteers from Brevard Community College help with drainage issues but always work within the staff's time frame.

ADJOURNMENT

Seeing no further business, Mr. Baker called for a motion to adjourn. Mr. Connor made a **MOTION** to adjourn, and Mr. Welsh seconded. **UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.** Mr. Baker adjourned the January 4 meeting of the Wickham Park Advisory Committee at 7:48 p.m. and informed the Committee that the next meeting would be held on March 1, 2006, 6:30 p.m., at Wickham Park.