



SOUTH AREA PARKS AND RECREATION Wickham Park Advisory Committee

REGULAR MEETING September 10, 2008

A regular meeting of the Parks and Recreation Department, Wickham Park Advisory Committee, was held on Wednesday, September 10, 2008, 6:30 p.m., at the site of Wickham Park, 2500 Parkway Drive, Melbourne, Florida, 32935.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Karen Kilianek (Chair)
Ted Whitlock
Ken Baker
Phyllis Principe
Eleanor Munton

MEMBERS ABSENT

Richard Contreras
Liz Lee

REFERENDUM MEMBERS PRESENT

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Greg Welsh
Tom Seaman
Carol Mulligan
Sally Richardson
Bill Connor
Greg England
Ralph Earusso

STAFF PRESENT

Don Lusk, Director, Parks and Recreation
Greg Minor, South Area Operations Manager
Fred Poppe, South Area Recreation Superintendent
Gustavo Vergara, Special Projects Coordinator I
Mike Knight, EEL Program Manager
Sue Gosselin, Natural Resources Management Office
Greg Engelson, Brevard County Animal Services and Enforcement
Josh Henderson, Park Supervisor III, Wickham Park
Mechelle Cook, Administrative Secretary, South Area Operations
Ted Mieczkowski, Wickham Park

PUBLIC

Attached.

MEETING CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Karen Kilianek called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m. Ms. Mechelle Cook called the roll with five members present and two members absent.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Members were provided with a copy of the minutes from the July 23, 2008, meeting. Ms. Karen Kilianek asked if everyone had had a chance to review the minutes, and called for a motion to approve the minutes. Discussion was held that comments by Mr. Richard Contreras during the July 23 meeting were not included in the minutes, it was stated by staff to the members that the minutes were not verbatim. Mr. Ken Baker made a **MOTION** to approve the minutes, and Ms. Phyllis Principe **SECONDED, UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.**

STAFF REPORTS

Mr. Fred Poppe stated that Mr. Josh Henderson's monthly reports were available for the members to review for August 2008.

OLD BUSINESS

Ms. Phyllis Principe asked when she could expect a presentation for beautification plans and about appointing alternates on the board. Mr. Don Lusk stated that he had spoke with Commissioner Bolin on the subject of appointing alternates and that there would be a lot involved to have alternates and that she didn't feel that alternates would be such a good idea. Ms. Principe stated that she still felt like we should have two alternates. Ms. Karen Kilianek stated that if we did not have quorum at the next meeting she would take the issue up with Commissioner Bolin. Discussion ensued regarding quorum and alternates on the board.

Ms. Karen Kilianek stated that Mr. Richard Contreras had previously said that he wasn't sure about the fires at Wickham Park, and had inquired if the fires were nature related, so she had researched the police and fire department reports and that the reports showed that arson incidents have declined at the park.

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Don Lusk introduced Mr. Craig Engelson with Animal Services who was going to report on the actions taken when the Tropical Storm Fay event occurred and read a

statement regarding the horses at the barns. Mr. Engelson stated that he was the ESF Coordinator who dealt with all issues dealing with animals and agriculture during a major storm. He stated that this storm was the above the 100 year storm event and that as the storms were occurring, water was quickly rising and people were needing help with their horses due to the water rising so high. He stated that he had called Mr. Don Lusk and said he would be housing the horses for only a few days but that it had become a much longer term than he had anticipated due to the fact the waters did not recede quickly as was the norm for our local area. Mr. Engelson stated he did move/transport horses from Cocoa and other areas and that they were concerned about the barns because horses should not be inside barns during major storm events.

Mr. Craig Engelson said that horses and their owners were served on a first come, first served basis. His decisions were made on the fly with no preconceived notions of using the Wickham barns. Mr. Engelson stated that the horses had left the park that day. Mr. Engelson said that the problem was that people had no where to go, and no place to take their horses to during this storm event. He stated that statewide, Wickham Park had an integral part in the relief effort for us as an animal shelter. Mr. Engelson stated that there were a few issues with the barns from his opinion, 1. no grazing area, 2. small turnout area, 3. small flooding issues. Discussion then ensued regarding the flooding event and the amount of room at the old barns.

Mr. Don Lusk stated that on September 25th there would be a joint meeting between the South Area Advisory Board (SAAB) and the Wickham Park Advisory Board, and on September 26th there would be a meeting on site with the previous horse boarders and on September 27th there would be an open meeting with the equestrian community.

Mr. Fred Poppe introduced Mr. Mike Knight, EELs and Ms. Sue Gosselin, Natural Resources Management Office (NRMO), who would inform the committee on questions raised about management of the lands at Wickham Park. Mr. Knight stated that there were scrub jays on the property, but they did not manage them on site as they do scrub jay lands. Mr. Knight stated that the scrub jay sanctuary they managed only had about 1-2 pine trees per acre. He stated that from a fire perspective, he usually encountered lands that had not been managed in a long time. Mr. Knight stated that prescribed fires were the best way to manage overgrowth and were a way of preventing big fires that could be very destructive. Mr. Knight stated that a by-product of that were fire lines which sometimes were unsightly. Discussion ensued regarding scrub jays and the optional fauna for their habitat.

Ms. Sue Gosselin added that what had happened at Wickham Park was a crown fire, which affects the trees all the way to the top. She added that she had noticed that there are pines growing and that within the next seven years, a lot of these pine trees will grow very tall. Ms. Gosselin stated that there were pine beetles on site that affect a lot of the pines, and that if she planted a lot of trees, those pine trees would be eaten up by the pine beetles. Discussion ensued regarding the animal population at Wickham Park. Ms. Gosselin stated that a fire management plan was in place now and that with that, the adjoining neighborhoods and the park would be more protected.

Mr. Don Lusk asked about the fire breaks, and Ms. Gosselin stated that it will take a while for the grasses and wildflowers to come back and for the park to become sightlier, but that it will happen. Ms. Karen Kilianek asked about the planting of new trees, and Ms. Gosselin stated that planting now might not be a good idea because the oak trees on site had a lot of root balls, and that the oak trees would come back, but it would take some time.

Mr. Fred Poppe added that there was a landscape plan in place to address areas where development was taking place in the park. Discussion ensued regarding bike trails at the park. Ms. Phyllis Principe asked about the senior center grant. Mr. Greg Minor stated that by January or February we would hear back about the grant.

PUBLIC INPUT

Ms. Dianne Young asked if SMG was receiving letters from the horse community.

Ms. Jennifer Fountain asked about the meeting on the 25th of September and distributed copies of letters to the members (see attached). Ms. Fountain asked about the second arena and would parks accept donations for a second arena. Mr. Don Lusk stated that he was waiting for the results of the study before making any decisions. He added that 6.2 million was being cut from the county budget and that Parks and Recreation was getting the biggest cut of the budget. He added that all new buildings would be staffed and opened.

Mr. David Palmbach asked if Don Lusk would ask the committee for input on prioritizing cuts. Don Lusk responded that in the future he would try, but the way the budgets have been running this year, he had no time to do that.

ADJOURNMENT

Seeing no further business, Ms. Karen Kilianek called for a motion to adjourn. Mr. Ted Whitlock made a **MOTION** to adjourn, and Mr. Ken Baker **SECONDED**, **UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED**. Ms. Karen Kilianek adjourned the September 10, 2008, meeting of the Wickham Park Advisory Committee at 7:44 p.m.