



PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD MEETING
ST. JOHNS COUNTY, FLORIDA
MINUTES OF MEETING

MAY 16, 2019

Proceedings of the regular monthly meeting of the St. Johns County Recreation Advisory Board held in the San Sebastian Room at the Administrative Offices, 500 San Sebastian View, St. Augustine, Florida.

Present were:

Al Guido, Chairman
William "Bo" Browne, Vice Chairman
Casey Van Rysdam
Vijay Panneerselvam
Bert Watson
Jillian McNiff Villemaire
Commissioner Paul Waldron
Joy Andrews, Assistant County Administrator
Doug Bataille, Director of Parks and Recreation
Billy Zeits, Assistant Director of Parks and Recreation
Paul Abbatinuzzi, School Board Representative
Joanne Machula, Recording Secretary

Also present were: Teddy Meyer, Facilities Manager, Diane Gorski, Parks and Recreation Supervisor, Jamie Baccari, Community Programs Manager, Sydney Lindblad, Beaches Supervisor, Stacia Lando, Budget Analyst OMB, Sallie O'Hara, Executive Director Vilano Beach Main Street, Mr. Crawford Ford, Vilano Main Street Board Member. Andre, representative for the St. Augustine Half Marathon event.

Meeting is called to order at 3:04 pm with a quorum. Motion to approve March's Minutes by Mr. VanRysdam with a second by Mr. Watson. Motion passes unanimously.

There is no public comment.

Chair defers his report until Commissioner Waldron presents to this meeting.

Mr. Doug Bataille, Director for Parks and Recreation, requests Board Members to introduce themselves. Mr. Bataille introduces himself and briefly details his 30 year career, achievements and goals as a Parks and Recreation Director for Knox County, TN. Mr. Bataille also discussed the Park Foundation that he'd created for his previous County's Parks and Recreation Department.

Mr. Zeits discusses the Board's support and thanks the Board for their continued efforts. Mr. Zeits also updates the Board on the Golf Course negotiations and informs that briefings have recently been held with the County's Administrator. This issue currently sits with our Legal Department as all required information has been submitted. Brief discussion follows.

Mr. Abbatinuzzi updates the Board on upcoming events. Graduation is just around the corner and it is a busy time. Chair gives a brief past history of the relationship with the School Board and Parks and Recreation which has evolved over the years into an excellent working relationship. Mr. Abbatinuzzi briefly discusses school security.

Commissioner Waldron discusses the Little League Urban Initiative Tournament and remarks that there had been a great turnout which made for a very successful event. The upcoming Budget Hearings will be May 22nd, 23rd and 24th and invites the Board members to attend if possible. Chair and Commissioner briefly discuss the Water Park.

Mr. Zeits discusses the upcoming Budget Hearing and briefly informs that there will be highlights for the Parks and Recreation portion. Ms. Lando has been invited to participate in this discussion. Ms. Lando presents a **draft** version of the highlights sheet and describes each item to the Board for this information. Ms. Lando details all of the drafted changes and there is increased discussion among Board members.

Ms. Andrews has nothing further to add for report.

Mr. Zeits makes an amendment to today's Agenda. Andre, representative for the upcoming event, St. Augustine Half Marathon, submitted an application for a Funding Grant for an event that will not be held until November of 2019. Ms. Lindblad distributes copies of this application to the Board Members.

Ms. Lindblad researched several examples of how other Counties report economic impact post events. Ms. Lindblad distributes example of Seminole County's economic impact post reporting. The Board reviews this document as Ms. Lindblad describes. There is increased discussion on how this Board would like to see events reported post event. Ms. Lindblad reminds that there is actually no definite deadline for when an applicant receives their fund request but that it is after the post reporting is sent in. Chair states that he would like to see 3rd party documentation and would like to keep it as simple as possible. Mr. Zeits states that he will bring three items back to the board: 1) Options for a 3rd party reporting form which includes the VCB as one of the options. 2) Modify the sample Seminole form to reflect St. Johns County reporting form and possibly substitute it for the current form in use. Mr. Zeits will bring this drafted form back to this Board for discussion and approval. 3) At the suggestion of Dr. Villemaire a line on the form should be added to include acknowledgement of St. Johns County participants and spectators.

Sports Event Funding Request

#3 2019 Battle at the Beach

Perfect Game

May 24 – 27

#4 2019 Battle at the Beach

Perfect Game

June 14 - 17

Requesting: \$15,000.00 each event
Previous 2 events granted: \$7,500.00 each event

The Board members discuss the both applications in detail. It is noted that these two events are the 3rd and 4th events that Perfect Game has brought before the RAB for funding requests. The previous two events were recommended in January by the RAB and each of those two had been recommended \$7,500 each. There is discussion regarding language for admission fees/entry fee and whether or not a separate line should be added in the future. Several members feel this application is poorly completed. In addition, it appears that the prior year reporting may be overstated. Chair remarks however that as the event ends the day before the Memorial Day weekend, that could provide carry over which would be an economic benefit to the County. Lengthy discussion follows. Mr. Van Rysdam motions to recommend \$6,500.00 per event which addresses site fees and marketing. Mr. Watson seconds the motion. There is brief discussion. There is a vote and the motion does not carry. Mr. Van Rysdam motions to recommend \$5,000.00 per event contingent upon presenting to this Board post event and have a discussion with this Board to determine how this process could be improved in the future. Mr. Watson seconds the motion. There is no discussion. All are in favor and the motion passes.

Recommended: \$5,000.00 each event

Mr. Zeits discusses the added item to the Agenda – a TDC Funding Grant Request for The St. Augustine Half Marathon, 10k, 5k and Kids' Race. The date for the event is November 9th and 10th of this year. The amount requested is \$15,000.00. Ms. Lindblad informs that last year's event had been granted \$7,500.00 and also briefly details past event as well as information from this year's coming event. Mr. Zeits informs that this event may be discussed and recommended upon today at this meeting or it can be placed on next month's Agenda for discussion and recommendation. Andre, the representative for this event, brought before the RAB briefly discusses this event and answers questions from the Board. The application is discussed in regards to the hotel numbers and Mr. Zeits informs that if Andre would like to take back this application to rework it and then resubmit an amended version to the Board in the future, there is enough time for that. Andre withdraws this application from the Board and will resubmit in the coming months.

Chair discusses the Proactive roles of the RAB with the Board members. There is brief discussion. Mr. VanRysdam accepts the suggestion from Chair to work on exploring what could possibly be done with TDC Funding for Parks and Recreation. Mr. VanRysdam briefly discusses his thoughts on this subject and states that he would like to see a larger strategic discussion to take place within the Department to take to the Board. Member boundaries are discussed. Chair further reminds that members are representatives of this Board and have no authority outside of making themselves known as representatives of this Board and will be reporting back to this Board. Commissioner Waldron suggests that Vice Chair work with Mr. Bataille as an RAB liaison in regards to creating a possible Parks foundation. Vice Chair is receptive to this suggestion but with the stipulation that he will need to verify that this task would be acceptable to his employer. There's further discussion among members. Mr. Bataille reminds that this will not be a short process and thinks that this will probably be just some conversation to start. There's brief discussion on how a foundation is created.

Vice Chair updates the Board on the Northwest Tower Committee and informs that they've earmarked \$100,000.00 for repairs, maintenance and upkeep to the Alpine Groves Farmhouse. There is brief discussion.

Vice Chair briefly discuss the difficult parking at Veterans Park and discussion follows on possible options for alleviating the issue.

Ms. Sallie O'Hara, Executive Director of Vilano Beach Main Street, presents to the Board for public comment. Ms. O'Hara firsts thanks Beach Services for their support in the recent planning and executive of their Music Fest at Ocean Front Park in Vilano Beach, which was a raging success. Ms. O'Hara also introduces Mr. Crawford Ford, a member of their Board and also their musical director, who was also instrumental in all of the planning for this Fest. Ms. O'Hara discusses the history of the old Fiddler's Green Property. Ms. O'Hara states that she is here to remind the Board of the obligation between now and 2023 to build a building and do something with the property and is unaware of the current status. Ms. O'Hara states that space is needed to have public events. Ms. O'Hara would also like her Vilano Main Street Group to be involved in the planning and configuration of this property. Further, would like to be notified and involved as to what's happening with this issue. There is increased discussion regarding options and incremental steps that possibly could be put in place. Limitations of the County's budget is discussed. Mr. Zeits adds the commentary that there had been an effort approximately two years ago to see what the Department could do with in house services in regards to this issue which was also at the time of the two back to back Hurricanes which changed the coastal construction rules and allowances. A request had been submitted to have a third party do some design and permitting of what could be at the site – feasibility study money. This is the first step in understanding what is possible. As we are in the infancy stages of our budget hearings, this project could be funded a number of different ways. At this time, this is a project without any planning because there is no funding to do the required planning which means at this time, we have gone as far as we can. There is continued further discussion.

Ms. O'Hara discusses another project that is currently being planned which would be developing a multi-use trail from Vilano to Ponte Vedra. Further, this trail should be an 8 – 10 ft. recreational off road trail to connect the neighborhoods and make it safe for cyclists and walkers to connect down to Vilano Beach.

Lastly, Ms. O'Hara discusses landscaping and clean up in the Vilano Town Center since the recent transition of service. Mr. Zeits explains further.

Mr. Zeits briefly discusses the issue of the unsafe tree currently located at Ron Parker Park and states that 3 arborists had evaluated this tree that has been deemed to be removed as it's causing a safety issue for the playground. There's brief discussion.

Mr. Zeits also informs that the previously discussed fees regarding field use will be on the Consent Agenda at the coming meeting along with other slightly increased fees.

Meeting adjourns at 5:15 pm.