



St. Johns County Board of County Commissioners

Parks & Recreation Department

RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD

Meeting Minutes – Thursday, November 12, 2020

3:00 PM – St. Johns County Auditorium

500 San Sebastian View | Saint Augustine | FL 32084

Present: Chair Casey Van Rysdam, Brad Long, Harold Dockins, Marty McEachan, Doug Bataille, Parks and Recreation Director, Emily Howington, Recording Secretary, Stacia Cotter, Assistant to Deputy Administrator
Present via Conference Call: Vice Chair Dr. Jillian McNiff-Villemaire, Bert Watson, Jamie Baccari, Parks and Recreation Assistant Director, Teddy Meyer, Rec Facilities Manager Diane Gorski, Project Specialist,

Absent: Deb Chapin

The meeting began at 3:00 pm followed by roll call. The first agenda item was the approval of the October minutes. The October minutes were approved with consensus. There were no public comment.

Chair Casey Van Rysdam welcomed back Commissioner Paul Waldron. Waldron spoke on the department's capital projects.

Under New Business, Bataille briefly spoke on the list of parks the department is interested in acquiring grants for with community input. There was continued discussion on the issue of homeowner's mowing along Shore Drive. A community meeting is scheduled for next week, Bataille and Baccari will attend to answer the community's questions.

Under Unfinished Business, Bataille provided an updated Department Organizational Chart included in the agenda packet. This updated chart demonstrated how the department will be organized accounting for adjustments to positions and new positions. Van Rysdam and Bataille discussed the future Administrative and Budget Manager position and the relationship with Director of Office Management and Budget Jesse Dunn. Van Rysdam asked how these changes would affect head count and payroll. Bataille stated the head count change was four part time positions in the department's budget were combined into the Administrative and Budget Manager position, the dollar amount remained the same. There is a position currently frozen due to military leave, which will be reanalyzed when it opens again in a couple of years. Van Rysdam asked about the part time employees. Bataille clarified that many were contract through Staffing St. Augustine. Van Rysdam asked who would work with the TDC relationship, Bataille replied the Facility and Event Manager position.

Bataille spoke further on the capital projects such as Davis Park, and the Villages West joint project with SJC Library Services.

Bert Watson provided updates on the Park Foundation, the nonprofit documents are underway. The focus of the foundation will be on fundraising and event planning. Van Rysdam asked about representation in the county, Watson replied they want to have the most qualified people but will make sure to have someone representing all areas.

Sydney Lindblad provided Beach Updates, vehicle access is temporarily halted due to tidal flooding and Nor'easter swells. A volunteer group assists with washback turtles, hatchlings that are caught in seaweed during storms and washed back onto shore. The turtles are transported to Whitney Lab Rehabilitation and then returned to the ocean. Vilano Renourishment is moving along, with some delays due to weather, expected to be done in January. Beach Access passes will be available to purchase on December 7th. Tara Meeks of TDC will try to attend the December RAB meeting. Category 5 dollars can fund future projects of the Pier. RAB would recommend to TDC the use of the dollars in this way, which will then go before BCC. Van Rysdam asked to count the sales of beach passes and compare with last years. Lindblad replied she would have the Pier Shop sales number available but the tax collector's office would not be available until March.



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Vice Chair Dr. McNiff-Villemaire asked Lindblad if the unused TDC dollars would roll over to the following year. Lindblad replied it would only roll over if that dollar amount had been assigned to a project/event. McNiff-Villemaire asked where it goes when not carried forward, Lindblad thought it may go back to the General Fund. Commissioner Waldron said it doesn't go to the General Fund, Bataille believed it was swept back into Category 5 dollars.

Baccari spoke on the Northwest Tower Committee, this is a committee whose purpose is to review applications and allocate the funds acquired by the cell tower located in Alpine Groves. It is required for RAB to have a representative in District One serve on the Northwest Tower Committee as well. Baccari is waiting on information from Legal if the representative must live in the Northwest Tower district or if simply District 1 is acceptable. Van Rysdam asked the average dollar amount the group oversees. Baccari said while they have a surplus amount is \$220k, but annually they received about \$44k to be used in the fall. Projects NWTC contributed to include \$100k of funding to Alpine Groves farmhouse, relocation of a tortoise, football pads for local teams, and recently, the Field of Dreams playground initial amount and the final \$90k to complete the site.

Upcoming Events are the Nov 21st food giveaway at the Fairgrounds and phone calls from Santa. There are plans for another movie in the park in December. McNiff-Villemaire asked if the RAB currently had members from District one, Baccari replied Marty McEachan and Bert Watson. Baccari clarified that this position was previously held by Bo Browne.

Teddy Meyer gave Construction Project Updates. The Doug Crane Boat Launch ramp is in the final stages of permitting. The updated list was provided in the agenda packet. Meyer briefly spoke on F.I.N.D. (Florida International Navigation District) the group traditionally meets in January.

Harold Dockins commented on a maintenance issue at Solomon Calhoun Center on Election Day, Meyer replied he would follow up with SJC Parks and Recreation Maintenance. Van Rysdam commented on the positive turnout at Solomon Calhoun on Election Day, this being the first year voting took place at the center.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:52pm.