



St. Johns County Board of County Commissioners

Parks & Recreation Department

RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD March 11, 2021 Meeting Minutes

Meeting was called to order at 1:30 PM

Chairman Van Rysdam took roll call.

Physically present: Casey Van Rysdam, Chair, Marty McEachean, Deb Chapin

Attending via telephone: Jillian McNiff-Villemaire, Vice Chair

Absent: Harold Dockins, Brad Long, and Bert Watson

Also physically present: Commissioner Paul Waldron; Doug Bataille, Director; Jamie Baccari, Assistant Director; Stacia Cotter, Business Manager; Teddy Meyer, Recreation Facilities Manager; Diane Gorski, Project Specialist.

Sydney Lindblad, Natural Resources Manager attended via telephone.

Chairman called for Public Comments for items not on the agenda and reminded everyone that each speaker had 3 minutes and that they needed to give their name and address. There were none.

Reports

Chairman Van Rysdam reminded everyone that a physical quorum is required at all board meetings. He stated that since there was not a quorum present, the February and March minutes will be deferred to the April meeting for approval. The Chair mentioned that the June meeting must have a physical quorum as the FY22 TDC category III applications will be reviewed. He explained the annual report was due soon and that includes prior year accomplishments and current year expectations and an update of the mission statement is applicable. There were no recommendations to change the mission statement, so the current statement will be included in the annual report.

Paul Waldron, County Commissioner (BOCC Liaison), mentioned that the FY22 Budget cycle had started. He reminded everyone that the TDC meets on Monday and that they will be discussing funding and the process of rating projects to be funded. He didn't anticipate changes in sports funding. Chair asked if the RAB would have some sort of idea of what funding will be available for FY22 and Waldron stated that OMB staff should be able to give RAB an estimate of FY22 funding prior to the June meeting. Commissioner Waldron explained that they would be discussing the 5th cent and how some of the monies will be allocated at the TDC meeting Monday, March 15, 2021 and 1:30 pm. He urged RAB members attend as there would be opportunity to comment.

Van Rysdam stated that he had attended the Park Foundation and reviewed the recommended structure for the Foundation. He explained that there will be 9-15 board members and a liaison from the RAB, BOCC and P&R staff. He mentioned outreach and funding as priorities for the Foundation Board and that Parks and Recreation would be requesting \$100,000-125,000 for annual startup funding from the Board of County Commissioners. He clarified that the funding request would be reduced as the Foundation gets its footing and is able to self-sustain. He stated that the Park Foundation website was a high priority. The Director is to forward the bylaws and Executive Director job description to members. Chairman expressed his opinion that there should be geographic board representation so that the entire county is represented; that

there is a process of determining objectives so that the Foundation is tied into the Master Plan and is taking care of underserved communities and that the Foundation is consistent with SJC naming rights policies.

Bataille announced that the next Park Foundation meeting was at the end of the month and that the existing Foundation board members would be reviewing and voting on the bylaws. He stated that staff was determining whether or not the request for startup funding should be brought to the BOCC this fiscal year or if it was better to include it in the FY22 budget proposal.

Mark Berman, Mediashare Consulting Group, provided a presentation about the Orca Golf Bags Women's October Play Championship expressing their interest in applying for Tourist Development Council (TDC) funding next fiscal year. He also pitched making St. Johns County a tournament hub for women's golf. The Chair suggested bringing the request and presentation back in June for consideration. Chapin confirmed that this was a qualifying tour and expressed her support. McNiff-Villemaire asked if this tour would conflict with LPGA tournaments and Berman stated that they are complementary. She asked if there were events that would conflict with this tournament and was told a very small number of players would be able to compete in other high level tournaments so this opportunity was unique and the tournament would be unaffected.

The director shared that the Shore Drive RTP Grant application submittal had been approved by the BOCC and that staff had met the submittal deadline. Notification from the state is anticipated in the fall. There was a brief discussion regarding the project.

The Chair called for public comment after noticing late arrivals. Steven Mail, Florida Elite Soccer Association addressed the board to explain their purpose, define their importance to the community, mentorship, continued growth with increases in participation numbers to over 10,000 players and need for additional field space. He stated they wanted to help the County while accessing more field space. Bataille stated many athletic associations were in need of additional fields. Discussion related to field needs and the possibility of a workshop followed.

Staff Reports

Doug Bataille, Director, Parks and Recreation, reviewed Capital Improvement Projects for FY22. There was a discussion about budgeting and financing opportunities. Bataille mentioned that staff was working on an updated Golf Course packet to present to the BOCC. He stated that options for the use of the 9-hole golf course property were being considered such as a walking trail or disk golf course. He said that staff was visiting a disk golf course in Jacksonville this Friday. The Director followed up with the Chair's request for site visits and mentioned Veteran's Park (4 PM April 22, 2021) & Golf Course (4 PM, May 27, 2021) and asked for feedback. Chair asked staff to reach out to each RAB member individually to confirm availability.

Jamie Baccari, Assistant Director, Parks and Recreation reviewed the FY21 Construction Projects & Deferred Maintenance Projects and provided status updates. She mentioned that the fairgrounds roof project might be deferred to FY22 due to additional damage to the roof. Additionally, the Royal Road basketball court replacement has been placed on hold due to infrastructure failure. Staff is working with Facility Maintenance to determine if additional funding from park maximization can be used to complete the projects.

The Chair asked if there were any deferred maintenance dollars in operating expenses for the golf course. Baccari recommended Wes Tucker, Golf Course Manager as the contact for golf course maintenance and scheduling. Stacia mentioned budgeting \$100,000 annually in reserve

to address maintenance issues, but that this was ballpark estimate only. Van Rysdam will email questions to Baccari to share with Tucker. Chapin wanted to know the women's golf numbers at the County Golf Course, Baccari stated that she would check, but that it was doubtful, as the reservation system did not ask whether male or female players were reserving tee times.

Stacia Cotter, Business Manager, spoke to the reporting frequency for the Strategic Dashboard. She stated that the Impact Fee reallocation question had been referred to legal. Commissioner Waldron said that Impact Fees could be shared if the project was something like a regional park or boat ramp that would benefit all of the residents in St. Johns County. Cotter reviewed expenditures for Recreation Maintenance, Programs and Aquatics; Special Revenue Divisions collections; Impact Fee projects completed and in progress and Social Media outreach to the community.

Sydney Lindblad, Natural Resources Manager, stated that the tolls were open and that spring break would increase the beach visit numbers. She mentioned that the Spyglass walkover replacement project was scheduled to start 3/15/2021 and that the walkover would be closed. She mentioned the movie at the pier 3/27/2021.

Teddy Meyer, Recreation Facilities Manager, announced that the Veritas Pickleball Tournament and Perfect Game Tournament were both successful and that he was working towards finalizing the numbers and impacts. He mentioned working with Tera Meeks and the TDC on the creation of the TDC Sports Marketing Group. He mentioned that Airstream reached out to the County to bring a FIFA event to St. Johns County; the request was being vetted by the County, City of St. Augustine and City of St. Augustine Beach. He stated that he would keep the RAB up to date on the request.

There were no Board Member Reports.

Bataille announced that he would be retiring and heading home to Tennessee to be with family. He said that he will be transitioning out through May and has offered to consult on projects if Administration sees the need. He explained that he was looking forward to spending more time with his family as his parents and mother-in-law were at advanced ages. He said that he was proud of the many positive management staffing changes he was able to make and of the team he helped build. He stated that he hoped Jamie would be considered for the Director's position as she was qualified and prepared to take on that role. He mentioned that the job would be advertised and that Jamie will apply and that she will most likely be interim Director until the final decision has been made by Administration and the BOCC.

Chapin made a motion to adjourn, seconded by McEachean. Meeting adjourned.