



St. Johns County Board of County Commissioners

Parks & Recreation Department

RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD September 9, 2021 - Meeting Minutes

Board Members Present: Casey Van Rysdam, Chair, Brad Long, Deb Chapin
Board Members Absent: Harold Dockins, Marty McEachern

Parks and Recreation Staff Present: Ryan Kane, Director; Jamie Baccari, Assistant Director; Teddy Meyer, Recreation Facilities Manager; Diane Gorski, Project Specialist

The Chair called the meeting to order at 1:03 PM and announced that there was not a quorum and that approval of the minutes would be moved to the October meeting. Kane asked that the August minutes be corrected to read that the High School athletic track was not open to the public.

The Chair asked for public comments. There were none.

The Chair mentioned the passing of Bert Watson, a long-time member of the RAB, who had been an ardent supporter of youth sports and founding member of the Creeks Athletic League. He mentioned future discussion on how to honor Mr. Watson's contributions to the community.

The Chair announced that the beach season recap would be added to the October RAB meeting. He mentioned adding the boat taxi from Vilano to downtown to a future meeting along with a presentation. He reminded everyone that the election of officers would not happen until the new Board Members had been seated, possibly in December. He stated that the RAB had three open positions. He discussed the TDC's infrequent meeting schedule and reinforced the need for a quorum at the RAB meetings. He asked for discussion regarding expansion of the number of board members from 7 to 9 be added to a future agenda. The additional members will help with issues the RAB has with not being able to meet with a quorum.

Chair moved on to new business and introduced Meyer to present the AJGA Junior Championship Tournament TDC Category III Grant Application. Meyer stated that since there was not a quorum, there would not be a RAB vote, but that the TDC would take this up in October. He explained that the AJGA wanted the County to be the host of this particular event. He stated that Adam from the AJGA would present next month. Chair asked that RAB members submit their score sheets.

Baccari explained that the Park Property Level of Service Matrix Project was a work in progress and that we are verifying that all of our parks are listed and working to confirm the amenities at each park. This will provide a full overview of the parks and recreation facilities in each district and the amenities they provide. We are also providing the properties we have that are currently undeveloped. She explained that we have over 80 properties and the goal is to have it completed by next RAB meeting. Chair asked about what was on the list. Baccari explained that it will list the type of park, which district it is in and the amenities in the park. Van Rysdam asked about Impact Fee dollars and which Districts outside their Impact Fee district would be able to draw from other Impact Fee Districts. Baccari stated that we can attempt to do that, but that she didn't believe that any of our existing properties met the criteria except the Golf Course. She stated that we would look into it and that Parks and Recreation would have to work

with the legal department for options and clarity. Chair asked about making a formal presentation of the Master Plan and if this project should be aligned with it. Kane replied that the Master Plan needs to be revisited and that this could be a supplement within the Master Plan. He stated that the Master Plan needed to be reevaluated. Chapin asked for listings of State Park subfields. Baccari replied that the report was for facilities the County maintains and operates. Chapin reminded Baccari of Bataille's request for including neighborhood parks for a global view but that it was irrelevant at this point. Baccari stated that department is happy to include state and federal parks within the County. Baccari added that this was a multi-tiered project and that the private neighborhood parks would be added in the future. Discussion followed.

Van Rysdam revisited the option for additional membership and ability to have workshops to eliminate absent time.

Meyer shared that Fort Mose ownership was complicated and that the county, city and state were owners. He explained the Fort Mose Historical Society gave money annually for the Battle of Fort Mose. He stated that Fort Mose fell under TDC Category II and they can apply for the grant twice yearly. Chair shared his views on the status of the property.

Chair revisited the TDC dollars option for seed money, or start up; Meyers explained that there are parameters under the state statute for event management, acquisition of facilities, but is not sure how that pertains to the County. Chair said TDC by-laws indicated that this would be an acceptable use of the grant money. He stated he would continue to look into it. Long mentioned that perhaps the Park Foundation would be able to help support startups. A discussion related to the opportunities and options continued. Meyer stated that he would follow up with the TDC and Legal Department for an interpretation of the marketing piece and whether investment in new event startup qualifies. Meyer explained that retroactive payments were not allowed. He mentioned working with TDC on grant requests due to their limited meeting dates. Lengthy discussion relating to funding sources, like VCB or Florida Sports Foundation, available throughout the county for new ventures. Meyers confirmed that this information is shared with all who reach out to Parks and Recreation and Visitors Convention Bureau. Meyer explained that grant payments couldn't be issued retroactively and that in speaking with Tera Meeks, TDC Director she confirmed that the AJGA Tournament in 2021 could not be payed out of funding for 2022. This was due to the budgeting process. Discussion relating to TDC funding, the AJGA FY21 request and deferred funding ensued.

Director Kane stated that he and Baccari were scheduled to meet with Administration Friday and would provide an update on the status of Nocatee RFI at the October meeting.

The Chair announced that RAB Applications for three open positions are being accepted through October 6, 2021. He explained that the applications for the open board positions would be provided to the RAB for review October 7 and recommendations for the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) would be voted on at the October 20, 2021 meeting. The recommendations will be provided to the BOCC Office for placement on the November 16, 2021 BOCC meeting. Discussion relating to the RAB open positions followed.

Ryan Kane, Director, Parks & Recreation responded to the questions from the August RAB meeting:

- Dockins asked about empty restroom soap dispensers. Kane shared that we were having issues with the touchless dispensers due to the short battery life and that we were working on getting them replaced and keeping them operational.
- Chapin had requested a copy of the Palm Valley Boat Ramp design. Kane provided a copy of the plan to the RAB members present. She was concerned with parking. Kane stated that there would be 11 trailered parking spots, 25 car parking spots and 3 ADA parking spots. The Chair

asked about tournaments at this boat ramp. There was a discussion relating to fishing tournaments in the area in regards to parking and traffic. Baccari explained that we had been waiting for permitting from the Army Corps of Engineers and that FIND had provided funding for this project.

Kane announced that we received \$3.25 million in funding from the American Rescue Plan and this includes turf replacement at Gamble Rogers, Bird Island Park boardwalk replacement, athletic facility light replacement across the county (\$1.2 million in upgrades to LED lighting). He stated that these funds would cover other FY22 deferred maintenance and capital projects. The chair shared his opinion that we should include this in the Strategic Dashboard. Kane mentioned that he and Baccari would be meeting with Administration to get project guidance. He said that Twin Creeks DRI will be providing 4 rectangular grass fields to the county. He mentioned the Villages West project with 5 little league baseball/softball fields and a rectangular field should be ready by November 1, 2021.

Kane reviewed the Disc Golf Presentation scheduled for the September 21, 2021 commission meeting. Chair pointed out a typo for correction. The proposed project was discussed at length.

Jamie Baccari, Assistant Director reported that we collect a weekly payment of \$250 plus tax each week and 40% of the vendor fee revenue collected from the Farmer's Market at the pier. She stated that we have collected \$45,000 year to date.

Chair asked for Board member reports. Long explained that he and his wife had visited the Vilano Bait Shop this past weekend and was very complimentary. He mentioned that the Park Foundation had met on August 27, 2021 and that they had discussed the upcoming presentation to the Board of County Commissioners. He was optimistic about obtaining the support of the Commission.

Long motioned to adjourn. Chapin seconded. 3/0