



# St. Johns County Board of County Commissioners

Parks & Recreation Department

## RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD MEETING MINUTES JANUARY 14, 2021

Chair called the meeting to order at 2 PM. Staff worked out some technical difficulties.

Board members present: Chairman Casey Van Rysdam, Vice Chair Jillian McNiff-Villemaire, Ed.D, Harold Dockins, Brad Long, Marty McEachean, Bert Watson

Board members absent: Deb Chapin

Also present: Paul Abbatinuzzi, School Board Representative, Commissioner Paul Waldron (2:45 PM), Parks and Recreation Staff: Doug Bataille, Director, Jamie Baccari, Asst. Director, Teddy Meyer, Recreation Facility Manager, Sydney Lindblad, Beaches Manager, Diane Gorski, Project Specialist

Chairman called the meeting to order at 2 PM. After working out some kinks, roll was taken. Van Rysdam asked for approval of the 12/21/2020 minutes. Minutes approved 6/0. He then called for public comment for non-agenda items only.

Bill Bowen stated his 30 member Disc Golf group appreciated PR staff working on new signage for the course at the County Fairgrounds and their hope for expansion and other courses throughout the County.

Van Rysdam requested an update on the Sports Director position within the TDC. He requested that the TDC Director attend the next Recreation Advisory Board meeting to bring the Recreation Advisory Board up to speed on the status of the TDC, its funding and future plans. He asked Bataille to bring the Impact Fee presentation to the Recreation Advisory Board to the February meeting.

Abbatinuzzi explained that the School District would be following the same Covid-19 protocols for spring sports as they had during fall and winter sports (Social Distancing, masks) making adjustments based on capacity and CDC guidelines as needed.

Watson, Park Foundation is actively seeking and adding members. Van Rysdam requested a work shop with the Park Foundation and the Recreation Advisory Board. Watson invited the members to the next Foundation meeting.

Van Rysdam asked Bataille to give the Shore Drive Trail Presentation before the Performance Dashboard. Chair explained that staff was looking for Recreation Advisory Board approval to place the Shore Drive Trail, RTP grant on the Board of County Commissioners agenda to obtain permission to apply for the grant. The grant requires a County match and if approved provide up to \$400,000.

Bataille reviewed the Shore Drive Trail project, the public meeting with the St. Augustine Improvement Association and the results of the survey (188/65 in favor of the trail – 66% St.

Augustine South residents). The options for the width and materials for the proposed trail were explained.

Van Rysdam questioned whether or not the residency for the survey takers could be confirmed. He asked if the grant had specific requirements. Bataille stated that the grant was for a recreation trail and that there were no requirements. Van Rysdam asked about the budgeting for the project. Bataille confirmed it would be a FY22 project and that impact fees could be used. McNiff-Villemaire asked for clarification on the design of the trail in reference to distance from the water and whether it would be hidden from the road. Long mentioned the importance the width of the trail in consideration of design. Bataille stated that design would happen in later phases. That staff needed a recommendation for consideration of placement on the BOCC agenda. Dockins asked about the trail impacts to existing nature and drainage. Bataille mentioned that these issues would be covered in the permitting process. McEachean asked for project end date. Bataille stated that it was too difficult to determine at this time.

Public Comments for Shore Drive Trail (10 opposed/7support/1undecided):

- Michelle Alderman 1902 Shore Drive – Opposed (Home Owner)
- Dianne Campbell 138 Linden Road – Opposed (Home Owner)
- Daniel Sanderson 2318 Shore Drive – Opposed (Home Owner)
- Sharon Chambers 1810 Shore Dive – Opposed (Home Owner)
- Eric Searcy 2302 Shore Drive – Supports (Home Owner)
- Micheline Fountain (Boutine) 137 Linden Road – Opposed (Home Owner)
- Handly Carroway 312 Wisteria Road – Supports (Home Owner)
- Frances Lundberg 2406 Shore Drive – Opposed (Owner: Integrity Bldg & Design LLC)
- Oona Hoak 223 Argonaut Road – Opposed (Owner: Michael Don Jones ETAL)
- Alan Chappell 137 Egret Road - Supports (Home Owner)
- Joy Eickert 150 Argonaut Road – Undecided
- Jill Scales 4200 Shore Drive – Opposed (Home Owner)
- Dan Kelly 116 Hercules Road – Supports
- Margo Geer 249 Argonaut Road – Supports
- Philip McKenna 3510 Shore Drive – Opposed
- Mike Jones 228 Argonaut Road – Supports
- Dave Hankla 3702 Shore Drive – Supports
- George Watts 2230 Shore Drive – Opposed

Chair pushed Performance Dashboard to February meeting and asked the Recreation Advisory Board members to send questions to Bataille. He then called for member comments.

McNiff-Villemaire wanted a report from the Sheriff's Department regarding traffic issues and accidents and mentioned concern for the final design aesthetically. Van Rysdam encouraged members to ride down Shore Drive.

Long stated that he saw the issue from both sides and understands the viewpoint of wanting to keep things the way they are and also safety concerns. He felt that the timing of the project since it was first mentioned to present complicates things. He stated the park property belongs to St. Johns County and stated that development should be done in a professional and courteous matter. Long believes that throughout the process of permitting and design the residents' concerns can be alleviated. Was happy to see the community playing such an active

role in the process.

Dockins looks forward to the next steps and working through the issues discussed.

McEachean stated that he wanted to look over the project with Bataille to glean more information and understanding of the project.

Chair asked for a motion to approve the placement of the request for approval to apply for the RTP grant on the Board of County Commissioners next agenda. Dockins made the motion to recommend approval from the BOCC to apply for the grant. Van Rysdam stated that he wanted to obtain more public input, a traffic study and more detail and definition on the project in the interim. Bataille stated that the County's Neighborhood Bill of Rights gives the neighborhood notifications and the ability to acquire more information. He mentioned that he would be meeting with the St. Augustine South Improvement Association the week of January 17, 2021. He discussed the difficulty in getting a response to a survey in general. Bataille stated that obtaining public input is challenging.

McNiff-Villemaire asked for the RTP grant deadline for application. Bataille stated that the deadline was March 31, 2021. The Chair reiterated that the vote today was not for the project but for a recommendation to ask the County Commissioner for permission to apply for the grant. Watson seconded the motion to include the Chairs recommendations, Van Rysdam asked for clarification on the motion. Dockins motioned to make a recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners to allow Parks and Recreation apply for the RTP grant and require an additional survey of St. Augustine South residents and more information about the project, seconded by Watson.

Motion approved 6/0.

Commissioner Waldron explained that the Recreation Advisory Board was an advisory board, not a government body that made decisions. The public should reach out to the Commission with questions and concerns.

All other business was moved to the February Recreation Advisory Board meeting. Bataille stated that we could reopen the survey again. There was a consensus of the Board to do so. Long mentioned communication with the residents as a crucial component of the project. McNiff-Villemaire wanted to know if there was a way to certify that the survey responders were South residents and the Shore Drive residents were given precedence. Dockins concurred.

Long motioned to adjourn, Dockins seconded the motion. Meeting was adjourned at 3:35 PM.