



St. Johns County Board of County Commissioners

Parks & Recreation Department

Recreation Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

1:30 pm Wednesday January 12, 2022

Board Members Present: Casey Van Rysdam, Brad Long, Marty McEachean, Harold Dockins, Bill Bowen, Lauren Watkins
Absent: Deb Chapin

Also Present: Parks & Recreation Director Ryan Kane, Assistant Director Jamie Baccari, Administrative Manager Stacia Cotter, Programming Manager Tess Simpson, Natural Resources Program Manager Sydney Lindblad, Recreation Facilities Manager Teddy Meyer, Project Specialist Diane Gorski, Jaya Dillard, Visitors Convention Bureau.

Chair called the meeting to order at 1:30 pm and asked for a motion to approve the December meeting minutes. Motion by Long, seconded by McEachean. Approved 6/0.

There were no Public Comments.

Chair announced the Field of Dreams grand opening on Saturday February 5th at 9 am. He said the Recreation Master Plan was available on the Parks & Recreation website. He mentioned that the TDC post event reporting requirement would be presented by staff after the TDC items are heard. He stated that the first quarter report on Key Performance Indicators (KPI) for the Recreation Department was included in the RAB packet and to follow up with Stacia Cotter with questions. The KPI Dashboard will be discussed at the February RAB meeting.

Commissioner Paul Waldron spoke to the well-attended St. Johns Golf Course ground breaking ceremony. He stated that the project should be completed in October and that the clubhouse renovations will start soon. He added future plans to build a new fire station, sheriff's department facility and disc golf course on the golf course property.

Chair mentioned that School Board Representative Paul Abbatonozzi was unable to attend today's meeting but that he had provided information regarding sports season opening dates and Beachside High School sheet in the agenda packet.

Chairman opened up the election of Chair and Vice Chair. Motion to re-elect Casey Van Rysdam as the Chairman by Long, seconded by Dockins. Approved 5/0 with Van Rysdam abstaining. Dockins nominated Long for Vice Chair and McEachean seconded. Approved 5/0 with Long abstaining.

Chair introduced Sydney Lindblad, Natural Resources Programs Manager who gave a brief personal history, provided her educational background, travel experiences and shared her employment history within the Parks and Recreation Department including the Beaches division. She stated that she was responsible for overseeing the Toll Booths, Pier Gift shop, Water Access Management Plan grants and special events. She expressed her interest and involvement in sports and passion for her job.

Chair introduced Tess Simpson Recreation Programming Manager who also gave a brief personal history, provided her educational background, travel experiences and shared her employment history with Parks and Recreation in Miami and Putnam County. She mentioned adding STEM training to afterschool programming and adding a Limelight Theater program to the Ketterlinus and W.E. Harris programs. She mentioned the start of a kayaking and fishing program for Veterans at no cost to the participant. She explained that the goal was to provide meaningful programming to veterans for one year and then partnering with the local Veteran's Administration to receive grants for future programming. She announced the River Blessing on January 29, 2022 and invited all to attend. She stated that Steven Lightfoot was now supervising the Hastings programs and working on expanding opportunities and programming to meet the needs of the community. Brief discussion followed.

Teddy Meyer, Recreation Facility Manager mentioned that he is a native Floridian. He explained that he was an avid soccer player and earned a Flagler College soccer scholarship to go to college. Received a Masters from Winthrop University. He provided an overview of his education. He mentioned his employment as a college soccer coach at every level at Northwestern University, Westminster College and Winthrop College, and a women's coach at Flagler for 14 years. He was the Director of Coaching in Palm Coast. He has offered camps and clinics throughout the country. He is involved in recruitment of high school players for colleges. His current position has him involved with youth sports, field management, project management, tourist development and sports events and management of two staff positions.

Ron Davidson explained the Adult Softball League's request to post a sign recognizing Rick Johnson, as the Senior Adult Softball Founder at Treaty Park softball. There was a lengthy discussion that resulted in Baccari saying that the department would work to confirm that Mr. Johnson as the founder, and explore the Commemorative Policy and Application as an option for the signage. Follow up on this request at the February RAB meeting.

Presentations were provided by each of the TDC Category III applicants. Discussion followed each presentation. The RAB weighed the importance and value of each request to the community and businesses. Staff will provide historic information on repeat grant funding requests.

Veritas in Ancient City Pickleball Tournament was given the recommendation of \$10,000 in grant funding to be approved by the Tourist Development Council at their next meeting. Motion by Long, seconded by McEachean. Approved 6/0. A motion by Dockins to provide a \$15,000 grant had failed due to a lack of a second.

St. Augustine Race Week 2022 – Sailing Regatta Competition was given the recommendation of \$7,500 in grant funding to be approved by the Tourist Development Council at their next meeting. Motion by Dockins, seconded by Van Rysdam. Approved 5/1 with Bowen dissenting.

Professional Redfish League Tournament Event was given the recommendation of \$5,000 in grant funding to be approved by the Tourist Development Council at their next meeting. Motion by Van Rysdam, seconded by McEachean. Approved 6/0.

Chair requested developing a method of reporting on prior events for the February meeting. The idea would be to have the data needed to quantify the request. Meyer will work with the TDC and Visitor Convention Bureau (VCB) to determine the format. He introduced Jaya Dillard who explained the how the VCB obtained data relating to hotel stays. Discussion ensued.

The possibility of completing a 5 year Association Partnership Review was discussed. Meyer explained what a youth sports partnership offers and the requirements for partnership status. He suggested ways of measuring successful programs. Discussion followed. It was agreed that the topic would be continued to the February meeting. Kane reminded everyone that a list of partners and an example from the Ponte Vedra Athletic Association (PVAA) that documents the fields they use, participation numbers, and expected growth was included in the agenda packet.

Director Kane stated he had met with the new RAB members individually last week. He said that the Shore Drive trail grant application had ranked 8th overall in the Recreation Trails Program and that no additional information was available. He stated that the Request For Quote for the Disc Golf Course had been drafted and was with the Purchasing team with the timeline for the RFQ posting on February 1, closing on March 1 with selection being made, the contract signed on April 15 and the design work beginning May 1, 2022. The design will provide cost estimates and the item will then go to the Board to request funding. He announced the countywide partnership meeting on January 26, 2022 and his intention to meet with individual athletic organizations throughout the year. Kane said that the site coordinators were meeting with associations at the fields to assess needs. He provided an update on the playground request at Cornerstone Park. He mentioned that construction has begun on the golf course with a finish date of October or November.

Assistant Baccari said that Parks and Recreation had a new Public Affairs representative and that changes to social media and the newsletter were forthcoming. She stated that the community program team was continuously looking for more opportunities to provide programming to the public.

Long provided an update on the Park Foundation. He said the Memorandum of Understanding between the Foundation and County would be on the February 1, 2022 Board of County Commissioner Agenda. He said they were looking to fill one additional Board seat and working on a job description for the Director.

Watkins asked the RAB members to consider updating the TDC scoring sheet. She provided suggestions for consideration. There was a consensus of the board to add this item to the February agenda. Watkins agreed to work with Meyer to bring a new document that includes detailed instruction on how to rank the request using the form.

Chair provided the following items to be included in the February meeting:

- Partnership review
- Post event memorialization and reporting of heads in beds etcetera
- Grant scoring form template and process

Motion to adjourn by McEachean, seconded by Long. Approved 6/0.