

**RECREATION COMMISSION MINUTES
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 2021 1:30 P.M.
CITY HALL, COUNCIL CHAMBERS, VERO BEACH, FLORIDA**

PRESENT: Brooke Malone, Chairman; Rock Tonkel, Vice Chairman; Members: Brooke Steinkamp, and Christopher Woodruff, Alternate Member **Also Present:** Jenny Flanigan, Assistant City Attorney; Jim O’Connell, Recreation Director; Patty Howard, Assistant Recreation Director and Tammy Bursick, City Clerk

Excused Absences: Samuel Lapeyre
Steven Newman

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mrs. Malone called the meeting to order and the City Clerk called the roll.

2. MISSION STATEMENT

Mrs. Malone read the Recreation Commission’s Mission Statement.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A) January 12, 2021

Mr. Tonkel made a motion to approve the January 12, 2021 minutes. Mrs. Steinkamp seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comments were made.

5. NEW BUSINESS

A) Proposed Recreation Programs and Community Events Rate Schedule – Ms. Cindy Lawson, Finance Director

Ms. Cindy Lawson, Finance Director, reported that beginning with FY 2019-2020, the City separated the Recreation Department budget into multiple individual cost centers in order to provide additional clarity and transparency as to the net cost of each facility/activity. At the time, Council also directed staff to begin a review of the rate schedules and policies currently in place for each cost center. As a result, a new rate schedule was adopted for Leisure Square in November 2019. A revised rate schedule for Riverside Tennis was proposed to the Recreation Commission and City Council in August 2020, but is currently on hold pending further analysis.

Ms. Lawson provided a spreadsheet outlining the Recreation Department by cost center (information on file in the City Clerk’s office). She said that the expenses show that they are more than the revenue that is coming in. When these changes were made for Leisure Square last year everything was going well and they were in good shape until COVID hit.

Mrs. Malone brought up in Exhibit 5-A) there were some numbers that did not match. Ms. Lawson explained if they look at Attachment C they will see that the numbers she handed out today do match. Mrs. Malone could see that.

Ms. Lawson expressed to the Commission that if they have any questions to feel free to call her with their questions.

Mrs. Steinkamp commented that Leisure Square loses \$900 a day. She asked if they were expected to close that gap.

Ms. Lawson reiterated that before COVID they were right on track with revenue and they would have closed the gap.

Mr. Tonkel asked if the Recreation Director participated in putting this document together.

Mr. Jim O'Connell, Recreation Director, said that he started with the City in March of last year and was very instrumental in working with Ms. Lawson in putting this document together.

Ms. Lawson went to the Community Events Rate Schedule. She said what they wanted to do was simplify the rates and schedules. She recalled that when she spoke to the Recreation Commission in November 2019, that the Recreation Commission had concerns with one (1) group being charged a different price than another group. They felt that the rates should be fair across the board. She took that to the City Council and they agreed. She said at Leisure Square the not-for-profit agencies had not paid before and now they do.

Mr. O'Connell agreed that he also was looking for simplicity. In meeting some of their goals they need to look at the rate structure, especially when it came to the stage rentals and sound system. They needed to make sure that staff costs were being met with the rental of that equipment. He said that it usually takes two (2) employees working overtime to set up the stage and take it down and that time was not being included before, nor was the wear and tear of the stage.

Mrs. Steinkamp was confused and questioned if the sound system and stage is used for all the events held.

Mr. O'Connell explained that the City owns the equipment and rents it out to people who want to use it. These new fees will help recoup some of the Recreation Department's costs for the use of the stage and sound system.

Mrs. Malone asked about level 1, level 2, and level 3. It was explained that was the old charges and they have been eliminated.

Mrs. Malone did not realize that there is a concession wagon that they rent out. She was told that it is a mobile concession available to rent out to organizations, but is basically used at Leisure Square.

Mr. Tonkel understood the objective of funding and asked Mr. O'Connell if there were any other issues that he sees might be coming up from a managerial standpoint.

Mr. O'Connell said that it will be an on-going effort for the Recreation Department to implement these cost centers. In the future they will have a better understanding of where revenues and expenses are coming from. Their big goal is to make this simplified. They feel that it is very fair and inexpensive for

someone looking at utilizing the rentals privately. He reiterated that everyone will be paying the same price to rent the facilities.

Mrs. Malone commended both Ms. Lawson and Mr. O'Connell for their job in putting these documents together and said it is nice to see some streamlining going on.

Ms. Lawson stated that the Recreation staff did a great job in digging in and seeing what they wanted to achieve. If staff tries it for a few months and there are problems then they can always make adjustments. She said that there will be some upset people because they have not been paying a fee and now they will have to.

Ms. Lawson said that staff plans to attach her memo to a Resolution and take this before the City Council. She asked for a recommendation from the Recreation Commission to take it to City Council.

Mr. Tonkel asked if everyone felt that they had sufficient time to review the new rate schedule that is being proposed.

Mrs. Malone said that she can only speak for herself, but by in large there are not any big increases. She said that the rate schedule just kind of averages everything out.

Ms. Lawson agreed. She said that the big changes were located on Attachment A, which is the gymnastic programs, then the event equipment rental, which they discussed earlier. On Attachment B there is a comparison of the current recreation programs versus the proposed rates and fee structure, which there are not any significant increases.

Mrs. Steinkamp felt that they were moving in the right direction for the City.

Mr. Tonkel asked if the City Manager agrees with this.

Ms. Lawson said that he does and that he (Mr. Monte Falls) has been a part of some of the meetings that have taken place when they were discussing this.

Mrs. Malone made a motion to accept the memorandum dated January 27, 2021 and the recommendation from the Finance Director and the Recreation Director concerning the proposed Recreation Programs and Community Event Rate Schedule and send it to the City Council. Mr. Tonkel seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Ms. Lawson said that she would add to the memorandum that the Recreation Commission has reviewed the programs and rate schedule and recommend approval and then she will attach that to a Resolution and take it before the City Council.

Mr. O'Connell thanked the Finance Department for all the work that they put into coming up with this new rate schedule.

B) City Parks and Maintenance Costs – Mr. Jason Jeffries, Planning and Development Director

Mr. Jeffries stated that he would be giving an overview of their Parks and Recreation in terms of how they interconnect with their Comprehensive Plan. He said that Ms. Lawson will go into the improvements that have been approved through the budget process for the Recreation Department and Parks. He gave a Power Point presentation (attached to the original minutes).

Mr. Tonkel asked what the policy makers continue to use for the strategic plan.

Mr. Jeffries explained that the Comprehensive Plan was adopted by the City Council in 2018 and it is only revised every seven (7) years. He said that there are only a couple of ways to amend the Comprehensive Plan and one (1) is by State law and to do an evaluation every seven (7) years. If the City amends their Comprehensive Plan (policies) then the State requires that it has to be done with sufficient data and an analysis to justify it. He said they can't just amend it because they want to. He said that they will be working to amend the Comprehensive Plan for the Three Corners project. There will also be some amendments made for the Airport regarding their Master Plan.

Mr. Tonkel commented that the citizens of this community are fortunate to have land committed to these activities. The basis is strong and solid and it allows opportunities for visitors and residents.

Mrs. Steinkamp agreed. She said that she home schools her children and thinks this is great. However, there are limited opportunities just because there is open space. She said that the Parks are packed with children in the evenings. Although, she is happy that the Parks are being utilized and the residents are taking advantage of them. She asked Mr. Jeffries to talk about a Comprehensive Plan that was written three (3) years ago and then they go through COVID. She asked what impact does that have on the Comprehensive Plan. She noted that she and her husband both work from home so they are constantly trying to get outside in the evening because the family is stuck inside all day. She would like to see what COVID has done to impact their community.

Mr. Jeffries explained that with the information in the Comprehensive Plan they have to look at the open space as an entire system. He said that the conservation land is very detailed on what is conservation and acreage throughout their public Parks.

Mrs. Steinkamp hears staff mention the pools that are in Vero Beach, but she does not feel that the pool at Leisure Square is geared towards families. The pool has limited hours that it is open on the weekends so she would not want to get a membership to swim in the pool when it isn't available on the weekends. She questioned how much is really assessable to the public for use for their recreational needs.

Mrs. Malone told Mr. Jeffries that this presentation has been very helpful and it gives them something to "chew" on. She loved hearing where these different places were located and appreciated Mr. Jeffries doing this for the Recreation Commission.

Mr. Tonkel asked what are some of the major initiatives by citizens that have wanted to amend or bring to the attention of the Recreation Commission relating to this evaluation.

Mr. Jeffries explained that the Comprehensive Plan is a multi-topic plan that has several different elements to it and it covers land use. He said that the adopted comprehensive policies are related to the City. He has not been approached by anyone that wants to make any changes to their Park elements.

Ms. Lawson provided the Recreation Commission with the Five Year Capital Improvement Program. She said on page 2, they will see a square, which includes all of the recreation projects that total \$2,588,000 for the five year period. She pointed out that the sale of Dodgertown and the Electric Utility freed up some money in the Infrastructure Fund so a lot of that money was put into recreation.

Mr. Tonkel asked if the decisions have already been reached on these projects.

Ms. Lawson explained that this is an adopted budget and a big portion of that money has been spent in this first year.

Mr. O'Connell gave an update on where they are at with the projects that have already been approved. He said that the tennis courts are going to be resurfaced and have gone out to bid. He said there has been a lot of roof replacement on some of the facilities and they are doing the best they can to spend every cent they have. He said there is not really a lot of new things being put in place; it is just mainly making repairs at their different Parks, which are needed. He said it is an ongoing battle to keep ahead of the replacement and repairs on all of this stuff. These Parks and facilities need to get up to the level where they need to be because they have been neglected for so long.

Ms. Lawson brought up the public/private relationships that the City has with different organizations, such as GoPlayVero, the Vero Beach Dog Park, Youth Sailing Foundation, etc. She said that the City has gone out of their way to work with these organizations and allowing their facilities to be operated on City land.

6. OLD BUSINESS

A) Update on the Three Corners Project – Mr. Jason Jeffries, Planning and Development Director

Mr. Jeffries commented that he watched their last Recreation Commission meeting and there were some questions as to why matters were going to the Steering Committee and not to the Recreation Commission. He said that this Commission did meet and discuss the Three Corners project along with the Marine Commission back in 2015. He said that those minutes are available on the website. At that time there was a Task Force created by the Chamber of Commerce and they made their recommendations. They recommended that a professional company be hired to do the design work for the project, which was done in 2019. He said that in Section 1.21 the Comprehensive Plan states that the City will explore land use options on the property, which is what they are doing. Then in 2019 they hired DPZ to take the City through the planning process. He said they are very close to adopting a plan. The Steering Committee is in the process of exploring different options. At the January Steering Committee meeting they went through element by element and now he is working with DPZ to make some modifications to the plan and are hoping that will be the "community's plan." He is also working on a new contract with DPZ. There is not a date set for the next Steering Committee meeting, but the City Clerk will let the Recreation Commission know when one (1) has been set. He feels that the Steering Committee is going back to the June 16th plan with a few minor changes to be incorporated into the plan.

Mrs. Steinkamp brought up the survey that was done on SpeakupVeroBeach.com and said that the number one (1) thing that people were looking for was Environmental Sensitivity. Then number two was Park and Open Space and number three (3) was dining/restaurants.

Mr. Jeffries explained that people clicked on that because they want to make sure that environmental sensitivity is a key factor in the development of this process. He said if you look at the parentheses next to environmentally sensitive land it says (clean water, green building).

Mrs. Steinkamp continued going through the rest of the survey and the results. She said that it is not that people don't want to see restaurants on the property, but the people she is talking to want to make sure that the land is protected.

Mr. Jeffries said that is why they are going through this process to meet the desire of the community. He said that this survey was taken before the charrettes were held. The whole idea of the charrettes was to design different things and what came out of the charrettes that were held is a very detailed concept for the site.

Mrs. Steinkamp brought up that on the bottom list of the things on the survey, it listed a hotel, offices and residential units, which turn out to be the first three (3) things on the plan.

Mrs. Malone noted that the survey showed 32% of the people did not want to see any development on the site.

Mrs. Steinkamp asked if there was a plan to lease the land.

Mr. Jeffries explained that those things will be ironed out during the negotiation process.

Mr. Tonkel asked if it was premature to deal with some kind of cost for the project. He knows at this point they don't know what the project is going to be.

Ms. Lawson explained that she has not done any cost analysis on the project because there is no reason to until the plan has been solidified.

Mrs. Steinkamp commented that she is just asking the questions that she keeps hearing that the public has. She said that there are a lot of unanswered questions and people are just looking for answers.

Ms. Lawson said that she cannot put numbers on anything until there is a plan.

Mr. Jeffries commented that is why his goal is to present the community plan to find out what the community desires. Then they will be working on an RFQ for developers on what are they willing to do and then what is left could be the City picking up those costs.

Mrs. Malone commented that this is no longer part of the bulk of the Recreation Commission's conversation. She said from now on they will have to participate as a citizen if they choose to do so.

Mr. Jeffries said that was correct. He said that the Steering Committee will keep working on the plan and will be making a recommendation to the City Council.

7. RECREATION DIRECTOR'S MATTERS

B) Update on the Point of Sales System for Leisure Square

Mr. O'Connell reported that they do have the Point of Sales System set up at Leisure Square. He said that they are going through the training process right now to make sure that staff is familiar with the codes. He said on April 1st they will go live.

C) Update on the National Recreation and Parks Association Membership

Mr. O'Connell stated that they are now an official member of the National Recreation and Parks Association. He asked the members to provide him with the information that he sent them to register if

they have not already. This way once they are registered they will begin receiving information from the National Recreation and Parks Association.

8. CHAIRMAN'S MATTERS

Mrs. Malone encouraged the members to continue going through the financial information that they discussed today and if they have any questions they can be brought up at their next meeting.

9. MEMBER'S MATTERS

Mr. Tonkel asked about item 5-B) that they received. He was told this was for information purposes only.

Ms. Jenny Flanigan, Assistant City Attorney, mentioned that at the January 28, 2021 Special Call meeting held by the City Council there was a discussion on the use of Beach Parks and Beaches for Equipment Rental Activities. At that meeting the Council asked that the Recreation Commission take a look and see how other cities handle this.

The Clerk was asked to put this item on their next Recreation Commission agenda and to send each member a copy of the minutes from that Special Call meeting.

Mr. Woodruff told Mr. O'Connell if he needs a "guinea pig" for the Point of Sale System he would be happy to help. He has been working with this Point of Sales System also.

10. NEXT MEETING DATE

The next scheduled Recreation Commission meeting is set for March 9, 2021.

11. ADJOURNMENT

Today's meeting adjourned at 3:37 p.m.

/tb