

VERO BEACH RECREATION COMMISSION MINUTES
TUESDAY, JULY 12, 2022 1:30 P.M.
CITY HALL, COUNCIL CHAMBERS, VERO BEACH, FLORIDA

PRESENT: Brooke Steinkamp, Chairman; Leonard Markir, Vice Chairman; Members: Christopher Woodruff and Rick Gillespie **Also Present:** Jenny Flanigan, Assistant City Attorney; Jim O'Connell, Recreation Director; Patty Howard, Assistant Recreation Director and Tammy Bursick, City Clerk

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Chairman called today's meeting to order and the City Clerk performed the roll call.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A) June 14, 2022

Mr. Gillespie made a motion to approve the June 14, 2022 minutes. Mr. Markir seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

B) PUBLIC COMMENT

Mrs. Katherine Booth brought up the racquetball courts at Riverside Park. She said that the courts have been locked up since she moved to Vero Beach, which was in 2013. She is able to play racquetball at Leisure Square, but it would be nice to play in an outdoor atmosphere. She wondered if the only problems were with the roof of the courts, which she didn't think would prohibit someone from playing even if there wasn't a roof. She asked if this question has come up before.

Mrs. Patty Howard, Assistant Recreation Director, explained that those racquetball courts were destroyed in 2004 when Hurricanes Jeanne and Francis came through. Since then they have never been refurbished and reopened. She said that the courts have been put in the budget many times, but have always been taken out.

Mr. Jim O'Connor, Recreation Director, added that funding for those racquetball courts has been asked for many times in the past. He said that they are not in the upcoming budget because of the possibility of USTA taking over the tennis courts and wanting to make changes to the facility. He said that these racquetball courts have not been forgotten.

Mrs. Booth reiterated that she thought it would be nice to have an outdoor court.

Mrs. Howard commented that there are some structural problems with the racquetball court building. She said that no one is supposed to walk on the stairs because it is not safe.

Mrs. Booth felt that it was time to get these racquetball courts taken care of and refurbished.

Mr. Jim Kordiak talked about how important it was to recycle. He said the City does not offer recycling on their beaches, downtown or at City Hall. Nor has he found any local bars that separate their food waste from their aluminum cans and bottles. He assumed that City residents have recycling and the County handles the recycling program. He asked what the goal is for Vero Beach when it comes to recycling. He was willing to do anything that he could to help out with expanding recycling in the City and grow the

number of plastic picnic tables that they have in the community. He realizes that there is a cost to recycling, but it needs to be done. He suggested maybe having a Recycling Commission.

Mr. O'Connor commented that the Community Center and Leisure Square do take part in recycling. Also, bins are put out in the Parks when events occur. He said anything that the Recreation Department can do to help motivate people to recycle they would be happy to do.

Mr. Kordiak said he would leave his card with his contact information in case an opportunity comes up regarding recycling.

The Commission agreed to ask Mr. Matt Mitts, Public Work's Director, to attend their next meeting to discuss recycling especially when it comes to commercial recycling.

Mrs. Steinkamp asked Mr. Kordiak if he knew what percentage of glass gets recycled.

Mr. Kordiak said that as he understands it, it is collected, grinded, shredded, and then dumped on top of the garbage every night. He said In Minnesota where he comes from they recycle glass. He has never seen Vero Beach encourage their citizens to recycle.

Mr. O'Connell noted that the City does have a contract with Coastal Connections in which they provide baskets on the City's public beaches to encourage people to pick up trash while they are walking the beach to help keep their beaches clean.

Mrs. Booth commented that lately she has not seen any of the baskets at the beaches. She is always happy to help with cleaning the beaches. She was told that people probably forget to return the baskets.

Mrs. Booth reported that there is a new Keep Indian River Beautiful (KIRB) Director who spoke at the last Tree and Beautification Commission meeting. She felt that people would do their part in recycling if they had a receptacle to put the garbage in.

Mrs. Tammy Bursick, City Clerk, read into the record a letter that the Recreation Commission received from Mrs. Rosemary White (letter attached to the original minutes).

Mr. O'Connor commented that the Recreation Department is always looking for new programs whether it be in-house with the Recreation Department collecting the fees or renting facilities to different groups who want to offer different programs. He also mentioned that there are organizations who have license agreements with the City, such as the Pickleball people and Little League. They are responsible for the upkeep and improvement of the facilities that they lease. He said different clubs like the Bridge Club rents out the Community Center to hold their bridge games. He reiterated that they were always looking for new program ideas and program providers. He said another way to do more programming is to have more staff and he doesn't think the City is adding new staff to their roster.

C) NEW BUSINESS

D) OLD BUSINESS

A) Programs for Homeschooled Children

Mrs. Howard reported that they were looking at having a gymnastics class and a tennis class for homeschooled children. She said as far as gymnastics goes there have been three (3) people interested

so far in taking the class and they need a total of five (5) people to offer it and she does not know how many people have called about taking tennis lessons.

Mrs. Steinkamp asked about having a flyer to pass out so that the parents of homeschoolers are aware of these programs. She said that she spoke to Jessica at the Youth Sailing Foundation who said that she would be happy to provide the flyers.

Mrs. Howard would work on putting a flyer together and provide it to Mrs. Steinkamp.

B) USTA Workshop Update

Mr. Gillespie reported that he attended both Town Hall/workshop meetings provided by USTA. He noted that Mr. Markir attended one (1) of the workshops. He said the presentation given by USTA was well received, but there was not a huge turnout at the workshops. There were people there who were familiar with USTA and spoke about their experience. He said that USTA presented their vision and introduced people from USTA who were at the meeting to answer questions. He felt that USTA received enough information in order to formulate a proposal to be presented to City Council.

Mr. O'Connell reported that USTA was working on a proposal that will probably be finished in August. He said that he would bring it to the Recreation Commission for their recommendations and then it will be taken to the City Council.

Mr. Gillespie commented that last month he brought up the Mardy Fish Foundation and the proposal that they did some time back for the tennis courts. He hopes that they will get involved with updating the facility. He said that they were at the workshops held by USTA and seemed to be very supportive of USTA. There was a Round Robin event held at 3:00 p.m. on the same day of the workshops that was hosted by USTA. He said that USTA was at the City all day to answer any questions that they could and gather as much information as they needed to put a proposal together.

Mr. O'Connell said that USTA was happy to come to Vero Beach and host that session.

Mr. Gillespie recalled that some of the comments and questions that came up were about membership fees and hourly rates.

Mrs. Steincamp was unable to attend the workshops and wondered if some of the same people that attended the Recreation Commission meetings when this item was discussed also attended those meetings.

Mrs. Howard said that she recalled seeing some of the same people attend the Town Hall meetings hosted by USTA.

Mr. Markir asked Mr. O'Connell if he would be bringing the proposal to the Recreation Commission in August.

Mr. O'Connell said that he was not sure when it would be prepared to bring to the Commission.

Mr. Markir told him (Mr. O'Connell) that he probably needed time to review it himself.

Mr. O'Connell reported that himself and the City Manager met with USTA (via zoom) to go over certain things that they were looking for so he has a good idea of what is being proposed. Once he receives the

proposal he will review it and put it on a future Recreation Commission agenda for the Commission to review and make their recommendations to City Council.

Mr. Markir expressed that the implications for the existing staff is very important as far as he is concerned.

Mr. O'Connell explained that USTA does not have any recommendations regarding City staff. The staffing issue is something internal to the City and not a USTA matter.

Mr. Markir felt that they needed to take care of staff who have seniority and there could be an equitable arrangement made between the two (2) entities.

Mr. O'Connell reiterated the issue for the City to handle staff matters is done internally and separate from any proposal USTA would bring in.

C) Humiston Lifeguard Tower

Mrs. Steincamp commented that she recently spoke to someone who was interested in helping with the new lifeguard tower for Humiston Park and she asked him to contact the City Clerk.

Mrs. Howard reported that the Humiston Lifeguard Tower has been put in the budget under the funding list. She has been working with the City's grant writer in hopes that they can get some type of funding to get the tower replaced.

Mr. O'Connell reported that the other two (2) lifeguard towers for Jaycee and South Beach Parks were approved to be replaced and should be shipped to the City by January. He said that Humiston Park is a little different. He said that there is a project that will take place concerning replacing the boardwalk and they hope to be able to combine both projects. He recalled back in March the City applied for tourist tax funds through the Tourist Development Council for the lifeguard tower and their request was denied. They then appealed the request and that was also denied. He said that this will be an expensive project when it happens. They are looking at about \$500,000 for the pavilion and the lifeguard stand. They will pursue looking for grants to help cover the costs.

Mr. Woodruff suggested that the Commission members watch both of the meetings where the request for funds was discussed. He said it is quite telling what happened and the lack of partnership.

Mr. Markir brought up construction projects and asked if it was standard in the City of Vero Beach that they handle projects as one (1) project or do they phase the project out and have it done in stages.

Mr. O'Connell explained that obviously not every project can be covered in a single year so the project is put in the budget under a five-year plan.

Mrs. Steincamp said that she knows of an organization that is willing to assist with the lifeguard tower so she hopes that someone can do the grant writing.

Mr. O'Connell said the City does have a grant writing service.

Mrs. Steincamp commented that if the City could get some grant money then it would be easier to come up with the rest of the money that is needed.

Mr. Woodruff wondered if they could take the old towers from South Beach and Jaycee Park and put them at Humiston.

Mr. O'Connell said those towers are in really bad shape. He said it would not be a good idea to recommission them even on a temporary basis.

E) RECREATION DIRECTOR'S MATTERS

Mr. O'Connell commented that the July 4th event went really well. He said that summer camp is also going well with each week being full. He read off the list of scholarship donations received to help send children to City summer camp and other programs throughout the year (attached to the original minutes).

Mrs. Howard talked about the Circus production coming up on August 4, 5, and 6 at St. Edwards School. She said that each show is a little different so everyone is invited to attend them all. There are close to 250 children involved in this year's event.

Mr. O'Connell let the Commission know that the Assistant City Attorney has taken another job and will be leaving the City.

Ms. Flanigan told the Commission that it was nice working with each one of them.

Mrs. Howard let the Commission members know that the City Council will be discussing the Recreation Commission's budget this Thursday and they are welcome to attend.

F) CHAIRMAN'S MATTERS

Mrs. Steincamp referred to some of the concerns that Mrs. White expressed in her letter. She noted that basketball is offered at Leisure Square. She then asked what would be the charge for someone to rent a room for a function. She was told that it would depend on which facility that they rented the room from and the time and day of the week. The fee for Leisure Square is \$14.00 an hour and the Community Center is \$20.00 an hour.

G) MEMBER'S MATTERS

Mr. Woodruff reported that the event where people swam out to the shipwreck off of Sexton Plaza on July 4th was huge this year. He said that he was told by a former lifeguard that they were not allowed to leave their post even if there was an emergency and someone was in danger.

Mrs. Howard said lifeguards are to assist if someone is in danger, but their first priority is at their station. They have a guarded area and that guarded area is marked so people know where it is safe to swim and that lifeguards are on duty.

Mr. Gillespie commented that the swim to the shipwreck looked like it was a safe event and there were a lot of people on their paddle boards and in their kayaks.

Mrs. Howard wanted to make it clear that this is not a City event. She thought that the event was sponsored by the Sunrunners.

Mrs. Steincamp said that any way the Commission can assist with the lifeguards they would be happy to do so.

H) NEXT MEETING DATE

The next Recreation Commission meeting will be held on August 9, 2022 at 1:30 p.m.

Mrs. Steincamp told the Commission members if they had any items that they want to put on a future Recreation Commission agenda to let the City Clerk know.

I) ADJOURNMENT

Today's meeting adjourned at 2:34 p.m.

/tb