

**PARKS, RECREATION, & BEACHES BOARD MINUTES
CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 28, 2018 – 6:30 P.M.
HOLIDAY PARK SOCIAL CENTER
1150 G. HAROLD MARTIN DR. FL 33304**

Cumulative Attendance

| Board Members | Attendance | Present | Absent |
|----------------------|-------------------|----------------|---------------|
| Bill Schonlau | P | 5 | 0 |
| Bruce Quailey | P | 5 | 0 |
| Brucie Cummings | P | 3 | 2 |
| David Itskovich | A | 3 | 2 |
| Debby Eisinger | P | 4 | 1 |
| Dermot McQuarrie | P | 4 | 1 |
| James Jordan | P | 3 | 2 |
| Jo Ann Smith | A | 3 | 2 |
| Karen Polivka | P | 5 | 0 |
| Marianna Seiler | P | 4 | 1 |
| Marie Huntley | P | 2 | 0 |
| Paul Davidson | P | 5 | 0 |
| Robert Payne | A | 1 | 4 |
| Roy Grimsland | P | 4 | 1 |

Oct 2017 - Sept 2018

As of this date, there are 14 appointed members to the Board, which means 8 would constitute a quorum. It was noted that a quorum was met for the meeting.

Staff

Carl Williams, *Parks & Recreation Deputy Director*
 Chijioke Ezekwe, *CRA Project Manager*
 Donald Morris, *CRA Manager*
 Eric Thomas, *Rec. Programmer II*
 Leona Osamor, *Administrative Assistant*
 Lester Alexander, *Community Program Supervisor*
 Rodrigo Canaval – *Rec. Program Coordinator*
 Thomas Green, *CRA Senior Project Manager*

Public Attendees

John Burns
 John P. Wilkes

Roll Call

Chairperson Debby Eisinger called the meeting to order at 6:35 PM. Roll was called and all stood for the pledge of allegiance. It was determined that a quorum was present.

Approval of Minutes

Motion was made by Bill Schonlau and seconded by Karen Polivka, that the minutes of February 28, 2018 be approved. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

1. Department Update

Deputy Director Mr. Carl Williams informed the board that the new “Spring/Summer 2018 Playbook” had been mailed out and everyone should be receiving their copy by the end of the week.

Mr. Williams informed the board that he had followed up with Fire Chief Timothy Heiser and Chief Ocean Rescue Breck Ballou to determine the position and feasibility of having Thorguard installed on the beach. However, it was noted by Mr. Williams that based on the feedback received there are still concerns regarding the maintenance aspect and possible hazards/liability associated with the evacuation process should this need to be activated.

Mr. Williams informed the board that the City now has an opportunity to paint the South Beach restrooms with a mural. The board was delighted to hear the news and unanimously agreed that it was a great idea.

The board was informed by Mr. Williams that on the next meeting agenda the Merle Fogg Park will be discussed since a request had been received by the Parks and Recreation Department to have the park renamed to Stiles Park. Mr. Williams noted that due to the fact that the information was received late it could not be added to the current agenda due to time constraints.

2. Ferris Wheel Presentation – DC Alexander Park

A presentation was made by Mr. Donald Morris, Mr. Thomas Green and Mr. Chijioke Ezekwe of the Beach CRA regarding the proposed ferris wheel concept for DC Alexander Park. It was noted by Mr. Donald Morris that currently the Beach CRA is considering a few design concepts for the installation of a ferris wheel at DC Alexander Park and is seeking recommendations and feedback from the board regarding those concepts. Mr. Thomas Green informed the board that the City sent out a Letter of Interest for the design, build, maintenance and financial aspects of the ferris wheel concept at DC Alexander Park and confirmed that currently no conceptual drawings for the park has been rendered as yet since the concept is only in its introductory stages. It was also noted by Mr. Green that according to the City

Attorney's office this concept follows the required Public Park and Public/Recreational usage.

Board Discussions

Board member Mr. Dermot McQuarrie stated that he thinks the concept would be a good idea but somewhere else within the City of Fort Lauderdale. Mr. McQuarrie felt that the bigger issue and concern would be with the turtles and their nests because of all the LED lighting that would be a part of the ferris wheel.

Board member Mrs. Karen Polivka stated that over the years both locals and her family have felt that the City has already taken away the beaches, there are limited parking and all she continuously hear from locals are the cries for more green space. Mrs. Polivka also stated that she can remember the topic of DC Alexander Park being discussed in great details in the past where it could include the possibility of introducing a water feature for the kids but not for a ferris wheel. It was noted that Mrs. Polivka also thinks that the park could be designated as another open green space instead.

Board member Mr. Bill Schonlou informed the board that the Santa Monica Pier is known for its ferris wheel attraction and it has become an icon for the City of Santa Monica. Mr. Schonlou stated that from a business/commerce standpoint, the idea is a dynamic one as it would attract a lot of tourism. Mr. Schonlou also stated that even the City of Newport has its own version of attraction at the Balboa Pier.

Board member Mrs. Brucie Cummings stated that the design concept was an atrocious one and felt that the City could look at turning the park into an educational park where visitors can learn more about their native environment.

Board member Mr. Roy Grimsland stated that he didn't want to dismiss the idea so early on in its preliminary stages but felt that maybe any funds profited from such a concept could be used in acquiring more parks and green spaces especially since the park is currently not being used. Mr. Grimsland also felt that the concept would definitely bring more of a tourist attraction to the Beach.

Board member Mr. Paul Davidson stated that with a design structure such as a ferris wheel, it would be well over 200 feet in the air and covered with LED lights but won't be such a good idea especially for the new residents that would occupy the high-rise buildings currently under construction near the park or other residents in close proximity.

Board member Mr. James Jordan stated that the beach area was already too saturated with all the new constructions being taken place.

Board member Ms. Marianna Seiler stated that the concept would definitely be a tourist attraction but felt that when she thought of the City's recreational purposes it doesn't coincide with this conceptual use. Ms. Seiler stated that given the usage of the park in which it was intended for, the concept should be more for the locals/residents in the City to be able to experience its purpose with recreational usage.

Chairperson Mrs. Debby Eisinger stated that it was bad timing for the proposed concept. Mrs. Eisinger also stated that the City currently is faced with too many developmental issues and need to put its focus on finishing other projects that have been started. In particular, Mrs. Eisinger stated that the Fort Lauderdale Aquatic Center (FLAC) is an icon in the City of Fort Lauderdale and attention should be given to restoring this facility instead of installing a ferris wheel.

Motion made by Marianna Seiler and seconded by Bill Schonlou to recommend the concept of further exploring the development on the property of DC Alexander Park. The board unanimously disagrees with the current ferris wheel concept. In a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

3. Budget Overview Presentation

Mr. Carl Williams presented a budget overview for next year's FY19 and shared with the board the current budget amendments being requested by the Parks and Recreation Department.

4. Board Comments

Mr. Bruce Quailey expressed his strong disappointment regarding the City's slow pace and lack of priority in trying to get Thorguard or any other lightning detection system installed on the City's beaches. Mr. Quailey also stated that since there are many new members on the board that are not quite familiar with the topic that he will make arrangements to have a Thorguard representative come to one of the future board meetings to make a presentation and answer any questions.

Mr. Bill Schonlou agreed with Mr. Quailey's proposed action and stated that he will also be conducting some research on Lightning Rods systems to share along with the Thorguard discussions in an attempt to look at all possible options in the solution.

Mr. Dermot McQuarrie expressed strongly that the City needed to separate the Facilities Maintenance and Sanitation Divisions from the Parks and Recreation Department so that the Parks and Recreation Department could focus on the building and maintenance of the parks. Mr. McQuarrie also stated that he felt the City should look into creating a separate department whose sole responsibility would be for the building works and maintenance of all the City's facilities.

Chairperson Debby Eisinger agreed with Mr. McQuarrie on the fact that the Parks and Recreation Department should not be overseeing the Facilities Maintenance and Sanitation Divisions. In addition, Mrs. Eisinger also stated that the decision to have the departments set up in this manner was made by the City Manager and staff who determine the organizational structure of City departments.

Mrs. Karen Polivka informed the board that she received an update regarding the reason why the sidewalk next to the Mangurian Park was being dug up. Mrs. Polivka stated that apparently the sidewalk was encroaching on the boundary of the homeowner and needed to be torn-up and corrected.

Ms. Marianna Seiler informed the board that although the Smoking Bill had recently been approved in the Senate it apparently later died in the House.

Mr. Bruce Quailey stated that he thought it was a great idea for the City to consider cancelling all future Gun Shows that were held at the War Memorial Auditorium.

Mrs. Karen Polivka agreed with the sentiments of Mr. Quailey and stated that he fully supports the City cancelling all future Gun Shows especially since these shows were held at a location that was always in close proximity to kids participating in scheduled sporting activities.

5. Communications to the Commission

Motion made by Karen Polivka and seconded by Marianna Seiler to recommend that the City proceed in not allowing the Gun Shows to be held at the War Memorial Auditorium. In the event that this is not feasible under legal grounds, we recommend the City to ensure that the event is not scheduled during any organized sporting activities. In a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

6. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:25 PM.