



City of Pensacola

222 West Main Street
Pensacola, FL 32502

Meeting Minutes 3 - Draft

Parks and Recreation Board

Thursday, July 15, 2021

8:00 AM

Hagler-Mason Conference Room

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Members of the public may attend the meeting in person. City Council encourages those not fully vaccinated to wear face coverings that cover their nose and mouth.

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 8:06 am.

2. ROLL CALL

Chairperson Hicks read a statement to the public about how they can participate and that the City Council encouraged those present to wear face coverings protecting the nose and mouth.

Present 8 - Chairperson Rand Hicks, Vice Chair Maranda Sword, Renee Borden, Antonio Bruni, David Del Gallo, Gabriela Garza, Leah Harrison, and Michael Wolf

Absent 1 - Alejandra Escobar-Ryan

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the June 17, 2021 meeting were distributed to each board member prior to the meeting. A few extra minutes was given for the members to review.

A motion was made by Vice Chair Sword, seconded by Del Gallo, that this be Approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 8 - Chairperson Hicks, Vice Chair Sword, Bruni, Del Gallo, Garza, Harrison, Wolf, and Borden

Absent: 1 - Escobar-Ryan

3. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Director Cooper brought the following report:

- * He noted the police investigation of the human remains found at Miraflores, to which he could not speak further.
- * Hitzman Park grand reopening will not be on July 24, 2021. The contractor is not ready to turn the project over, so the reopening has been postponed until school has begun.
- * The bids on Kiwanis have come in, so staff is working on that.

- * The Mayor has reached out to the County for assistance in funding the court replacement project at Roger Scott Tennis Center, and we are hopeful.
- * Two playgrounds are going in in the next two weeks, the first at Estramadura, and then at Operto Square.
- * Director Cooper thanked Officer Bell for the significant impact his work has had in improving the safety of our parks.
- * We are hiring staff, especially in landscape maintenance. Tonya Byrd is also hiring for Gull Point. If the budget is approved, Parks and Recreation will have two full-time professionals at every center (e.g., supervisor and programmer). Board member Harrison complimented the amazing work by the staff in charge of summer programming.

Board member Garza raised concerns about unsecured construction materials around Operto and also neighbor complaints about nighttime basketball at the courts were brought to her attention. Discussion about the lighting at the basketball courts followed. Chairperson Hicks asked Director Cooper if next month we could have a presentation about existing basketball facilities.

Deja Dowdell, Marketing Coordinator, answered questions about the website and thanked all for participating in the reopening of Legion Field. She described the department efforts at improving the PlayPensacola website. Board members brought up things they would like to see including project updates, when new playground equipment will be installed, board member's reviews, etc. Coordinator Dowdell will approach Innovation and Technology for possible revamping.

Board member Borden asked about the discovery of human remains at Miraflores. Debra Oliver, a local amateur historian and genealogist, spoke to the board about her research and investigation of the site. She has conducted research on the park and noted that it has been used as a Negro graveyard, among other things. She went into detail on her findings, and she presented several of the articles for review to the board. The remains found at Miraflores are more than 75 years old. Director Cooper made a commitment not to disturb the ground at Miraflores. Member Bruni made the following motion: "I move that the board send a letter to the City Council encouraging them to investigate this issue and cooperate with the University of West Florida."

Director Cooper noted that the lawsuit regarding the temporary restroom at Veterans Memorial Park is ongoing. A meeting is planned to make that facility more accessible to the public.

With respect to Hitzman Park, staff will address a retention pond that may

be contributing to the washout of a sidewalk.

He also noted that we expect to receive a grant for the Blueway Paddling Trail that would run along the bay from Sanders Beach to Baars Park through Bayou Texar with several boat launches.

A motion was made by Bruni, seconded by Borden, that this be Approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - Chairperson Hicks, Vice Chair Sword, Bruni, Del Gallo, Garza, Harrison, and Borden

No: 1 - Wolf

Absent: 1 - Escobar-Ryan

4. STAFF REPORTS

Officer Bell spoke to the problems at Wyer Park and his ongoing efforts to address them. The situation is getting better, and the hours will be changed from current posting to our customary sunrise to sunset. The shrubbery is still about four and a half feet tall, but the officers have a better view of what is going on in the park. Staff would like the shrubbery removed, but the neighbors enjoy the privacy that it gives.

There is a 30-day moratorium on removing the homeless that are encamped under the interstate.

NEW BUSINESS

5. OLD BUSINESS

6. PARK ASSIGNMENTS DISCUSSION

Park Assignment discussions were postponed until another meeting.

7. OPEN FORUM

Hayne Haigler, representing the Roger Scott Tennis Under the Hill League, asked for an update on the design of the tennis courts. Director Cooper mentioned that the construction plans were complete, but he still has not received the drawings. There is a board available for view at the tennis center. Discussion followed about possibly charging a surcharge so that the funding will be available in 30 years when they will need replacing again.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:31.

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