



City of Pensacola  
Parks and Recreation Board  
Approved Meeting Minutes

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June 20, 2019

8:00 am

Whibbs Conference Room

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**Members Present:** Paul Epstein (Chairperson), David Del Gallo, Alejandra Escobar-Ryan, David Forte (left at 8:25), Gabriela Garza, Leah Harrison, Rand Hicks

**Members Absent:** Antonio Bruni, Maranda Sword

**City Staff Present:** Brian Cooper (Parks and Recreation Director), Cheryl Fox (Athletics Superintendent), Bill Kimball (Parks Superintendent), Heidi Thorsen (Assistant to the Director), Tonya Vaden (Marketing Coordinator)

**City Council Present:** Sherri Myers

**Others Present:** Betty Douglas, Dottie Dubuisson, Krista Hobgood, Kelley Martinez

**CALL TO ORDER** - 8:02 by Chairperson Epstein.

**ROLL CALL** - An oral roll call was taken.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Member Del Gallo made a motion to approve the minutes of the April 18, 2019 meeting. Member Hicks seconded. The minutes were approved. One point of clarification re: the insects in parks – due to the number of parks, it is impossible for the Parks Crew to find all of the insect problems in all of the parks, so they rely on 311 and any other notifications they receive. They are handled as soon as the crew is made aware of the issue.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

#### **Naming of Bayview Community Resource Center in honor of J. [Julian Ole] Olsen**

- This is the only naming request received for this facility.
- Several Board members have spoken with citizens, and the citizens want to keep the name as the Bayview Community Resource Center or Bayview Resource Center.
- Even if it gets renamed in honor of Mr. Julian Ole Olsen, people will still refer to it as the Bayview Resource Center.
- Ms. Douglas would still like for it to be named something like the Olsen Bayview Center or some combination that incorporates both Olsen and Bayview in the name.
- Some of the Board members investigated Mr. Olsen to be sure that there is nothing contentious in his past.

- It was mentioned that more public input is needed. Since Bayview Park is a regional park, not only should the neighborhood offer input, but the greater Pensacola area as well. Perhaps City Council would be a better place to get more public input.
- The Board is making recommendations to Council in this matter due to the City ordinance regarding naming of city property. Once a decision is made, backup for the decision will be included in what is presented to Council.
- Chairperson Epstein mentioned that based on the ordinance, the entire center should be named after him, not just a portion thereof.
- In an effort to educate the public of Mr. Olsen's merits, some information needs to be disseminated.
- Member Del Gallo made the following motion:
  - That we do not move forward with the renaming of the Center.**
  - o The motion was seconded by Member Hicks. Discussion followed.
  - o Member Harrison mentioned that if other naming requests for the facility are ever received, that we reconsider naming it after Mr. Olsen.
  - o Ms. Douglas does not feel that just naming part of the center would do him justice since other centers have been named in honor of his peers. She is also not in favor of naming Bayview Senior Center after him since he did not have a part in that center.
- The motion was amended several times, each time followed by a second and discussion. The discussion revolved around naming something significant other than the community center in his honor.
- Member Escobar-Ryan mentioned that there are actually two different issues here and they need to be separated.
  1. Are we renaming the center after one person?
  2. What will be named in honor of Mr. Olsen?
- In response to Member Escobar-Ryan's point, the Board came up with the following motion [in place of the one above]:
  - After considering a naming proposal, we do not recommend renaming the Bayview Community Resource Center, and that this name [Bayview Community Resource Center] should be retained into perpetuity.**
  - o The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.
- Member Del Gallo brought the next motion –
  - That we consider naming something significant in Bayview Park after Mr. Olsen.**
  - o Member Harrison seconded the motion. Motion passed.
  - o Discussion followed. What should be named after him? Even though he did not have any part of the Senior Center it was thrown out as a possibility. Considerable consideration was given to the street leading into the park, but ultimately decided to let the City Council decide what would be deserving of the honor.
  - o This motion will be passed up to City Council, and at their next meeting, Chairperson Epstein and Ms. Douglas will give a presentation regarding the many contributions to Parks and Recreation made by Mr. Julian Ole Olsen.

**NEW BUSINESS****Park Restrooms**

- Due to time constraints, this item will be moved to next month's meeting.

**DIRECTOR/STAFF REPORTS, CORRESPONDENCE, PROJECT UPDATES**

Director Cooper brought the following updates:

- Morris Court improvements are about done. The ribbon cutting should be in mid-July.
- The renovations at Cobb Resource Center are complete. They removed carpet from the library, replaced the gym windows, and repainted.
- Housing has received a grant to make some improvements to Kiwanis Park.
- Bayview Senior Center is progressing nicely.
- The building of Bayview Community Center is going up.
- Terre Verde and Legion Field playgrounds are the next ones to be replaced.
- The YMCA/City land exchange passed Council last Thursday.
- Blues on the Bay this Sunday, movie on Friday.

**OLD BUSINESS****Board Member Park Visitation Program**

- The following parks were presented: Bruce Beach, Community Maritime Park, Cordova Square, Lions Park, Miraflores Park, Operto Square, Parker Circle Neighborhood, Roger Scott Athletic Complex, Semmes Park, Toledo Square.

**Board Meeting Time**

- No matter what time is selected for the meetings, the time will be difficult for the public to attend.
- Ms. Dubuisson asked the Board to consider meeting at 3:00, but not after 5:00. Based on her experience, most of the public attends meeting between 3:00-5:00.
- Council Member Myers boisterously berated the board and mentioned that she will have a Council item on the July agenda requiring this Board to meet between 1:00 and 3:00 in the afternoon.
- Ms. Hobgood recommended possibly varying the times, or have an outreach portal such as Facebook Live or video recording the meetings where citizens can pick what part of the meetings they would like to listen to..
- Chairperson Epstein went around the Board members, and asked if they could make a 3:30 pm meeting. Only two of the remaining six members [David Forte had left by this point in the discussion] could attend the meeting without some sort of "making other arrangements". The majority mentioned that an 8:00 meeting time is best.
- Other ways of engaging the public, informing them of issues the Board discusses, and getting their feedback will be explored.

**OPEN FORUM**

- Ms. Dubuisson thanked everyone for their service. She complained about the restroom and general maintenance of H. T. Wyer Park.
- Council Member Myers was really upset at the length of time that the Board discussed the land exchange with the YMCA.

**ADJOURNMENT** – 9:50 am