

**City of Pensacola****Parks and Recreation Board****Approved Meeting Minutes**

January 16, 2020

8:00 am

Whibbs Conference Room

Members Present: Paul Epstein (Chairperson), Antonio Bruni, Alejandra Escobar-Ryan, David Forte, Gabriela Garza, Leah Harrison, Rand Hicks, and Maranda Sword

Members Absent: David Del Gallo

City Staff Present: Brian Cooper (Parks and Recreation Director), Alex Odee (Athletics Coordinator), Paul Pipes (Volunteer & Outdoor Pursuits Coordinator), Heidi Thorsen (Assistant to the Director), Tonya Vaden (Recreation Superintendent), and Mike Ziarnek (Transportation Planner – Complete Streets)

Others Present: David Handley (PFNWF), David Mitchell (spouse to the President of the Cordova Park on the Bayou Neighborhood Association)

CALL TO ORDER – 8:04 am

ROLL CALL – An oral roll call was taken.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Member Forte made a motion to approve the minutes of the December 19, 2019 meeting. Member Garza made a motion to second. The minutes were approved.

NEW BUSINESS**Blueway Community Paddling Trails**

Director Cooper introduced Coordinator Pipes. He explained that becoming a Blueway Paddling Trail takes a lot of work and requires a State application. Although a lot of work has been done, nothing is firmly in place yet.

Coordinator Pipes brought a presentation explaining the concept. The proposed trail is 9.6 miles, which incorporates all existing City Boat Launches as well as unimproved non-motorized launch points. A Blueway Community promotes eco-tourism, environmental science, and stewardship, and allows for grant writing for things such as invasive species removal, and launch improvements.

The steps to becoming a Blueway Community are – 1. Get a declaration from the Mayor (temporarily set for February 24), 2. Get the trail designated by the Office of Greenways and Trails, part of the Florida Department of Environmental Protection.

So far two public meetings have been held -- a Town hall sponsored by Council Member Hill, and a public input session. The trail will be available for non-motorized boats.

Coordinator Pipes is in the process of forming the working group. The Board felt that one of their members should be a part of the group.

Member Hicks mentioned that probably the most contentious item on the trail is whether or not to include Baars Park. Several of the neighbors of Baars Park do not want to have their park on the map as a launch site. Concerns were raised that there is not enough parking at the Park, impossible water access, and they do not want to damage the already fragile estuary. They do not mind if it is a destination, but do not want it to be a launch site.

In an effort to promote eco-tourism, it was suggested to add hiking/biking trails along the paddling trail. The question was asked about renting paddling boards. This will be included once the new Bayview Resource Center is completed.

Mr. Mitchell is willing to have a member of his group serve as part of the working group. He stressed several points – accessibility to the water from Baars Park is difficult; the neighbors want to be part of the conversation; and they want to keep the environmental integrity of the Park.

Discussion regarding who should serve in the working group ensued. Member Hicks was recommended, but due to him serving as President of CNAPP, it may be perceived as a conflict of interest. Member Bruni volunteered to serve on the working group as a member of the Parks and Recreation Board.

Director Cooper reiterated that the Mayoral proclamation in no way locks in any of the sites on the map.

DIRECTOR/STAFF REPORTS, CORRESPONDENCE, PROJECT UPDATES

Director Cooper brought the following updates:

- We are seeking funding through Council for the Olsen monument.
- At Osceola, there is a plan to create cart paths, and rebuild the gazebo.
- The restrooms at Roger Scott Pool will be renovated prior to swim season.
- Highland Terrace Parking lot plans are going to permitting this week. We had to remove some basketball goals to create more space for the parking lot, but we are moving them around the corner to Callaway Park.
- The old YMCA building at Hitzman Park is $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way down and going fast. There are some minor renovations being made to the disk golf course.
- The playground is installed at Legion Field. We are getting ready to accept bids for the press box and bleachers.
- Bayview Resource Center will be opening in late summer. Coordinator Pipes will be moving his office to the Outdoor Pursuits Center, which will house the rowing association and his outdoor adventure programs.
- The playground at Springdale Park is being removed. The new one will go in next month.
- Tierra Verde Park is about ready to reopen.

- The EPH Lions Club playground has been removed, and a new one will be installed next month.
- Magee Field work is being done. We have done some new irrigation, and now working on getting sod quotes. Eventually a new press box and bleachers will be installed.
- Kiwanis Park is being gutted and rebuilt.
- Bill Gregory restrooms will be renovated soon.
- Hunter Pool building will be torn down and rebuilt. We will operate this summer as we did last summer with the shack and storage building. Next summer we will have a new pool house.
- Durant Park playground is scheduled to come out this month, and a new one go in next month.
- Miraflores is getting a new playground next month where the old one was burned down. We also have a building renovation project going on. In order to be ADA accessible and still keep it historic, we are getting a removable ramp.
- EPH Clubhouse is getting ready to be renovated.
- Bayview Dog Park will be renovated.
- Not necessarily from our budget, but at Wayside East Park, the seawall will be rebuilt at a cost of \$1.6 million.
- The Hollice T. Williams corridor is about to go out for bids. The area will be redesigned, then we will get the money to get the work done.
- At Hitzman Park we now have a sign that explains the soccer field's project.

Athletics Report

Coordinator Odee filled in for Athletics Superintendent Cheryl Fox in presenting her report.

He gave an overview of the staff, facilities, and various programs. He mentioned some new programs including a Youth Flag Football League, Frisbee League, and Wiffle Ball League.

OLD BUSINESS

Board Member Park Visitation Program

The following park was presented: Bayou Texar Boat Ramp

OPEN FORUM

- Dr. Handley mentioned that the fishing club is in its 35th year. The Boy Scout house is being well used. There is now a group of ladies who want to meet there. The introduction to Fly Fishing is kicking off. The cost is \$60.00 for the course, and it includes all of the materials. The class will meet for eight Monday evenings.
- Planner Mike Z mentioned safety improvements at Magee Field. FDOT and the City are looking to change the traffic from one way back to two way. It will take about five years to do so. He also mentioned that the Press box had a break-in. He would like to see some connectivity from low-cost housing to Magee Field, as well as connecting it to Hollice Williams Park.

ADJOURNMENT – 9:17 am