



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

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September 24, 2020

8:00 am

Council Chambers

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**Members Present:** Rand Hicks (Chairperson), Maranda Sword (Vice-Chair), Antonio Bruni, David Del Gallo, Gabriela Garza (left at 9:22), Leah Harrison, and Jarah Jacquay (left at 9:05)

**Members Absent:** Alejandra Escobar-Ryan, and Michael Wolf

**City Staff Present:** Brian Cooper (Parks and Recreation Director) (left at 9:00), Deja Dowdell (Marketing Coordinator) (via Teams), Paul Pipes (Volunteer & Outdoor Pursuits Coordinator), and Heidi Thorsen (Assistant to the Director)

**Others Present:** Phil Nickinson (Pensacola Youth Soccer)

To limit the potential spread of COVID-19, some Board Members could attend by telephonic conferencing (Microsoft Teams), and members of the public had the opportunity to attend and participate only via live stream or phone. This change in format was consistent with Executive Order 20-179 issued by Gov. Ron DeSantis and had been adopted at the direction of Council President Jewel Cannada-Wynn in consultation with the City Attorney. Public participation was available as follows:

Members of the public could attend and participate via live stream and/or phone.

- To watch the meeting live, visit [cityofpensacola.com/428/Live-Meeting-Video](https://www.cityofpensacola.com/428/Live-Meeting-Video).
- To provide input –
  - o For Open Forum, (for items not on the agenda): citizens may submit an online form here <https://www.cityofpensacola.com/ParksInput> beginning at 7:00 A.M. until 8:30 A.M. only to indicate they wish to speak during Open Forum and include a phone number. Staff will call the person at the appropriate time so the citizen can directly address the Parks and Recreation Board using a telephone held up to a microphone.
  - o For agenda items: citizens may submit an online form here <https://www.cityofpensacola.com/ParksInput> beginning at 7:00 A.M. until that agenda item has been voted upon to indicate they wish to speak to a specific item on the agenda and include a phone number. Staff will call the person at the appropriate time so the citizen can directly address the Parks and Recreation Board using a telephone held up to a microphone. Any form received after an agenda item has been voted upon will not be considered.

**CALL TO ORDER – 8:05 AM**

Chairperson Hicks read a message about there being about a one-minute delay when the meeting is viewed via the live stream on the City's website.

**ROLL CALL** – An oral roll call was taken. A quorum was present.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Member Del Gallo made a motion to approve the minutes of the August 20, 2020 meeting. Member Jacquay made a motion to second. The minutes were approved.

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

Director Cooper brought the following updates focusing on storm damage from Hurricane Sally (September 16, 2020), all other projects are on hold for the time being:

- After the storm all hands were on deck to clear the streets. Bill Kimball (Parks Superintendent) took the lead working with other departments. More than 360 trees were cleared from the streets. A debris management company will remove them later.
- During the April 2014 flood, the water ran through the Vickrey Center. The renovations that were done after the flood, worked. The water did come through the gym floors though, so the gym floors will have to be redone, but the doors held back most of the water.
- Hurricane Sally severely damaged two of the clay courts at Roger Scott Tennis Center, and also damaged some others.
- There was some damage to the floor in the big ballroom at Sanders Beach Resource Center due to water coming in under the doors. The floors will need to be redone.
- There was some water damage to Gull Point Resource Center.
- May Center had a little bit of roof damage. Overall the centers really fared well with no trees down on the centers.
- The new Bayview Resource Center sustained no damage, but the Bayview Senior Center received a little bit of water damage.
- About 5 canopy shade structures at playgrounds were lost, and there are many tree issues. The Vickrey Center has opened up for after school, but the gym remains closed. Due to safety, parks will remain closed at this time.
- All of the issues have been given a priority level. Any level 3-5 issues will be handled by the debris management company. Level 1-2 is not reimbursable by FEMA, so they will wait until Park staff is able to get those.
- The golf course was saved from a lot of erosion due to the renovations that had been made due the April 2014 flood. They are working hard to get the back nine holes opened by Saturday.
- The Roger Scott Athletic fields are closed due to being used as a debris staging area.

Vice-Chair Sword asked if there is a size limit to how big the trees can be in order to be picked up. Director Cooper was not sure, it is outside of his area, but he will find out. [Per sanitation, there is no limit. If the citizens can get it to the curb, it will be picked up.]

Member Harrison asked if the centers had been open. They were scheduled to do a partial opening for After School, and a full opening on October 5.

Member Bruni asked about how the repairs will be paid for. Director Cooper mentioned that where possible, the City will seek FEMA reimbursement, otherwise the reimbursement could come from insurance or a self-funded savings.

Member Garza asked if the boardwalk at Sanders Beach will be replaced. Director Cooper mentioned that he will probably look at new plans for it, maybe raise it up.

Some of the centers provided food for low-income and elderly citizens. Council on Aging is not operating so the program has been discontinued for right now. There were some tarp and water distributions at several of the centers, but the supplies were gone in 15-20 minutes. Many places have called to donate and provide help in any way possible. Coordinator Dowdell mentioned that the Council on Aging would be distributing shelf-stable meals at our three locations (Bayview Sr., Fricker, and Cobb). Chairperson Hicks mentioned that when things are safe again, if Director Cooper could use some help, please let the Board know and they will gather some volunteers.

### **Staff Presentation**

#### Paul Pipes – Volunteer and Outdoor Pursuits Coordinator

- There have been some changes to the volunteer programs since COVID; people cannot do as much as before. Since March, over 749 hours have been volunteered, with still more planned. People are volunteering to clean up parks such as Hitzman-Optimist.
- All of the trees in the parks have undergone a quick assessment. Trees have been cleared from the roads. Now levels are being assigned to the remaining tree issues.
- Adopt-A-Spot Memorandum of Understanding has been renewed.
- Many hours are being volunteered without being documented. The Parks and Recreation website is being updated to make it easier to track the hours spent volunteering at parks.
- Coordinator Pipes is responsible for 10 summer camps. Lately the programs have been run out of Sanders Beach, but when the new Bayview Resource Center opens, they will be run from there. He further mentioned that his camps were some of the ones that were not cancelled due to COVID since they meet outside.
- At Mallory Heights 3 two foldable picnic table/bench combinations and six benches are being installed. The goal is to create some trails through the park for citizens to enjoy without damaging the preserves.

Member Jacquay asked if there are any plans for a safe crossing of Scenic Highway to Mallory Heights 3? Coordinator Pipes was not sure, David Forte and Public Works would be better to answer that question.

**NEW BUSINESS****David Forte – SUN Trail Update**

Mr. Forte was not available this month to bring this update, so it will be added to next month's agenda.

**Phil Nickinson – Pensacola Youth Soccer**

- Mr. Nickinson, President of Pensacola Youth Soccer, mentioned that soccer has been around forever. For the past ten years the City's soccer program has been run by Steve Werdung, until this spring when Mr. Nickinson took over so that Mr. Werdung could retire.
- They have now established the soccer program as a non-profit organization.
- They serve children ages four through eighteen, boys and girls, including those with disabilities. If someone is over the age of 13, they can work as a referee. Pensacola Youth Soccer provides training for them.
- Due to COVID, they did not have a spring soccer season.
- Children come from more than 20 zip codes, and all of the City Council districts.
- The uniforms can be used from one year to the next, and handed down from one child to the next.
- The money goes for things such as online processing, insurance, field usage, referees, salary for the league director (which they are interviewing people for the position), clinic coaches, and the City.
- Recent upgrades include offering online registration, online uniform purchases, better communication and advertising, as well as writing down policies and procedures, and conducting background checks on coaches and board members.
- Most of the money that was collected for spring soccer was returned to the families. Based on the limits set by the City, they would like to offer some sort of soccer this fall, and possibly grow to other locations.

Director Cooper mentioned that Pensacola Youth Soccer is a parent-run organization. Everyone is looking forward to getting the soccer fields constructed. The contractor will have until February 18 to construct the three fields, with the rest of the project being completed per the contract.

Chairperson Hicks asked Mr. Nickinson if things such as transportation to the practices, registration costs, etc. are being considered when someone wants to play soccer. Mr. Nickinson mentioned that if someone cannot pay the registration fee, money is available to help cover the fees (similar to a scholarship). They are looking for places to play on the west side of town. Part of having kids on different fields is trying to organize them so parents do not have to go to multiple fields if they have multiple children involved in the program.

Director Cooper mentioned that as demographics change, so will the location of the practice fields. He further mentioned that the \$10.00 fee per child goes to offset the costs of the ball crew, utilities, etc. The fee does not cover all of the City's expenses, but it helps.

**OLD BUSINESS****Board Members and Neighborhood Associations (NA)**

- Member Bruni said that he had attended the Tanyard NA meeting. Quint Studer made a presentation on the old sewer-treatment plant location. The plans include mixed use with retail on the bottom floor, and residential on the floors above it. It was mentioned that there is an issue with some of the parks that were flooding. He will contact Director Cooper about those.
- Member Garza mentioned that she really does not have any spare time to volunteer. She was assigned to the Old East Hill NA meetings. Member Del Gallo mentioned that he would be happy to attend those for her. The other NA she was assigned is still not meeting, so no worries there. She mentioned that her new job has mandatory trainings quite frequently on Thursday mornings. She will figure out what she will do.
- It was mentioned that Member Escobar-Ryan had attended the Cordova Park NA meeting, but she is not at this meeting to give a report.

**Capital Improvement Projects Update**

[None]

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

The following parks were presented: Lavallet, Osceola Golf Course, Terry Wayne East, Vickrey Resource Center

**OPEN FORUM**

- Member Bruni was wondering about some of the concerns he had that he raised when he reported on Woodland Heights Resource Center. He was wondering about if they were addressed or if there were funds allocated to address them. Director Cooper was not available to address this, but Assistant Thorsen did say that Director Cooper will leave enough funds to do a quality project. Member Bruni did want it noted that Director Cooper does a wonderful job.

**ADJOURNMENT – 9:30 AM**