

PARKS & RECREATION BOARD MEETING

August 13, 2019

The regular meeting of the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board was called to order at the Recreation & Aquatic Center at 7:00am on Tuesday, August 13, 2019. Board Members Joy Phillips, Greg Giordano, Dana Suiters, Elizabeth Giordano, Chairman Dave Schrader and staff liaison Elaine Smith were in attendance.

The June 11, 2019 minutes were unanimously approved. (There was no meeting in July.)

OLD BUSINESS:

- Toddler Swings Install – Sims Park – The Toddler Swings have been installed and everyone loves it. Someone carved their initials in the wet surface material and that will need to be removed.
- Sims Park Boat Ramp Project – A BID for design work and permitting, which can be a lengthy process, is in progress. Improvements will include extending the ramp, removing the boulders at the end of it, the restroom, parking area, and ADA sidewalks along the Riverwalk.
- Concert Series Promotional Fans – (distributed) All of the upcoming concerts are listed and a large-print sticker with information about the Winter/Holiday activities on December 21st is on the other side of the fan. (Elaine described in detail the planned activities for the day, which includes the Art Walk (children's art work hung along the walkway), the Florida Orchestra performance at 2pm, visits with Santa, Mullins Music downtown, crafts for the children to make in downtown, and the Johnny Cash tribute band concert in the evening.)
- Questions about Grand Blvd. Park – There's a big mess there; the retention pond is being dug up and is getting worse; want to know what is going on there. Also, trees removed at entry of James Grey Preserve, leaving a stinky muck; when will those be replaced? Elaine said she would find out from Public Works what is going on.

NEW BUSINESS:

- Possible Increase in Summer Camp Fees – Records going back to 2012 indicate there has been no change to camp fees since then. There was a large increase to fees in 2010, which led to low participation in the program. The fees were then changed back to what they are now. A comparison of current fees with nearby County facilities offering Summer Camp showed: Holiday Recreation Complex is \$50/week, and Veteran's Memorial Park Camp cost is \$55/week for a six-week program. PLACE costs \$65/week; which includes on field trip, and one activity each week. The YMCA, which caters to a different clientele, costs \$135/week. The majority of camp participants are non-residents. *Elaine was asked what she has done to keep the camp fees the same, without costing the City additional funding to run the program. She stated that staff salaries were reduced \$1/hr. and additional campers (133) were enrolled in the program this year (33 more than last year). The camp is designed to be a service program rather than make a large profit. Most children (85%) in the area qualify for reduced/free lunch program. The Advisory Board discussed limiting the amount camp fees should be raised, while bringing camp staff pay back up. A recommendation was then made to reinstate camp salaries to what they were in 2018 and raise the camp registration fees \$5/week. There was a unanimous vote of approval for the recommendation.
- Youth Advisory Board Trip to Tallahassee – They saw the trophy room at FSU, shook hands with the Governor, visited the Recreation facility and Courthouse; some stated that their favorite place was the Supreme Court Building. (More details of the trip were discussed.)
- 3D Virtual Video Tour of RAC – KC found a Video-grapier that will film RAC for \$700 (instead of \$ thousands) and is coming this Saturday.
- Special Event Protest Area – Protesters are making their presence known at many special events. Some were even arrested during Main Street Blast. The Police Department and City Attorney are working with Elaine to create a protest area so they may exercise their right to protest without harassing the event attendees.
- Dogs in the Grey Preserve – The recommendation has been made to not allow dogs in the Grey Preserve. The topic may be reconsidered once the new entryway connecting the walking trail with the upper trail is open.
- Sims Park Extended Operating Hours (10:00pm) – The Police Chief has requested the Park hours be extended to 10pm; the park is well-lit and people are using the park. It's easier to enforce keeping people out of the park after 10pm (except during special events, etc.)

SPECIAL EVENTS

- Family Movie Night – August 17 – We will have some Star Wars Lego set giveaways.
- Kids Night Out – This program is starting back up on August 24th; Amazing Race theme this time.
- Toddler Time and Learn & Play programs begin again August 28; will be free for members, but non-members will have to pay a small daily fee.
- Men's Basketball League will be starting up on September 4th.

VOX POP

The meeting adjourned at 7:50am.

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn Marlowe
Secretary

CM:dch