



City of Pensacola

PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD

MINUTES

City of Pensacola
222 W. Main Street
Pensacola, FL
32502

June 18, 2024

10:00 AM

Hagler-Mason, 2nd Floor

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Bruni called the board meeting to order at 10:00 A.M.

ROLL CALL

Members Present: Michael Blankenship, Kristin Brown, Antonio Bruni, Suzanne Lewis

Members Absent: Renee Borden, Leah Harrison, John Jerralds, Jake Renfroe, Kirwan Price

Chairperson Bruni stated there was not a quorum present. No official action will be taken.

OPEN FORUM

John Soule Sr. addressed the board regarding the boardwalk at Bay Bluffs Park. He was involved in building the boardwalk in 1983 that was to keep people and dogs off the bluffs to stop erosion of sand along the shoreline; therefore, he does not recommend having nature trails in the park. He referenced the bait house at the fishing bridge. The site still has an existing sewer line that could be tapped into for restrooms. He also referenced Sanders Beach boat ramp, where he was also involved in the project. He stated the boat ramp is now covered up with sand to allow it to be used as a kayak and paddle board launching area only. He suggested that the city continue to dredge the area and stockpile the sand or use the sand at the new Bruce Beach location.

Chairperson Bruni asked Mr. Soule if he had been out to Bay Bluffs Park. Mr. Soule responded that he had not said it would require an escort. It was blocked off. However, he would welcome meeting someone on-site to look at the boardwalk and take notes on its condition.

Director Heistein commented he would follow up with him and schedule a discussion with the City Engineer on the dredging feasibility.

Adron Chambers addressed the board regarding the quality of the city's ballparks. He is a former professional baseball player. In 2013, he began an organization called SwingChamps and began offering youth baseball camps all over the city. This was a way for him to give back to the community. He has been practicing at Terry Wayne Park for the past three months, on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. He enjoys coaching and loves seeing the reaction of the youth and the development of baseball. He says it is a tough sport that includes life skills, discipline, and team work. He stated he would like to see the community more engaged in baseball with players of all ages being active in the sport as he had seen as a youth growing up in this area. Also, he would like to see that all ballfields are properly maintained.

Member Lewis asked if he had a particular baseball park that he was most interested in getting revived and attracting more young people. Mr. Chambers responded by starting with Terry Wayne Park. It has some maintenance issues.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. 24-580 MINUTES OF THE MAY 21, 2024, PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD

Minutes not approved due to lack of quorum

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

2. 24-581 DIRECTOR'S REPORT PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD

Chairperson Bruni asked board members if they had questions regarding the Director's Report.

Chairperson Bruni asked for clarification regarding park cleanups at D'evereux and Dunmire if it was coordinated by the city or by a neighborhood association. Director Heistein responded it was the park's maintenance staff.

Chairperson Bruni asked regarding the new Florida Statute that requires level 2 background checks for athletic coaches. Will it now go into the new field use lease agreements? Director Heistein responded, Yes, so that everyone is in compliance, we will have to work the new language into the new field use lease agreements. We are waiting for the state to make a decision on the date when it will begin the implementation of the new requirement.

Chairperson Bruni asked regarding the two fenced soccer fields at Htizman Park. One is open where the goals are chained to the fence, making them unusable. Do the goals belong to the City or Pensacola Youth Soccer? If they do belong to the city, may we get them unchained so they can be used. Director Heistein responded he was

unsure of the situation of the goals at the park. He said he would look into it further.

STAFF REPORTS

NEW BUSINESS

3. 24-583 PRESENTATION - PENSACOLA SPORTS - RAY PALMER, PRESIDENT/CEO

Ray Palmer brought before the board a brief overview of Pensacola Sports. Mr. Palmer handed out to board members a flyer with brief details of some of the events that Pensacola Sports is involved with. The organization was founded in 1955. It is the oldest sports commission in the State of Florida and the second oldest in the country behind Indianapolis. Pensacola Sports is a nonprofit organization that host and promotes sports events, sports management, and the sport tourism industries. It represents Pensacola and Escambia County in the sports tourism industry by bringing major events to our community. It partners with Parks and Recreation Departments to offer a variety of different services. Mr. Palmer travels around the country to learn best practices and see best practices and share those practices with the directors of the city and county of the Parks and Recreation Department.

Chairperson Bruni asked how Pensacola Sports becomes involved in the sports that it sponsors. Mr. Palmer responded that they are a clearinghouse of means and information. The organization runs no leagues. Grant funding is available for sports events if the event benefits the community.

Member Lewis suggested hosting a round table maybe twice a year for the public. Mr. Palmer responded he would be happy to host a round table and work with the department to facilitate that.

4. 24-582 PARK AMENITY REQUEST - GARDEN OF PEACE AND HOPE WALL

Assistant Parks and Recreation Director, Tonya Byrd introduced Lavon Brown, who is requesting the approval of a monument/memorial wall to be placed in the Garden of Peace and Hope located at Corinne Jones Park. Ms. Brown was accompanied by Alyson Yarbough Clay. Ms. Brown stated she had been working on the Garden of Peace and Hope since 2014. She came before the board in 2022 when she requested the approval for naming the garden. This monument will be a monument/memorial wall that represents all who have been loved and lost. She shared that funding had finally been raised for the design and installation and by adding the monument/memorial wall, it would make the garden project complete.

Member Brown asked if a monument/memorial wall had been part of the original plan.

Ms. Brown responded yes.

Director Heistein asked what the inscription would say on the monument/memorial wall. Ms. Brown responded it would say the Garden of Peace and Hope and a list of sponsors on the bottom in silver and gold.

Chairperson Bruni asked if funding was secured for it. Ms. Brown responded, yes it is paid in full.

Chairperson Bruni commented that the board did not have quorum, but the board members who were present gave the recommendation for the city council to approve.

Member Lewis suggested that the minutes should reflect that the board members present recommend that the project be completed.

5. 24-584 PARK AMENITY REQUEST - "LEARNING TO FLY" SCULPTURE

Holly Benson addressed the board regarding the request for the approval of an art sculpture "Learning to Fly" that she wishes to donate to the City to be placed in Bartram Park. In the past, she donated other art sculptures to the City that have been placed in Bartram Park. She stated that beautiful art adds to the quality of our city.

Chairperson Bruni asked if there was a reason for the art to be placed in Bartram Park. Ms. Benson responded she had served in the Florida House of Representatives and a group had organized a temporary public art exhibition in Bartram Park. Some of her leftover campaign funds were used to purchase one of the art sculptures, and it was donated to the City. Bartram Park became the destination park, so we wanted to continue to add art sculptures in this park.

Member Lewis inquired about the number of art sculptures in the park. Ms. Benson named three other art sculptures, so this would make four.

Ms Benson shared with the board she had previously worked with city staff and, with other art leaders in the community, to create an inventory of all the arts. City staff created ArtVenture Pensacola, which is a website that features all the artwork and its location and background history.

<https://storymaps.arcgis.com/collections/09a96d2a83e549248237b7929e92868c?item=1>

Member Brown inquired if there were QR codes on the art sculptures. Ms. Benson responded that there were security issues, so at this time, no, but maybe it will be looked into again.

In Ms. In Benson's conclusion, she thanked the board and stated that her understanding of the board not making a recommendation and there were no objections that this would be on the agenda at the July meeting, and she would update everyone with the

installation date.

6. 24-579 DISCUSSION - BOARD MEMBER PARK EVALUATIONS

Chairperson Bruni started the park evaluation discussion by stating that when he first came on board, each member had 10 or 11 parks assigned to them to review and comment at the beginning of the board meetings on its needs or repairs. During Covid, the board had gotten away from reporting, so he wanted to put this back out for discussion to see if this is something the board would want to bring back and continue.

Member Lewis recommended waiting until a broader number of members are present and also to see the results of the RFP Facilities Assessment Report to be more informed, which would give more information on what to look at.

Member Brown and Member Blankenship support the recommendation waiting for the assessment.

Member Brown shared with the board that the Belmont Devilliers Neighborhood Association had worked with Council Person Patton to clean up Wyer Park.

Chairperson Bruni shared with the board a packet that contained the historical background history of the city parks.

OLD BUSINESS

OPEN FORUM

ADJOURNMENT

11:42