



RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD
September 14, 2022 Meeting Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 1:30 p.m. by Casey Van Rysdam, Chair.

Attendees

Recreation Advisory Board (RAB) Members present: Casey Van Rysdam, Chair; Brad Long, Vice Chair; Bill Bowen; Deb Chapin; Marty McEachean

Absent: Harold Dockins; Lauren Watkins

Also present: Commission Paul Waldron; Assistant County Administrator Sarah Taylor; Ryan Kane, Director; Jamie Bacarri, Assistant Director; Teddy Meyer, Recreation Facilities Manager; Diane Gorski, Project Specialist

Long moved to approve the August meeting minutes, seconded by Chapin. Approved 5/0.

There were no Public Comments

Reports

Casey Van Rysdam, Chair mentioned that he and staff had spent time working on the 3-5 year strategic plan and would continue to do so. He brought up the Bert Watson Memorial plaque and stated that he and Jamie Baccari had come up with some language for the sign that included the dates he served on the Recreation Advisory Board and Northwest Communications Tower Citizens Advisory Board. Baccari read the language aloud. She said that it had been provided to the Creeks Athletic Association Board and that they were going to add the dates Watson served on the Creeks Athletic Association Board and that the sign would include an etching of Watson's face and be hung on the Concession Stand at Mills Field. Chair requested that a member from the Growth Management Division provide a presentation explaining the policies and procedures of the Land Development Code. He said that the RAB needs to understand how developers can add 1,000s of homes to an existing development without having to add recreation space. He declared that the housing boom was adversely affecting citizens access to parks and recreation spaces. Kane stated that he would contact Growth Management and arrange this presentation at a later RAB meeting.

Commissioner Paul Waldron reminded everyone of the final Budget Hearing on September 20, 2022.

New Business

Teddy Meyer, Recreation Facilities Manager introduced Sheldon York from the Police Athletic League (PAL). A youth athletic organization that partners with St. Johns County who provided an overview of the organization that reaches over 3,000 youth and the future 40 acre athletic facility with baseball and multipurpose fields to be built on Alan Nease Road in Elkton. He mentioned that PAL was partnering with Flagler College to provide a track at the new facility.

Meyer gave an overview of each of the FY 23 TDT CAT III Sports Event Grant Applicants before they presented. Grant awards are contingent upon approval of the FY 2023 budget. Chair reminded the grant applicants that they would each have 5 minutes to present and that questions from the RAB would follow.

Brian Huether and Willie Savoie provided a Game ON Triathlon presentation that included the history of the organization. They requested \$10,000 for the event scheduled for October 9, 2022 at Micklers Landing. Huether and Savoie fielded questions from the RAB. The footprint of the event and impact on the local economy was discussed. Long motioned to award \$5,000 to the event with a second by McEachean. Approved 5/0 contingent upon FY23 budget approval.

Meyer reviewed the American Junior Golf Association (AJGA) grant request for \$7,500 for the October 7 – 10, 2022, Billy Horschel Junior Championship event being held at the Palencia Club Golf Course. He explained that this was an annual event and that this year features 78 boys & girls aged 12-19 from all over the country and overseas. Discussion relating to the event followed. Long motioned to grant AJGA \$7,500 for the event and Bowen seconded the motion. Approved 5/0 contingent upon FY23 budget approval.

Angel Natal of Perfect Game Tournaments provided details about the October 21-23, 2022 & November 4-6, 2022 tournaments. He reviewed previous tournaments and expressed the organization's appreciation of being

able to hold tournaments in St. Johns County. Perfect Game requested \$7,500 for each tournament and explained that the grant money would be applied to the county field and maintenance fees charged. The value of the tournaments, impact on tourism, hotel stays, and attendance was discussed.

- Motion by Long to grant \$7,500 to the October Perfect Game Tournament grant request, seconded by McEachean. Approved 5/0 contingent upon FY23 budget approval.
- Motion by Long to grant \$7,500 to the November Perfect Game Tournament grant request, seconded by Bowen. Approved 5/0 contingent upon FY23 budget approval.

Mark Berman representing PXG Women's Match Play Championship provided information about the organization. He shared a video advertisement for social media, and a presentation for the November 1-6, 2022 tournament. Discussion relating to the tournament ensued. The Chair requested an updated economic impact statement from the 2021 event. He stated that the RAB had not had enough time to review the current request and that it would be placed on the October 12, 2022 RAB agenda for a vote and then on to the Tourist Development Council on October 17, 2022 for final approval.

Tony Cutright representing the Florida Georgia Pickleball Classic at Treaty Park on October 26-31, 2022 gave a presentation and provided background and details about the organization. He explained the sport, its steady growth and continued interest in pickleball for all age groups. The RAB discussed the sport, the tournament and its impact on the tourism industry. Motion by Chapin to allocate \$8,000 to the October tournament, seconded by Long. Approved 5/0 contingent upon FY23 budget approval.

Felipe Muñoz, representing PRIME Soccer Club provided information about the Prime Soccer Cup tournament scheduled for October 8-9, 2022. He expressed gratitude for being added as a youth sports partner with St. Johns County Parks and Recreation. He explained how quickly the club was growing and the need for field space. Discussion relating to the economic impact to St. Johns County was had by all. The Chair expressed concern over the hotel stays being in Duval County. RAB discussed the need for hotels in the NW part of the county. Commissioner Waldron mentioned the importance of organizations providing a positive economic impact for St. Johns County. Opportunities and options relating to the hotel stays and possible solutions were discussed. It was advised that Muñoz work with Meyer to obtain local hotel discounts for the tournament goers. The Chair stated that he was not opposed to supporting a partner group and that this was an opportunity to help them grow. Motion by Long to allocate \$7,500 to the Prime Soccer Club tournament in October, seconded by McEachean. Approved 5/0 contingent upon FY23 budget approval.

Old Business

Meyer provided an update on TDC CAT III Sports Event Grant Application Portal Options. He stated that staff is waiting for budget approval 10/1 to connect with the Culture Council to connect on their new portal project called FOUNDANT.

Staff Reports

Director Ryan Kane:

- Reviewed the results of the public input from the Cornerstone Park Public Meeting.
- Provided an update on the Shore Drive Trail and mentioned that there would be a meeting with the residents in October.
- Explained that the Treaty Park improvements were still under discussion and that the residents suggestions were being considered.
- Announced that the golf course was slated for opening in Mid November and that the club house was waiting for doors to ship and be installed so that the Certificate of Occupancy can be obtained.
- Invited the RAB to the ribbon-cutting at Flagler Estates Community Center on Friday, September 16, 2022 at 9 a.m.

Board Member Reports

Brad Long, Vice Chair gave an update of the Park Foundation and stated that they would soon be actively seeking an Executive Director.

Meeting was adjourned at 3:35 p.m.