1st DRAFT MEETING MINUTES
CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE
PARKS, RECREATION AND BEACHES ADVISORY BOARD MEETING
MILLS POND PARK
2201 NW 9th AVENUE
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 26, 2024 – 6:30 P.M.

Cumulative Attendance

Board Members	Attendance	Present	Absent
Alex Collazo	A	5	2
Ruchel Coetzee	A	6	1
Caleb Gunter, Chair	P	6	1
Mary Peloquin	P	6	1
Charlie Leikauf	P	7	0
Solomon Schoonover	P	1	0
Zillah Tarkoe	P	6	1
Idan Eckstein	A	5	2
Joy Oglesby	P	5	2
Marta Reczko	P	4	0
Barbara Magill	P	5	2
Samantha Sisler	P	2	0
Stacy Ritter	A	0	1

Oct 2023 - Sept 2024

As of this date, there are 13 appointed members to the Board, which means 7 would constitute a quorum. A quorum was present.

Staff
Amy Jean-Baptiste -- *Deputy Director of Parks and Recreation*
Carl Williams – *Director of Parks and Recreation*
Angela Salmon – *Assistant to the City Manager*
Leana Suarez – *Senior Administrative Assistant*
Patricia SaintVil-Joseph – *Assistant City Attorney*
Amanda Foor, *Assistant to Commissioner John C. Herbst*

Others
Brooke Mosier - *Associate VP, Colliers*
Ken Krasnow, *Vice Chairman of Institutional Investor Services, Colliers*
Craig Batzel, *President, Bal Harbor HOA*
Karen Cruitt, *Recording Secretary, Prototype-Inc.*

Pledge of Allegiance
Chair Gunter led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chair Gunter congratulated the Florida Panthers and welcomed two new Board members.

Approval of the April 25, 2024, Meeting Minutes

Motion was made by Charlie Leikauf and seconded by Alex Barbara Magill, to

approve the April 25, 2024, meeting minutes, as distributed. In a voice vote, the motion passed 9-0.

1. Department Update (Carl Williams and Amy Jean-Baptiste)

Ms. Jean-Baptiste provided an update on the following upcoming events: Florida Panthers Parade, July Spectacular, Starlight Musicals at Holiday Park, Concert Summer Jamz, and Movie in the Park. Additionally, she mentioned a playground ordinance would be brought to the City Commission in August, prohibiting adults 18+ from the play areas unless accompanied by a child.

Mr. Williams discussed the dog park rules from the previous City Commission meeting and noted more investigation was needed. Also, the City Commission is on break during July. The next scheduled City Commission meeting would be held in August.

Chair Gunter asked if the Board would review the ordinance prior to the City Commission meeting. Ms. Jean-Baptiste agreed to send the draft ordinance to the Board.

2. Update on Bal Harbour Village Plat - 2201 NE 19 Street - B-1 Parcel Park Acquisition (Brooke Mosier)

Mr. Ken Krasnow, Vice Chairman of Institutional Investor Services Colliers, introduced himself to the Board. He began his presentation and noted the property was located in District 1 and just over 19,000 square feet. The owner appraised the property at $1.74M but the average of the City's appraisals was $1.18M. He noted the price under contract was $1.74. He explained the owner purchased the entire 85,000 square foot lot on September 22, 2023 for $6.8M and currently improved with a church. The parcel was proposed as a commercial lost with an office building and seven residential lots. This acquisition would replace the commercial portion with open space. He displayed images of the gate, which are owned by the City of Fort Lauderdale, and confirmed the entrance to the park would be before the security gate, providing unimpeded public access, which was an issue the Board requested to have investigated. He explained the gate was not secure and the park was clearly delineated before any security access.

Mr. Leikauf inquired about the average price per square foot for commercial property. Mr. Krasnow acknowledged he lacked specific comparable for the area but assured that the price was within the market range. Mr. Leikauf voiced his concern, pointing out the market price was around $61 per square foot, while this agreement was set at approximately $90 per square foot. He also highlighted the issue of insufficient green space in the area.

Mr. Krasnow explained the owners plan to build a commercial office building on the site if the acquisition does not move forward.

Mr. Leikauf commended the nearby homeowners for attending the meeting.

Ms. Peloquin asked if the entrance to the park would be on the west side of the gate. Mr. Krasnow affirmed.

Ms. Oglesby inquired about the additional cost to create a park beyond the initial $1.7 million. Mr. Williams explained the bond dollars were designated solely for acquisition, with no current plans for development.

Ms. Oglesby raised concerns about an entrance that seems closed to the public. She recommended adding signage to clearly indicate it is a public park and suggested installing a sidewalk at the entrance for better accessibility.

A brief discussion followed about the acquisition. Mr. Williams mentioned while trash cans and park benches would be added, no other amenities were planned.

Mr. Leikauf asked whether the development would build a wall to separate the residential and commercial areas.

Mr. Craig Batzel, President of Bal Harbor HOA, outlined the planned security measures, which include installing cameras and arranging for a police detail. He added it was assumed the developer would attempt to separate the residential area. He said they would be open to well-designed park signage.

Ms. Tarkoe expressed concern about the price. Mr. Krasnow noted the land was not for sale, but Colliers brought the opportunity to purchase directly to the property owner.

Ms. Amanda Foor, Assistant to Commissioner Herbst, stated there were several meetings with the property owner and the charter permits an increase in offer up to a certain amount. She also reminded the Board the price was approved by the City Commission. Mr. Williams confirmed both Commissioner Herbst and Commissioner Glassman had remaining balances for land acquisitions.

Chair Gunter agreed the price was high and wondered if the City Commission would reconsider.

Mr. Krasnow discussed the challenging real estate market, emphasizing the necessity of paying premiums for properties that are not currently on the market.

Mr. Schoonover inquired whether the developer needed any specific restrictions or special considerations. Mr. Krasnow indicated that the purchase covenant specified the area would be designated as a park.

In response to Mr. Leikauf's question, he noted Colliers does not generally bring a property forward to be considered until it was under contract.

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Mr. Leikauf continued to voice concern about price but noted it might be the best option with the current market conditions.

Ms. Foor contributed comments regarding neighborhood-specific pocket parks, sparking a discussion. Mr. Williams emphasized the goal during park acquisitions is to provide parks accessible to the community within a 10-minute walk.

Discussion ensued about green space and zoning, emphasizing an office building would be a concrete disaster. Mr. Leikauf proposed relocating the 10-15 royal poinciana trees to the park, a suggestion Mr. Williams acknowledged.

Ms. Reczko expressed agreement with previous concerns regarding price and inquired about the role of Colliers. She noted commercial development would generate tax revenue and a park would require security and maintenance. Mr. Krasnow clarified Colliers serves as the City's real estate consultant and elaborated on their strategic approach. Ms. Foor made it clear the City's intent for the property did not include commercial purposes, underscoring their focus on utilizing $30 million in bond funding to develop parks in underserved areas.

Chair Gunter asked about burials on the church grounds. Mr. Krasnow confirmed an assessment would be done.

Chair Gunter welcomed additional public speakers.

Mr. Douglas Fulcher spoke about his proximity to the property and stressed a preference for a park. He expressed concern about his property value if commercial was built on the property.

Mr. Norby Belz encouraged support of the acquisition, noting green spaces are the heart of neighborhoods. Additionally, he recommended it be immediately zoned as a park.

Ms. Lara Geselbracht spoke about the significance of green space for psychological wellness, particularly children.

Ms. Bonnie Gross voiced her support for the park acquisition, expressing confidence it would serve as a public park accessible to all, not just residents of Bal Harbour.

The Campbell Family expressed their support for purchasing the property, acknowledging costs have increased since the onset of Covid.

Two additional speakers were called upon but previously departed the meeting.

Chair Gunter noted all 56 people from the public in attendance were in favor.

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Motion was made by Solomon Schoonover and seconded by Barbara Magill, to approve the acquisition at the purchase price of $1.74M. In a roll call vote, the motion passed (8-1), with Zillah Tarkoe voting in opposition.

3. Bass Park District 3 Land Acquisition Funds – Carl Williams

Mr. Williams summarized the reallocation, noting Bass Park needs $600K in order to move forward.

Motion was made by Charlie Leikauf and seconded by Mary Peloquin, to approve reallocation of $600K from the Carter Park Acquisition and Improvement project in District 3 to the Bass Park project. In a roll call vote, the motion passed (9-0).

Ms. Oglesby asked the affect on Carter Park project. Mr. Williams stated there is an $8M shortage and they are awaiting grant funding responses. He explained the shortage was due to construction costs. Discussion ensued about funding and signature parks.

In a roll call vote, the motion passed (9-0).

Motion was made by Joy Oglesby and seconded by Barbara Magill, to approve $600K from District 3 acquisition fund for the Bass Park improvement project. In a roll call vote, the motion passed (9-0).

4. Update to Park Rules and Regulations – Rules 4.9

Mr. Williams mentioned the language concerning dog parks and tents on City property was too restrictive so it was brought back to the Board for reconsideration.

Assistant City Attorney SaintVil-Joseph further explained the challenges with the previously proposed language.

Chair Gunter suggested tents only during the daytime and must be removed at sunset. Assistant City Attorney SaintVil-Joseph noted the beach was technically a park and language could be added to adhere to park hours. Mr. Williams stated park hours are 6:00 A.M. – 9:00 P.M.

Discussion ensued about the intent of the rules and regulations, enforcement, and overnight camping.

Assistant City Attorney SaintVil-Joseph indicated that more research needed to be completed.

The Board agreed to table the item.

5. New Business (Caleb Gunter)

Ms. Oglesby if the promotional flag on the beach promoting The Grove could be a source of income. Mr. Williams confirmed he would look into it.

In response to Ms. Magill's comment about people selling items in the beach parking lot, Mr. Williams stated that no selling should occur without a permit.

Chair Gunter stated the City Commission rejected dog parks within all parks and whether a communication should be sent with their unanimous recommendation.

Mr. Williams clarified that the City Commission directed the Board to engage with the community to identify specific parks where leashed dogs would be allowed.

Ms. Peloquin argued that the City Commission was overcomplicating the issue with too many rules.

Mr. Williams reiterated the City Commission's desire to identify specific parks where leashed dogs would be allowed. He also expressed concern about enforcement, noting that 12 park rangers are responsible for managing 112 parks.

A discussion ensued regarding the City Commission's direction, which included engaging with homeowner associations, proposing new language, and outlining the next steps. Mr. Schoonover suggested a potential compromise of issuing a letter to civic associations.

Mr. Williams emphasized the directive to engage directly with the homeowner associations.

Ms. Jean-Baptiste noted that July is Parks and Recreation Month, which would include a proclamation issued by the City Commission. She also mentioned that the next meeting would be held in August.

6. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:57 P.M.

[Minutes prepared by TBaclawski, Prototype-Inc.]

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