

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PARKS AND RECREATION
ADVISORY BOARD

North Collier Regional Park
15000 Livingston Road
Naples, Florida 34109

March 17, 2021

LET IT BE REMEMBERED, the Collier County Parks and Recreation Advisory Board in and for the County of Collier, having conducted business herein, met on this date at 2:00 P.M. in REGULAR SESSION via hybrid in-person and video conference attendance at Immokalee Community Park, Community Center, 321 N. 1st Street, Immokalee, Florida 34142, with the following members participating:

CHAIRMAN:	Mr. Edward "Ski" Olesky
VICE-CHAIRMAN	Mr. Phil Brougham
	Ms. Mary Bills, Advisory Board Member
	Mr. Paul DeMarco, Advisory Board Member
	Ms. Rebecca Gibson-Laemel, Advisory Board Member
	Ms. Kristina Heuser, Advisory Board Member

ALSO PRESENT:

Mr. Barry Williams, Director, Parks and Recreation
Ms. Jeanine McPherson, Assistant Director, Parks and Recreation
Ms. Annie Alvarez, Regional Manager, Parks and Recreation
Mr. Ayoub Al-Bahou, Principal Project Manager, Facilities Management
Mr. Bernardo Barnhart
Mr. Dave Closas, Senior Project Manager, Facilities Management
Ms. Olema Edwards, Regional Manager, Parks and Recreation
Mr. James French, Department Head, Public Services Division
Mr. Said Gomez, Supervisor, Immokalee Sports Complex
Dr. Frank Nappo, Immokalee CRA
Mr. Brian Owen, Park Supervisor, Donna Fiala Eagle Lakes Community Park
Mr. Miguel Rojas, Jr., Administrative Assistant, Parks and Recreation
Mr. Robert Strommen, Managing Partner, ENCP/Veteran's Park Pickleball Complex
Mr. Manny Tournon, Soccer Pit Cobras

I. Call to Order

II. Pledge of Allegiance and Invocation

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited, and a moment of silence observed.

III. Approval of the Agenda

Mr. Brougham entered a motion to approve the March 17, 2021 meeting agenda. Ms. Gibson-Laemel seconded the motion. All members were in favor. The motion was carried.

IV. Approval of Meeting Minutes – January 20, 2021

Mr. Brougham entered a motion to approve the January 20, 2021 meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Ms. Gibson-Laemel. All members were in favor. The motion was carried.

V. Public/Board Comments

+Mr. Bernardo Barnhart addressed PARAB to discuss field capacity issues in Immokalee. The many benefits of athletics were noted, for both adults and children, with heavy field use by all age groups within the community. Mr. Barnhart requested consideration of the construction of additional fields to address the capacity deficit. Commissioner McDaniel suggested that a study be done of current usage of available fields to justify potential taxpayer funding of additional fields. Mr. Williams noted that data on field utilization could be presented at the next meeting for review.

+Dreamland Park, 411 9th Street South: Dr. Nappo addressed PARAB to suggest that Parks Staff meet with School Board officials to discuss removal of a fence on the property to allow public access to the little league field. As a member of the Immokalee CRA, Dr. Nappo offered to arrange a tour of the site for interested PARAB members. Mr. Williams stated that the property is leased to the county and is currently used for “drop-in” soccer play. Ms. Alvarez noted previous plans to improve the green space, which failed to move forward for a variety of reasons. Ms. Alvarez further noted property availability of a site previously considered for purchase. Mr. Williams noted the opportunity for improvement of Dreamland Park and will report findings to PARAB.

+It was noted that that hours of operation and fee schedules have been standardized across all County fitness centers.

VI. Capital Projects Update

+Big Corkscrew Island Regional Park: The total cost for Phase I (north side of the park) is \$45M, with construction being done by Astra Construction Services. Completion of Phase I, which includes ball fields and soccer fields is scheduled for April 2021, with Phase II (south side of the park) scheduled for completion in July 2021. Phase I includes two Astra turf soccer fields, 2 Bermuda grass softball fields, concession stand, pavilions, and a dog park. Qualite sports lighting is being utilized to reduce light spillage to surrounding residential areas. The park will feature a robust landscaping design surrounding the perimeter of the property, as well as within the park for beautification.

Phase II (south of the ballfields) includes two basketball courts, six pickleball courts, two tennis courts, fitness pavilion, concessions building, aquatic center with 4 pools, playground, community center, event lawn, and pavilions located throughout. The aquatics center is currently under construction and will consist of a family pool, competition pool, wading pool, and a slide tower pool. The community center will offer daycare, multipurpose rooms, as well as a platform stage which will open to the event lawn. A National Fitness Campaign outdoor fitness court will be installed adjacent to the sports courts.

Ms. Gibson-Laemel inquired as to whether there were distance standards observed when planting oak trees near sidewalks and roadways. Mr. Closas noted that the landscaping design was created by a landscape architect and that there are planting standards which are observed to mitigate the potential for damages from root growth. Mr. French noted that consideration will be given to this issue with future development.

+Immokalee Aquatics Center: Funding has been appropriated for renovation of county aquatics facilities, including at Golden Gate and Immokalee. A Principal Project Manager has been selected to oversee the projects, currently developing the scope for the Immokalee Sports Complex renovation, with work anticipated to begin in the fall, with reopening in summer 2022.

VII. New Business

a. Introduction of Deputy County Manager and Public Services

Department Head:

+ Mr. James French introduced himself as the newly appointed Department Head of the Public Services Division. Mr. French is a native of Collier County, working many years in the private sector and most recently, working in the Collier County Growth Management Department for 17+ years.

+Mr. Dan Rodriguez, Deputy County Manager, was unable to attend the PARAB meeting.

- b. **Introduction of Advisory Board Members:** Introductions were made of new Advisory Board members, Mr. Paul DeMarco and Ms. Kristina Heuser, with Advisory Board appointments approved by the Board of County Commissioners.
- c. **Review Advisory Board Terms:** A copy of Advisory Board members' terms was shared. It was noted that Mr. DeMarco and Ms. Heuser's appointments to the Board were to fill recent vacancies, with completion of these terms in December 2021, at which time renewal will be required. Advisory Board appointments are valid for four years.
- d. **Future Advisory Board Selection Process:** Mr. Brougham noted a suggestion was made by Commissioner LoCastro that Advisory Board candidates be considered more carefully than with the standard County application for Board membership. Mr. Brougham suggested possible modification of the existing application process for the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board and noted being in favor of a requirement of an onsite interview of candidates to gauge reasons for interest in Board membership. Ms. Gibson-Laemel recommended applicant attendance at a PARAB meeting to determine whether there was still an interest to proceed with membership application. Also, that the system for vote be modified to allow additional time for Advisory Board members to fully consider applicants after meeting attendance and onsite interview. The suggestion was made to study the applicant process followed by other Advisory Boards. Ms. Bills concurred that modification of the applicant interview process and vote is necessary, allowing for additional time for deliberation, as well as a private vote, with applicant notification of the results later. Mr. Williams stated that a review of potential revisions to the applicant process would be pursued, with recommendations to be shared with PARAB for review.
- e. **Review Alcohol Policy:** The alcohol permission policy was reviewed for the benefit of new Advisory Board members. Mr. Olesky suggested that preapproved alcohol permission at recurring events be brought back before the Advisory Board for consideration, following a change in leadership of the requesting organization.
- f. **'Eat, Laugh & Cheers by the Lake' alcohol permission:** Mr. Owen addressed PARAB to request permission to sell beer and wine at the "Eat, Laugh & Cheers" special event at Sugden Regional Park on Saturday, April 17, 2021. The event is hosted by Collier Parks and Recreation and will feature live music, DJ, food, drinks, yard games and a special appearance by a local comedian, Mr. Josh Pray.

A motion was entered by Ms. Gibson-Laemel to allow the sale of beer and wine at the "Eat, Laugh & Cheers" special event to be held at Sugden Regional Park on Saturday, April 17, 2021. Mr. Brougham seconded the motion. All members were in favor. The motion was carried.

- g. NPC ENCP Member Party alcohol permission:** Mr. Strommen addressed PARAB to request permission to sell beer and wine at a member event scheduled to be held at East Naples Community Park on Saturday, May 1, 2021. The "Sorry to See You Go" event will feature a member pickleball tournament in the morning, followed by a party at the Championship courts. The event will be catered by 360Market, who will provide staffing, cleanup, appropriate insurance, and liability coverage for the event. All County guidelines would be followed for the event. Mr. Williams noted Parks Staff support of the event as a value-added benefit for members.

Ms. Bills entered a motion to allow the sale of beer and wine at the "Sorry to See You Go" member event, scheduled to be held on May 1, 2021 at East Naples Community Park. Mr. Brougham seconded the motion. All members were in favor. The motion was carried.

h. Immokalee Update:

Immokalee Sports Complex: Mr. Gomez addressed PARAB to detail the extensive measures taken during the COVID-19 pandemic to ensure maintenance, cleanliness, and public safety at the Immokalee Sports Complex. The many amenities available at the Sports Complex were highlighted, which include a teen room, indoor basketball and volleyball, futsal court, three multipurpose fields, fitness center, patio space, heated lap pool, activity pool, locker room with showers, indoor/outdoor rental space. The extensive programming at the Sports Complex was also discussed, with varied activities available year-round. The robust adult men's soccer league consists of 12 teams and 300+ players. Participating partners were highlighted and include Fit2Run, NCH Children's Coalition, Immokalee Chamber of Commerce, Seminole Casino Hotel, Benison Center, Immokalee CRA, and Miracle University After School Program. The many upgrades and renovations at the Sports Complex were noted, including the fitness center, main building, basketball gymnasium, activity pool, lap pool, restrooms, teen room, and parking lot lighting. A \$2.1M grant has been awarded for roof and HVAC system replacement, as well as for upgrading the building to storm wind resistance standards. Senior Program Leaders also detailed efforts in coordinating local volunteers to participate in a scheduled Earth Day cleanup campaign at the park. The effort is supported by local community partners.

Immokalee Community Park: The many facility amenities and available programming options were discussed, including a new playground which was installed in August 2020. The several local neighborhood parks were highlighted, including Airport Park, Tony Rosbough Park, and the Pepper Ranch Campground. Assistance is provided by local community partners; Kiwanis of North Naples, Cocolvia of Immokalee, and Immokalee Little League Youth Softball and Baseball.

Immokalee South Park/Zocalo Park: Facility amenities and programming options were highlighted, which includes the successful afterschool, preschool, and VPK programs, virtual learning, room/outdoor space rentals, summer camp, and special events. Community partners include the Immokalee CRA and Mr. JC Jackson, NFL player.

Ms. Alvarez expressed thanks to her Staff and to participating partners for ongoing support.

- i. **Soccer Pit Cobras:** The Soccer Pit Cobras is a club whose mission is to advance leadership, scholarship, and teamwork through a structured soccer program that requires academic achievement, encourages parental involvement in their child's activities, and teaches technical skills, integrity, respect, and promotes self-worth. The club has participated in competitive travel programs, competing, and placing in state, regional, and national competitions.

Mr. Manny Touron, President of the Immokalee Soccer Pit Cobras Club, addressed PARAB to discuss soccer field maintenance issues at the Immokalee Sports Complex. There are three soccer fields available for play in Immokalee, however two fields are heavily used by the Pop Warner and Immokalee Chiefs programs, with the remaining field used for practice and games by over 200 children participating in the Soccer Pit Cobras program, which continues to grow each year. It was noted that fields are closed for maintenance each May, with the grass patched and repaired, however with field conditions unable to sustain heavy use.

Commissioner McDaniel recommended that a cost/benefit analysis be done of the current repairs and maintenance schedule versus field conversion to turf in consideration of heavy use and program growth. Mr. Brougham noted the benefit of having done a cost benefit analysis of the soccer fields at East Naples Community Park.

Mr. Brougham entered a motion for Parks Staff to initiate a study to examine the current annual cost of maintenance versus the cost of field conversion from grass to turf, and the potential resultant improvement in capacity. Ms. Gibson-Laemel seconded the motion. All members were in favor. The motion was carried.

- j. Collier Beaches:** A graph was shared with PARAB, which detailed increasing public usage of Collier beaches following the onset of the pandemic, particularly at Vanderbilt Beach, Clam Pass, and North Gulfshore. A survey of beachgoers indicated that most individuals used a personal vehicle to the beach. The physical condition of the beaches, restroom cleanliness, and quality of amenities were rated “good”. Most survey respondents did possess a beach parking pass. Updated information on beach projects will be shared with the Tourist Development Council on an alternating monthly basis.
- k. Field Allocation:** Field usage utilizes a four-tiered approach. The first tier consists of Parks programming, Sports Tourism, and Partner SFI/Paradise Coast. The second tier includes sports partners, the third tier includes rentals and organizations, and the fourth tier consists of walk-ons, with no reservation or request for exclusive use. It was noted that scheduling of field use, based on hours of availability of fields and overlapping requests presented a challenge. Survey results from sports partners showed a preference for field choice based upon historical use, followed by a score card system and actual use. A score card was also identified as the method of choice to accommodate new sports partners, as well as a suggestion to reserve field space for new partners. The fee schedule and tiered fees were also surveyed, revealing a preference for an hourly rate for field use, as well as a tiered fee schedule for varying amenities.

VIII. Director’s Highlights

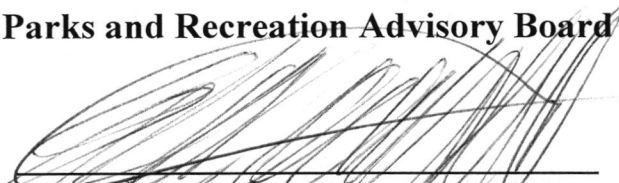
+Mr. French emphasized the collaboration by Parks Staff for appropriate maintenance, cleanliness, safety, and customer service at all county parks.

- IX. 311:** Recent 311 inquiries were shared with PARAB. A field for location of concern has been added to the report.

X. Adjournment

There being no further business for the good of the County, the meeting was adjourned.

Parks and Recreation Advisory Board



Edward "Ski" Olesky, Chairman

These minutes approved by the Board/Committee on _____ as presented, or as amended.