

**RECREATION COMMITTEE**  
8:30 a.m., Monday, February 5, 2018

The regular meeting of the Recreation Committee was held at 8:30 a.m., Monday, February 5, 2018 in the City Hall Conference Room, 1207 Palm Boulevard, Isle of Palms, South Carolina. Attending the meeting were Councilmembers Buckhannon, Moye and Smith, Administrator Tucker, Recreation Director Page, Assistant Administrator Fragoso, Assistant Recreation Director Ferrell and City Clerk Copeland; a quorum was present to conduct business.

1. Administrator Tucker called the meeting to order and acknowledged that the press and public were duly notified of the meeting in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act.

**2. Election of Chair and Vice Chair**

Councilmember Moye nominated Councilmember Buckhannon to serve as Chair of the Committee; Councilmember Smith seconded and the vote was unanimous for Councilmember Buckhannon.

Councilmember Smith nominated Councilmember Moye to serve as Vice Chair; Chair Buckhannon seconded and the vote was unanimous for Councilmember Moye.

**3. Approval of Previous Meeting's Minutes**

**MOTION: Chair Buckhannon moved to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of January 10, 2018; Councilmember Smith seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

4. **Citizens' Comments – None**

**5. Departmental Report for January 2018 – Director Page**

Athletics at the Rec are going strong with youth basketball; adults are registering for softball, 6vs6 soccer, table tennis and volleyball, and youth are registering for baseball. Since the retractable basketball goals will be installed in March, the gym will be closed in March until such time as the installation is complete, but the Cardio Room will be open. One (1) the reason the retractable goals are needed is that the portable goals are very heavy and damage the floors; the replacement of the gym floor will be included in the FY19 budget. The Keenagers will meet on Wednesday, February 7<sup>th</sup> when they will hear stories about Charleston from Eric Lavender. The City also has an Employee Wellness Program where employees are allowed to attend exercise classes at no cost to them; the classes offered are Core & More, Semi-personal Training, Total Body Challenge, Fit Body in 50, Yoga, Boot Camp and Zumba. Upcoming events include the Performance Workshop that will perform a short play on April 19<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 p.m.; Cupid's Card Shop will be Wednesday for youth to make Valentines for ones they love; Doggie Day at the Rec is happening on Saturday, February 10<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 a.m.; the Front Beach Fest on March 3<sup>rd</sup> from noon until 4:00 p.m.; the annual Easter Egg Hunt will be Saturday, March 31<sup>st</sup> at 10:00 a.m. sharp and the annual Yard Sale on Saturday, April 14<sup>th</sup> from 8:00 a.m. til noon will close out the spring.

On the subject of the usage of the Cardio Room, the Director noted that the total number of participants in January 2017 was two hundred eighty-eight (288) compared to three hundred

eighty-five (385) in January 2018; in addition, the average daily participation has increased to eighteen (18) from twelve (12) in January 2017. Director Page commented that she is also seeing a younger age bracket coming to the Rec – not all participants are fifty (50) and older.

Councilmember Smith suggested that the Rec hold a one (1) day self-defense class. Director Page said they had held a self-defense class in the past, but could try it again.

**6. Old Business – None**

**7. New Business**

**A. Discussion of potential Farmers' Market changes for 2018**

Councilmember Smith agreed with the Chair that the Farmers' Market in the late summer and fall of 2017 was a huge success; she also stated that she has talked with the volunteers, Rebecca, Jessica and Lewis, regarding possible changes that could be made in 2018 to make the market more successful and sustainable for the vendors. Chief components of Councilmember Smith's suggestions were to move the Farmer's Market to one (1) of the municipal parking lots or to Front Beach and, possibly, to close Ocean Boulevard from 14<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue and the second suggestion was to hold the market once a month from April to September on a weekday, maybe Thursdays. She envisioned the City having an event like Second Sunday in Downtown Charleston, but on a much smaller scale. A major complaint from shoppers about the 2017 market was that parking in the County Park was not free, and free parking in the municipal lots did not appease many residents.

Benefits cited by Councilmember Smith were as follows:

- Easier parking options could increase attendance;
- Drawing residents to Front Beach would make it more of a community focal point;
- Continuing to draw off-islanders to the market would make it more sustainable for the vendors;
- Increasing local traffic to businesses on a slower day of the week;
- Holding the market monthly would make it more of an event;
- Providing an avenue for young professional residents to connect;
- Spreading the work out might make the market more doable for volunteers and City staff; and
- The long term benefit to businesses to build better connections with residents.

Councilmember Smith did voice the need to discuss the idea with other Front Beach businesses to know if they would be supportive of the changes.

Chair Buckhannon thought that the Councilmember had some good ideas, but he wanted to hear about the problems or issues the market experienced last summer.

Assistant Fragoso stated that next week she will meet with with Rebeca, Jessica and Lewis, the market volunteers for an after-action meeting of the 2017 Farmers' Market. Issues that she was

familiar with were the pay-to-park in the County Park and the fact that it was getting dark by 7:00 p.m. toward the end of October and people were leaving the market between 6:00 p.m. and 6:30 p.m.

Administrator Tucker explained that one (1) reason that the County Park was selected as the site for the market was because of the amenities there, particularly electricity, that are not available elsewhere in the Front Beach area.

The Administrator recalled that, from the initial discussions, the Recreation Department was clear that they did not have the time to take on the market along with all of the summer activities and camps. As a result, a good deal of work was required of Assistant Fragoso as a liaison between the volunteers and the City; additionally, police officers were used on the days the market was held to mark off the spaces in the County Park for each vendor. Logistically, she also noticed that the vendors on the east side had the glaring sun in their faces and, therefore, less traffic than the vendors on the west side.

Assistant Fragoso recalled that the IOP Farmers' Market drew fifty (50) vendors, so there was a good bit of duplication of offerings; therefore, she would recommend fewer vendors to eliminate the duplication and to generate more business for those selected.

Based on her experience with street events, Director Page stated that putting on street events was very difficult, beginning with telling people that they must move their vehicles, and what is being proposed is putting on an event once a month using a lot of City resources. If the market was done once a month, it would begin to compete for attendees at annual City events, like the Front Beach Fest.

Chair Buckhannon and Councilmember Smith agreed that the large municipal parking lot would be a suitable alternative to the street, but she said she has also heard people mention holding a farmers market at the Rec Center.

Director Page stated that there is no space at the Rec to hold it since vehicles cannot be on the athletic fields.

Chair Buckhannon stated that, if some financial arrangement could be made with the County Park, it was the best location for the market.

Assistant Fragoso told the Committee that the County Park was not interested in setting any kind of precedent relative to free parking.

Councilmember Moyer suggested paying the County Park some type of event fee in exchange for free parking for those attending the Farmers' Market.

Another factor that swayed the volunteers to choose the County Park was to introduce residents to it and the amenities it offers.

For Councilmember Smith, the motive for these changes was to make the market sustainable for the vendors.

**B. Discussion of opening the Rec Center on Sunday afternoons**

Director Page stated that the Rec Center has been open on Sunday's before; for a while the adult volleyball games were played on Sunday. The Sunday opening was stopped because of problems with staffing availability; currently the Rec has five (5) part-time, year-round employees. These employees keep the scores for the games, help supervise the building on Tuesday nights and Saturdays, etc. She recalled that the previous Saturday, one (1) of the five (5) employees had the flu, another was at a band competition and one (1) was taking the SAT, so she had to work the games on Saturday because she did not have enough people to supervise the building and work the basketball games. She stated that she does have some applicants, but that does not mean that they have the qualities needed to supervise the building. If someone comes in to register for a class, the person supervising the building must know how to operate the Rec Department software to register and take the money. Another issue with Sundays would be that no one shows up use the facilities, but two (2) people are working.

According to the Director, the Rec Center is open approximately four hundred (400) hours a month; in the evenings, the Rec may close at 10:00 p.m. or it may close at 7:00 p.m. In her opinion, the Rec Center is open enough.

Responding to Councilmember Smith's questions, Director Page said that the gym was open during the day every day, but either classes or games were held in the gym in the evenings. Open gym time is on Saturdays between 1:00 p.m. and 5:00 p.m.

Since basketball season is in full swing, open gym time is minimal, not just at the Isle of Palms, but throughout the County. The Director added that, once the weather gets nice, the gym gets very little use.

Councilmember Smith stated that her husband plays basketball with a group of men, many of whom are residents, on the outdoor courts on Saturday mornings and they would like to reserve the gym for an hour or so to play full-court basketball on Sundays as well. To have the Rec Center open on Sunday afternoons would be a way of maximizing the use of the facility, and there must be a way to solve the staffing issue; she opined that some people who live on the island would like to work on Sunday afternoons.

To Councilmember Moye, two (2) situations were at play, i.e. one (1) was the staffing challenge and the other was a question of would the Rec Center be utilized, and, if the facility was not utilized, the staffing challenge was irrelevant.

Director Page stated that, when someone does not come to work, she must work because the Rec Department does not have an overtime budget to pay any of her full-time personnel to work on Sunday. When the Department has a special event, everyone is expected to work, and that means that Rec employees must juggle their work schedule to come in late or leave early to compensate for the Saturday hours worked.

Councilmember Moye asked if anything has changed that has increased the demand for Sunday usage of the Rec Center and how it could be determined; he also asked if the desire for Sunday hours had a seasonal component. He asked the Director is she knew of a way to determine the

demand. If the demand was great, the possibility that some people who were capable and responsible would volunteer to work on Sundays was good.

Director Page said that being open on Sunday could be started in the fall for the winter months, but she did not think there would be a great demand. Although volunteers were a great asset, she noted that the person working must be knowledgeable of CPR, aware of the building to know when something was amiss to call the Police Department, trained on the Rec software to register people for classes and collect the class fee, etc. She thought she could use the part-time, year-round employees to work on Sunday afternoons; they are a smart group of young men who have proven to be very responsible, but they, too, are involved with school activities, like sports and band, that also demand their time after school or on the weekends.

When Councilmember Smith asked if the Department could add more staff to make the Sunday opening a reality, the Director commented that these young people had to get enough hours to make working at the Rec worthy of their time. Currently the part-time, year-round employees work about twenty (20) hours a week.

Chair Buckhannon asked the Director to go back to her daily usage logs from the period when the Rec was open on Sunday to see what the demand had been then.

Director Page shared an additional bit of information that the Rec has rules for the use of the gym, and one (1) of them does not allow for playing full-court basketball. Although the rules could be changed, this rule allows two (2) groups to use the basketball courts at one time.

Councilmember Smith then asked, if the gym were to be open on Sunday afternoons, could a group reserve the gym; to which the Director responded that the City's policy is not to rent out space at the Rec Center, but the Rec does have a men's basketball league.

On the overtime issue, Administrator Tucker acknowledged that some employees like working overtime for the additional money and that funds for overtime could be put into the FY19 budget. She estimated that, if the gym were to be open on Sunday year-round, the cost would be approximately ten thousand dollars (\$10,000),

For the next meeting, Director Page will have a report on the usage of the Rec Center when it was open on Sundays in the past and whether the usage was seasonal.

**8. Miscellaneous Business - None**

**Next Meeting Date 8:30 a.m., Tuesday, March 6, 2018 in the Conference Room**

**9. Adjournment**

**MOTION: Chair Buckhannon moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:24 a.m.;**  
**Councilmember Moyer seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Respectfully submitted:  
Marie Copeland, City Clerk