

**Recreation Committee**  
5:00 p.m., Monday, March 4, 2019

The regular meeting of the Recreation Committee was held at 5:00 p.m., Monday, March 4, 2019 in the City Hall Conference Room, 1207 Palm Boulevard, Isle of Palms, South Carolina. Attending the meeting were Councilmembers Buckhannon and Smith, Chair Moyer, Interim Administrator Fragoso, Recreation Director Page and Clerk Copeland; a quorum of the Committee was present to conduct business.

1. Chair Moyer 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**

Chair Moyer resigned his Chairmanship due to the demands of the Personnel Committee where he is also Chair. He, therefore, called for the election of a new chair.

Chair Moyer nominated Councilmember Smith as Chair; Councilmember Buckhannon seconded. Councilmember Smith was unanimously elected Chair of the Recreation Committee.

Councilmember Moyer nominated Councilmember Buckhannon as Vice Chair; Chair Smith seconded, and Councilmember Buckhannon was unanimously elected Vice Chair.

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

**MOTION: Councilmember Buckhannon moved to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of January 8, 2019 and February 7, 2019 as submitted; Councilmember Moyer seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**4. Citizens' Comments**

Jim Raih, 3904 Cameron Boulevard, was pleased to see that the Committee was seeking ways to better engage with the community; he thought that the Rec Center should have a limited staff on holidays to keep the Rec Center open and should provide activities for the days the island's youth were out of school. Mr. Raih recalled that he had served on the first *ad hoc* committee for an island farmers' market. He said that the name "Farmers' Market" did not fit the market that the City was sponsoring; with only one (1) farmer participating, he thought it should be called a food truck rodeo or a fair or whatever the City chooses, but not a farmers' market. He suggested encouraging residents to stop on their way home from work to get dinner from one (1) of several food trucks participating. He concluded by suggesting that, since the Rec Center was the benchmark for the City's overall appearance, Director Page should be more involved with the Real Property Committee to guide them in improving the appearance of the municipal parking lots, for example; he said that he has frequently heard residents refer to the lots as "an eye sore." He stated that it was time for the City to take ownership and to make the necessary improvements to the lots. He thought that the marina tenants should chip in to have the parking lots graded; he recalled a time when the City would partner with the marina manager to improve the lot, i.e. the City would buy the materials and the marina manager would provide the labor to grade the lot.

**5. Departmental Reports**

Director Page stated that the report was longer than usual to answer some of the questions she has been asked in recent meetings.

The Director commented that the "Acting Performance Workshop" was a well-received program; the instructor Jean Schubert has a special means of relating to the youngsters in the class. At the end of the program, they will put on a performance for their parents, family and friends, and it is always well done.

Among the social groups that take advantage of the Rec Center to get together are "Gather, Knit and Stitch", mah jongg and woodcarving; they sit around with their projects, talking and just enjoying the companionship.

A class that was suggested by the instructor was the 'Spanish: Travel and Leisure'; the class has been very popular.

Director Page reported that Doggie Day at the Rec was a huge success, and many dogs were adopted. The Front Beach Fest will be on Saturday, March 9<sup>th</sup> from noon until 4 p.m., and the weather forecast calls for a perfect day for the event. The bands that will be performing are the bands from the Holiday Street Festival when it rained and activities had to be moved inside. The annual Yard Sale will be held on Saturday, March 30<sup>th</sup>, the Easter Egg Hunt on Saturday, April 20<sup>th</sup> and Music in the Park on May 4<sup>th</sup>.

The Director noted that the Rec staff always has activities planned for the days when the island's youth are out of school; for instance, it could be dodgeball and a movie when the kids have pizza, watch a movie and play.

Registration for island residents for summer camps will be on Saturday, May 4<sup>th</sup> from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.; non-residents can register the following week.

The adult athletic programs will begin a new session this week, and the youth have just finished basketball and are beginning baseball. The numbers for baseball registration are in the report showing how many youths from IOP and how many from off island.

Councilmember Moyer asked how the 2019 registration compared to previous years, and the Director thought that they would be very similar. Although the Rec Department teams suffer due to the traveling teams, the total needed to form a league was usually met.

Noting that summer camp registration was later than usual, Chair Smith was interested to see if it has any impact since Mount Pleasant registration begins at the end of this month. Since staff will be on duty anyway for Music in the Park, registration for summer camp the same afternoon seemed to be a good fit.

Chair Smith asked if notification of the Saturday camp registration was being advertised to residents, and Director Page was certain that the word was being spread among interested island residents.

## **6. Old Business**

**A. Consideration of rental alternatives for the Recreation Center, fields and courts and associated costs**

Director Page stated that she “was not crazy about the idea of renting the facility” because if it was rented to one (1) group it must be rented to all. She thought the biggest demand would be for renting the athletic fields based on the number of traveling teams in the area. She reported that the area Recreation Directors meet every month, and the biggest challenge to all was field usage by outside groups, then allowing the fields to rest before the Rec Departments’ athletic activities begin. She also noted that it would be difficult to police; she also foresaw a problem when a traveling team has rented a field and a large family who are residents of the island want to use it –who wins the conflict? The team that rented the field or the residents of the island. If Council were to decide to rent the fields, the policy would need a campaign to educate the residents. The same issue could come up with the picnic shelter; many island residents show up to hold birthday parties, graduation parties, etc., and only seldom do they call in advance. If they were to be asked to leave because it has been reserved by whoever, their response would be that they did not see the sign or that, as island residents, they should get preference. But the Director said that they could do it; it would take time and resources to do it.

Councilmember Moye stated that the question that should be asked when change was proposed was “what is the benefit to be provided versus the cost to do it?” On the subject of field rest, he said that he would look to the Director and her staff to tell him how much rest time the fields would need so that neither Rec activities nor a group wanting to rent a field would be allowed to use them. For him, the first part was to preserve the City’s asset and he would look to the Rec Department’s staff to insure that was done; he then saw the cost to be the added burden to the Rec staff. He stated that island residents who belong to travel or other teams would benefit from using the fields, and he has heard from a number of them that they want to use the Rec Department’s fields. He said that, if Council decided to rent the facilities, it would be because more people would benefit. He added that he did not have a recommendation at this time because he was still digesting the information.

Councilmember Buckhannon opined that the best approach to the issue would be to make those concessions when the fields were available based on the Rec Department’s schedule. He stated that the field rental would be considered on a case-by-case situation since the Rec Schedule changes month to month and maybe week to week; any long-term scheduling would be difficult.

Interim Administrator Fragoso said that these actions would require a change in the Rec policy that currently discourages organized groups from using the fields and basketball courts. This might be an opportunity to address why that policy was in place, and she said that this could be a way to accommodate residents without establishing a formal rental program.

Director Page cautioned the Committee that, if the City establishes this program, the Rec Department will receive requests from travel teams from Mount Pleasant because they were constantly looking for fields.

Councilmember Moye opined that being inconsistent with the times when the fields would be available on a monthly basis would not suit their needs because they practice on specific days and times.

The Rec teams also have to practice, but their practice days can vary week to week to accommodate date the coaches’ schedules.

A problem that the Director anticipated was who or how they would keep up with these schedules since the full Rec staff was not at the Rec all of the time. She suggested that the City might have to invest in a program to maintain the schedule of field usage.

Councilmember Moye was ready to depend on Director Page's knowledge and expertise to devise a plan "to test the water" possibly by allowing one (1) field to be rented or reserved. He wanted a way that the residents would know that Council was listening to them and trying to meet their needs.

Chair Smith thought that they should distinguish between school teams and traveling teams; she was under the impression that traveling teams were accustomed to renting fields.

Councilmember Buckhannon noted that most school teams have a place to practice.

Interim Administrator Fragoso opined that paying to rent the field might add a layer of accountability that was important; it would discourage teams from calling to reserve a field and then not showing up.

Director Page voiced total agreement, but asked the Committee how it could be policed; for example, she was convinced that someone was teaching tennis lessons on the Rec Department's courts, but, if they were approached, the response was that she was an aunt helping her nieces.

For Councilmember Moye, allowing island residents to reserve a field or the picnic shelter was not about raising revenue but about accommodating them. He stated that he wanted to know if it was a feasible system that that was helping to educate the community and helping Council make better decisions. Between now and the next meeting, he wanted the Rec staff to devise a way to determine if it was a feasible way to accommodate residents.

Interim Administrator Fragoso wanted to clarify the Committee's charge to the Rec Department, and she stated that the Committee wanted the Rec staff to determine what times the Rec athletics and activities would be using the fields, how much time needed to be built in for the fields to rest, how much time to be left open for first come/first served and finally identify the times that could be made available for the field to be rented.

Director Page explained that the organized teams that might come to use the City's fields have coaches that are unknown to the Rec staff and who have not had a background check by the City. Their backgrounds would be a blank; if someone wanted to coach a Rec team but did not pass the background check, he/she would not be allowed to coach.

After lengthy discussions, the decision was made that teams that have fifty percent (50%) island residents on the team would be allowed to reserve a field. Director Page remarked that this would be much easier to do and did not require any calculation of available times.

Councilmember Moye was impressed by the criteria the Director had for coaches and indicated that he would support background checks for coaches who are unknown to her.

**B. Consideration of policy changes to encourage more residents to use the Rec Center**

Councilmember Moye said that this subject came up from the meeting Mrs. Rosenthal attended when she also wanted a better way to pay for classes.

Director Page said that she was comparing the IOP Rec Center with the Mount Pleasant Senior Center which, for a variety of reasons, was not an equal comparison. According to Director Page, the Senior Center has a cafeteria, free coffee and pastries every day, daily newspapers, etc. Their pay system is one (1) where a resident pays the annual fee, and they pay five dollars (\$5) per class. Additionally, their instructors are paid a salary where the Isle of Palms pays its instructors a percentage of the class enrollment/attendance fees.

On a bit of a tangent, Councilmember Moye asked what the process was if a person offered to teach a new class or a resident suggested a new program or class to get that class added to the schedule. According to the Director, that is how ninety percent (90%) of the classes happen – an instructor or a resident presents a new idea to her; no petitions were needed. The idea or concept was put into the Activity Guide and either enough people registered for the class or they didn't; if the number of registrants was reasonable, the classes moved forward as listed in the Guide.

Interim Administrator Fragoso said that she was charged with looking into ways the City could partner with the Exchange Club since they have a large facility. Although she has not had a lot of time to think about it, she thought that, as the Committee pursues way to create a sense of Community, opportunities might arise that would lend itself to partnering.

Councilmember Moye suggested that resident education was needed more than policy changes; residents want to know how to get something done or make something happen.

Director Page suggested that, when Councilmembers were approached about new classes or programs, to get their name and phone number for her to call them as opposed to telling the person to call Norma Jean. Director Page's reaching out to him/her has a way of making him/her feel more important, and the call shows that the City does care about him/her.

### **C. Discussion of fee structure for classes and programs**

Chair Smith stated that she had some specific suggestions relative to exercise classes; she was interested in finding a way that residents could buy a month's classes that were not tied to one (1) class. She wanted residents to be able to attend a variety of exercise classes in a month for an established price.

Director Page thought that the instructors would allow someone to attend a class at no charge to determine if she thought it was right for her.

Director Page saw challenges for her in that the classes have different fees and in figuring the month's class attendance to compute the instructor's pay since it was a percentage of the revenue generated by the classes they teach.

The first step would be for Director Page to compute the per class fee when using a sampler rate, and then to ask the instructors to agree to a third rate, a sampler rate, being charged for their classes. When someone checks in at the desk using a sampler card, she would be coded as a sampler rate holder attending the exercise class of her choice; from there, Councilmember Moye thought the computations for determining the instructors pay would be relatively simple.

Director Page stated that, when a class fee is paid, it must be applied to the appropriate class, and with this sampler category, the participant will likely not know in advance what classes she would attend in the coming month. She thought that she and the Treasurer could determine a way to make it work, but it would not be through the existing RecTrac software. On the other

hand, she would prefer to let the resident attend the classes she wants to attend in a month and to settle up financially at the end of the month.

Director Page asked for the name of the person to whom Chair Smith spoke to call to ask her to come into the office to hear exactly what it was that she wanted and to figure out a way to accomplish it.

#### **D. Update on franchise agreement**

Interim Administrator Fragoso reminded the Committee members that City Council voted in their February meeting to proceed generating an RFP for an exclusive beachfront franchise agreement within Wild Dunes. She has the final draft that reflects Council's decision to allow surfing lessons on the beach, and she has a meeting scheduled with Frank Fredericks from Wild Dunes on Wednesday in an effort to speed up the process by getting his approval of the terms in the agreement. The franchise agreement has been drafted and will be part of the RFP so that anyone submitting a proposal would know the terms of the agreement would be required to meet. She distributed a proposed timeline that if everything went according to plan, would have the franchise operational for the 2019 beach season. The public notice of the bid will be in newspaper on March 6<sup>th</sup>, and the deadline for proposals will be March 19<sup>th</sup>. The timeline provides ten (10) days for the evaluation of the proposals and interviews with the individuals, if necessary; a recommendation for an award of a contract will be presented to the Recreation Committee on April 1<sup>st</sup> and then go to Ways and Means and to City Council for First Reading on April 23<sup>rd</sup>.

#### **7. New Business**

##### **Discussion of 2019 Farmers Market**

Interim Administrator Fragoso reported that she met with the two (2) managers of the IOP Farmers Market recently, and they asked that the City consider moving the Farmers Market to the Rec Center. The County Park was chosen because of the availability of parking and the proximity to Front Beach; the hope then was that market-goers would go to a Front Beach restaurant after shopping. After two (2) years, that has not happened, and, last year, the market added beer and wine sales but the managers were unable to draw any vendors.

The Interim Administrator agreed that holding the market at the Rec Center was a good fit despite the fact that it would have to be scaled back a bit. She noted that the City has received many comments that the market had too many craft vendors and only one or two (1 – 2) farmers.

Staff is working on the logistics necessary to have the farmers market at the Rec Center that could possibly see a change in the day of the week when it is held.

#### **8. Miscellaneous Business**

Next meeting date: 5:00 p.m., Monday, April 1, 2019 in the Conference Room

#### **9. Adjournment**

**MOTION: Councilmember Buckhannon moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:32 p.m.; Councilmember Moye seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Respectfully submitted: Marie Copeland, City Clerk