

RECREATION COMMITTEE
9:00 a.m., Tuesday, March 1, 2016

The regular meeting of the Recreation Committee was held at 9:00 a.m., Tuesday, March 1, 2016 in the City Hall Conference Room, 1207 Palm Boulevard, Isle of Palms, South Carolina. Attending the meeting were Councilmembers Kinghorn and Rice, Chair Carroll, Administrator Tucker, Recreation Director Page, Assistant Administrator Fragoso, Assistant Director Ferrell and City Clerk Copeland; a quorum was present to conduct business.

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

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

MOTION: Councilmember Rice moved to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of February 11, 2016 as submitted; Councilmember Kinghorn seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

3. **Citizens' Comments** – None

4. **Departmental Report for February 2016** – Director Page

Director Page reported that, on February 18th, eleven (11) Keenagers had gone on a field trip to the Nathaniel Russell House Museum followed by lunch at Page's Okra Grill. According to the Director, Doggie Day at the Rec was "awesome;" seventy (70) dogs participated in the contests and fifty-three (53) got rabies shots. The Middle School Dance was attended by only twenty (20) youths; Seacoast Church had an event for young people of the same age on the same night and drew those that would have normally attended the Middle School Dance. Upcoming events included the Front Beach Fest planned for Saturday, March 5th featuring the *Blackwater Rhythm and Blues* band and *The Tams*; more than forty (40) local craft vendors, restaurants, businesses and free entertainment will be present. The annual Isle of Palms Easter Egg Hunt will be at 10:00 a.m., Saturday, March 26; as in the past, jump castles, a balloon artist, a photo booth, a face painter and an appearance by the Easter Bunny will be part of the fun. The date for this year's Yard Sale is Saturday, April 23rd from 8:00 a.m. til noon, and the spaces are available for five dollars (\$5).

Councilmember Rice suggested that a food truck featuring breakfast food should be invited to participate in the Yard Sale.

Chair Carroll asked that the number of participants or the number of teams be added to the athletics report.

The Director noted that Andy Sinwald had attended a SCRPA Programming Summit that she thought had been very helpful for him since he is new in the field.

Director Page then directed attention to the graphs she has added to the report; the first graph demonstrated the participation totals for January and February; the second graph illustrated the number of individuals that have enrolled and/or paid for participation; and the third graph showed the number of hours the building was open and supervised, the number of classes offered and the number of games plan in both adult and youth sports.

Councilmember Kinghorn asked whether two hundred (200) people maxed out the cardio room, and Director Page replied that she had never seen it full. Assistant Director Ferrell remarked that the room is pretty full before 7:00 a.m. with people using it before they head to work and again at 5:00 p.m. on the way home; the room is pretty busy between the hours of noon and 2:00 p.m.

Councilmember Kinghorn stated that the graphs were very helpful and meaningful; he also voiced approval with the way the Director had shortened the report.

5. Old Business

A. Update on pickle ball

Director Page stated that they had explored several options to avoid a conflict between tennis and pickle ball, but it was going to be expensive to have the pickle ball anywhere else. The pickle ball net is to be put up this week, and, like the tennis courts, it will be first come-first served. If enough people participate, a league could be formed. The Director does not intend, at this point, to invest much in paddles; she expects that those who play will have their own.

B. Update on Bark Park pumping

The Director reported that she is working on getting that done, but there had been a mix-up in the equipment. In the meantime, the trenches have been dug, and the pumping can begin as soon as the equipment arrives. The pumped water will be directed to the same storm drain as runoff from the building.

Administrator Tucker asked that she get with Director Kerr to insure that the City would not be breaking any NPDES regulations.

6. New Business

A. Review of FY17 Capital Budget

B. Discussion of 10-Year Capital Plan

In order to produce the Capital Budgets, staff begins by checking what was completed in the current year; unfinished projects are typically rolled into the coming budget year and added to the projects assigned for purchase or replacement in the coming budget year. Once that list is compiled, the items to be replaced are evaluated to determine if they can be deferred for a year or must be replaced, and items that are in out-years are reviewed to determine if any need to be moved up to the coming budget year. For those items included in the FY17 Capital Budget are also assigned a replacement year in the future.

The “big ticket” item in the Recreation Capital Budget is the replacement of the soccer field lights at one hundred twenty-five thousand dollars (\$125,000); items to be replaced “only with failure” are the replacement playground equipment or outside scoreboard and HVAC systems. Other items on the Capital Budget are the golf cart, outdoor water fountains, baseball field fencing, four (4) outdoor basketball goals and posts and the radios to comply with Phase II. The total

Recreation Capital Budget is two hundred seventy-four thousand dollars (\$274,000); a copy of the proposed FY17 Capital Budget is attached to the historical record of the meeting.

Councilmember Kinghorn asked how the capital purchases were prioritized, and the Administrator indicated that it was the wear and condition of the items to be replaced; he stated that some items on the list are not required to be replaced, but the decision has been made to do certain things.

Director Page reported that both the baseball field fencing and the lights at the soccer fields are in disrepair; a lot of the soccer lights no longer burn, they cannot be repaired and the wiring has rotted. She added that they were installed in 1997.

Councilmember Kinghorn then asked whether the estimated cost included the poles and everything; the Director answered that it did. The lights would be purchased through Musco Lighting, as were the multi-purpose field lights and tennis and basketball courts, and they come with a twenty-five year (25 yr.) warranty. The lights are monitored twenty-four (24) hours a day, seven (7) days a week and, when there is a problem, they automatically send a technician to repair. In addition, the new lights would not bleed out, but beam directly on the field.

The poles need to be replaced because they no longer meet code, and, once the lights are replaced, the poles must meet code.

Director Page stated that she tries not to spend money, but, when something needs to be replaced, she adds it to the budget to get the necessary things done. She noted that maintenance at a Rec Center was tough; everything they have must be in good shape to minimize the chances of someone being hurt.

Responding to Chair Carroll, the Director recalled that the softball fencing was replaced last year.

Councilmember Kinghorn asked how budget purchases were prioritized, i.e. what would the deciding factor be in replacing an asset versus maintaining and using it for another year. He indicated that he would like some third party validation.

To enlarge or relocate the cardio room would be an expensive venture; the Director believes that to relocate it, the building would have to be expanded.

The construction of a swimming pool and a gymnasium are both scheduled for FY21, and Councilmember Kinghorn asked for the rationale of doing that, acknowledging that the two (2) projects were on a wish list. According to Director Page, they were listed to keep them before the Committee and City Council.

Chair Carroll opined that a referendum should be held to get residents' input before the City spent five million dollars (\$5,000,000).

Referring again to the cardio room, Director Page stated that the best time to construct a new one would be when the gymnasium was built, and, following the discussion, a separate line of two hundred fifty-thousand dollars (\$250,000) in FY21 was added to the budget for the construction of a fitness facility that did not tie it to a new gym.

Chair Carroll questioned that a city the size of the Isle of Palms needed a new gymnasium.

Councilmember Rice commented that the gym is old and “in tough shape;” she also stated that “it is packed all the time.”

Administrator Tucker reminded Chair Carroll that the Mayor had asked that the Committee Chairs make the budget reports at the Ways and Means Committee meeting.

C. Consideration of Implementation of

- **Changes to the monthly report;**
 - **The pursuit of non-traditional funding**
 - **Partnering with other local entities**
 - **Surveys for input into the facility utilization and future needs of the Recreation Department**
-
- **Changes to the monthly report**

For the March report, the Director will add the number of participants and teams involved in sports activities.

- **The pursuit of non-traditional funding**

Director Page reported that she has been looking into grants, but, from past experience, she knew that it was difficult for the Isle of Palms to get grants because the community is considered to be too affluent. She recalled that she did get a CDBG grant of forty thousand dollars (\$40,000) for HVAC for the gym based on the degree of use by senior citizens; each year the City receives a PARD grant distributed by Charleston County based on population, ranging from fifteen hundred to three thousand dollars (\$1,500-3,000). The PARD grants have been used for buying playground equipment, resurfacing the tennis courts, replacing the gym ceiling, etc. At one time, staff sold ads in the activity guide in order to publish it; that happened for a couple of editions, but then the City’s businesses stated that they thought they were doing enough through the sports sponsorships. In the past, Council has not supported the concept of going out for funding or soliciting for donations; therefore, she thought that to do so she would need a directive from the Committee.

Councilmember Kinghorn said that it was easier to raise money when the money would go toward a specific goal; he thought the baseball field fencing was a good example. He noted that funding could come from state, federal or local grants, corporations and/or foundations; with the aging population on the island, he suggested checking with AARP for funding opportunities.

According to the Director, the other issue with grants is that Council must adopt the project before the funding application could be submitted.

Councilmember Kinghorn countered that, hypothetically, the City was awarded a grant of one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) for a fitness space that has to be matched, he thought that Council would be more likely to find a way to fund that over something equal cost because the Rec Department has brought something to the table.

Councilmember Kinghorn reiterated his position that the best way to raise money through contributions was registration, and, whether paper or electronic registration, a blank could be inserted encouraging contributions to the Building Fund, for example. A similar space could be placed on the Recreation Department website, assuming that was the direction Council wanted to go.

Chair Carroll asked whether a donation to the Rec Department would be tax deductible, and she confirmed that it would be. The Chair then asked who would be assigned the task of overseeing a program for donations; he thought the staff at the Recreation Department had full plates every day. He also suggested that a donation space could be added to the e-newsletter stating that "the Recreation Department gladly accepts donations for future needs."

Assistant Frago asked the Director if a line needed to be added to the budget for online registration at the Recreation Department.

Director Page responded that the software module for online registration will cost twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000). For those people who come to classes and repeatedly pay by the class, the ability to register online would mean nothing; she thought the most use for online registration at the Recreation Department would be sports and summer camps.

- **Partnering with other local entities**

Director Page stated that the Rec Department has partnered many times with groups such as the Red Cross, the Department of Natural Resources, and the Charleston County Parks and Recreation Commission. The Director indicated that Charleston was unique in that the local Rec Directors meet monthly to talk about programs that are happening and how to help one another; they also try not to duplicate efforts or compete, but complement each other. When needed, Mount Pleasant allows teams from the island to participate in their leagues; there is the Connector Walk for the Child; the Exchange Club participates in Middle School Dances and the Front Beach Fest; and the Windjammer supports every activity at the Rec or on the beach.

The Director's conclusion was that, when she is approached by an agency that wants to do something, she will look at it and determine how it could help the residents and the Department. She stated that, if they were to take on something else at this time, they would have to drop something; she noted that she did not think she could ask her employees to do more than they already do.

- **Surveys for input into the facility utilization and future needs of the Recreation Department**

Since the last meeting, the Director has developed two (2) surveys, which she distributed to Committee members for their input. (Copies are attached to the historical record of the meeting.)

Administrator Tucker stated that, when a survey pops up on her computer, she wants to know how long it will take to complete and for it to be as quick as possible. Based on that, she opined that the surveys offered by the Director were too long; she indicated that she would advocate for something that is brief and targeted to what the Director is trying to learn. The Administrator added that the question "Are you an island resident?" must be on any survey the City or Department generate.

Chair Carroll asked if it would benefit the Recreation Department to have its own Facebook page.

The Administrator noted that every form of social media that the City gets into has to be carefully monitored, and the more sites that it is on, the more the risk goes up that something would be posted that is not well thought out and which represents the entire City because people who are too busy and who are also trying to manage the social media aspect of something.

The Administrator recalled that she has encouraged all Council members to get on Twitter because it will give them a quicker notice that something has been posted to Facebook.

Councilmember Rice thought it important to ask "What other program would you like to see at the Recreation Department?"

Councilmember Kinghorn expanded on that saying he liked the idea of space at the end of a newsletter for open comments or suggestions.

Councilmember Rice thought that the age of the survey participant could be valuable, for instance, many seniors could indicate that they want a pool for water aerobics.

7. Miscellaneous Business

Next Meeting Date: 9:00 a.m., Tuesday, April 5th in the City Hall Conference Room.

8. Adjournment

MOTION: Councilmember Kinghorn moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:19 a.m.; Councilmember Rice seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Respectfully submitted:

Marie Copeland
City Clerk