

MC Parks and Beaches Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

July 18, 2022

In-Person and Virtual Meeting

Minutes recorded by Naomi Pagidas, Executive Assistant, MC Parks & Beaches

Meeting Called to Order at 6:00pm

Board Members in attendance in-person:

Steve Miller

Darcy Wadsworth

Dr. Jim Boilini

Board Members in attendance via Zoom:

Margie Smith

Board Member not in attendance:

Gayle Glover

Media Present:

No Media Present

Monroe County was represented by:

John Allen - Director, Parks & Beaches

Tom Henry – Manager, Parks & Beaches

Cary Knight - Director, Project Management

Suzi Rubio - Aide to Kevin Wilson

Patricia Eables - Assistant County Attorney

Bob Shillinger, County Attorney

Jethon Williams – IT Media Manager

Public Attendee:

Reese Spencer, Executive Director of Sea Camp

Gus Formato, Kelsey Pena, and Dana Dammar (Interns in County Attorney's office)

Denise Leitner & Mitchel Leitner

Sue Heim

Meeting Minutes:

- **The Board approved meeting via Zoom/CMT methods (Resolution 397-2020) and in person.** Dr. Boilini made a motion to approve, and Darcy Wadsworth seconded the motion and approved.

Agenda Changes/Approval for July 18, 2022, meeting

Add to new business:

- New business: Wisteria Discussion and Update (8d)
- New business: RFP-Maintenance of fields (8e)
- New business: Parks & Recreation master plan survey (8f)
- Add: Ordinance Update in place of Ordinance Discussion (6)
- Move item 8b Paddleboard/Kayak Concession after item 4 (Approval of Board Meeting Minutes)
Dr. Boilini made a motion to approve the agenda changes and it was seconded by Darcy Wadsworth. Revised Agenda was approved.

Approval of April 18, 2022, meeting minutes

- Board had no changes to the April 18, 2022, Minutes. Dr. Boilini made a motion to approve the Minutes and Margie Smith seconded the motion. Minutes were approved.

New Business:

- Paddleboard/Kayak Concession at Pine Channel Nature Park going out to bid if the BOCC approves it on Wednesday, July 10, 2022. Reese Spencer, Director of Sea Camp, has some concerns since their property is near the location and wants to stay up to date with the decision. Was advised that the information will be made available on the County website.

Project Management update on projects for Parks and Beaches - Cary Knight

- Higgs Beach:

Reynolds Street Pier: TDC grant expiration aligned with FDOT grant funding. Applied for TDC and FDOT Tap grants in funding cycle for FY26-27. FY25 will advertise for construction. Five-year work plan. Both grants can be rolled over to the City of Key West. Piling repair on the pier below high mean water line.

Road realignment: Nothing was found on underground penetrating radar, but two small areas with ground disturbance that indicated no graves. Working with SHPO to test to reconfirm.

Restrooms: Awarded grant FY23 of \$833,627. TDC Grant funds total \$1.5Mil. Submitting design to permitting. Once approved, will advertise to put out for construction bids. Begin construction in winter and finish before hurricane season. Grant can be rolled over to City of Key West. Will most likely spend funding by end of FY23.

Sand renourishment: Turtle nest incubation taking place. Participated in Derelict Lobster Trap Roundup. Collected over 100 traps in exchange for mitigation. County pays for dump fees on traps collected.

West Martello: Last phase of Irma repair being done. Seawall repairs with backfill being done now in 100ft sections. Work takes about two (2) months. Funding from a TDC \$19,999 grant.

- Bernstein Park: John Allen, Director, wants to install artificial turf. Getting design professional proposal and plan for installation, similar to Key West fields with small pellets that are heat tolerable.

- Pine Channel Nature Park: Finishing up the project. Light poles installed. Received TDC grant of \$200,000 to expand trail enhancements. The State is excited about the expansion and plans to post trails on their site.

Reese Spencer: Inquired as to where the Coupon Bike trail would be located. Pine Channel trailhead will go out from Pine Channel Park in a loop and back to Pine Channel Park.

- Blue Heron: Social Services current senior meal site in Big Pine Key was condemned due to spalling and will move to this location for an extended period. Not sure what BOCC will do with the old location.
- Big Pine Community Park: IRMA repairs are mostly done. FEMA requires mitigation. Higher flood panels are being installed.
- Sheriff's Residence: Interior work is almost complete. The residence, when completed in a couple of months, will be used for an affordable housing unit for either a Sheriff's Deputy or other County staff.
- Veterans Memorial Park: Preconstruction for ADA and Tiki huts at the end of the month. Finishing up for Permitting now. Bathroom construction to follow. Trying to complete by November for a memorial kick off. Septic tanks are in. Received a TDC \$100,000 grant instead of the requested \$500,000. Use funds for stucco finish on bathroom with a Veterans type theme. Veterans Affairs will take the lead on the finish and design of the artwork. It will not be a project by the Arts Council. Margie Smith mentioned that there are some local artists that do decorative plaster work and she will forward their information to Cary.
- Rowell's Park: Phase 1 is closing out. A 24/7 library kiosk is being installed in the Park but will only be accessible during park hours. However, the kiosks installed outside the libraries are accessible 24/7. Completed late September with a ribbon cutting. Anyone with use of a library card can put a book in a hold locker. Books can be ordered at any library. It's a library kiosk for after hours access. There will be a few installations throughout the Keys. Library Director selected the branch locations. Largest library grant of \$1Mil was awarded to the County and some funds were used to purchase these kiosks. Staff recommends a presentation from the library director for more detailed information.
Phase 2 submitted for permitting and is being advertised for construction.
Phase 3 Tiki huts approved. TDC grant submitted for \$500,000 with expiration date in 2024. It may take two (2) years for design, permitting, and completion with supply chain demands. Need design on park uniformity across all parks. They are looking to the Parks & Beaches Director for design guidance prior to going out for bid.
- Pickleball courts: Suzi Rubio advised that the courts are being designed. Received 60% design plans and provided comments. Next meeting on 7/28/22 with Planning Department and design team to go over requests and requirements.
- Big Pine Park: Suzi Rubio advised that Facilities Maintenance requested an RFS to paint the community center at Big Pine Park. Color scheme same as Pine Channel Nature Park and hope to paint it this fiscal year.

- Ballfield Maintenance: Suzi Rubio reported that the RFP opened on 7/6/22, but there with no bidders. 8/17/22 is the new opening date for the second RFP that was published. Reaching out to contractors to bid on DemandStar for the RFP. The contract is for fertilization and pest control of the fields throughout the county.

Parks & Beaches Director Update:

- Parks & Beaches Ordinances in Chapter 18 - In process of making changes to streamline them and organize the chapter to be easier to read. Once revisions are ready, it will need the Parks & Beaches Advisory Board and BOCC approval. The current Use of County Property policy, which includes Facilities, is being updated. Need to update to incorporate Parks and Beaches rules and responsibilities, special event and rental policy, swimming areas, fishing, independent contractors, standardize park operating hours, dog park regulations, electric bike path in certain areas of the park, to name a few. Patricia Eables discussed the rules and how we can share policy/ordinance draft with the Advisory Board.
- Mini Season – Harry Harris Park and Mike Forster Park boat ramps fill up quickly. Posting on social media when we are open and a “how to guide” before it opens on our website. Residents to provide ID.
- Blue Heron – Pickleball courts are being extended and project starts 7/19/22.
- ADA and regular picnic tables were ordered for installation throughout the county.
- Veterans Memorial Park - Mobile Matt installation for easy ADA access to the beach is being done at the Park.
- Higgs Beach and Harry Harris – Beach chairs and down the road also hope to order Mobile Matts at Harry Harris and Rowell’s.
- Key Largo Park – Playground fabrication to start soon at the warehouse.
- Bay Point – Closed basketball courts.
- Pine Nature Channel – Still looking for more pictures of the Whales to make a sign to show volunteers and the efforts that were made to rescue them. Dr. Boilini may reach out to Bob Levans for images.

Old Business

- Workshop – Suggestion to do one after school starts.
- No Smoking Ordinance - A Smoking Ban was passed in House Bill 105. Legal is working on an Ordinance draft to prevent smoking in County parks and on beaches. Requesting approval to advertise. Darcy Wadsworth made motion to advertise and Dr. Boilini seconded the motion, with the motion being approved.
- Harry Harris Parking App – Steve Miller recommends talking to the school on transporting people to the Park.

New Business

- Paddle board Kiosk at Veterans & Rowell's Parks. On the BOCC agenda for approval to advertise an RFP for these services. Dr. Boilini made motion to support the Kiosk RFP and Darcy Wadsworth seconded the motion, which was approved by Board.
- Bob Shillinger - Wisteria Island, known as Christmas Tree Island, is off the coast of Key West. The land lies within the unincorporated Monroe County area. The Federal government has been involved in litigation on the ownership and has won at the trial and appellate level thus far. If the litigation finalizes with the Federal Government acquiring property ownership, it has stated it is willing to transfer it to the County to use the property in a recreational manner. This will relieve them from managing the property. Part of the process would be to set up a meeting with either the public and/or departments and have this Advisory Board assist with hosting the meetings. It will take several meetings and Bob suggested starting in the Fall. Another option would be to contract to a vendor to run the property to avoid using money from other parks to make improvements to make this property a park. The BOCC is considering all the options. This Board is interested in taking the role to assist and set up meetings and discussions. The Advisory Board asked Bob to give them enough advance notice as to when to start meetings. Bob suggested to hold a public meeting or workshops at the Harvey Government Center to start and remote options to gain public input participation.
- Master Plan Survey: Parks and Beaches is doing a master plan. Possibly have a survey in September for the public to provide its input.

Public Comments:

- Denise Leitner & Mitchell Leitner are new residents in Cudjoe and want to be involved.
- Sue Heim, "What does the P&B director think of Wisteria?" John Allen responded that he had not seen it yet, but once he toured it on Friday and gets feedback, then he will be able to make a better decision. He may then be able to answer some questions at the next meeting.

Next Meeting: October 17, 2022, meeting to be held in a Key Largo location. Meet beforehand at 5:00pm to visit parks.

Motion was made to adjourn the meeting by Darcy Wadsworth and seconded by Dr. Boilini. Meeting adjourned at 7:17 PM.