

**CITY OF PALM BAY, FLORIDA**  
**RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD**  
**REGULAR MEETING 2024-11**

Held on Tuesday, the 12<sup>th</sup> day of November 2024, at Tony Rosa Community Center, 1502 Port Malabar Boulevard NE, Palm Bay, Florida 32905.

The meeting was properly noticed pursuant to law; the minutes are on file in the Recreation Administration Office at 1502 Port Malabar Boulevard NE, Palm Bay, Florida 32905.

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Thomas Gaume at 7:00 P.M.

**ROLL CALL:**

<b>CHAIRPERSON:</b>	Thomas Gaume	Present
<b>VICE-CHAIRPERSON:</b>	Randall Olszewski	Present
<b>MEMBER:</b>	Wudson Fenelon	Present
<b>MEMBER:</b>	Logan Luse	Present
<b>MEMBER:</b>	Thomas Graver	Present
<b>MEMBER:</b>	Alfred Agarie	Present

**ALSO PRESENT:**

Juliet Misconi, Deputy City Manager; Daniel Waite, Acting Recreation Department Manager; Josh Hudak, Parks Division Manager; Erich Messenger, Deputy City Attorney

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

1. Isabel Wright, resident, felt that the board meetings should be held in Council Chambers to allow for proper recording of the meetings.

**REPORTS:**

**1. Juliet Misconi, Deputy City Manager/Acting Recreation Department Director**

a. *Pickleball Update* – Staff from the Parks and Facilities, and Recreation Departments had preliminary conversations with Kimley-Horn (consulting engineers) for probable cost for eight (8) courts each at Fred Lee Park, Nungesser Park and Veterans Park along with a 32-court tournament style at Fred Poppe Regional Park, which would be done in two (2) phases. Findings would be presented to City Council at its meeting to be held on December 19, 2024.

b. *BMX Park on Osmosis Drive* – Staff was reviewing the actual costs, such as long-term maintenance and staffing. Findings would be presented to City Council at its meeting to be held on December 19, 2024.

**2. Daniel Waite, Acting Recreation Manager/Special Events Coordinator**

There was no report.

**3. Josh Hudak, Parks Division Manager**

a. *Dog Park at Riviera Park* – Geotechnical survey was scheduled to be completed by November 20<sup>th</sup>. to be done (scheduled for 11/20). Once completed, sidewalks, water stations and the pavilion would be installed.

b. *Playground at Fred Poppe Regional Park* – Demolition of the existing playground was scheduled for January 6, 2025; shipment of the new playground would be in mid-January; and installation was scheduled for the first week of February 2025.

c. *Castaways Point Park* – The project was almost complete and was on schedule. The observation deck was in the process of being added.

d. *Stearns Park* – The project was still in process but king tides had caused delays.

Mr. Graver asked if Nungesser Park would be the top priority in having a functional pickleball court. Ms. Misconi said that was yet to be determined. The challenge was the tennis court which needed to be resurfaced. If a pickleball court was constructed, then the tennis court would be left in disrepair. Ms. Misconi advised that one of the projects on the Capital Improvement Projects list was to resurface the tennis courts and the pickleball lines would be added to the courts at that time.

Chairman Gaume asked the status of purchasing additional land in Nexus 32909 with Recreation Impact Fees. Ms. Misconi responded that one of the items requested on the budget list was a Parks Master Plan, which would contain a comprehensive and strategic look at the City's recreational facilities. The Master Plan would include a complete inventory of all park amenities, estimated usage, areas of population gain, land availability and high-level budgetary costs. Three (3) firms had been interviewed by staff to complete a Parks Master Plan to allow for pursuit of grants and potentially a future referendum. Chairman Gaume asked that all recreational facilities be Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessible.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**1. Consideration of a request by Santa Isabel Wright to rename Fred Poppe Regional Park.**

Ms. Wright, President of Foreign Hispanic Chamber of Commerce as well as United Coalition Council, presented the request and asked that Fred Poppe Regional Park be renamed to “Heritage Park.” She envisioned the park be a focal point for community activities, festivals, historical events and an increase in civic engagement creating strong connections to the park that acknowledged residents’ shared heritage. Ms. Wright proposed a cultural board to work with the City to increase tourism and economy and create a landmark with flags representing countries of City residents. She said that increased community involvement would result in positive shifts in community moral.

Individuals made comments, stating parks should not be named after living people and that the park should be renamed to the original name of Palm Bay Regional Park.

Board members discussed the Park Naming/Renaming Policy and what constituted an extraordinary condition to rename a park that had already been renamed. Mr. Messenger and Ms. Misconi responded to questions posed by the Board.

Vice-Chairman Olszewski felt the Board was within its rights to rename the park and that the circumstances were extraordinary. He said it was the Board’s duty as stewards of recreation to set standards of excellence for the future of the city. He was not proud of the current name and did not feel the need to include “regional” as part of the title.

Chairman Gaume relinquished the chair to Vice-Chairman Olszewski. He commented that renaming the park to Heritage Park would cause confusion with Heritage High School as both had a field named after Roberto Clemente. He recommended naming it as Palm Bay Heritage Park or Palm Bay Regional Park, make it a contest for the youth to rename it. Mr. Agarie agreed with Palm Bay Heritage Park. Mr. Luse supported renaming it to Palm Bay Regional Park.

Chairman Gaume said the policy needed to be changed to prohibit naming any facilities or parks after living people. Mr. Messenger said this request to rename the park was based on a personal issue against Fred Poppe and the legal case against Mr. Poppe was still pending.

Motion by Chairman Gaume, seconded by Mr. Luse, to table the request until the legal case was concluded. Mr. Graver said this was an extraordinary situation and recommended renaming back to Palm Bay Regional Park. Mr. Fenelon and Mr. Agarie agreed. Vice-Chairman Olszewski felt the standards to rename the park had not been met when it was renamed to Fred Poppe Regional Park.

Motion failed with members voting as follows:

Chairman Gaume	Yea
Vice-Chairman Olszewski	Nay
Mr. Fenelon	Yea
Mr. Luse	Yea
Mr. Graver	Nay
Mr. Agarie	Nay

Note: The minutes, adopted at Regular Meeting 2025-01, were corrected to include the roll call vote for the above vote.

Motion by Mr. Agarie, seconded Mr. Luse, to recommend to City Council to rename the park as “Palm Bay Regional Park”.

Motion carries with members voting as follows:

Chairman Gaume	Yea
Vice-Chairman Olszewski	Nay
Mr. Fenelon	Yea
Mr. Luse	Yea
Mr. Graver	Yea
Mr. Agarie	Yea

Chairman Gaume resumed as the presiding officer. He commented on the BMX presentation that was recently given to the City Council. He felt it could be a good project.

Mr. Agarie said he had a soccer team and inquired about the City hosting a tournament. He also requested field lights at Fred Poppe Regional Park for training. He added that he was dissatisfied with the scoring procedures for the Holiday Light Parade and would not be in attendance based on the current scoring system. Ms. Misconi advised that the Board was the scoring body for the Holiday Light Parade.

Vice-Chairman Olszewski expressed his opinions about the Parade and the scoring system. He said it was a personal scoring and was up to each individual; it was not a standard set by someone else’s scoring system.

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The next meeting would be held on December 3, 2024, at 7:00 P.M., at Tony Rosa Community Center, Room A, 1502 Port Malabar Boulevard NE, Palm Bay, Florida 32905.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at the hour of 7:56 P.M.

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Thomas Gaume, Chairperson

ATTEST:

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Jeff Billker, Minute Taker