



THE CITY OF MIRAMAR PARKS & RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD RETREAT MINUTES

February 26, 2024

6:30 P.M.

The City of Miramar's Parks & Recreation Advisory Board (PRAB) met for a Retreat on Monday, February 26, 2024, at 6:36 p.m. at the Development Services Building, 2nd Floor, 2200 Civic Center Place, Miramar, Florida 33025.

- 1. CALL TO ORDER**
- 2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
- 3. ATTENDANCE - BOARD MEMBERS**

The following members of the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board were present:

Synthia Parchment-Green, Chairperson
Dr. Yelena Revere, Vice Chairperson
Ian Excell
Abdool Gani
Carlister Gordon
Lair Hall
Nichola Officer
Carlos Ramsay
Joshua Rhodes
Sherria Williams

A quorum was achieved.

Staff present:

Billy Neal, Director, Parks & Recreation (P&R)
Jacqueline Lovell-Santos, Dept. Coordinator, P&R

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- **January 22, 2024**

Mr. Gordon made a motion to approve the minutes of January 22, 2024, as corrected, seconded by Mr. Rhodes. The motioned passed unanimously.

5. BLACK HISTORY MONTH WRAP-UP - Billy Neal

- March overview - Billy Neal

Mr. Neal gave the board an overview, stating all the Black History Month events were a success; over 3,000 people attended the Afro Carib Fest, which was a signature event the City hosted annually, and it got bigger and better every year. The most recent event was the Bob Marley Movie showing that also had a great turnout, and the final event was the Black History Business Recognition Awards dinner sponsored by Mayor Messam; it would take place on February 28, 2024, at 7:00 p.m. at the Miramar Cultural Center (MCC) banquet hall. He said though Black History Month ended in February, other events celebrating black history would continue throughout the year. For March, Parks had over seven events: Saturday, March 9, the annual Mayor's Health Fair/5K Run that would take place in the Town Center Plaza at 6:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m., at which would be vendors, games, the run, etc.; the Rhythms of Africa event hosted by Mayor Messam at the MCC would take place on Saturday, March 16 @ 7:00 p.m., and Sunday, March 17 @ 5:00 p.m. The event was hosted at the Miramar Amphitheater a few years prior, at which there was a good turnout, but Mayor Messam sought to make the event more intimate and condensed. On Saturday, March 30 was the Mayor's Chess Challenge at Sunset Lakes Community Center, 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.; it was exciting to see the young players dominating in the event; another event on March 30 was the Easter Eggstravaganza hosted by Commissioner Chambers at the Miramar Regional Park from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.; this event continued to grow each year, with an attendance approaching that of the City's Fourth of July event, with the police detail increasing to help handle for crowd control.

Chairperson Parchment-Green asked about the Kite Festival on Saturday, March 23.

Mr. Neal affirmed The World's Greatest Kite Festival hosted by Commissioner Barnes would take place at the Miramar Regional Park from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.; this event was actually outgrowing its venue, so for the 2025 event a new location would have to be found, as they needed an open field area without the obstruction of lights poles, etc. They were considering a site at Bass Creek

Road, the property right next to Everglades High School, and attendees could use school parking.

6. COMMUNITY FOOD DRIVE: Saturday, January 27, 2024 feedback - Board

Vice Chairperson Revere asked the board for their feedback on the January 27 food drive.

Mr. Rhodes commented that it appeared to be another successful food drive, as the cars lined up early, and everything seemed to run smoothly.

Vice Chairperson Revere remarked, as the food drive set up early, there was no need to let anyone sit and wait, and let the cars pile up, she suggested starting the food drive earlier; it was not necessary to wait until 9:00 a.m. to begin. She agreed that the food drive seemed to have gone well. Everyone was thanked for attending, and there was leftover food, so they took the food to the center to give the elderly, and she hoped for future food drives food could be taken to the elderly, giving them the forms to fill out to receive the food. She noted volunteers could help them with their food items on the bus that drove them from and back home from the center; they did not always have sufficient money to buy food, so she wished to help them out whenever it was possible. She asked when was the next scheduled food drive.

Ms. Lovell-Santos answered in April.

Ms. Williams admired the manner in which board members, staff, and the volunteers pivoted when they realized so much food was left over, as it concerned her, but it was great the way everyone pitched in, calling in resources, and the solution was executed effortlessly.

Ms. ~~Office~~ **Officer** wondered if the board and staff could do anything differently for the next food drive to draw more people out to receive the food. The board's first food drive had a great turnout, but the last one had a much lower turnout. She wondered if having volunteers hold signs out on the corner announcing the food drive would help, as there was a huge contrast between the amount of food and the number of people who showed up for it.

Vice Chairperson Revere mentioned passing out flyers of the food drive at the MLK Parade, and the notice of the food drive went out on the City's newsletter, so she was unsure how much more could be done to alert the community. She could call on her radio contacts to try to increase awareness.


Ms. Office **Officer** questioned what the board and staff did for the first food drive.

Mr. Rhodes thought there might have been another event going on in the City that contributed to the low turnout.

Mr. Excell said he spoke to a number of people at church the following Sunday, and they indicated they forgot about the food drive, so it might just have been that some people just chose to do something else and forgot, as the following Monday was President's Day.

Chairperson Parchment-Green suggested sending out a community reminder closer to the event date.

Mr. Neal responded that the City's Marketing staff sent out notification of the food drive every week until the event, but the low turnout might be linked to the public holiday the following Monday.

Mr. Gordon agreed the low turnout was unlikely due to something the board or staff did wrong, and he, too, was pleased to see how staff and the board responded to ensure the food did not go to waste, and went to help elderly persons in need.

Vice Chairperson Revere, again, commended everyone for their work at the food drive, noting Commissioner Barnes, the host elected official, stayed at the food drive for its entirety.

- Black History Corner site visit feedback - Board

No discussion.

- Review of events for Advisory Board participation - Board

Vice Chairperson Revere noted, in speaking with Commissioner Barnes at the January food drive, she learned that he was all about educating the City's youth, and doing all that he could to make it happen. She was grateful the PRAB was able to step in, and help execute his vision, and she hoped other elected officials would do the same, as Miramar's children were the City's future. She went on to comment on the board members who were working diligently on the college fair discussed at the previous board meeting. They identified over 5,000 colleges, and they were in the process of working out various elements; for example, as the event would be held at the Miramar Amphitheater, they wished to know if there was space for buses to park. She said Commissioner Barnes already indicated his support, and she hoped her fellow board members would participate

in the event; she was working on identifying someone to connect the PRAB with someone on the School Board. If they could get Broward County on board, they need only get sponsors to transport the children to the event. Dr. Revere said she already had a sponsor who would donate food to feed the children, as the intent was to invite students from all Broward County high schools, adding that Tuesday they would be doing a similar event in Dade County at which all the high schools would be present. She said the caveat of the Miramar event was to have colleges do on-spot admission, which some have already agreed to do, so students were encouraged to bring their transcripts, etc. to facilitate that process. The hope was to do an annual event in October, as November 1 was early admission, so students could attend the event, shop the colleges, and apply accordingly, and parents were welcome.

Ms. Williams asked if board members should reach out to their individual commissioners to see if they had a contact on the School Board, or should board members reach out to the School Board to identify a contact person.

Chairperson Parchment-Green thought Mr. Excell could ask Commission Barnes if he could speak to his contact on the School Board about identifying someone the board could work with on the subject initiative.

Mr. Excell mentioned from the food drive he spoke with Commissioner Barnes' aide, who indicated she would contact someone on the School Board, and then let the board know that outcome.

Vice Chairperson Revere added Commissioner Barnes' aide indicated she would reach out to the Jamaican Nurses Association, stating the board needed as many contacts as possible to promote and support the event, and she would be disseminating information on the event on the radio.

Ms. Williams wondered if it would be beneficial for each board member to reach out their appointing commissioner, and the Mayor's aide regarding contacting someone at the School Board. She asked if it were possible for staff to do a formal letter board members could share with the elected officials, and for use to contact the School Board.

Mr. Excell opined the college fair would be a huge project that would require a significant amount of sponsorship, so board members needed to reach out to the various Commissioners, and utilize the options available to bring the pool of finance needed to host a successful event.

Chairperson Parchment-Green stated, rather than each board member going to their appointing commissioner, was it possible for some board members to meet

with some or all members of the City Commission.

Mr. Hall thought, for such a large event, the board needed to have a cohesive presentation before bringing anyone in to look at what the board was doing. For example, the CEO of Memorial Hospital Miramar was a friend of his, and it was people like this the board needed to get involved in such an event; regardless of whether it's the commissioners, or high profile sponsors, etc., the board needed to have a cohesive plan to present to them to show what the board wished to achieve prior to the date of the event to ensure its success.

Vice Chairperson Revere stated, at the next board meeting, she would invite the person she was partnering with to help the host the subject event to make a presentation to the board. She asked Ms. Williams to meet with **Jessica ? 30:33**, as she knew people who would be great sponsors for the event.

Ms. Williams knew a budget was mentioned, and the need to increase it, but she questioned whether the board would have to pay for a police detail, etc., so she wondered what would be the best way for the board to create a budget for the event, possibly drafting one that could be sent out to board members for their feedback. When that was finalized, board members could show it to the potential sponsors, so they could determine how much help they could render.

Mr. Hall concurred, as sponsors liked to see how funding was being allocated.

Vice Chairperson Revere noted sponsorship dollars would be spent on such things as transportation. Again, the event would be held on a Tuesday, 9:00 a.m. to at least 1:00 p.m. or 2:00 p.m. In Dade County, they did the event as a school field trip that was approved by the Dade County Schools superintendent. She noted being unsure about getting the support of the Broward County Schools Superintendent.

Ms. Williams agreed the board should try to identify a School Board contact to get the School District's support, but, failing that, the event could be held during the weekend rather than on a school day.

Vice Chairperson Revere remarked the board could just go through individual schools, and speak with their BRACE advisors. The Dade County School Superintendent pushed the event out to the school principals, notifying them that attending would be considered a field trip, but she was less familiar with the Broward County School system.

Mr. Hall mentioned he would try to contact Broward County School Board member Torey Alston, and if he was able to get a meeting with him, he would

invite Dr. Revere to join that meeting.

Vice Chairperson Revere added, if Broward County showed no interest in partnering with the board on the event, each school's BRACE advisor could be contacted, and board members would inform them that the event would provide bus transportation and lunch for each student and chaperone.

Mr. Hall asked what was the proposed date of the event.

Vice Chairperson Revere replied October 7, 2024; it would be promoted as an annual college fair, and career expo, so along with colleges, technical, trade, and military schools would be included.

Ms. Williams wondered if the name of the event would identify the host as the City of Miramar, or the PRAB.

Mr. Neal stated it would be the City of Miramar Parks & Recreation Advisory Board Annual College Fair & Career Expo hosted by Commissioner Barnes.

Vice Chairperson Revere said The Friendships that Give organization had to be included in the title; the gentleman from that organization used to host the 100 Black Men College Fair at FIU; he was now assisting her with the proposed Broward County event. They were pooling their resources to this end.

Chairperson Parchment-Green urged every board member to participate the October 7 event, which might entail taking the day off from work; she knew it would entail a lot of work, and there was enough time to put plan accordingly.

Vice Chairperson Revere stated she would keep the board updated each week, via staff, on the status of the event; she would email Mr. Neal on a number of questions, and Ms. Lovell-Santos and he could respond, so they could proceed with planning the event. She hoped Parks & Recreation staff would be able to help, as the event would conclude by 2:00 p.m., giving sufficient time to get students back to school for home pickups.

Mr. Neal mentioned the need to work out the logistics; for example, how many schools would be invited; each school would get one bus; the number of hours the bus would be hired for, and if it would be an hourly rate.

Vice Chairperson Revere said they would likely charge a flat fee rather than an hourly rate; Dade County charged a flat rate of about \$300.00 or \$400.00 per bus.

Mr. Neal believed Broward County Schools charged by the hour.

Vice Chairperson Revere commented on the need to see if Broward County Schools worked with certain private bus vendors, as the school buses could only be used for a limited time.

Ms. Williams thought three hours was sufficient time for the event.

Vice Chairperson Revere disagreed, as colleges willing to admit students on the spot would require time to interview the students, at least 35 minutes. Students were much more savvy, and had a good idea of the colleges they wished to explore, and they were seeking as much financing as they could get. The expo would not be limited to HBCUs, as having other universities would widen students' options, and the event would run from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. She added some students would be brought to the event by their parents. Dr. Revere said she would identify all Broward High Schools, visit their website to get information on their population; the event would provide each school with one bus for their seniors, and if the bus could not hold all the seniors, or if the school wished to also bring juniors, they could provide the added transportation. She said there were variety of resources individual schools could use to get funding for additional buses if needed, such as **ESAC 55:15** funds.

Mr. Neal felt it was necessary to see how many of the 32 Broward high schools would participate.

Mr. Hall said the Broward School Board needed to be involved in the event.

Mr. Rhodes asked if charter schools would be included.

Ms. Williams remarked when she drafted a budget, she would do it for 50 schools comprised of the 32 high schools, and the remaining could be filled by other schools, including charter schools, and she would budget \$500.00 per bus.

Vice Chairperson Revere restated all high school students were welcome to attend, but the event would only provide bus transportation for the 32 Broward public high schools. She asked about the collaboration proposal.

Ms. Lovell-Santos mentioned the information from Commissioner Barnes' office was he would like to be a part of three of the board's projects: the college readiness expo; the back-to-school uniform drive; and he desired more information on the Good360 relief packages. He wanted the board to gather and relay to him more information on the needs of Miramar and the college tour trade expo, as he wished to support this endeavors as well.

Vice Chairperson Revere mentioned staff was supposed to introduce her to Reginald Taylor with Parks & Recreation, as he was already doing a college readiness initiative.

Ms. Lovell-Santos said she would invite him to a future board meeting.

Vice Chairperson Revere stated FAMU was already providing SAT and ACT tutoring, so she was able to have that service extended to Miramar high school seniors, along with other college readiness seminars, including writing essays, etc. With regard to the contents of the Good360 relief packages, her company was approved for the Good360 charity organization, and the boxes usually contained: hygiene products, water, food, etc.; it was, essentially, a care box; they handed out one care box a month to homeless persons who met them at the designated location. The guidelines was that none of the products could be sold, or stored away; everything had to be donated. She said the food products usually included Meals Ready-to-Eat (MRE), etc.

Mr. Excell said they would follow up Ms. 1:06:03 in regard to the information she would supply. He added, as Commissioner Barnes was already a radio personality, it was likely the board could get one or two advertising segments from him.

Ms. Lovell-Santos mentioned staff was missing pictures of some board members; specifically: Ms. Parchment-Green, Dr. Revere, Mr. Gani, Ms. Williams. They could have them taken at the **Sunset Lakes Community Center or Multi-Service Complex ?? 1:07:42.**

Chairperson Parchment-Green stated she would have hers done on February 27th.

Ms. Williams indicated she already did her picture prior to the meeting.

Mr. Excell said residents asked him when Monarch Lakes Park would reopen, as the park was closed while park improvements were in progress.

Mr. Neal acknowledged Monarch Lakes Park was currently closed, and had been for some time due to issues the City was having with the State; the latter refused to grant the City a certificate of occupancy (CO), because of some drainage issues that had to be rectified before the park could reopen. He said it was slated to reopen on March 18, 2024, which was when the ribbon cutting was scheduled; hopefully, the contracted work would be finished before that, and the park could reopen earlier.

Ms. Office **Officer** knew at River Run Park there were two gazebos that would be rented for parties, etc., and she wondered how long it would take the City to tell people they should stop releasing balloons into the air at the end of their parties. Sometimes the balloons became stuck in trees, and it was an environmental hazard.

Mr. Neal remarked there was very little the City could do to stop them; park patrons renting City facilities were told to clean up after themselves, and that included not to leave any party paraphernalia, such as balloons, around the park, but and they did not, leaving Parks staff to clean up after behind them. River Run Park was an unmanned park, so there was no staff watching over the facility during such activities.

Mr. Ramsay mentioned the soccer fields at Miramar Regional Park by the pool, asking when they would be fixed.

Mr. Neal stated the Big Bounce event was held on those fields, so Parks staff knew they were in need of repair; the work was scheduled for March 2024, but the fields were still in use.

Mr. Excell noticed improvements at Lake Shore Park; his wife went and played at the park, and she saw an improvement in the previously mentioned issues with the tennis net, the garbage around the park, and unemptied garbage cans.

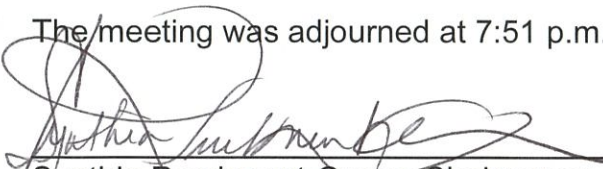
Mr. Neal commented it was a work in progress, and the new tennis pro just started in January 2024, and it would take him a little time to get the tennis courts in proper working order. Lake Shore had five clay courts, two in the front, and three in the back; for the two in the front, the City planned to send out a bid to change them to four pickleball courts.

7. PUBLIC INPUT: NONE

8. ADJOURNMENT:

The next meeting would be Monday, March 25, 2024, at 6:30 p.m.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:51 p.m.



Synthia Parchment-Green, Chairperson
SP/cp