



City of Naples

City Council Chamber
735 Eighth Street South
Naples, Florida 34102

Community Services Advisory Board Regular Meeting May 12, 2009 - 9:00 a.m.

Chairman Selfon called the meeting to order and presided.

CALL TO ORDER (8:59 a.m.).....ITEM 1

ROLL CALL.....ITEM 2

Present:

Lois Selfon, Chairman
Douglas Finlay
Roslyn Katz
Alan Ryker
Noreen Schumann
Jenah Victor-Smith

Absent:

Linda Black

Also Present:

David Lykins, Community Services Director
Michael Leslie, Assistant Comm. Services Director
Kathy Brisson, Senior Administrative Specialist
Rachael McLean, Technical Writing Specialist
Jennifer Fox, Cambier Park Manager

John Finnegan
Other interested citizens and visitors.

ANNOUNCEMENTS.....ITEM 3

None.

INTRODUCTION OF NEW BOARD MEMBERS.....ITEM 4

Community Services Director David Lykins welcomed Member Katz to the Community Services Advisory Board (CSAB).

ITEMS TO BE ADDED.....ITEM 5

None.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES.....ITEM 6

***MOTION** by Finlay to **APPROVE** the February 10, 2009, meeting minutes as submitted; seconded by Victor-Smith and unanimously carried (Finlay-yes, Black-absent, Katz-yes, Ryker-yes, Schumann-yes, Victor-Smith-yes, Selfon-yes).*

MOTION by Schumann to APPROVE the April 14, 2009, meeting minutes as submitted; seconded by Ryker and unanimously carried (Finlay-yes, Black-absent, Katz-yes, Ryker-yes, Schumann-yes, Victor-Smith-yes, Selfon-yes).

SPECIAL EVENTS UPDATE.....ITEM 7

Community Services Director David Lykins stated that over the past few months, various event organizers had been invited to provide a summary of the successes and challenges of major events in the downtown area. John Finnegan, president of the Naples St. Patrick’s Day Parade and Scholarship Society, stated that the parade is a fun family event, free to the public, which has a philanthropic purpose, also describing it as part of the cultural fabric of the City, having been held there for over 30 years. The Society, he said, regularly is contacted by individuals from around the country and Europe who schedule their Naples vacations to coincide with the parade. In addition to challenges ranging from inclement and/or very hot weather to scheduling high school marching bands, Mr. Finnegan identified lack of parking as a problem, despite the construction of two parking garages (both located on Eighth Street South). He however acknowledged the generosity of Jack Antaramian in permitting the use of his property at Goodlette-Frank Road and Fifth Avenue South, which was used as parking for several hundred vehicles. Although other private lots were also available these venues may be developed as the economy improves. Mr. Finnegan pointed out that the parade had been reduced in size in recent years and asked that the City consider streamlining the permitting process since the event does not change from year to year. In response to Member Victor-Smith, he confirmed that the St. Patrick’s Day Parade is always held on the Saturday closest to the holiday and lasts five hours, including set-up and take-down. Organizers continue to use St. Ann Catholic Church for staging, he said, and the buses which transport bands to the site are given various routes to limit congestion.

Member Ryker stated that he resides in the downtown area and does not object to the level of activity, but questioned whether an estimate was available for the number of parade attendees parking downtown. Mr. Finnegan said that while this would be difficult to quantify, the 2009 parade was believed to have had fewer attendees because Marco Island hosted its own parade the Saturday prior. In response to Member Ryker, Mr. Finnegan agreed that free valet bicycle parking for downtown events, a proposal previously considered by the City, would be advisable and further noted that a shuttle was not provided between the Antaramian property and the parade site, assuming that many had then crossed US 41 at Fifth Avenue South (Four Corners). Member Ryker expressed concern with there being no pedestrian crosswalk and therefore no means to cross safely and legally at that location.

In response to Chairman Selfon, Mr. Lykins stated that Mr. Finnegan and other parade volunteers fulfilled the City’s expectations, noting that the St. Patrick’s Day Parade has a long history as a very large event conducted in a concentrated area during the height of the tourist season. Parking is a challenge that all event organizers must face, he said, but Mr. Finnegan promoted available parking locations. Mr. Lykins also noted that event organizers are learning that an orderly parking plan is essential to the success of an event and attendees are recognizing the importance of being sensitive to downtown residents, particularly where right-of-way parking is lawfully utilized.

Member Katz stated that she regularly attends local parades, noting that several vehicles had apparently parked overnight along Fifth Avenue South on the night before the 2009 St. Patrick’s Day Parade and these vehicles impaired visibility from the sidewalk. Acknowledging that this

affects viewing, Mr. Lykins explained that signage is temporarily installed prior to the event asking the public to remove their vehicles from the street, but there is not full compliance. On-street parking also narrows the travel lane for the floats and marching bands, he said, and indicated that staff would continue to work with local merchants and the Naples Police & Fire Department (NPF) in this regard. Chairman Selfon suggested that it may be appropriate to draft an ordinance which would enable the City to enforce parking restrictions in an area prior to an event. Mr. Finnegan stated that it may be possible to mention this problem in its advertisements and correspondence, asking that individuals not leave their vehicles along the parade route the night prior to the event.

In response to Member Victor-Smith, Mr. Finnegan stated that scholarships are offered to the schools that participate in the parade, but extensive fundraising is also necessary to cover the cost of the parade itself. Mr. Finnegan reviewed the organization's fundraising activities, including acquiring sponsors and hosting a gala at the Inn on Fifth. Chairman Selfon thanked Mr. Finnegan for his input.

Mr. Lykins said that there would probably not be additional special event updates included on future agendas unless the Board wished to obtain feedback from a specific event organizer, noting that the hosts of major events had provided input to the Board over the past several months. He stressed that there is consistency among the larger events with regard to complying with the intent of the Board's policy recommendations, particularly the sensitivity to parking regulations. Member Victor-Smith said she believed the Board had however not received significant input from community-based organizations conducting small events, such as the Humane Society or National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI). Mr. Lykins agreed that it would be possible to invite one or more of the smaller groups to attend a future Board Meeting. Member Ryker suggested that staff request feedback via email from the various organizers that had obtained special event permits. He further noted that while other organizations may find the new regulations onerous, he had not found this to be the case when he applied for a special event permit.

Cambier Park Manager Jennifer Fox provided the Board with various promotional materials for the Park and the Norris Community Center and encouraged Members to show their support by voting for the Gulfshore Playhouse/Norris Center in the live theater category of the Southwest Florida Choice Awards. (It is noted for the record that a copy of the materials, along with other documentation referenced in this item, is contained in the file for this meeting in the City Clerk's Office.) Ms. Fox noted that Cambier Park had been awarded three honors in Gulfshore Life Magazine's 2009 Best of the Gulfshore article, including Best Community Park (Gold Award), Best Place for Live Music (Gold Award), and Best Free Fun (Silver Award). In addition to a large event in Fleischmann Park, she explained that the Humane Society conducts five or six small events throughout the year in Cambier Park and offered to invite a representative to provide further input. Other smaller events at Cambier Park and the Norris Community Center include private gatherings, such as birthday parties and small luncheons, she said. Member Victor-Smith requested that the event organizers be contacted via email for feedback, as suggested by Mr. Ryker.

Ms. Fox explained that the effectiveness of promotional materials is measured by asking those who contact the facility how they learned about the event. She also confirmed that the economic climate had not negatively impacted the Norris Community Center, noting that ticket sales

during the winter season (2008-09) had been strong. Both Chairman Selfon and Mr. Lykins commended Ms. Fox for her efforts with regard to marketing strategies and the overall success of the facility.

In further discussion, Ms. Fox said the facility had maintained an affordable pricing structure for events, but some ticket prices had increased, largely because there is a greater cost for higher quality entertainment. With regard to the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) (see Item 9), Ms. Fox noted that the theater had received various upgrades in recent years, but the wood flooring requires resurfacing at more frequent intervals. Member Finlay pointed out that the Community Services Department would be requesting funding for Norris Center enhancements as part of the five-year CIP proposal, but that request did not include funding for the 2009-10 fiscal year. Mr. Lykins clarified that the work initially planned for 2009-10 would be deferred one year, as reflected in the proposal. He also explained that the enhancements may include electrical/lighting upgrades, sound system upgrades, replacing or refinishing the wood floors, and painting.

Member Finlay stated that City Council had discussed the Board's booth fee recommendations at a recent meeting, during which the Naples Artcrafters had objected to the proposed fee increase for its use of Cambier Park, with Council Member Gary Price expressing concern that there was no justification for the increase. Mr. Finlay however pointed out that there had been a joint meeting between the Board and Council during which figures were provided with regard to the cost of special events to the taxpayers. The Board had recommended that the City increase the booth fee to \$35 from \$10 to offset the cost of police and fire personnel overtime for special events. He explained that booth fees currently generate approximately \$14,000 to \$20,000 annually, but the cost of the above reference overtime is approximately \$70,000. Mr. Finlay said he did not realize during the Board's previous discussions that some events would be subject to both a park rental fee and booth fee; therefore he had emailed the City Council suggesting that it consider the following solutions: 1) exempting park rentals or booth fees so long as one is paid; or 2) maintaining the \$10 booth fee but also collecting the existing park rental fee. Nevertheless, he said, the fee should be increased to \$35 for all events conducted outside of a park. Chairman Selfon stated that the Board reviews the fee schedule annually and the goal is a rate structure that is simple to understand, easy to administer, and affordable for users. The fees, she said, are not intended to completely cover the cost of operating the facility or program, because the City in general provides social, cultural, and recreational amenities for use by the public. She described the recommended increase to \$35 as reasonable, and strongly objected to the idea that the fee increase was intended to discourage the use of City parks. Mrs. Selfon further noted that there are other options for individuals who do not wish to pay the booth fee, such as staging at the downtown farmer's market; in addition, organizations may engage in fundraising to cover event expenses, including the fees charged by the City. She encouraged Members to direct further comments on this issue to City Council, noting that the Board had already formalized its recommendation in this regard.

Member Schumann acknowledged that the City subsidizes the cost of all activities in the parks because the fee structure is not designed to recover the expense of maintaining a facility. She nevertheless said she believed the proposed increase is onerous, noting that the Cambier Park rental fee had increased to \$800 from \$120. Ms. Schumann further asserted that the Board's recommendation had unintentionally conveyed the message to the art community that its contributions to local culture are undervalued and underappreciated. She also expressed concern

that the proposed increases may encourage use of the street for events, rather than parks, which was certainly not the intent. (It is noted for the record that Member Schumann submitted a statement to this effect which is contained in the file for this meeting in the City Clerk’s Office.)

Member Victor-Smith recognized that Board Members may have varying opinions on particular issues, but the Board agreed on a recommendation, which was forwarded to City Council. During City Council’s consideration of special event fees, she said, other issues were discussed that every Member of the Board may not have contemplated, stressing the role of public input in moving forward with the decision-making process. Ms. Victor-Smith encouraged any interested individuals in the community to offer comments at City Council’s further consideration of this matter on June 3.

Chairman Selfon emphasized that the Board would respect the wisdom of City Council in the policy it adopts, regardless of whether it comports fully with the recommendation of the Board.

PARKING GARAGE NAMING UPDATE.....ITEM 8

Community Services Director David Lykins stated that staff is preparing a memorandum to City Council, which would be included in the May 18 workshop meeting packet, to provide an update on the Board’s effort to obtain financial support in exchange for naming rights at the municipal parking garage at Sixth Avenue South and Eighth Street. He agreed to disseminate the memorandum, following completion, to the Board via email, but noted that to date there had been no interest expressed by potential donors. Therefore, he said, City Council may consider whether to continue offering the naming rights to the parking garage and, if so, identify the level of financial contribution that would be appropriate.

CIP/BUDGET REQUESTS 2009-10.....ITEM 9

Community Services Director David Lykins stated that the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) budget request for the Community Services Department would be presented to City Council in June, noting that the request marks a reduction from previous years due to the economic situation and the City’s need to use the utility tax funds in other areas. (It is noted for the record that a copy of the above referenced budget request for 2009-10 is contained in the file for this meeting in the City Clerk’s Office.) He noted that Member Finlay had requested a list of CIP projects approved in 2007-08 for comparative purposes (a copy of which is contained in the file for this meeting in the City Clerk’s Office). Mr. Lykins pointed out that the department would request \$573,000 in funding for 2009-10, which he described as minimal and fiscally responsible, although it would allow replacement of amenities, such as water fountains. The request for the tree fill-in and replacement program had been substantially reduced, he said, primarily because of the cost of maintaining a tree in perpetuity is an operational effort which is supported by the City’s general fund. In response to Member Finlay, Mr. Lykins confirmed that although the City Council had approved \$150,000 for the tree program in previous years, it had been reduced to \$15,000 for the current year, although none of this allocation had been expended. He further clarified that trees that had died in the current year had not been replaced, but he pointed out that the City’s tree inventory is nevertheless substantial due to planting efforts over the last 10 to 15 years. Mr. Lykins also pointed out that trees may be planted as donations and property owner associations may consider funding replacement as a neighborhood program. Member Finlay however expressed concern that it may be several years until the City is willing to increase funding for the replacement of trees, and that over time the loss would escalate.

In response to Chairman Selfon, Mr. Lykins stated that the number of trees donated to the City had declined in recent years. Mrs. Selfon suggested promoting the donation program on the

City's television channel. Member Victor-Smith pointed out that she is working with Parks & Parkways Superintendent Joe Boscaglia to expand the memorial tree program to allow individuals to fund the care of an existing tree, rather than planting a new one.

In response to Member Victor-Smith, Mr. Lykins clarified that funding for the Third Street South Streetscape Improvements project had been deliberately postponed until 2009-2010, so that the installation could occur during one fiscal year. The project, he said, had already been bid and the entity awarded the contract (low-bidder) had agreed to maintain its bid price for a period of time until a final decision is made. He further emphasized that the funding allocations presented were merely proposals and must still be approved by City Council. Chairman Selfon commended the Third Street Association for taking responsibility for a portion of the landscaping at its own cost and contributing to the beautification of the area, urging the City to support this effort.

In further discussion, Mr. Lykins reiterated that CIP projects are funded through utility taxes, not the general fund, and that City Council would direct staff as to which proposed projects would be funded in the coming year. Member Ryker cautioned that grant eligibility may be affected by not funding projects, noting that he had recently learned that the City had not been awarded a grant for sidewalks in conjunction with the State's Safe Routes to School program and expressed concern that it may be due to the City's decision to cut its own funding for sidewalks. Member Finlay pointed out that the approved budget may be amended by City Council and there is no requirement to actually expend the amounts allocated, noting the tree replacement program in the current year as an example of a funded project that may not be completed.

Chairman Selfon expressed support for the proposed water spray recreational amenity at River Park, which would replace the current pool, but questioned whether the \$275,000 funding request was realistic. Mr. Lykins stressed that the community would receive a great benefit from this expenditure, noting that staff had considered ongoing operational and maintenance costs and a traditional pool would have much higher operational costs over time. He described the spray park as an important capital project; given the status of the current River Park pool and the fact that routine repair is no longer effective; he estimated that a new basic-model pool would cost \$1- to \$1.5-million. The spray park concept, he said, provides a cost-effective alternative, both in terms of capital outlay and operational expenses, and it would provide the cooling effect of a pool with fun and playful components that could be incorporated into the existing playground. Mr. Lykins further noted that summer recreational programming would be able to use Collier County's extensive aquatic facilities, which include traditional deep well pools. Member Schumann express support for the spray park concept and said she assumed that the swimming lessons offered by the City would also be relocated to the County facilities. Chairman Selfon thanked the Community Services Department for taking the initiative to incorporate the use of the County's facilities, noting that City residents should take advantage of these opportunities, as they are also residents of the County. In further discussion, Mr. Lykins clarified that \$275,000 is the total project cost, but the City is applying for a Florida Recreation Development & Assistance Program (FRDAP) grant to assist, provided the State includes the FRDAP in its own budget. He noted that Grant Coordinator Greg Givens would assist in this effort. Member Victor-Smith suggested that the City's submittal address the fact that a water spray facility would be more accessible than a traditional pool for individuals with special needs.

In response to Member Finlay, Mr. Lykins confirmed that, although the landscaped median restoration had been funded in previous years, a request would not be made for funding in 2009-

10, because over the past three years the majority of the City's medians had already been addressed. He further clarified that the flowering plants at neighborhood entrances would be reflected in the Parks & Parkways general operating budget. In response to Member Ryker, Mr. Lykins explained that the City has had a program for the past ten years to renovate five to ten cul-de-sacs annually, but there was currently no need for a substantive funding request. He also clarified that the beach access point at Eighth Avenue South is not considered a cul-de-sac, but a beach end and explained that \$5,000 would be budgeted for replacing computers at the River Park computer lab, but the threshold for inclusion as a capital expenditure is \$10,000 and greater.

Member Finlay asked whether staff was reluctant to provide the proposed operating budget for review. The department's recommendations had not yet been finalized, he said, but its budget proposal must be submitted to the Finance Department by May 22. Chairman Selfon and Member Finlay asked whether a copy could be provided at the next meeting or forwarded via email following submission to Finance; Mr. Lykins however stated that it may be possible to provide the first draft at an upcoming meeting, stressing that it is only being provided to the Finance Director on May 22 and it would subsequently be revised through a series of internal meetings between the department, the Finance Director, and the City Manager. The operating budget would be reviewed by City Council in August, he said.

Member Finlay pointed out that the Board is charged in the Code of Ordinances with reviewing and making recommendations with regard to the CIP and operating budget for the Community Services Department. Therefore, he said, the Board should provide input prior to City Council's review of the budget. Mr. Lykins stated that City Council had been advised by the City Manager of the projected shortfall in the 2009-10 City budget, noting that many municipalities and counties throughout the state are significantly reducing their operational budgets. Staff, he said, is preparing a general fund budget in accordance with revenue projections based on the rollback rate, noting that City Council had recently expressed support for that approach. He further noted that the department would therefore recommend some reductions in the Community Services Department, which is one of the largest departments. The City, he said, has been more fortunate than many other municipalities which would be facing significant reductions in service. Mr. Lykins noted that an efficiency audit had been performed on many programs and facility usage, and its results would be utilized to formulate the Department's budget recommendations.

DIRECTOR'S STAFF REPORT ITEM 10

(It is noted for the record that a copy of the director's staff report is contained in the file for this meeting in the City Clerk's Office.) Citing a report in the April 20 Community Update newsletter regarding a trawling study in Naples Bay, Member Victor-Smith requested that Natural Resources Manager Michael Bauer attend a future Board meeting to provide an update on the efforts and activities of the Natural Resources Division; Community Services Director David Lykins agreed.

Member Victor-Smith also commended Carla Reyes, who is a Telecommunicator with the Police & Fire Department (NPF), for her efforts in handling an unusual call in which an individual in Texas reported that a 12-year old girl in the Naples area was attempting suicide. Ms. Reyes, she said, was subsequently recognized as NPF's 2008 Telecommunicator of the Year.

Chairman Selfon commended the City's Ambassadors (volunteer program), who contributed over 600 hours of service in April, and thanked Recreation Services Manager Jill Orstad for overseeing this effort.

Mr. Lykins pointed out that at its next workshop the City Council would consider three items of interest to the Board: 1) the City's after school program at Fleischmann Park, including presentation of the parent survey results; 2) the formula used, and possible alternatives, to calculate the level of service (LOS) for parks and recreation elements within the City; and 3) fiscal challenges at the City Dock, including a request to amend the facility's budget. He further noted that the City Dock has been impacted by the current economic climate, which has affected the general retail sector, particularly the marine industry. The City continues to promote the availability of vacant slips, he said, but an overwhelming number of the individuals on the waiting list had declined when contacted because they cannot afford the rental rate or the cost of fuel. The City may consider renting vacant slips to a broker, who would display vessels, or a boat club with a rental fleet.

In response to Member Finlay, Mr. Lykins confirmed that the Florida Department of Community Affairs (DCA) does in fact permit flexibility with regard to the LOS calculation methodology. He also confirmed that Collier County funding to provide lunches to the students attending the River Park summer camp was in place for 2009.

Member Finlay provided the Board with the City of Naples Bicycle Map, which was provided by the Greater Naples Chamber of Commerce and the Naples Pathways Coalition, noting that Member Ryker had been involved in the project. (It is noted for the record that a copy of the map is contained in the file for this meeting in the City Clerk's Office.) Member Ryker pointed out that the map would be available at no cost to the citizens, noting that the project had not been funded by City taxpayers. Chairman Selfon said she had contacted Streets & Stormwater Director Ron Wallace and Grants Coordinator Greg Givens for an update on potential grant funding for pathways, but had not received an appreciable response. She therefore expressed concern that pursuing grants for pathways did not appear to be a priority and encouraged the Board to continue to follow this issue closely, noting that it is a matter of safety. Member Victor-Smith stated that the Ride of Silence would be conducted on May 20 at 7:00 p.m., which is an international event that commemorates with a solemn and respectful bicycle ride those who have died while cycling. With regard to the pathways plan, Member Ryker pointed out that the Board is responsible for making a recommendation with regard to the level of service for bicycle lanes, but he asserted that any real involvement in the development and promotion of these amenities is lacking.

Member Victor-Smith announced that children's story time is offered at the Naples Preserve/Hedges Family Eco-Center on Wednesday mornings throughout the summer; interested individuals, she said, should contact the Naples Preserve for more information.

PUBLIC INPUT ITEM 11

None.

ADJOURN **ITEM 12**
10:43 a.m.

Lois Selfon, Chairman

David Lykins, Community Services Director

Minutes prepared by:

Rachael McLean, Technical Writing Specialist

Minutes Approved: June 9, 2009