

VERO BEACH RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING
Tuesday, February 11, 2020 – 4:00 p.m.
City Hall, Council Chambers, Vero Beach, Florida

AGENDA

- 1. CALL TO ORDER**
- 2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
 - A) December 10, 2019**
- 3. PUBLIC COMMENT**
- 4. NEW BUSINESS**
 - A) Annual Report**
- 5. OLD BUSINESS**
- 6. RECREATION DIRECTOR'S MATTERS**
 - A) Recap of the 17th Annual Mother/Daughter Tea Party – February 8th**
 - B) Gymnastics Registration – March 21st**
 - C) Spring Break Cheer Camp – March 23rd – 27th**
- 7. CHAIRMAN'S MATTERS**
- 8. MEMBER'S MATTERS**
 - A) Goals and Objectives for new Recreation Director – Mrs. Brooke Malone**
 - B) National Recreation and Parks Magazine Articles – Mrs. Brooke Malone**
- 9. NEXT MEETING DATE**
 - A) March 10, 2020**
- 10. ADJOURNMENT**

This is a Public Meeting. Should any interested party seek to appeal any decision made by the Commission with respect to any matter considered at such meeting or hearing, they will need a record of the proceedings and that, for such purpose, they may need to ensure that a verbatim record of the proceedings is made, which record includes the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based. Anyone who needs a special accommodation for this meeting may contact the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Coordinator at 978-4920 at least 48 hours in advance of the meeting.

VERO BEACH RECREATION COMMISSION MINUTES

Tuesday, December 10, 2019 – 4:00 p.m.

City Hall, Council Chambers, Vero Beach, Florida

PRESENT: Chairman, Richard Yemm; Members: Judy Jones, Brooke Malone, and Alternate member, Garrett MacMillan **Also Present:** Recreation Director, Rob Slezak; Assistant Recreation Director, Patty Howard; Assistant City Attorney, Karen Emerson and Senior Administrative Assistant, Rita Hawkins

Excused Absences: Bobbi Burdick, Sue Dinunno, and Greg Holtan

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Yemm called today's meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. and the Senior Administrative Assistant performed the roll call.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A) November 12, 2019

Mrs. Malone made a motion to approve the minutes of the November 12, 2019 Recreation Commission meeting. Mr. Yemm seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

3. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

A) Chairman

Mr. Yemm asked for nominations for Chairman.

Ms. Jones nominated Mr. Richard Yemm as Chairman of the Recreation Commission. There were no other nominations. Mr. Yemm was unanimously appointed Chairman of the Recreation Commission.

Mrs. Malone stated that they received a copy of an email from Mrs. Sue Dinunno, Recreation Commission Vice Chairman. She asked if they were going to address it. Mr. Yemm replied he did not know. Mrs. Malone read the email into the record (attached to the original minutes). She asked how do they handle this. Mr. Yemm said they will move on to the election of the Vice Chairman.

B) Vice-Chairman

Mr. Yemm asked for nominations for Vice Chairman.

Ms. Jones said she was thinking maybe Mrs. Bobbi Burdick.

Mrs. Malone stated that she was nominated by someone who is not here. She asked if that is allowed. Mr. Yemm replied that they have not accepted that in the past.

Mrs. Karen Emerson, Assistant City Attorney, confirmed that the member would have to be present to make the nomination.

Mrs. Malone said that since there are only four (4) voting members here, what stops them from delaying their vote until they have more members present. She said this is awkward.

Mr. Yemm nominated Mrs. Brooke Malone for Vice Chairman of the Recreation Commission. Mr. MacMillan seconded the motion.

Mrs. Malone stated that there are a number of people who sit on this Commission that deserve to have a voice in the election. They are missing people that are active and have been doing this for a very long time. She said she would gladly accept the nomination. Mr. Yemm stated that the members have to be present to be nominated and to accept the position. Mrs. Malone said she understands, but is there any reason they should not show respect to the seats and maybe delay this until they have everyone here. She just wants it to be fair. Mr. Yemm stated that it is fair.

There were no other nomination. Mrs. Malone was unanimously appointed Vice Chairman of the Recreation Commission.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

5. NEW BUSINESS

None

6. OLD BUSINESS

A) Update, Timeline, and Data on the Point of Sale Systems Being Considered

Mr. Rob Slezak, Recreation Director, stated that Ms. Cindy Lawson, Finance Director and Mr. Jeff Matthews, Recreation Manager, are here to talk about the point of sale systems.

Ms. Cindy Lawson, Finance Director, stated that Mr. Matthews handed out a memo pertaining to the point of sale systems they are considering (attached to the original minutes). For a few months they have been looking for an appropriate level of software specifically for Leisure Square. What they need is good member data and good membership metrics in an easy sale system, which will help reduce some of the manual labor associated with posting general ledger entries. They have looked at a handful of programs and they came up with two (2) that Mr. Matthews is recommending, which he feels are the best fit for their current needs at Leisure Square. In addition to the criteria that Mr. Matthews laid out in his memo, she is also looking for a system that will work with their current merchant services provider. That would make the implementation much easier, because their goal isto get this rolled out fairly quickly. Mr.

Matthews has received demonstrations on all of the systems he looked at. The Finance Department has demonstrations scheduled for December 19, 2019, so they can look a little deeper into the implementation and the ease of working with their current merchant services provider. She said she agrees with Mr. Matthews that Book King looks like the most flexible to work with, but if Book King will not integrate with their current merchant services provider it would just cause some delay in the implementation. She explained that most of these kinds of software systems are cloud based. The software is a subscription service or subscription and they do not have to buy thousands of dollar's worth of software and try to keep it up do date. These software services are relatively inexpensive with a price of about \$100.00 per month. They can use parts of the service and choose not to use others as they see fit without a huge investment. With these two (2) systems, they are looking at an initial investment of \$300 to \$700 for hardware. She stated that both of the systems do all the things they would like, but her opinion is that Book King is a little more flexible, they might have better reporting, and there is the possibility they can grow into the online registration for summer camp and gymnastics in the future. It will depend on the ease of implementation and the price. Now that they have a simplified rate structure, they do not need a complicated point of sale system. What Mr. Matthews needs is a system where he can easily pull out the data he is looking for.

Mr. Jeff Matthews, Recreation Manager, said the point of sale system is the first aspect they are trying to tackle. The beautiful thing about Book King is that they have other modules that they can implement especially for gymnastics and summer camp. They will also be looking at door access systems to make sure that people are going to the proper places. The challenge they have had in the past is being able to provide the demographics of the age range, the time of day, etc. This information will help them know if they are over or under serving the different areas and programs. What the City Council wanted them to provide were these details, but they were having a hard time bringing that forward. A system like this will make it simple for the public, the staff, and the City Council to access and it will provide them with the details.

Ms. Lawson explained that door scanning uses radio frequency identification (RFID), which will take the guess work out of who they are serving and what time frames they are using the facilities.

Mr. Matthews added that this is not a contract based program and if it is not what they want they can cancel it. They have been looking at this company for about five (5) years, but it was never in the budget before. Now it is a good time for them to explore it and have a system that will work for them. Book King also handles space rentals, so that might go beyond just Leisure Square and handle the rentals for Riverhouse, Bethel Creek House, the Community Center, etc. People would be able to go on the website and see if the location and dates are available before any staff time is even involved.

Mrs. Malone asked if it is iPad based. Ms. Lawson said she knows that it is mobile unit based, but she is not sure if it is iPad based. Mr. Matthews replied that it is compatible with Macintosh computers, cell phones, iPads, desktop computers, etc.

Ms. Lawson stated that she likes Book King, because as they move through the different cost centers they might have the ability to build upon it for the other areas like the Community Center rentals, and the tennis facility. They also had another company, Civic Plus, who was interested in being their online space rental for the facilities, so when they get to that point they might look

at them as well. It is nice to have things consistent, but if they need to have two (2) or three (3) systems that work best for the different areas, she is not against that as long as they are compatible with the merchant services provider.

Mr. Yemm asked if there will be a module for the oversight of the vendors at Leisure Square.

Mr. Matthews replied no. He explained that there are different modules, but the one (1) they will try to move forward with is the point of sale to gather information and data on memberships. They want to try it for just their basic needs and if it works, then they can explore other areas. They like the module for the summer camp because it will instantly create rosters and it will automatically create wait lists when the classes fill.

Ms. Lawson said she would like to stress that they cannot set up and manage reservations for the private vendors that teach classes at the facilities.

Mr. Yemm asked if they will be able to track what the vendors are paying to rent space. Ms. Lawson replied yes. One (1) of the point of sale items will be the room rentals, so when Mr. Matthews receives a payment it will go into the system. She explained that any item on the Leisure Square rate sheet will come into play in the point of sale system.

Ms. Lawson reported that they implemented the new rates at Leisure Square and it is going good.

B) Update on Leisure Square Signage and Code Regulations

Mr. Jason Jefferies, Planning and Development Director, read the information that was provided in the agenda package, which explains the sign code regulations for the RM-8 zoning district (on file in the City Clerk's office).

Mr. Rob Slezak, Recreation Director, reported that he solicited some private corporations to see if they were willing to be sponsors for the sign. He might have some information on this in February.

Mr. Yemm asked what is the purpose of the sign. Mr. Matthews replied to bring people in.

Mr. Slezak said it will provide more exposure, information, and advertising.

Mr. Yemm asked if they will be advertising programs, events, or just the name Leisure Square.

Mr. Matthews stated that it depends on what type of sign they get. If it is electronic, it will be better than what they have now.

Mr. Yemm asked if there is a possibility of having an electronic sign hang out horizontal with the road, so as people drive by it is easier to read. Mr. Jefferies stated that it can be a double-sided sign, but it cannot extend out over the right of way.

Mr. Matthews reported that they did a survey and there is a little more room to move the sign closer to the road. By cleaning out the vegetation in the front and down into the canal really makes it easier to see the sign, the parking lot, and it provides an overall visual of the property.

Mr. Slezak said if it was an electronic sign, he believes that people could find Leisure Square much easier.

Mrs. Malone suggested putting a brighter color scheme on the sign that would create more of a contrast to the greenery. She asked if they need help with that project, because she is willing to put a word in with the Vero Beach Mural Project about having the Vero Beach Charter High School do a mural project, or paint the sign. She asked if they thought that spending \$10,000 to \$30,000 on a sign is the best use of the money, or would they like to allocate those funds to something more important to their goals.

Mr. Matthews said there is a lot of updating that needs to happen at Leisure Square and this would be a part of that process. Updating the gym equipment is probably more of a concern than a sign, but at the same time, it made them aware that some of the bushes and vegetation needed to be addressed. He believes if they could find someone from the public or a corporation that would be able to attach their name to the project that would be great.

Mrs. Malone explained that the Vero Beach Mural Project gets their paint donated to them, so that is free if they want something artistic on the building. To paint the sign to make it bright and eye catching would only cost about \$60 to \$70 in paint and volunteer hours.

Mr. Yemm said Leisure square is on a narrow two-lane road with a canal on one (1) side, so how many people are really going to slow down and read an electronic sign. Mr. Matthews said that he still believes a sign would help, but he feels the money could be better utilized inside the building.

Mrs. Malone asked how many pieces of equipment could be updated for \$30,000. Mr. Matthews said the last time they purchased four (4) or (5) pieces of equipment for about \$25,000.

Mrs. Malone asked Mr. Jefferies if there are any limitations on changing the color of the sign. Mr. Jeffries replied no. They do not regulate the content of the sign, but just the location, size, and the regulations for the zoning district it is in. He believes the only prohibition is on florescent colors, but it can be lit up.

C) Update on the use of You Tube

Mrs. Patty Howard, Assistant Recreation Director, stated that she is going to provide more of an overview of their social media presence and not just You Tube. She said she has met with Mr. John White, Vero Beach Police Department, multiple times and he has been very helpful. She handed out a packet of information that Mr. White helped her put together (attached to the original minutes).

Mr. John White, Vero Beach Police Department, said he has been helping the Recreation Department lay the groundwork by gathering all the locations on the Parks and the Recreation facilities from Facebook and Google. He said it is harder to verify a Park, because they do not have real addresses. If he could not verify the locations on Facebook or Google he is trying to do a manual verification. He explained that if there was not a page for him to claim on a location he created a new page. The following pages of the report show how many users are on the

pages, the activity by the hour, analytical data, etc. As time goes on Facebook will continue to gather the data and it will fill in. The last few pages are from Google and they provide a lot more information like how people are using Google to find the City Parks, beaches, etc. Now that he has all of these locations claimed, they have to add information and photos.

Mrs. Malone asked Mrs. Howard how overwhelming is this for her.

Mrs. Howard replied that it is a little overwhelming, but Mr. White has been a big help. She will take pictures of all the Parks, gather as much information that she can, and get it posted. She announced that they now have an Instagram page, but they are still working on You Tube. She said this information they are gathering will be very helpful to the Recreation Department.

7. RECREATION DIRECTOR'S MATTERS

A) Recap of the Performing Arts Holiday Drama

Mrs. Howard reported that they held the "Christmas Wish List" holiday drama this past Saturday at the Vero Beach High School, Performing Arts Center. They had two (2) shows and there were about 225 children involved.

Mr. Slezak stated that they had great crowds at both shows.

B) Winter Gymnastics Registration

Mrs. Howard reported that the next gymnastics registration will be on January 25, 2020 starting at 8 a.m. at Leisure Square. This session ends with a performance at the Indian River County Firefighters Fair, which is always fun for the children.

C) 17th Annual Mother/Daughter Tea Party

Mrs. Howard announced that the 17th annual Mother/Daughter Tea Party will be on February 8, 2020 at 2:00 p.m. at the Community Center. She stated that this event is getting a lot of activity on Facebook and she is sure it will sell out. The theme will be "Under the Sea".

Mr. Yemm asked if the upcoming registration for the performing arts can be done online now.

Mrs. Howard replied no. If they choose to go with Book King for the point of sales system, then the online registration will be phased in.

Mr. Yemm asked what is the timeframe for implementing a point of sale system. Mr. Matthews stated that would be up to Ms. Lawson to sign off on. He said he was told that for it to be operational it would take as least two (2) months. If the system was installed in January, it would be March before it was implemented for the public to start using.

8. CHAIRMAN'S MATTERS

Mr. Yemm announced that he attended the second showing of the Holiday Drama production. He said that each year it keeps getting better. He asked where do they get their stories and new

moves from. Mrs. Howard replied that they all get together and brainstorm ideas to make it happen.

Mr. Slezak stated that to him, recreation programs and special events are more about the community and the excitement it brings to the people who live here. It is an opportunity to get families together for laughter, fun, and enjoyment.

9. MEMBER'S MATTERS

Mrs. Malone stated that they have a couple of students in the audience. She announced to the students that the Recreation Department takes volunteers to help with many of their programs. She knows that the students are required to do volunteer hours, so this might be a good opportunity to contact the Recreation Department. She said there is a much bigger City issue that she would like to address. She said there is a website that is being facilitated by an architectural firm, which was hired by the City. It is called *speakupverobeach.com* and they are looking for feedback from the entire community. She encouraged the students to provide their feedback since they are the ones who will be around in twenty years to enjoy it. She suggested that they look at the website, because there are a lot of cool and very different ideas. She said if they interact with the website and post pictures or their ideas, she will sign off on volunteer hours for them if they can spend an hour a week to help them out.

Mr. Slezak reported that there will be several charrettes starting the last week of January.

Mr. Yemm said he understands that most of them will take place at City Hall.

Mr. Slezak replied that he believes they are going to move them around. He said if people have questions they can call the City Clerk's office at 978-4700, or they can go to the City website to find out when and where they will be.

10. NEXT MEETING DATE

A) Next Recreation Commission Meeting Date – January 14, 2020

The next Recreation Commission meeting is scheduled for January 14, 2020.

11. ADJOURNMENT

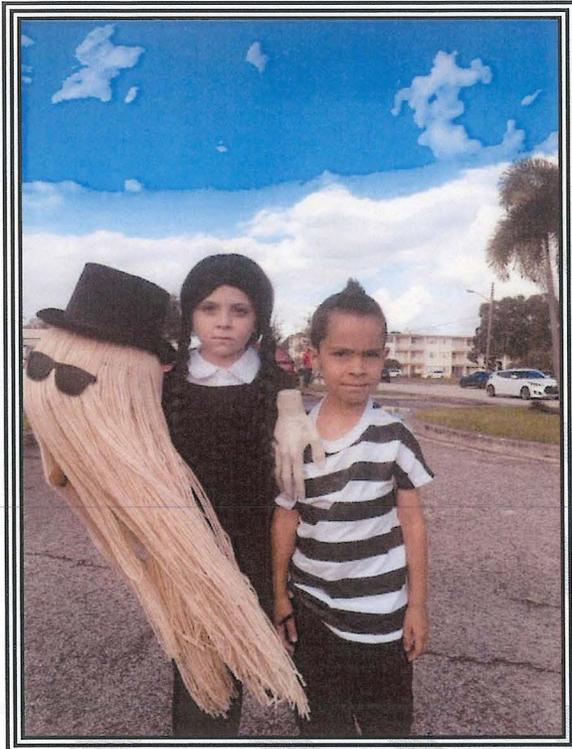
Today's meeting adjourned at 4:50 p.m.

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4-A)

Recreation Commission

2019 Annual Report



61st Annual Halloween Parade



2019 Centennial Ariel Antics Circus



Junior Staff Recognition Breakfast - 2019

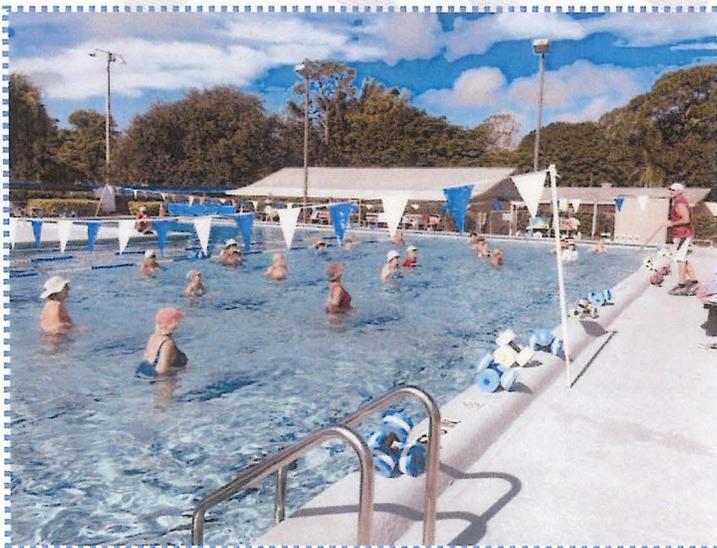
*Vero Beach Recreation Commission
2019 Annual Report*

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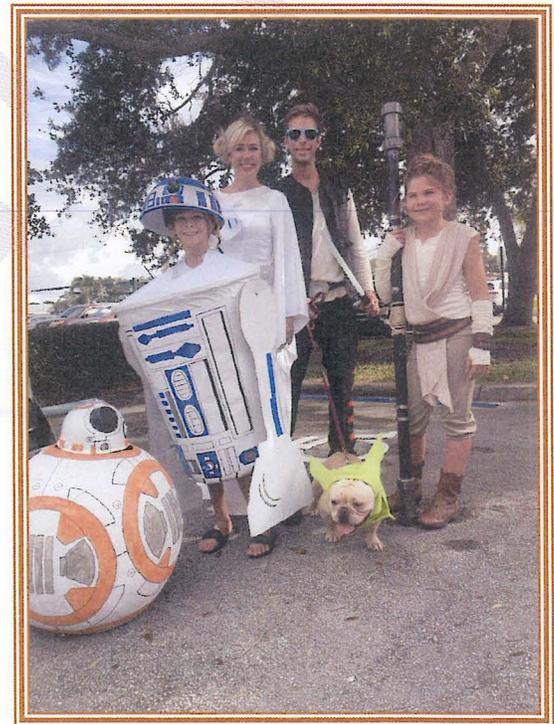
1. *Cover Page*
2. *Table of Contents*
3. *Letter of Transmittal*
4. *Mission Statement*
5. *City of Vero Beach Recreation Commission/Members Years of Service*
6. *2019 Project Report*
7. *2019 Project Report (continued)*
8. *2019 Project Report (continued)*



Riverside Racquet



Water Aerobics at Leisure Square



61st Annual Halloween Parade

Letter of Transmittal

To: Mr. Anthony W. Young, Mayor and
City Councilmembers

From: Mr. Richard Yemm, Chairman
Recreation Commission

Date: January ??, 2020

RE: 2019 Annual Recreation Commission Report

2019 will be reviewed as a “turbulent year” for the City of Vero Beach Recreation Department and in turn for the City Recreation Commission in its advisory capacity. Meetings were conducted to obtain public input to propose and vet current and future issues.

In addition to addressing budgeting issues, the focus as directed by Council was on improving the efficiency of the Department.

Staff is to be commended for their resiliency in staying committed to providing dedicated “community service” during this transformational period. Participation in Department directed programs continues to grow.

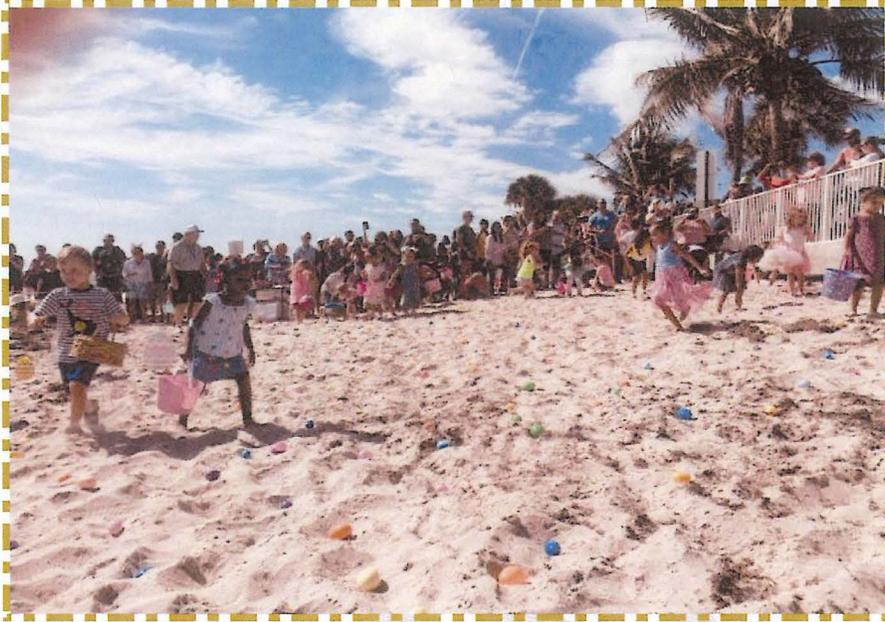
Respectfully submitted,



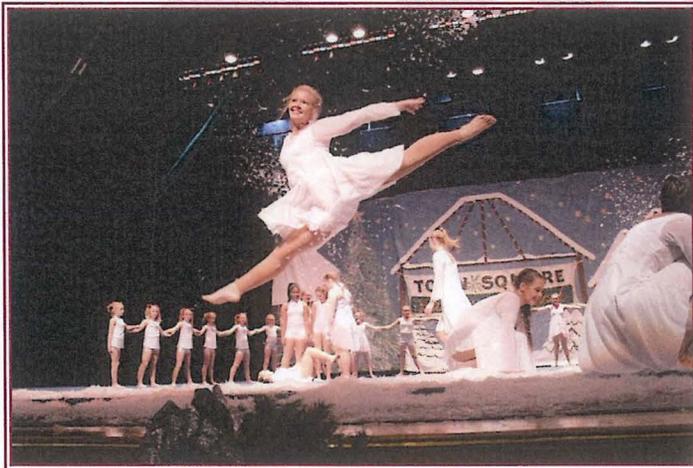
Richard Yemm, Chairman
Recreation Commission
City of Vero Beach

Mission Statement

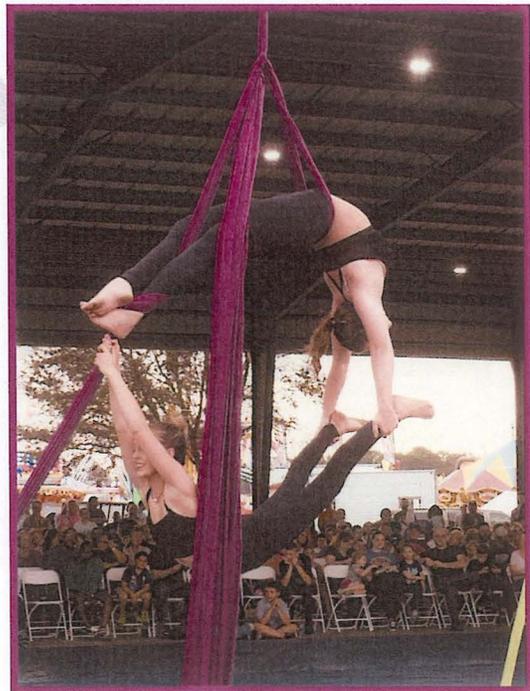
The Recreation Commission shall advise and assist the City Council regarding the leisure needs and interests of the citizens. In its advisory capacity, the Commission shall conduct open public meetings as a means of identifying and delivering recommendations to the City Council concerning the extensive programs and usage of Parks managed by the City Recreation Department.



2019 Easter Egg Hunt



Christmas Drama



2019 Firefighters Fair

City of Vero Beach Recreation Commission

The Recreation Commission is currently working with a full board of five (5) full members and two (2) alternate members. The Recreation Commission meets most months on a project driven basis and the meetings are normally held on the second Tuesday of the month at 4:00 p.m. at City Hall. The Commission held six (6) regular meetings and one (1) special call meeting this year to carry out their responsibilities, as an advisory board for the City's recreational needs and issues.

Commission members are appointed by City Council based on their expressed interest and demonstrated support of various recreation programs. Commission member's roles include, but are not limited to:

1. **Ceremonial** – Attending various parks and recreation events: i.e., dedications, programs, professional meetings
2. **Participatory** – Direct involvement with various aspects of the City's recreation programs
3. **Visionary** – Serve as the pulse of the community relative to needed leisure services, appropriate fee structures and awareness of budget process needed to deliver comprehensive programs
4. **Advisory** – The Recreation Commission, in its advisory capacity, conducts open to the public meetings as an avenue of identifying and delivering recommendations concerning the extensive programs conducted by the City Recreation Department

2018-2019

Recreation Commission Members

Richard Yemm Chairman	11/4/1997 <u>11/15/2022</u>
Sue Dinunno Vice Chairman	9/04/2012 <u>11/15/2023</u>
Judy Jones	10/17/2000 <u>11/15/2023</u>
Bobbie Burdick	9/20/2011 <u>11/15/2023</u>
Brooke Malone	11/20/2017 <u>11/15/2021</u>
Greg Holtan Alternate #1	5/20/1986 <u>11/15/2021</u>
Garrett MacMillan Alternate #2	3/20/2018 <u>11/15/2022</u>

Rob Slezak – Recreation Director
Patty Howard – Assistant Recreation Director
Karen Emerson – Assistant City Attorney
Rita Hawkins – Senior Administrative Assistant

2019 Project Report

Task: Public Workshop for input on creating a Master Plan for Parks and Recreation

Action: In January, the Recreation Commission held a Special Call Public Workshop to gain input for the idea of creating a Master Plan for the City of Vero Beach Parks and Recreation. In attendance were current and past City Council members, City staff, representatives from the Youth Sailing Foundation and the Dog Park and numerous residents from the City and the County. It was reported that the last Recreation master plan was done in 1992, but it did not include the Parks. Now the City Council is looking for a master plan for both Parks and Recreation. The discussions included the three (3) corners property, the Dog Park, Youth Sailing, and the current condition of the Parks and the facilities.

Outcome: The consensus was that the City needs to keep the Parks and maintain them. There is an economic benefit and health benefit to the people in the community by having the Recreation Department. The Commission thanked everyone for attending and they appreciated all the feedback, concerns, and suggestions. The Commission encouraged the community to keep speaking up and providing them with their recommendations.

Task: Adopt a Park

Action: In March, Mr. Arthur Economy, City Resident, brought us his idea of adopting a Park. He explained that individuals or groups that regularly frequent a particular Park could adopt it. They could report to the City any issues or ideas. The focus of Adopt a Park is inspection, proper use, needs, and improvement ideas for the Parks.

Outcome: Mr. Economy's idea was well accepted by the Commission. Mr. Slezak suggested putting it on the Recreation Department's webpage to see if it strikes any interest with the public.

Task: Pickleball University

Action: Mrs. Mari Colacino, President of Pickleball University, attended the March meeting to talk about the economic factor of what Pickleball University brings to Vero Beach. She reported that they have been here since 2015 and their membership keeps growing. They expected to have 600 members by the end of 2019. She gave a presentation on a proposal of adopting Pocahontas Park and starting a Go Fund Me account to raise the money they need. She explained that the North courts are in bad shape so the first phase would be to pull up the existing surface and lay down all new material. The second phase would be to resurface the South courts and add fencing. The third phase would be to add lighting. The entire project would cost \$183,000. She asked for the Commission's blessing on the concept of adopting the Park so they could move it forward to the City Council.

Outcome: After a lengthy discussion, the Commission unanimously passed a motion to recommend to the City Council that Pickleball University be allowed to move forward with their plan.

Task: Budget Review

Action: At the May meeting, Mr. Rob Slezak, Recreation Director, reported on the Recreation Department's budget. Mr. Slezak went over the pages of his new proposed rate schedule and explained the new higher maximum rates that were applied to some programs. Mr. Slezak also discussed the budget worksheet and stated that he was requested to provide a zero change budget. He explained the changes to the budget and that he will be meeting with other departments to discuss the items on the five-year capital improvement list.

Outcome: The Recreation Commission recommended applying the new proposed maximum rates for the Riverside Tennis Court starting in 2019. They also recommended increasing all the monthly membership rates, because private clubs do not offer monthly memberships. The Commission agreed to increase the monthly City resident and non-resident single adult rates, the monthly family membership fees, and the annual membership fees.

Task: Leisure Square Rates

Action: Ms. Cindy Lawson, Finance Director, attended the October meeting and provided the Commission members with a newly created Leisure Square rates packet. She explained that during the budget hearings she was asked to break the Recreation Department's budget into cost centers. This will create individual pieces of the budget for the different functions and/or locations. She was also asked to have the Finance Department take over and revamp the financial management part of the cost centers. The new rates were simplified and were created based on competitor's rates. At this meeting, there was also good feedback and input from Mr. John Sammartano, Instructor at Leisure Square, and Mrs. Laura Moss, City Councilwoman.

Outcome: A motion was unanimously passed to endorse the rate and fee scheduled as submitted by the Finance Department for Leisure Square to be effective November 1, 2019. It was proposed that there should be a joint workshop between the Recreation Commission, the City Council, and City staff to address the cost centers before they get into the budget next year.

Task: Social Media Policy and Recreation Department Advertising

Action: Mrs. Gabrielle Manus, Human Resources Director, attended the November meeting and provided the Recreation Commission members with a copy of the City's Social Media Policy. She explained that one (1) of the Charter Officers can assign one (1) publisher for any social media website. For the Recreation Department, Mr. Rob Slezak would be the "publisher" and Mrs. Patty Howard, Assistant Recreation Director, would be the "representative" of their facebook page. Mr. Slezak would be the only person to authorize anything being posted on their page. Mrs. Howard also gave a detailed report on all the different venues she uses for advertising and promoting the Recreation Department's functions and events.

Outcome: This great informational meeting gave the Commission a better understanding of the Recreation Departments interaction with social media and their advertising options. No action was taken.

Task: Leisure Square Signage

Action: At the October, November, and December meetings, the Commission discussed how to improve the signage for Leisure Square to provide more exposure, information, and advertising.

Outcome: Options for a new sign and pricing were provided at the December meeting along with updates on additional road signs. Another suggestion was to paint the current sign to create more of a contrast to the trees and greenery around it.

Task: Point of Sale System

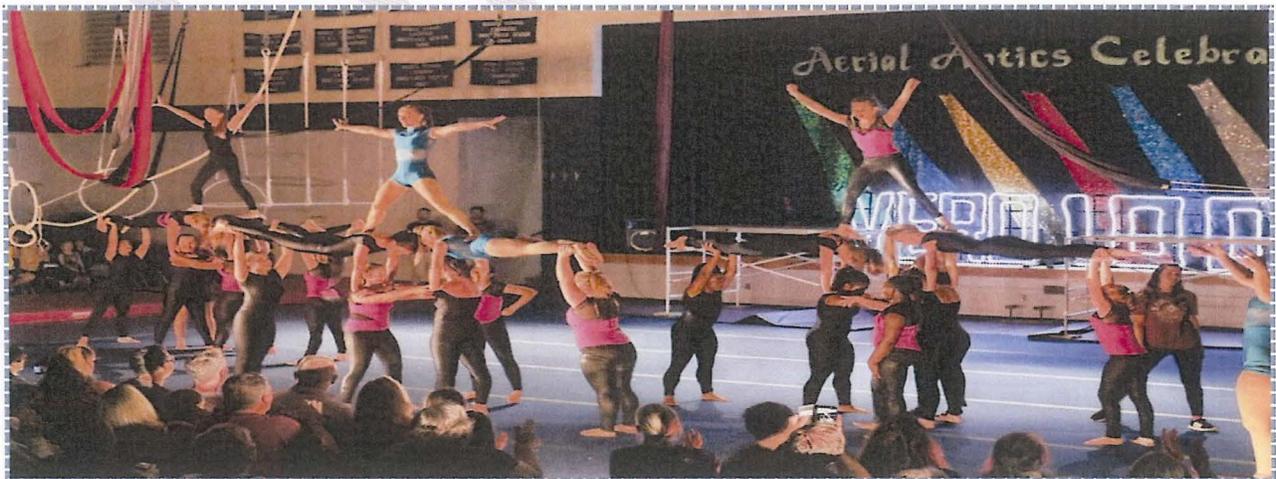
Action: Ms. Cindy Lawson, Finance Director, and Mr. Jeff Matthews, Recreation Manager attended the December meeting to present the two (2) point of sale systems that they are looking at for gathering membership data and meeting the needs at Leisure Square. They felt that the Book King system seemed to be the most flexible and it has the option for expanding into other areas such as scheduling the rentals of the Riverhouse, Bethel Creek House, and the Community Center. The system also has a module to take registrations, create rosters, and waiting lists for the gymnastics programs and summer camp.

Outcome: After the Finance Department receives demonstrations on the systems being considered and to see if they are compatible with the City's merchant service provider then a decision will be made on what system to move forward with.

Task: Recreation Programs and Events

Action: Attended community recreational events including, but not limited to Memorial Day, July 4th, Veterans Day, Performing Arts and gymnastic performances, Mother/Daughter Tea Party, Junior Staff Recognition, Halloween Parade, dedications, downtown and beach events, Dog Park events, etc.

Outcome: Ongoing throughout the year.



2019 Centennial Ariel Antics Circus

8-A)

Hawkins, Rita

Subject: FW: Agenda Item for next Recreation meeting

From: Brooke Malone
Sent: Thursday, December 12, 2019 10:19 AM
To: Bursick, Tammy <tbursick@covb.org>
Subject: Agenda Item for next Recreation meeting

SECURITY WARNING: This message has originated from an **EXTERNAL SOURCE**. Please show caution when clicking links, opening attachments, or responding to this email unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hi Tammy, Hope your Christmas Season is moving along wonderfully. I would like to have an item added to next months agenda.

Now that Rob is retiring I would like to hear the plan for what the goals and objectives for management look like. How are we approaching new leadership and qualifying those that take over the responsibilities as the best possible choice for our city and our parks.

I have included two references on from the National Recreation and Park Association on their research and national data on what it takes to successfully build, create and maintain a health and growing recreation department. I would like to have these brought to consideration as they seem to be the specialist on quality programs in our nation and have a pulse on who is succeeding.

Also, any suggestions on who else I should include in this email besides our City Council and Mr. Falls? Would you recommend I email them all individually?

<https://www.nrpa.org/parks-recreation-magazine/2016/may/the-hard-skills-of-park-and-recreation-leadership/>

<https://www.nrpa.org/parks-recreation-magazine/2016/april/creative-strategies-for-financing-parks-and-recreation/>

Thank you,

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May

The 'Hard Skills' of Park and Recreation Leadership

May 1, 2016, Feature, by Sara Hensley and Lawrence Allen

Leadership remains one of the most discussed but elusive concepts across all sectors of life. We all desire to be better leaders; however, because there is no ultimate set of skills or

dispositions that totally define effective leadership, it is a continuous process of development we all desire. The skills and dispositions employed will vary based on the circumstances we are presented with, including the formal or informal philosophy and desired outcomes of the agency or setting in which we are working. Every setting is different and it may require a different set of skills.

The above discussion notwithstanding, we believe there is a basic set of skills and dispositions that define effective leadership in the public park and recreation field. As a service profession dedicated to the betterment of the community and our constituent groups, we embrace the concept of servant leadership where the focus is on the growth and well-being of the people and communities we serve.

According to Joanne Ciulla, a leading scholar in leadership studies, "Leadership is not a person or a position; it is a complex moral relationship between people, based on trust, obligation, commitment, emotion and a shared vision of the good." Josh Kuehler, president of Internal Consistency, defines leadership as the "ability to inspire motivation in others to move toward a desirable vision." And, many years ago, American businessman and founder of Firestone Tires, Harvey S. Firestone stated: "The growth and development of people is the highest calling of leadership." All of these definitions have similar themes and fit well with the philosophy and goals of our profession.

While, as Kuehler points out, "management is focused on tasks," leadership is about building relationships, motivating and inspiring, empowering and building people. These are core skills of servant leadership, and they help us more effectively work with our constituent groups in public parks and recreation.

These are not "soft skills" as some might believe. They are easy to say and promote but hard to achieve. Microsoft's co-founder, Bill Gates, stated it best: "As we look ahead into the next century, leaders will be those who empower others." We have broken down this discussion of leadership into four primary constituent groups:

- Consumers who use our facilities and parks and/or enroll and participate in our programs
- Employees and volunteers at all levels of the organization
- Partners including other government agencies, not-for-profit organizations and private businesses
- Legal authorities, including boards, commissions and elected officials

Other groups could be established, but these are four major groups we all encounter in public recreation and park systems. To effectively work with each of them, we must possess the technical knowledge and skills associated with our job responsibilities. However, technical competence does not determine effective leadership. The "hard skills" identified herein are the more critical skills for promoting effective leadership in our profession. So, how do we effectively work with these constituent groups?

Whether they are children, youth, young adults or seniors, working with our consumers is all about relationship building and establishing a true sense of understanding and empathy. If you cannot understand where someone is coming from, then you have no idea what they truly want and need. Taking the time to listen, building a consumer-friendly atmosphere, being responsive to their needs, and not focusing on procedures and rules, but rather on addressing consumer concerns, are the mechanisms for creating positive consumer relationships.

We need to move beyond only offering technically well-developed programs, expecting that people will participate and be satisfied. By focusing more on the needs of the individual, family and group, we move away from the “usual and traditional” program and service ideas, and focus more on the special, niche areas that will impact lives. What’s needed is more prescriptive programming that directly addresses consumer needs. This not only will create a better sense of understanding of what we really do, but also will enhance our relationship with and the overall support of our consumers.

When community members better understand that parks and recreation directly impact the quality of their lives and community (addresses and supports health and a healthy lifestyle, supports a healthy environment, focuses on critical social issues and advocates for social equity), then it is hard for them not to support all that we stand for. Community members want to know that we hear them. They want to be engaged. They desire that we build programs and services *with* them and not just *for* them.

To engage our consumers and the broader community is a time-consuming process, but the overall outcome is worth it. If we can create a community of consumer partners that feels engaged and supported, then we will fulfill our mission and will have much more support for what we do. Listen, learn and then plan!

Effectively Working with Our Employees and Volunteers

Our employees and volunteers are our most valuable asset, and they need to know we care about them as individuals, not just as employees. Building their leadership capacity through continuous training and opportunities to be involved in the decision-making process will create a positive work environment and a greater sense of loyalty. Training needs to be focused on their individual assets, which will help to promote their success at work as well as with their families and communities. It is important that we stress the seven Cs — compassion, creativity, collaboration, communication, conflict resolution, compromise and critical thinking — in supporting and enhancing our workforce. Again, the more we listen and learn, the more we will encourage their leadership development.

Providing more opportunities for them to expand and share their creativity will also enhance morale and a positive work environment. Many employees and volunteers have great insights and ideas, and we need to encourage them to share those thoughts and pursue their ideas within the context of their work responsibilities.

Further, promoting and encouraging collaboration is critical to our survival. Our performance evaluation system must encourage collaboration and direct communication among our workforce rather than competition. Many times, text or email messages are not the best form of communication, especially when trying to promote a collaborative effort. Conflict is

inevitable, so we must prepare our workforce to deal with it. They must learn the art of compromise, finding the commonalities, not the differences.

Finally, promote working smarter, not harder. Critical thinking skills are most important in our world. Foster problem-solving behavior and teach employees how to analyze situations to identify their key elements and challenges. In addition, show staff how to lay out simple, yet comprehensive evidence-based plans that effectively address issues in a holistic manner and promote accountability through after-action reports with clear performance measures and touch points.

Encouraging a stronger relationship with your workforce, promoting individual growth and development, facilitating the development of the seven Cs and providing a supportive work environment will require continuous effort and resources, but the payoffs, in terms of productivity, morale and workforce retention, far outweigh any costs of time and money.

Effectively Working with Our Partners

Leadership with our partners is about creating a sense of community. Finding commonalities with other agencies, nonprofits, city departments, business community and citizenry is critical to the overall success of how we work. As park and recreation professionals, we must be more open to the idea of partnerships, focusing on what is best for the community as a whole and encouraging this philosophy among all our partners. If someone else can do it faster, better and at lower costs, then we should support them with open arms. It is critical that we seek out partnering opportunities so we not only open more doors to being more economically viable, but we also increase the number of voices sharing our success stories.

In order to achieve successful relationships with our partners, the following elements have been found to be very helpful:

- Gain **buy-in** by all partners. Listening, acknowledging and compromising are critical to gaining buy-in. So is identifying mutual benefits for all partners.
- Provide all partners a **real sense of ownership**. They need to know that you respect their involvement and see them as an equal partner.
- Provide **clear and meaningful recognition** of their involvement.
- Work to establish a **deep sense of trust** among all partners. This requires being completely honest and transparent and promoting mutual respect. Without trust none of the other keys to success can be accomplished.

Building partnerships and encouraging collaboration are so important in today's work environment. As mentioned earlier, part of the performance evaluation system should address the workforce's success and effectiveness in creating and utilizing partnerships and collaborative efforts. These performance criteria are possibly more important than other areas of performance that we traditionally focus on, such as the number of programs offered and how much money they make.

Effectively Working with Policymakers

For the most part, working in the policymaking environment is exciting, colorful and diverse, but you need to know your core values, be confident in your ability to articulate them and always have a backup plan to be successful in this arena. If as leaders we seem uncertain, indecisive and vague, policymakers will sense that and challenge us. Effective leaders speak in a calm, clear, focused and concise manner. No policymaker wants to hear us pontificate; that is their job!

It is important to always be professional, but this does not mean you have to always agree with or respond to a policymaker with what they want. It also does not mean compromising your standards or doing something you know will have lasting implications with regard to ethical issues. What it does mean is that you need to have your finger on the political pulse. You have to be able to help policymakers understand the implications, good or bad, of the decision(s) they may make. Once you have handled this in the most professional manner, then it is up to the policymakers to make their decisions. We may not always be able to make them take action on what we want and believe, but we can provide the best professional information for an informed decision.

The Effective Future

Being an effective leader in this “new normal” world requires us to be able to respond to the rapidly changing work, family, civic and societal environments in which we operate. All of our constituent groups desire connectedness; not just technologically but personally as well. Consumers, employees and volunteers, partners and policymakers all want meaningful relationships with their constituents and colleagues. Success, now, is highly dependent on building, facilitating and maintaining these relationships.

Our employees must have the tools necessary to meet the many complex issues we are facing: ever-growing environmental challenges, diverse and highly individualized groups, the ever-changing balance of power in organizations, demographic transformations, instant and continuous communication, energy challenges and many others we can't even fathom today.

We need to be innovative and build a public recreation and parks system that foresees the future and successfully responds to it. In the words of the famous Canadian ice hockey player, Wayne Gretsky, we need to “skate to where the puck [i.e., challenge] is going to be, not where it has been.”

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April

Creative Strategies for Financing Parks and Recreation

April 1, 2016, Department, by Donald L. Rockey Jr., Robert Barcelona, Bob Brookover, Dustin Thorn and Dominic Saturday

Research



Recent economic hardships have brought about financial challenges for many government-sponsored programs, including parks and recreation. One of the oft-repeated concerns expressed by park and recreation administrators is the availability of sufficient financial resources for operational and capital expenses. Thus, agencies have had to become more creative and

entrepreneurial when delivering services and providing facilities for an increasingly diverse and demanding constituency. The purpose of this article is to explore strategies for creative financing among exemplary park and recreation agencies as identified by the South Carolina Recreation and Parks Association.

While there are numerous examples of the impact of economic hardships on park and recreation departments, there are also illustrative success stories of departments that are thriving. One such story is the Rock Hill, South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism. In 2011, at the height of the economic downturn, Rock Hill embarked on the development of an \$11 million outdoor center, including a 250-acre park with a cycling velodrome, BMX/supercross, cyclocross and mountain biking trails. This specialized complex has allowed Rock Hill to carve a niche in attracting sports-based tourism events. Another example of growth among parks and recreation agencies is the city of North Myrtle Beach Parks and Recreation Department's completion of a \$15 million sport tourism and recreation park.

These financial ventures were made possible by agencies finding creative means to finance the projects. For example, Rock Hill's outdoor center provides a complex example of diversification by leveraging multiple financing mechanisms, including hospitality taxes, sponsorships and federally backed private loans. The unique and creative aspect of this project was Rock Hill's use of the New Markets Tax Credits and stimulus fund monies. This diversified financing approach allowed the city to extend the scope of the project by adding features and amenities for approximately the same financial investment as the velodrome alone would have cost.

Significance

While specific success stories highlight how individual agencies have found ways to finance park and recreation programs and facilities, there is very little research that has explored the best practices of these agencies. Most of the existing research has examined public opinions of financing strategies, with some researchers suggesting government-sponsored park and recreation providers should strive to maintain or improve constituent trust and commitment to create a balance between existing and new funding sources. According to a 2006 study, only 39 percent of the public wanted to have user fees or increased taxation, but the majority of those surveyed wanted the parks to remain non-exclusive and affordable. A 2005 case

study of Gwinnett County, Georgia, suggested strategic planning is the key to financial management of public recreation.

Implementation and Design

To better understand the issues faced and strategies implemented by park and recreation agencies, researchers contributing to this article conducted interviews with the directors of seven South Carolina park and recreation agencies. These agencies were selected because they were identified as “financially successful departments” by the South Carolina Recreation and Parks Association. The agencies represented municipal, county and special district park and recreation agencies. Interviews with directors and key staff focused on the unique nature of each community, economic challenges, strategies employed to overcome these challenges and future projects and programming. The research team took detailed interview notes, met to discuss the content of each interview and developed a set of overarching themes. The themes provided insight into strategies agencies employed to best position themselves to grow financially, despite difficult economic conditions.

Strategies that Work

Through the data analysis, six strategies or trends emerged. These strategies were broadly applicable to the park and recreation field, and may be adapted in many communities across the United States. While there were cross-cutting strategies that emerged from these interviews, they were applied in a variety of ways by the agencies and readers should consider the best ways to apply these within their own communities.

(1) Contributing to Economic Development: Recreation and park services were widely believed to be an economic catalyst for the community. For example, numerous programs, facilities and events offered by park and recreation agencies have become tools to generate revenue within the community. Sport tourism (i.e., traveling to another place to engage in or watch sport) was mentioned as having a powerful economic impact on the communities. Local residents and businesses were likely to support investment in parks and recreation if they saw economic benefits from these investments. Leaders interviewed for this study communicated the economic impact the facilities sponsored by capital growth have had on their communities. For example, independent analysis showed that Greenville County Parks, Recreation and Tourism (GCPRT) generated more than \$10 million in economic impact across the county in 2012. Similarly, the city of North Augusta hosts the annual Nike Peach Jam basketball tournament, an elite men’s and women’s basketball showcase that generates more than \$4.5 million for the local community, and generates positive press through coverage by ESPN and other outlets. The continued success of the event over 20 years has led to increased funding for facility development and improvements.

(2) Nurturing Public Support: Another key to successful financing was the development and centrality of public support. As mentioned in the previous strategy, community support is the key to getting financing and continuing to grow. For example, the 2006 study, “Public Response to Park and Recreation Funding and Cost-Saving Strategies: The Role of Organizational trust and Commitment,” published in the *Journal of Park and Recreation Administration*, found that park and recreation administrators who took actions to build trust

and demonstrate commitment were able to expand funding beyond just taxes. All of the leaders interviewed indicated they intentionally and strategically worked to build community support by nurturing relationships with nonprofit “friend” organizations, boards, private citizens and partnerships. All mentioned they were able to build trust because the park and recreation agencies used capital funds responsibly in the past.

(3) Strategic Planning and Assessment: Strategic planning and evaluation to help guide growth efforts is essential to successfully securing funding. Interviewees stated that in order to use capital funds in a responsible way, they needed to conduct research to assess community needs and to evaluate current facilities, programs, policies and employees. Interviewees consistently mentioned how they used frequent needs assessments to determine interests in the community. This information was then used to determine growth and development. Interviewees emphasized that it is important to deliver on strategic planning efforts. For example, Gwinnett County, Georgia, makes all its key financial decisions and develops partnerships based on a strategic plan. Directors and key staff noted that they were successful in delivering on their strategic plan. Rock Hill obtained funding to develop the “Rock Hill Outdoor Center Greens,” a multiuse athletic field designed for passive and free-play activities, as a result of public input stating that there was not enough space in the city for residents to throw a Frisbee, fly a kite or kick a soccer ball. Interviewees often mentioned that the trust created through delivering on their plans was essential to establishing a positive image within the community. This trust was viewed as a major asset for gaining needed economic capital for future projects.

(4) Adopting an Entrepreneurial Approach: Successful agencies in South Carolina found ways to generate revenue through creative and innovative strategies. Examples include the Charleston County Parks and Recreation Commission’s dog-themed events with music and beer sales, as well as Rock Hill’s velodrome facility, developed in a former industrial area that is now changing to a shopping and residential area. The city leadership capitalized on the momentum of the recreation facility to create a new, revitalized “live where you play” community. The change is creating a long-term revenue source for the city and its recreational offerings. In all cases, successful park and recreation directors talked about the importance of understanding the marketplace and offering programs and services that met the public’s needs and willingness to pay for services.

(5) Leveraging Special Taxes: Many agencies took advantage of special taxing systems to improve parks and recreation infrastructure. Conventional ideas ranged from the use of hospitality and accommodations taxes to finance tourism-related projects such as parks, convention centers and athletic fields, and “penny” sales taxes used for capital improvement projects. Novel taxing systems included the creation of municipal improvement districts (MIDs) in blighted neighborhoods or areas of town that needed improvements to encourage development and the use of federal New Market Tax Credits for the development of recreation and athletic facilities as part of commercial and residential development of a former brownfield site. Successful agencies highlighted the need to have someone on staff who is responsible for identifying these innovative taxing mechanisms and working with city finance and planning departments to identify new opportunities.

(6) *Partnerships*: The directors continually mentioned the partnerships they developed to assist with capital funding. For example, the Irmo-Chapin Recreation Commission, city of Aiken and Greenville County all specifically mentioned that private special-interest groups approached them with project ideas that met defined needs within the community and provided fiscal resources to get the project off the ground. The expectation was that the park and recreation department would find additional funding and manage the project's development, implementation and operations. These large-scale projects, such as the development of the MESA Soccer Complex, a 60-acre, 16-field soccer facility in Greenville County, were pursued when they were able to meet a clear need in the community.

Conclusion

The major take away from this project was that success builds trust with citizens and stakeholders, and that trust often led to the acquisition of new resources for facilities and programs. While there were some creative strategies being employed (novel taxing mechanisms, different entrepreneurial approaches), agencies were able to leverage the success of earlier innovations and creativity into broader and stronger community support. Creating new strategies and/or repositioning agencies and getting that first "win" often led to the public and decisionmakers wanting more.

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