TOWN OF PALM BEACH

Recreation Department

RECREATION ADVISORY COMMISSION MEETING

March 14, 2007 Minutes

I **CALL TO ORDER** – A meeting of the Town of Palm Beach Recreation Advisory Commission was held on March 14, 2007, at the Recreation Center. The meeting was called to order by Mr. Michael Spaziani, Chairman at 9:00 a.m. Commission members in attendance were Mr. Spaziani, Dr. Timothy Coffield, Ms. Danielle Hickox, Mr. Kenneth Schechet and Mr. Stuart Shulman. Alternate members in attendance were Mr. Joseph Della Giustina and Mrs. Rita Taca. Absent from the meeting were Mr. Michael Andrews, Mrs. Milissa Agnello and Mr. Henry Jamison. Staff members in attendance were Director Mr. Jay Boodheshwar, Assistant Director Mr. Rod Gardiner, Dock Master Mr. Jon Luscomb and Office Manager Mrs. Lisa Walkowich.

II **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA -** Mr. Spaziani asked for a motion to approve the agenda. Mr. Schechet made the motion to approve the agenda. Seconded by Mr. Della-Giustina, all were in favor.

III **APPROVAL OF THE JANUARY 10, 2007 MINUTES** – Mr. Spaziani asked for a motion to approve the January 10, 2007, minutes. Dr. Coffield made the motion to approve the minutes. Seconded by Mr. Schechet, all were in favor.

IV **OLD BUSINESS**

A. **Seaview Tennis Center Renovation Update -** Mr. Boodheshwar stated that at the last Town Council meeting the Council decided to delay the renovation of the Seaview complex to give further consideration to an elevated facility. He said that Council had questions regarding the project and directed staff to gather additional information and report back to them at later meeting. Mr. Boodheshwar said that once the back up information is prepared for the Town Council meeting he would e-mail the Commissioners the information.

Mr. Schechet said that at the last Council meeting the Council had directed staff to look at some alternate proposals for parking other than a raised facility. Mr. Boodheshwar said that staff was looking at alternate plans that included street parking and parking on private property. He said that Day Academy was hesitant about using their west field for parking. They felt that the neighbors would be against it and they did not want to lose that open green space for the kids. He said that there was a proposal that expanded Seaview to provide angled parking, but that would require taking some of that green space, further narrowing that field. Mr. Boodheshwar said that ultimately we are not sure how this will pan out, but all of the other options other than the street issue, involved private property and the Town can only encourage those individuals to cooperate. The elevated facility is really the only option that the Town can control.

After further discussion, Mr. Spaziani asked if there were any more comments or questions regarding the Seaview Tennis Center renovation. Dr. Coffield asked what type of things the Council would be looking at and what if any role, will the Commission play. Mr. Boodheshwar said that he was unsure what role the Commission would play, but suggested that once staff completes the research and is able to answer some of these questions, the Commission could hold a special meeting to study the findings. Ms. Hickox said that she had spoken with a Council person who encouraged the Commission to speak one on one with Council members. Mr. Spaziani asked if that would be in violation of the Sunshine Law? Mr. Boodheshwar said that he would get a clarification and contact the Commissioners if they were in fact in violation of the Sunshine Law.

Seaview Multipurpose Field Update – Mr. Boodheshwar said that at the January meeting the Commission had a very quick discussion regarding this project. He said that the department had gotten funding commitments from Mr. Dan Borislow, a resident and the Palm Beach Day Academy totaling $800,000 to change the athletic field to a synthetic surface with lighting. Mr. Boodheshwar said that at the February Council meeting, Council members listened to a presentation giving them an overview of the project and directed staff to move forward and begin the zoning review process. He said that zoning is needed for this project because it requires three variances and a special exception. He said that staff was currently going through that process and is scheduled to go back to Council for final approval at their April meeting. Mr. Boodheshwar then showed a power point presentation showing what the field with lighting could potentially look like.

Mr. Spaziani asked if there was anything the Commission should address immediately at this meeting today. Dr. Coffield said there were unknown issues regarding the lights, such as what the usage policies would be, who was going to control them, and how late the lights would be on. Would the lights be shut off immediately after an event was over or would they be set on a timer to go off at 9:00 p.m. He felt that if we could answer these questions prior to the Council meeting, we might have a better chance of getting the lights approved.

Mr. Boodheshwar said that staff envisions that lights will be used seasonally during structured activities such as practices, Day Academy games, field rentals and special events. He said that staff had discussed having these activities ending by 8:00 p.m. which would be consistent with the Tennis facility and possibly having only permitted play on the field. Mr. Boodheshwar said that it was not staff's intentions to leave the lights on every night till 9:00 pm for anybody to show up and use the field.

Mr. Spaziani a resident on Seaspray Avenue said that after seeing how these lights work and the effect on the adjacent properties he have no problem with the lights.

Mr. Spaziani felt that the idea of a permit, would control everything, we know exactly who's going to be here, we charge these people money to use the field, we know exactly when to turn the lights on and off. Mr. Boodheshwar explained to the Commission that there were controls already in place, a Facility Rental policy. He said that if anyone wants to use our building or our field, they either have to be a resident or the event has to be town serving. So a private little league group from Lantana is not going to be able to rent our field. He said the rental process is quite involved and in some cases included proof of liability insurance.

After further discussion, Dr. Coffield made the following motion, "That we get together as a committee to address the potential concerns of the Council related to the control and usage of the lights." Mr. Shulman seconded the motion. Mrs. Taca said that you need to add that we have discussed the matter regarding the lights and we are committed to setting those guidelines in the future. Mr. Boodheshwar asked if the Commission wanted to set time limits now. Dr. Coffield said that he didn't want to set a time limit but rather that the lights would be tied to a specific event and would be shut off immediately at the close of an event and not be left on. Mr. Boodheshwar suggested "The lights would be for approved uses only and not for open general use." Dr. Coffield agreed. Mr. Spaziani asked for a second to the revised motion. Mr. Shulman seconded the motion, all were in favor.

Mr. Boodheshwar said another concern for the Council, other than the lights was drainage. He said that our engineers feel that we will be able to improve the drainage situation.

Mrs. Taca asked how long the installation would take. Mr. Boodheshwar said about 3 months. Dr. Coffield asked if the project would create problems for the summer camp. Mr. Boodheshwar said that staff was prepared with alternate areas for summer camp and did not see the project effecting camp in any way. Mr. Gardiner stated that there were several other areas of open green space that could be utilized which included the Day Academy's west field. Mr. Spaziani said he wanted to comment on what Mr. Gardiner had just said in reference to the Day Academy's west field. He said "This is why it is so important that we keep this green space in regards to the parking. If the athletic field is being used we need this green space. To rip it up for parking, is absolutely crazy as far as I'm concerned, we need to keep every inch of green space in this Town for this very purpose. We spent meeting after meeting fighting this public school to save green space, the 20 or 30 feet that we need, so this is another reason why we really need to look at this issue with the parking and consider green space."

Dr. Coffield said that he wanted to add a statement which might help clarify the motion he made earlier about the lights and also give the Council some level of comfort. He said that the lights will be set on a nightly basis in relation to the sanctioned activities for that evening and if there are none there will be no lights.

Mr. Spaziani asked if there were any other comments. Mr. Shulman asked what the anticipated, total cost of the project. Mr. Boodheshwar said that it was estimated to cost $800,000 to $1,000,000.

V NEW BUSINESS

A. **FY 2008 Budget Development/Action Planning –** Mr. Boodheshwar said that the budget process is underway and as is customary we would like to offer commission members the opportunity to give some input with the budget. He said that in addition to that we would like to invite the commission to be part of our action planning process this year. Staff is going to develop an action plan for fiscal year 2008 and that will be related to the budget, especially if these actions require some sort of expense. Mr. Boodheshwar said that he would like to invite the Commissioners to review the current action plan with in the next couple of weeks and then get in touch with him with ideas for items they may want added.

B. **Par 3 Master Plan Proposal -** Mr. Boodheshwar said that he and Rick Dytrych, Golf Pro-Manager had met with Mr. Steven Hall and Mr. Floyd Wideman over the past couple of months and were very excited about an opportunity for completing a master plan for the golf course. He said that these two gentlemen and the group they represent have a very sincere interest in assisting the Town with golf course beautification. He said that they see the golf course as a crown jewel and a very important part of our Park and Recreation system and staff agrees with them. He said that we are excited to have them here today and hear what they have to say.

Mr. Hall thanked the Commission for allowing him to speak at their meeting. He said that we were very lucky to have the Par 3 in our Town, it was almost 50 years old and there was a lot of history. Mr. Hall said that the problem that they saw was that, in spite of its beauty, inherent design and intrinsic value, it is just a used piece of real estate. He said that he has likened it to a house that was built back in the 50's and 60's that may have really good bones, but it's a 50's product and it hasn't been updated. The bones are there, the beauty is there, we just have to bring it out and it shouldn't take very much to do that. Mr. Hall said that unfortunately over the years with budget restrictions, the maintenance has been kept to the minimum, the capital improvements have been few and far between and future planning is not funded. He said that several residents have gotten together and felt that what the Palm Beach Par 3 needs is a master plan. He said that there are dozens of people who have expressed a very strong interest in seeing the Par 3 improve.

Mr. Hall said that over the past few months, staff had approached a few golf course architects to submit preliminary proposals. Three proposals were submitted and the cost ranged from $15,000 to $22,000. This would be for a very comprehensive plan that would include the costs, all sorts of options (not including the building) to update the golf course to today's standards. He said that the idea was to come up with a well designed master plan and then obtain private and public funding.

Mr. Shulman said for years it has always been talked about putting an extra story on the club house. He said, "Why don't we go to Starbucks and have them put on the extra story and use Starbucks. Now that Starbucks is accepted in Town." Mr. Shulman said that we already have one in Town but not in the south end. He said, "I even spoke to Bob Moore about this, I spoke to Bob yesterday about this, because he's involved with Starbucks. You'll get tremendous funding, you'll get income and you'll also get the second story that the Town has been talking about for years. You know, make a nice little club house out of it and let Starbucks foot the bill. I'm sure that they would be more than happy to, have two places in Palm Beach."

Mr. Hall said that the initial step is to have a planner come and meet all of us so that we can give them our thoughts. He said that certainly the clubhouse has to be addressed eventually, but the master planner will be concentrating on updating and beautifying the course. We can always go back and address the clubhouse at a later date. Mrs. Taca said, "Basically your mission here is for us to accept financing or funding the master plan." Mr. Hall said exactly. Mr. Shulman said, "That's why I figure we could get Starbucks to pay for it."

Mr. Wideman said, "I think it's important to remember that we have talked to and will continue to talk to well healed citizens who seem quite willing to invest in this project and bring the golf course back to what it was, they consider it part of the ambiance of Palm Beach."

Dr. Coffield indicated that it would be in our best interests to look into long term planning, because it is a very valuable town asset. Ms. Hickox said that accepting their help would be much in the same way that we have accepted the help from Mr. Borislow with the athletic field. Ms. Hickox said, "This is actually part of our job to listen to Mr. Hall and Mr. Wideman, who have concerns with items that might have passed us by for whatever reason, so I'm so happy to see both of them here and their group, helping us."

Mr. Schechet said, "I want to thank you both for doing this for us. This is an absolutely excellent idea and it just seems like it needed someone to grab hold of it and bring it forward. I couldn't support it more."

Mr. Spaziani made the motion that we allocate $25,000 toward the master study but was also concerned about the club house. He felt that it is a very integral part of the whole concept and that it should be addressed within the master plan, not necessarily an architectural rendering, but the issue of the building itself should be considered as part of this master plan.

After further discussion it was decided that the master plan should encompass the golf course as a whole and should be detailed and make specific recommendations based on the consensus of everyone who will be involved in the process. Mrs. Hickox made the motion that the Commission recommends appropriating up to $25,000 for a new master plan for the golf course and that the plan is very specific in regards to the scope of work to address issues such as landscaping, irrigation, and the pro-shop. Seconded by Mr. Shulman, all were in favor.

C. **Lake Drive Park Master Plan –** Mr. Boodheshwar introduced Mr. Fred Bonci, from La Quantra Bonci Associates a park planning firm out of Pittsburg who has been hired by the Preservation Foundation of Palm Beach to prepare a master plan for Lake Drive Park. He said there are a number of focus groups that are going to take place over the next couple of days leading to a general Town wide public meeting on Friday morning in which Mr. Bonci and the Town's project team will summarize the findings and to give the general public a chance to give input into the future of this park.

Mr. Boodheshwar said that staff received direction from Town Council to integrate the park master plan, the existing docks master plan and the strategies developed from our parking and traffic consultants. Mr. Bonci's main focus is on the park itself, but at the same time he's going to integrate the docks issues and the parking issues and hopefully put together some conceptual ideas for the Town to use in improving or enhancing the park.

Before turning the meeting over to Mr. Bonci, Mr. Boodheshwar showed the Commission a Power Point presentation of the current Master Plan for the Town Docks and proposed parking improvement strategies.

Mr. Bonci said that the purpose of today's meeting was to hear the Commission's opinions on Lake Drive Park and what they thought could be done to improve the park.

After a lengthy discussion the following comments and suggestions were made.

Parking Suggestions:

- Permitted Parking
- Shared Public/Private Parking
- Taking a small area near the Water Mgmt Building and putting in parking spaces
- Possibly Parking @ City place with a shuttle service
- Right now 38 spaces are needed, if the docks are expanded, 78 spaces would be needed.

User Immenities

- A facility where you can get a snack or drink on the promenade, along the Marina.

- Improved restrooms
- All three Marina buildings need to be demolished and new updated facilities needs to be put on each of those docks.
- Look into enhanced or additional services to the boaters that will create revenue.

Landscaping

- Some additional trees or landscaping would be fine.
- The south end of the park seems unbalanced as compared to the north end of the park. There is no shade because of the small trees and it is hardly ever used.

VI ANY OTHER MATTERS

Staff Report – This Report is attached

VII. ADJOURNMENT – Meeting was adjourned at 11:20 a.m.

RECREATION ADVISORY COMMISSION
Record of Attendance 2007

Regular Members	**1/10/07**	**3/14/07**	**5/9/07**	**9/12/07**	**11/14/07**
Mr. Spaziani	P	P			
Mrs. Agnello	P	U			
Mr. Andrews	U	E			
Dr. Coffield	P	P			
Ms. Hickox	P	P			
Mr. Schechet	P	P			
Mr. Shulman	E	P			
Alternate Members					
Mr. Della-Giustina	P	P			
Mr. Jamison	P	E			
Mrs. Taca	P	P			

LEGEND: P = Present
E = Excused
U = Unexcused
A = Absent Pending Classification as “Excused” or “Unexcused”

RECREATION ADVISORY COMMISSION
Conflict of Interest Record 2007

Regular Members	**1/10/07**	**3/14/07**	**5/09/07**	**9/12/07**	**11/14/07**
Mr. Spaziani					
Mrs. Agnello					
Mr. Andrews					
Dr. Coffield					
Ms. Hickox					
Mr. Schechet					
Mr. Shulman					
Alternate Members					
Mr. Della-Giustina					
Mr. Jamison					
Mrs. Taca					

LEGEND: X = Conflict of Interest