

August 21, 2003

The Pinellas Assembly Recreation, Structures and Financing Task Force met in the Pinellas County Park Department Conference Room, 631 Chestnut Street, Clearwater, Florida, at 3:00 P.M. on this date with the following members present: Jerry Provenzano, Chairman; Carlen Petersen, Co-Chairman; Jim Appelt; Elizabeth Darnell; John Day; Chris Eaton; Steve Heller; Ralph Marlow; and Lynn Rives.

Absent: Elizabeth Warren.

Also in attendance: Kathy Swain, Pinellas County Park & Recreation Operations Manager; John Giantonio, St. Petersburg/Clearwater Area Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB); D. Lee Metzger, Barbara G. Van Camp, and Susan P. Ajoc, City of St. Petersburg; and Barbara Harb, Board Reporter.

AGENDA

- I. Overview/General Discussion
 - a. Where are we?
 - b. Where are we going?
 - c. How do we get there?
 - d. Who else do we need to talk to?
- II. Guest Speakers
 - a. John Giantonio, CVB, Sports Marketing
 - b. Barbie Van Camp, Therapeutic Recreation Supervisor, City of St. Petersburg
- III. Public Input
- IV. Task Force Member Input
- V. Adjournment

Chairman Provenzano called the meeting to order at 3:00 P.M.

OVERVIEW/GENERAL DISCUSSION

Chairman Provenzano reviewed the meeting agenda and noted that one of the guest speakers, Ms. Van Camp, will be delayed. He also indicated that direction needs to be provided to Ms. Petersen, who will represent the Task Force at the September 3, 2003 Board of County Commissioners (BCC) midterm review.

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PRESENTATION BY JOHN GIANTONIO, CVB DIRECTOR OF SPORTS

Mr. Giantonio stated that his responsibility is to market Pinellas County as a destination for professional and amateur sports events. His presentation included the following information:

- ✓ Partnering efforts with the Cities of Clearwater, St. Petersburg and Largo
- ✓ The need for multipurpose fields and available, accessible and quality facilities
- ✓ Current recreational complexes are inaccessible most of the year and unavailable for the amount of time needed
- ✓ A complex with 12 multipurpose fields and five baseball and softball fields could fit easily on the Struthers property
- ✓ The Toytown site could accommodate 24 multipurpose fields and eight baseball and softball fields, and at least one field should have an artificial turf surface

During discussion and responding to queries by the members, Mr. Giantonio made the following observations:

- ✓ The geographic location of Toytown makes it an ideal site relative to access from airports and hotels, and would provide a significant economic development impact
- ✓ School facilities have been utilized but are problematic due to the lack of a standard use agreement
- ✓ Sponsorships could provide a revenue source as well as grants programs currently available from Major League Baseball, the U.S. Soccer Federation, the National Football League and the State of Florida

Discussion ensued regarding the possibility of locating a restaurant on the proposed complex, concessionaire services and the sale of alcohol. Mr. Giantonio stated that the development of a facility as he described would complement existing facilities; and that the County Park Department should be responsible for the operation and management of such a facility. Mr. Heller noted that a County ordinance prohibits signage in its parks and recreational facilities; whereupon Ms. Swain indicated that an amendment to the Chapter 90 ordinance is currently being considered.

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PRESENTATION BY BARBARA VAN CAMP, CITY OF ST. PETERSBURG, RE THERAPEUTIC RECREATION

Ms. Van Camp distributed copies of a brochure, which has been filed and made a part of the record, and described the different programs offered for people with developmental disabilities. She noted that the programs are separated by disability and age, and range from arts and crafts/art enrichment to aerobic exercise and team sports; and that she is trying to build programming for youth sports for persons with physical disabilities. During discussion and in response to queries by the members, she provided the following information:

- ✓ Transportation is an issue with regard to accessing existing recreation and leisure programs
- ✓ After-school and adult day-training programs for developmentally disabled individuals are needed
- ✓ The City is addressing becoming a Medicaid-Medicare waiver provider in order to provide a recreation based day program for adults
- ✓ Additional summer camp opportunities are needed as well as a program of competitive sports training for physically impaired youth
- ✓ Private sector facilities have only been utilized on one occasion for summer camp
- ✓ The City has one accessible minibus and school buses are leased during the summer for transportation
- ✓ A committee established as an advocate for impaired persons receives a budget from half of the fines paid for parking in handicapped spaces and provides funding for equipment and modifications to the recreation center
- ✓ The disabled adult population does not have a lot of disposable income to pay for recreation

Mr. Metzger added that the Americans with Disabilities Act requires that recreational facilities provide reasonable accommodations; and that most of the municipal recreation departments are failing to do so.

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PUBLIC INPUT - NONE

TASK FORCE MEMBER INPUT RE PRESENTATION TO BCC

Chairman Provenzano distributed a document prepared by Mr. Eaton that enumerated his recommendations, a copy of which has been filed and made a part of the record. Following discussion, the consensus of the Task Force was to make the following recommendations in the presentation:

- ✓ Standardized use agreement between Pinellas County, Pinellas County Schools and municipalities for the use of facilities
- ✓ Encourage cooperation between County and city government
- ✓ Do not recommend a golf course, but suggest the creation of a master plan for a regional mega-complex at the Toytown site
- ✓ Amend Charter to allow the County to become involved in active recreation and permit sponsorship opportunities
- ✓ Rectify the shortfall in therapeutic recreational opportunities including issues of transportation and programming

The members requested that Ms. Petersen provide a written report on the meeting. Following further discussion, it was the consensus of the Task Force that County legal staff evaluate the issuance of discount cards for County residents to use at golf courses and other such facilities.

MEETING SCHEDULE CHANGE

The September 4 meeting was rescheduled for September 11, 2003.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 5:05 P.M.