



Hendry-LaBelle Recreation Board
P.O. Box 1760
LaBelle, FL. 33935
(863)675-5347 - Office (863)675-0390 – Fax

January 18, 2024

A regular meeting of the Hendry-LaBelle Recreation Board was held on the above date at 5:30 PM at Forrey Park, 785 Forrey Drive, LaBelle, Florida.

City Commissioner/Chairman, Daniel Akin, called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM.

Opening Prayer was led by County Commissioner, Mitchell Wills.

Everyone recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Members present were City Commissioner/Chairman, Daniel Akin, County Commissioner, Emory “Rowdy” Howard, City Commissioner, Bobbie Spratt, County Commissioner, Mitchell Wills, and Director, Steven Lynn.

Chairman Akin started with:

Bids: Stating he is moving this to “Staff Reports, this is really more for informational purposes.”

Consent Agenda: Approval of the December 21, 2023 Minutes and the bills:

***Commissioner Wills made the motion to approve the 12/21/23 Minutes and the bills.
Commissioner Spratt seconded. All in favor, motion passed unanimously.***

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Schoolboard Member

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Awards, Appearances, and Presentations: None.

Correspondence: None.

Staff Reports: Director Lynn reported that progress at Forrey Park with the pump station hit a small brick wall explaining that there is a certain drive in there that runs the whole pump station, that was sent off to be refurbished two (2) years ago. It was refurbished but was never tested. It does not work and it's outdated, so SiteOne, the subcontractor for Juniper Landscaping, who was hired to complete the irrigation/well work, is getting a new, updated one but won't be able to install it for 2-3 weeks. Once they get that in, we will be ready to start pumping water. Juniper will be out the following day to see how the irrigation is working.

Director Lynn then went on to say that he wanted everyone to come out to Forrey Park to see what has been going on (rather than just hearing), for the past two and half weeks with all of the new baseball field work. The ground is really soft, so loads of fill dirt had to be brought in.

Director Lynn went on to state that he met up with the owner, Jimmy Stamps, of JSM Services, Inc., (as a potential project manager), who builds ball fields all over the state for the big leagues. He gave us a quote of \$174,765.00 to complete three fields with us supplying material but stated that he felt we were doing a pretty good job ourselves and that the only thing he could offer over what we are doing already is he could get it done a little faster. Director Lynn then met with Lew Marotti of Juniper and his recommendation was not to hire JSM, save the money and keep moving forward the way that we have been.

Director Lynn received a quote from Home Depot for stainless steel fixtures for the restrooms. Stating it was for Civic Park for a total of \$21,977.74. He said that we do not have the funds to do that right now especially after having spent \$20,000 on the new lights there. He said that he would like to replace the porcelain in one of the restrooms (either men's or women's) towards the end of the year and then possibly the other one next year. Commissioner Spratt asked if the fixtures were getting replaced at Davis Pratt. Director Lynn replied, "no ma'am, they have not been broken out there like at Civic Park. The only thing they did at Davis Pratt was to remove the waterline from the back of the toilet." He further stated that we have spent \$2,500 - \$3,000 on new commodes that have been broken at Civic Park just in the past couple of weeks. Commissioner Howard asked what the state of the restrooms at Civic Park are right now. Director Lynn answered that they are all up and running except for one urinal that went down today. It wouldn't stop flushing so we have to order a new flush valve. Commissioner Wills wanted confirmation that it would be installed right when it comes in and Director Lynn

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confirmed, “yes.” Commissioner Howard then said, “we’re not under urgency to change them out then? Director Lynn replied, “no sir unless they keep going in there and breaking them. We’re going to go broke either way. We either pay that \$21,000.00 or we keep replacing them as they break them.” Chairman Akin asked are the restrooms open all the time or what are the hours they are open. Director Lynn replied it’s until dark unless there is a game going on and then the lights go out at 10:30 p.m. Commissioner Spratt asked if it was happening during the day or at night? Director Lynn answered, “either one or both. We left out of there 2 meetings ago when Commissioner Iglesias had reported the damage he found, we replaced the commode at 3:30 p.m. and by 4:00 p.m. it had been broken again.” Director Lynn further stated that there was a deputy sitting out in the parking lot under the big Oak but if you are not sitting in the restroom, you don’t know who is breaking what. Unfortunately, we cannot install cameras in the restrooms. Commission Spratt asked if we could put cameras outside to see who is going into the restrooms? Director Lynn replied that you can put one up outside but unless you walk in behind every single person, you just don’t know who is doing the damage. Commissioner Spratt said, “well at least you have a suspect.” Director Lynn replied, “we do but it still doesn’t do us any good.” Commissioner Spratt went on to say she doesn’t know what the joy is in breaking a toilet. She just doesn’t understand how that gets a person happy. Commissioner Howard asked where we were with the timed automatic locks. Director Lynn stated, “there is no guarantee with those (as Commissioner Wills as stated in the past). You can have them set up to lock at a certain time but if someone goes in there and flips something or puts something in the spot where it locks, it's not going to lock. The cheapest one we have found so far is just under \$900.” Commissioner Wills mentioned that a lot of this damage is during daylight hours, not at night.

Director Lynn went on to finish up about Forrey Park pointing out that there are four (4) poles still needing light fixtures and when the construction begins on the concession stand, the access road will need to go between the two south ball fields because the concrete at the main entrance to the center is 9’ 1.” He said he didn’t trust the construction drivers not to hit the dugout or one of those light poles. Director Lynn stated that he along with the advice of Shane Parker and Rock, recommended this location between the two south ball fields for the temporary construction road. It will be made of millings which can be pulled up and used again elsewhere once the construction is done. In addition, he doesn’t want the Musco trucks in there busting up the irrigation like in the past so all the water will be shut off to the whole south end of the ball park until construction is completed.

Hearing of the Public: Alma Cerda of Jalapenos Restaurant is requesting permission to tap into the main (sewer line) from the Rec Board down to Cowboy Way (per Commissioner Wills). Her

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contractor was there to help her explain that they already did a directional bore under SR 29 going to Jalapenos and they want to connect to the 2” line that is already there that is the Rec Board’s. She is asking permission to tap into it so that her sewer and waste goes through it at no cost to the Rec Board. She will incur any cost. Commissioner Spratt asked how much of a strain will that put on it with Commissioner Wills replying there will be no strain at all. It’s just a matter of a connection fee to tie into it. Discussion was had about who owned it and who would charge for it.

Commissioner Wills made a motion to allow Jalapenos Restaurant to tie into the Rec Board’s sewer line. Seconded by Commissioner Spratt. All were in favor, motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Wills explained to Ms. Cerda that she will need to go into City Hall and ask the girls there for the information that she will need about a connection fee.

Ms. Cerda then stated that she wanted to help out by donating \$3,000 to the Rec Board. Commissioner Spratt said “yes, we’ll take it.” Kim said to see her at the office.

Reports & Other Business: None.

Agenda Additions: Are we charging tax to Ford & Sunset Community for rental of the James Singleton building & Kid Jones Park for Black Heritage Festival? We do not have a copy of their exemption certificate since their application with the State has not been approved yet. Kim stated that Commissioner Spratt brought up a good point today that tax is required by the State. We can only forego the tax if they produce a tax exemption certificate but the Board had given them six months that we would waive the rental fee while they wait on a reply to their application from the State. Commissioner Wills stated that anything festival driven, the County does not charge and further that if they come in under Pastor McKenzie’s church, then no we won’t charge them the rental fee. Chairman Akin explained to the Ford & Sunset Community members present that once they have their 501(c)(3), they can show their certificate and be free of fees for their events but if they come in under the umbrella of the church for perpetuities sake this time, it’s okay – it just can’t be an ongoing thing. Chaiman Akin explained that they are still responsible for the Security Deposit.

Commissioner Wills made a motion to allow the Ford & Sunset Community to apply for the Black Heritage Festival usage of the James Singleton Community Center and the Kid Jones

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***Park under the umbrella of the New Bethel Missionary Baptist Church's 501(c)(3) status.
Commissioner Spratt seconded. All were in favor, motion passed unanimously.***

Chairman Akin then asked if there were any other comments. The Commissioners all replied "no." Chairman Akin said he did have one for Director Lynn asking if he was going to be ready for a presentation and about scheduling the joint meeting with the City of LaBelle and the County next month, further stating that an "invite" needs to be sent out to the County Administrator. Director Lynn said that as soon as he finds out from Rock, he will send it out to everybody. Director Lynn added that Rock stated he didn't want to rush this but will work to have it all ready two or three weeks prior to the meeting. Chairman Akin stated that we cannot keep delaying on this, we want to get this park open and budgetary wise, we need to have a meeting on all the parks so we are all on the same page. Commissioner Wills suggested meeting in February. Chairman Akin confirmed the time to be 3:00 p.m. on a Tuesday, not on our Thursday Board night.

Commissioner Spratt asked if we need to vote on staying with Steven or paying JSM to manage the project.

***Commissioner Spratt made a motion that the Rec Board staff continues managing Forrey Park construction in lieu of hiring the proposed outside project manager, JSM Services, Inc.
Commissioner Howard seconded. All were in favor, motion passed unanimously.***

Commissioner Howard stated that he can see some real progress. Director Lynn concurred until the rains came.

Chairman Akin made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Spratt seconded. All were in favor, motion passed unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Akin adjourned the meeting. Meeting was dismissed at 6:00 p.m.

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