

Wednesday, January 26, 2005, 5:30 p.m.
Administrative Complex Board Meeting Room

The January meeting of the Santa Rosa County Parks and Recreation Committee was held at the Administrative Complex beginning at 5:30 p.m. on Wednesday, January 26, 2005. The following members were present representing the sports associations and host organizations: Robert Breland and Robert Saville, Futbol Club of Santa Rosa, Inc., Santa Rosa Soccer Park; David Radcliffe, Tiger Point Park Board, Tiger Point Recreational Park; Charles Baxley and Albert Ward, Pace Athletic and Recreation Association, Pace Athletic and Recreational Park/Santa Rosa Sports Plex; and Larry Dixon and Darrin Nicely, Navarre Youth Sports Association, Navarre Sports Complex/Navarre Football-Soccer Park/Holley Ball Field.

Absent were representatives from East Milton Recreational Park, Chumuckla Community Center and Park, Fidelis Community Center and Park, Benny Russell Park, and Swenson Park.

Also present were County Administrator, Hunter Walker; the Administrative Services/Parks Operations Department, Tammy Simmons and Kristin Schepper; Ray Palmer with the Pensacola Sports Association; Kathy Newby with the Navarre Beach Area Chamber of Commerce; Regina Sprague with the Santa Rosa County Fair Committee; and Lisa Enfinger with the Blackwater Saddle Club.

The meeting was called to order at 5:31 p.m.

The Administrative Services Manager welcomed all. Minutes from the December 8, 2004, meeting were accepted as written.

The first item on the agenda for discussion was the sports associations' procedures and methods for performing background checks of coaches, umpires, and volunteers having contact with children under the age of 18.

Baxley explained that PARA had its own form for performing background checks and that in the past, PARA had a connection in the Probation Office who had ran the checks for the organization but that would not be the case this year. Dixon explained that currently NYSA checks only coaches. Mike Bradley and Ferdinand Rodriguez, both members of NYSA, are the only members of the organization who have access to the background check once they come back in order to preserve confidentiality. NYSA performs random checks of its coaches. Radcliffe said that at Tiger Point, they simply collect the information to run the background checks, but they never run them. Walker emphasized to the Committee that the County's primary concern was for background checks to be performed on the coaching staff, and Baxley agreed.

The Committee next considered the types of offenses that would prohibit someone from being allowed to coach/volunteer at the park. It was explained to the Committee that the American Youth Soccer Organization (AYSO) has standards for prohibition/participation, but this issue would need to be referred to the County Attorney, Tom Dannheisser, for a more definitive solution. The objective will be to set standards and policies of exactly what behaviors and who to allow around children. These standards should act as a deterrent to any deviant attempting to coach or volunteer.

Thorough background checks are often quite expensive to perform, and this was the next topic of discussion. It was suggested that the County consider performing the checks through the Human Resources/Risk Management Department since it is already performing checks on employees hired on with the County. Also, the Administrative Services/Parks Operations Department will check with the Santa Rosa County School Board to see what it does with regard to screening volunteers who work within the schools and around children. The County staff will also investigate whether or not Santa Rosa County could become a member of the FYSA/AYSO to then allow the individual parks to fall under the large umbrella of the County so that even the associations without soccer could still qualify to use the AYSO to perform background checks.

The second discussion item on the agenda was adoption of a standardized fee schedule for implementation at all County parks.

Nicely began this discussion by explaining that NYSA holds 3 tournaments a year (1 AYSO, 1 FYSA, and 1 other tournament) in order to earn funds for the club. Registration fees are as follows: soccer = \$65; baseball = \$75 for everyone with discounts for larger families such that the third child in the family would be "sponsored" by someone else and therefore the fee would be waived; family pass = \$25. Included with the uniform when the child signs up to play ball is a shirt, shorts, and socks.

Baxley then explained PARA's registration fees, which are as follows: baseball and football = \$85 for the first child, \$60 for the second child, \$45 for the third child, free for each additional child. Sponsorship packages were explained as such: baseball major sponsor = \$350 (name on shirt); baseball associate sponsor = \$175; football major sponsor = \$500; football associate sponsor = \$300. In a typical season, PARA spends approximately \$30,000 to \$40,000 for baseball umpires alone.

Moving from the discussion of individual fee schedules, Walker explained that the County's position is that reimbursement by the sports associations to the County should come for tournament expenses only. However, the Committee discussed that if tournament funds are being used to sponsor recreational programming in the park, then this should not be charged the additional fees by the County. Only traveling teams where the funds would not benefit the park's recreational programs would be charged the additional fees. The Committee discussed the idea of requiring budgets to be submitted to the County on an annual basis. No decision was made on these issues, but at this point, Schepper presented the Committee with the FY2004 operational expenses at each of the County's recreational parks, and discussion took place on this.

The items to be taken up at the next meeting, which is scheduled for Wednesday, February 23, 2005, at 5:30 p.m., at the Santa Rosa County Administrative Complex Board meeting room, are discussion of financial issues for sports associations to be presented by Randy Sansom and continued discussion of a draft plan for standardization of background checks and a fee schedule for all County recreational parks. At this meeting, County staff will provide the Committee with research of fees associated with performing background checks and associated procedures/policies as established by organizations such as the FYSA, AYSO, and the Santa Rosa County School Board, and FY2004 repair and maintenance and utilities cost breakdown for each recreational park.

The meeting adjourned at 7:55 p.m.