



City of Eustis, Florida

City Hall
10 North Grove Street
Post Office Drawer 68
Eustis, FL 32727-0068

Meeting Minutes - Final City Commission Workshop

Thursday, July 5, 2018

5:00 PM

City Hall

CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Morin - 5:00 p.m.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF QUORUM AND PROPER NOTICE

Present: 4 - Marie Aliberti; Carla Gnann-Thompson; Michael L. Holland; and Robert Morin

Absent: 1 - Linda Bob

I. Workshop Item

18-0165

Discussion regarding Recreation Program Fees, Revenues and Comparison with Other Area Programs

Joe LaPolla, Parks & Recreation Director, reported on the Recreation Department's programming in 2017 and 2018 noting a number of new programs offered. He provided a breakdown of the revenue and costs for the summer day camp which includes free breakfast and lunch for a cost to the parent of \$1.46 per hour per camper. He noted that they allow campers to enroll per week, provide multiple child discounts as well as offer the scholarship program. He provided similar breakdowns for other recreation programs. He presented a list of the programs and related fees as well as a comparison of similar programs with other area cities. He concluded with a revenue summary for the recreation and athletic programs, aquatic programs and scholarship fund. He explained how the rates are determined based on supply costs and outside instructors.

II. Commission Discussion

Commissioner Gnann-Thompson expressed concern regarding how much the City charges for its programs and cited the number of children that used to participate in the City's programs and the amount of funding generated by that volume.

Ron Neibert, City Manager, noted that the cost for the City's summer program is significantly less than what it would cost to send those children to a regular daycare. He noted that the previous City Manager also included the cost for the fulltime staff and other departments into what was charged for a program. He stated that, currently, they only charge for direct program costs such as materials and the rec. aides for that specific program. He indicated that any shortfall in the department has to be made up with tax dollars.

Commissioner Gnann-Thompson asked how many grants Mr. LaPolla has applied for since he has been with the City with Mr. LaPolla indicating there are fewer recreation grants available currently. He indicated he has looked for grants and noted that a number of grants have special criteria that the City can't meet.

Commissioner Holland asked how many campers are in the summer program with Mr. LaPolla indicating between 70 and 80 registered with an average of 50 attending each day. He further explained that they have to limit the number to the amount of children they can accommodate if they have to move them indoors.

Commissioner Holland commented on the old recreation programs and other locations that were used to house the kids. He expressed concern regarding the number of children that need to be involved in the program and suggested looking at other facilities to be able to expand the program. He recommended holding another workshop to discuss how the recreation program can be expanded and other facilities that could be used.

Mary Montez, City Clerk, commented on how her adult children attended the Eustis recreation program when they were children and the use of the elementary school property and pavilion for that program.

Commissioner Holland cited the Commissioners' contacts with the school system and the possibility of utilizing some of those facilities for the summer program.

Mr. LaPolla noted difficulties that have arisen with trying to utilize other organization's facilities. He expressed support for trying to utilize other facilities.

Mayor Morin expressed agreement for the previous comments and the need for more youth participating in the program. He expressed support for not charging for use of the pool. He commented on the need to know how many people have applied for the scholarships and how many people wanted to participate in the program but couldn't afford it.

Commissioner Gnann-Thompson stated it is better for someone to pay what they can than to not pay at all. She expressed support for everyone having to pay something. She cited the high costs of running the pool and maintaining it. She stated that the pool needs to be open to the public more and cited the need for more fun activities.

Mr. Neibert stated they can talk about offering free services but have to determine how to fund those services. He stated the City's goal is to provide the best quality of life. He indicated that staff can provide a template of the best services possible along with what the cost would be.

Commissioner Gnann-Thompson stated the Commission needs to look at the type of programs offered and related fees and see where the City can charge a little more to support other programs and look for alternate locations.

Mayor Morin stated the need to analyze what kind of programs are wanted by the public. He indicated he wants information about waiting lists for the programs. He re-emphasized his desire to have the pool open more hours and for free.

Mr. LaPolla explained that they have the pool open as many hours as possible with the staff available. He reported on the difficulty they have had in obtaining sufficient lifeguards. He indicated that has been an issue everywhere and further explained that the younger lifeguards can't be worked as many hours as the older ones. He added the City has offered to pay for the lifeguard training with the understanding the applicants would then work so many hours during the summer for the City.

Commissioner Holland asked if they have limited the number allowed in the summer program with Mr. LaPolla explaining they take up to 70 paying participants knowing they would then have another ten to fifteen through the scholarship program. He added that if more participants are added they would also have to increase the number of staff.

III. Public Input

Johnny Saunders addressed the Commission regarding the need to have programs that the children and families want to do. He stated that the leadership needs to work together with the community and expressed concern regarding the number of children participating.

Gail Isaac Thomas commented on the prior recreation programs she worked with at the community center and at the elementary school and the low cost "latchkey" program. She expressed support for utilizing the community building.

D.J. Davis commented on her experience with Coach Johnny, the football program and his efforts on behalf of the children.

Mr. Neibert clarified that the football program is a private program run by Coach Johnny with the City allowing them to use the City field.

Ms. Davis noted the problem Coach Johnny had with getting the field mowed. She then cited her family's inability to afford the summer program and her grandchildren's lack of interest in the activities. She commented on her experience with recreation programs where she used to live in Virginia and how they were able to pay a low annual fee to use the pool and the gym. She cited the need to also have activities for the children who don't want outdoor activities.

Darius Kerrison cited the need for the City to know what the community wants and needs.

IV. Commission Direction

CONSENSUS: It was a consensus of the Commission to hold a longer workshop with the City Manager to contact the Commission to determine a date.

V. Adjournment - 5:48 p.m.

**These minutes reflect the actions taken and portions of the discussion during the meeting. To review the entire discussion concerning any agenda item, go to www.eustis.org and click on the video for the meeting in question. A DVD of the entire meeting or CD of the entire audio recording or verbatim transcript of the meeting can be obtained from the office of the City Clerk for a fee.*