

City Commission Workshop
Meeting Minutes
October 30, 2018
(APPROVED)

10/30/2018 - Minutes

1. ROLL CALL

Commissioners Present: Eugene Fultz, Mayor; Curtis Gibson, Terrye Howell, Robin Gibson

Commissioners Absent: Flora "Tonya" Stewart

Staff Present: James Slaton, Assistant City Manager; Teresa Allen Public Services Director; Stephanie Edwards, Recreation Coordinator; Jennifer Nanek, City Clerk

2. DISCUSSION ITEMS

2.I. Recreation Master Plan

James Slaton, Assistant City Manager, reviewed the plan and that we are working to get staff and public input for specific recreation locations. This is the first draft of Crystal Lake Park. After we get input the draft will be modified and finalized.

2.I.i. Crystal Lake Park

Stephanie Edwards reported that she has brought this draft to many civic groups as well as the Recreation Complex and getting feedback. She shared some ideas for Crystal Lake Park. One idea is to create a Recreation district with possibly brick pavers along the corridor. Other ideas include a boardwalk across Crystal Lake and a mulch trail around the lake. We could add basketball courts and more tennis courts up to 8 which will allow some tournaments to come. Other elements of the plan include more picnic areas, natural stage area upgrades, some equipment rentals, splash pad, and other ideas. Slaton said a final draft will be brought to the Commission. They will then look at costs. Mr. Slaton said that they will work on Lake Wailes Park next. Ms. Edwards said they will need more parking and this needs to be looked at.

Mayor Fultz asked if we have funds for this. James Slaton said we will get costs and the Commission will determine priorities and where funding comes from.

Mayor Fultz asked about the boardwalk. Ms. Edwards showed a picture of what it could look like. Darryl Washington asked about the multi-purpose complex. Ms. Edwards said that is a different item and a different location. They will discuss it later in the meeting. Commissioner Curtis Gibson said the boardwalk across the lake may be too much. Scott Crews, architect, said it was just an idea they came up with and surprised staff with it. He has seen other communities with similar features. Deputy Mayor Robin Gibson said he is skeptical about a permanent structure over a lake when the water levels may fluctuate. He likes the idea of using Crystal Lake for more recreation. Commissioner Curtis Gibson liked the idea of the stage and a shade structure. He said restrooms are needed in Lake Wailes Park. Ms. Edwards said we can look at that for the Lake Wailes Park plan. Commissioner Howell asked about funding these improvements. Mr. Slaton said that they will apply for additional grants and that funds could come from the CRA and Recreation Impact fees. Mr. Slaton said that this will be phased over the next 5-7 years. A question was asked about maintenance if those costs were factored in. Mr. Slaton said no not yet. Commissioner Curtis Gibson asked about a staff person at Crystal Lake Park if the City would run that with its employees. Mr. Slaton said that there are lots of options to look at.

2.II. Multi-Use Complex

James Slaton, Assistant City Manager, reviewed a draft diagram of a possible facility. He explained that the design was borrowed from another City and adapted it to what we need. He said that Mr. Fields wants this issue on the April agenda. Mr. Slaton said that there are various issues to consider such as what to do with the existing Kirkland Gym and the existing CSX building. We are getting public input on what this facility needs. This facility could be built to be another shelter for the next hurricane and have a larger banquet facility.

Mayor Fultz agreed with the need for a hurricane shelter facility and that we are looking for funds to build this facility to serve as a shelter. Having this facility would be needed for the next hurricane. Deputy Mayor Robin Gibson asked what features this multi-purpose facility would include. James Slaton said there would be two multi-purpose gyms that could be used for pickleball and volleyball. It could have a fitness center, a catering kitchen, computer lab, track space and whatever else the community thinks we need. Deputy Mayor Robin Gibson asked if the survey asked the public what they would be willing to pay for. Ms. Edwards says that their survey will include those kinds of questions. Fees could range from monthly usage to one time user fees. Deputy Mayor Robin Gibson said that the YMCA has a good workout facility and we are going to purchase it. Commissioner Curtis Gibson asked about the Little Theater and the Streets facility. This is going to cost a lot.

Mayor Fultz asked about fee schedules; would County residents pay more? Ms. Edwards agreed and said we will look at that. Commissioner Howell asked how will it read on the ballot? If the question of fees will be on the ballot. Mr. Slaton explained that it's a bond referendum that citizens will vote yes or no on. Regarding costs the Commission will set the policy. Commissioner Howell said that voters need to understand the costs to them. Mayor Fultz agreed that the costs to citizens will need to be explained. Mr. Slaton said that the City Commission will approve the ballot language. Mayor Fultz said that voter education will be important. The language for the ballot is discussed.

2.III. YMCA

James Slaton, Assistant City Manager, reviewed the progress of negotiations with the YMCA. He introduced Renee Camper who is the current branch director of the YMCA. A list of the proposed components were distributed.

[Begin List]

City of Lake Wales & Lake Wales Family YMCA Lease Considerations

1. YMCA will convey their facility to the City in exchange for payoff of the YMCA's current debt (\$545,000 as of October 2018).
2. Initial facility renovations – detail of work and projects to be worked out jointly based on priority and cost. Preliminary reinvestment is budgeted (\$291,000 as of October 2018).
3. Performance Contract/Lease Term – 5 years, renewed annually upon mutual agreement of both parties.
4. YMCA Membership fee reduced by 50% for city residents. The rate reduction would be made whole by the city in the form of reimbursement (approximately \$75,000).
5. Continuation of the non-member city resident pool usage opportunity (21 hours per week of open swim time). Current annual cost \$36,000, but will be adjusted annually based on usage.
6. Facility Repair & Maintenance – Maintenance items under \$5,000 will be the responsibility of the YMCA. Repairs in excess of \$5,000 will be the responsibility of the City. City and YMCA Staff will work jointly on annual "repair and replacement" plans and budget accordingly.
7. Programming – YMCA staff will work in concert with the city's recreation department staff on program coordination and community needs. The city will add a program subsidy (\$25,000) for city residents.
8. The YMCA facility will be made available for City programs and events contingent upon availability and prior coordination with YMCA staff.

YMCA of West Central Florida & Lake Wales Family YMCA Merger Considerations

1. Existing Lake Wales Family YMCA endowment/board restricted reserves (\$126,779.94) – those dollars would be placed in an account at the Give Well Community Foundation with designation/restrictions that the funds may only be used on Lake Wales Family YMCA.
2. The Lake Wales Family YMCA, Inc. would be dissolved as a corporation – details to include: The Lake Wales Family YMCA board would disband, and X number (3 to 4) of board members would transition to serve on the YMCA of West Central Florida board of directors.

[End List]

Mr. Slaton asked the Commission for feedback and wants to be sure everyone is on the same page. He recommends that the YMCA staff the facility rather than city employees as they are experts. Deputy Mayor Robin Gibson said that the purchase price is the best part of this as it would cost a lot more for the City to build its own pool. This is a good deal. It hasn't worked well for the City to run recreation programs itself in the past. He would like to see a contract detailing what all they will do. The fee structure is very important. The 50% reduction might be too strong. With this there might be more participation from residents which is not factored in.

Commissioner Howell said she doesn't know if the YMCA should be over things as that was a past problem. She asked if the funds for the Y will come from the general fund. Mr. Slaton said there will be scholarships for those that can't afford it. A resident doesn't have to be a member to use the YMCA. They can pay the fee for the day to use the facilities. There will be an annual performance review to examine the numbers. Commissioner Howell asked about 21 hours of open swim for a city building. These should be expanded. Who will decide who gets to use the facility? Should be the City not the YMCA. Mr. Slaton said specific performance measures in the contract for the YMCA to meet and these will be reviewed. Deputy Mayor Robin Gibson said he wants to see the final contract. He said that they should move forward to get a draft contract.

Commissioner Curtis Gibson said he agrees that we are going in a good direction and wants to be careful about paying too much. Commissioner Howell asked if we are buying the property. Mayor Fultz said yes they are buying it. Deputy Mayor Robin Gibson asked about the fields. He said we need another football field. Commissioner Curtis Gibson agreed. Mr. Slaton said that is a possibility with this property. The property is close to 10 acres. There is another parcel to the north that the City could get.

3. COMMUNICATIONS AND PETITIONS

Darryl Washington, resident, asked if the gyms in the multi-purpose complex are indoor. Mr. Slaton said they are indoors. Mr. Washington asked if the City would operate the programs or the Y. Mr. Slaton said the YMCA will run the programs. Mayor Fultz said the Y has the expertise to run recreation programs as the City does not currently. Mr. Washington said he would like the City to run their recreation programs. Mr. Washington asked about the maintenance costs and if we will have the expertise. Mayor Fultz said that not all of the maintenance will fall on the city. Mr. Slaton asked Mr. Washington what he would like to see. Mr. Washington said that he would like to see the City serve the people. He would like to see the city run its own programs.

Commissioner Howell asked Ms. Edwards if she planned to talk to PAL as part of this process. Ms. Edwards said that PAL representatives sit on the Recreation Commission.

Another resident said costs may be too high at multi-purpose center for many residents to use the facility. Mr. Slaton said that fees haven't been decided yet.

Scott Crews, architect, suggested more engagement with Lake Wales as the multi-purpose complex is designed to see what should be included.

Dick Howell, resident, said our community needs a facility like the multipurpose complex. He asked where the Kirkland Gym fits into all this. He asked how these different ideas will impact each other.


Mayor Fultz said he encourages additional public input into these issues so they know what citizens need.

Burney Hayes, resident, expressed concern about charging some residents fees to use the facilities. He suggested ideas to raise funds to allow low income residents to use the new facilities. Ms. Allen asked Ms. Edwards to include in the survey a question about fees. Commissioner Howell said she would like a question about this on the survey. Commissioner Curtis Gibson expressed concern that we don't get any income from any of our facilities.

Christopher Lutton, resident, encouraged the Commission to learn about the operating costs for each of these projects as these moneys will come from the general fund. The highest cost will be personnel. We need to charge people to use the facilities.

Deputy Mayor Robin Gibson said that these projects will benefit the many people that live outside the City limits. We need a fiscal plan that has all those that benefit pay their fair share. We can't do it for free. Mayor Fultz agreed with the need for fee schedules. Commissioner Howell said that people that live outside the limits are part of our community but people from other cities should pay more.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:43 p.m.



Mayor/Deputy Mayor

ATTEST:



City Clerk