

**MINUTES
CITY OF ORMOND BEACH
QUALITY OF LIFE ADVISORY BOARD
REGULAR MEETING**

April 4, 2013

6:00 PM

**City of Ormond Beach
Training Room
22 South Beach Street
Ormond Beach, Florida**

1) Call to Order

Dr. Shapiro called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

Members present were: Debbie Berner, William Masters, Brian Nave, Troy Railsback, Dr. Philip Shapiro and Betty Smith. Excused were: Dr. Daniel Drake, Kathy Page and Dr. Gerald Woodard. Absent was Julianne Blanford.

Others present were: Leisure Services Director Robert Carolin, Recording Secretary Shá Moss.

2) Approval of Minutes – February 7, 2013

Mr. Railsback moved seconded by Mr. Masters to accept the minutes of the February 7, 2013 meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

3) Request for Proposal for the Management and Operations of the Ormond Beach Gymnastics Center

Dr. Shapiro stated about four years ago the Board was presented with a RFP review for The Casements and the Performing Arts Center. At that time the Board recommended sponsorships for the facilities, but he wasn't sure what happened to that recommendation.

Dr. Shapiro stated according to the information presented for the gymnastics center, the participation has been declining since 2008, but the subsidy was consistent.

Mr. Carolin stated the RFP information in the packet was the same one from six years ago, using it as an example of what was being presented. He noted the City went through massive cuts during that time and staff looked to RFP several programmed facilities, one of them was the Tennis Center, which is now being run by Gary Heatwole. The other was the Senior Center which is being run by the Volusia County Council on Aging. Both of them have resulted in increased subsidy for the City by about 90%. There are still some costs being expended, because the Senior Center is used by the City occasionally in the evenings and the Tennis Center shares space with the MacDonald House.

The City proposed a response to the gymnastics center's RFP at that time, in the event that only one person put in a bid. He wasn't sure why no one else bid on the project because gymnastics is a very popular program, but it is difficult to retain kids with all the other activities they have going on, in addition to the cost. Gymnastics requires a lot of dedication and it is a year round event. He noted there were other gymnastics centers opening in the area that are more equipped than the City's site because of space and the design.

Mr. Carolin reviewed the power point presentation showed the objective and stated he would like a recommendation from the Board for the City Commission. He pointed out the several development programs, such as Mommy & Me and Tumbling Tots to Level 7, as well as recreational programs. The cheer programs were added to increase participation over the past two years; but have still not been able to retain the kids.

The gymnastics programs, under the leadership of George Postell, have won several awards and many individual awards, but small in comparison to the number of youth in the city. The cheer program was great in the beginning, but then Pop Warner and Pride also decided to have a cheer program, a lot of the kids went to those programs. The City has a seasonal share program with those groups, in addition to working with local schools and colleges.

The annual participation graph showed 770 registrations in 2008 compared to 557 in 2012, but only 21% of the participants remain. It is challenging to compete with the private sector. He stated a reason the numbers are about the same was because of the Mommy & Me program which has a high participation and was inexpensive.

The subsidy graph showed great disparity. He stated the City has a non-resident fee to cover cost, but it still did equal the expenses. If the City charged the amount needed to cover the expenses, the fee would be very high. The City currently charges 50% more for non-residents than for a resident.

The City tried to reduce cost by reducing staff, cutting the operating hours, advertised more but the expenses were still too high. Some of the expenses were electrical, water and sewer, cleaning, replacement and renewal, but the majority

of the expenses went towards staff. He noted there were one full time and three part-time instructors.

Mr. Railsback asked whether the City needed a gymnastics program and if the facility is only equipped for gymnastics, then that may not be the best use for the facility. He asked if other types of classes could be offered.

Mr. Carolin stated there approximately 40,000 residents, but we only serve 170 of them and it costs \$53,000. He noted the hours that the gymnastics programs operate would not be conducive to offer different programs, mainly because of the equipment. Mr. Carolin stated if he could offer a comparable program at that facility and save the City \$53,000 annually and was used by the residents, then that would be idea.

Mr. Carolin stated the RFP would be less specific, such as there is a building available, we would like to offer gymnastics programs, and they could purchase the equipment. It could be a facility usage RFP with the possibility of offering a gymnastic program.

Ms. Berner asked if the same services were being offered, whether the City could merge with the private companies; wherein Mr. Carolin stated that could be a part of the RFP.

Mr. Carolin stated there would be some cost dividing because of the gym that was attached to the gymnastic center, such as electric, water and sewer.

Mr. Nave asked why the City doesn't raise the rate to compete with the other facilities in the community.

Mr. Carolin stated the City was governed by certain practices. For example, if someone had a certain income level, then your services were gifted, so there was an automatic loss in fees. In order for the City to recoup all their expenses, we would have to increase the cost \$63.00 per person per month. He noted if there was a high turnover rate, you cannot divide the subsidy among the participation level because some classes run different lengths of time.

Dr. Shapiro asked what the time frame for the RFP contract was.

Mr. Carolin stated he wanted the recommendations from this Board and the Leisure Services Advisory Board so that he would have something to present to the City Commission as a request to bid in late May. It would be out for 30 to 60 days; then back to the City Commission for approval of contract, if there are any bidders, based upon an award. Hopefully there will be a contract award by October.

Dr. Shapiro asked what would happen if there were no bidders.

Mr. Carolin stated the RFP would be marketed differently. I won't be marketed solely as a gymnastic center. People will have more flexibility use; it was a very nice facility and should not be hard to make money using it. He noted he has already been solicited by people that are willing to take over the gymnastic program.

Mr. Nave asked whether the City could approach go to the private centers and offer buy a block of kids at a stated cost; wherein Mr. Carolin stated this wasn't a practice of the City, but he would look into it.

Mr. Masters moved, seconded by Mr. Railsback that the Quality of Life Advisory Board endorses the concept of a RFP for the management and operations of the Ormond Beach Gymnastic Center facility.

Ms. Smith asked what would happen to the middle school dances and basketball games that went on at the facility.

Mr. Carolin stated the gymnasium would still remain functional, which was where the middle school dances, exercise classes and basketball facilities were located. The gymnastic center is a separate location. He hoped that whoever took over the gymnastic center would run a gymnastic program. Mr. Carolin stated the City would not respond to the RFP.

Mr. Railsback stated the YMCA might consider a partnership with the City on a gymnastic program.

Mr. Carolin stated the City spoke with a representative at the YMCA and nothing ever came of that discussion.

Mr. Railsback stated if the private operator comes in and fails, then the program is loss. Someone could offer that service and other services to the community and in turn gain from more services at lesser costs.

Ms. Smith stated as taxpayer she would feel let down by the City for giving the program to the private sector because her taxes was not supporting what was best for her children. She stated she would like to protect the people that are currently involved in the program.

Mr. Nave stated before the City dumps the program, they should pursue a business and subsidize it at a cost per child, or move the program to a private school.

Ms. Berner stated the more restriction put into the RFP, the less response you will receive.

Mr. Masters amended the original motion and moved, seconded by Mr. Railsback that the Quality of Life Advisory Board endorses the concept of a RFP for the management and operations of the Ormond Beach Gymnastic Center facility; and whatever the use, includes a gymnastic program comparable to what was currently being offered. The motion passed with a 4 to 2 vote.

Dr. Shapiro asked Mr. Carolin to let the Leisure Services Advisory Board know that the Board discussed the proposal at great length and has expressed many concerns but would like to see the gymnastic program continue.

Mr. Railsback stated this should be presented as how to present a better service by increasing the level of service, but not as trying to generate revenue.

Mr. Nave stated it was the City's responsibility that as the funding decreases the cuts were made in the right place and not always in the easiest place.

4) Member Comments

Dr. Shapiro stated the Board will soon discuss the Capital Improvement Program and the Community Development Block Grant.

Mr. Carolin stated staff just started working on the CIP, so it should be coming up soon. The meeting for the Community Development Block Grant is scheduled for April 25, but the allocation has not been received from the County.

5) Audience Comments

Clay Beazley, 2180 Arabian Trail, Marshside Harbor representative, stated he appreciated the passion of the Board and their discussion and asked whether the project at Marshside Harbor would be something that this Board could discuss.

Dr. Shapiro stated if he wanted the Board to discuss it, the City Manager or staff would have to recommend it.

Mr. Beazley stated that the issue was about the quality of life for the community and should be before the Board for discussion.

Mr. Carolin stated that was a planning issue and not something that this Board would discuss. He appreciated the combining of the situation, but it should remain with the Planning Board for discussion.

6) Adjournment – Next Meeting – May 2, 2013

The meeting adjourned at 7:27 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Shá Moss, Recording Secretary

ATTEST:

Dr. Philip J. Shapiro, Chairman