

**BEAUFORT COUNTY PARKS & LEISURE SERVICES BOARD
MINUTES
THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 1, 2005
Burton Wells Recreation Center
2:30 P.M.**

Present: Arthur Middleton, Chairman
Orethia White, Vice Chair
Thomas Mobley
Corinne Hagood
Charlie Kent, Bluffton Resident

Absent: Calvin White
Michael Manesiotis
William Brown
Allan Stern
William Grayson
Joe Penale, Director, Southern Beaufort County PALS

Staff: H.C. Boehm, Director, Public Services
John Miller, Jr., Director, Northern Beaufort County PALS
Stacie Hawkins, Assistant to the Directors

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Middleton called the meeting to order at 2:35 p.m.

APPROVAL OF September 1, 2005 AGENDA

Mr. Mobley motioned to approve September 1, 2005 agenda.

Mrs. White seconded the motion.

Motion passed unanimously.

APPROVAL OF July 7, 2005 MINUTES

Mr. Mobley motioned to approve May 5 minutes.

Mrs. Hagood seconded the motion.

Motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Bluffton resident, Charlie Kent, addressed the Board asking Board Members to reconsider PALS policy not allowing children to move up to higher age brackets versus their skill level. Mr. Kent stated that his daughter, an eight year old, is a participant in PALS soccer program in Bluffton. He stated that this past year, her team won the championship.

To support his idea of allowing children to play in higher age brackets, Mr. Kent stated that soccer through the National Soccer Association age bracket classifications state “12 and under, 10 and under” and so on. The key word is “under”. It does not restrict children to play only within their appropriate age group. This classification does allow children with higher skills to play among those with the same skills. Mr. Kent stated that Beaufort County School District recognizes advance educational skills. Beaufort County School District allows students who have been identified by teaches as having advance skills to participate in accelerated educational programs. These students are separated from their peers to an environment that allows them to learn at their level and not their age bracket.

Mr Kent requested his daughter is allowed to play with the 9-10 years. He wants her in an environment that is challenging. He thinks that it won't be fair to the opposing teams if his daughter is required to play in her age bracket.

Mrs. Orethia White, PALS Board Vice Chair, asked Mr. Kent if he sought placing his daughter on boys team. Mr. Kent stated that he was seeking to move her up to the 9-10 year old girls team. His personal desire is to have his daughter moved up a level, but also wanted to challenge how PALS has its age brackets set up. He states with the rapid growth of PALS soccer programs, it is to PALS advantage to change to the same system used by National Soccer Association. He suggested PALS have parent to sign a waiver if a child is allowed to move up. Mrs. White asked if there were a traveling team for eight year olds. Mr. Miller advised the Board that there were none in the Bluffton area. Mr. Kent stated that Hilton Head was not an option for him.

Mr. Middleton advised Mr. Kent the PALS Board would send him a letter with their decision. Mr. Kent gave his contact information to Stacie Hawkins and left.

Mr. Miller advised Board Members that most private organizations use the 10 and under leagues. Mrs. White recommended that Mr. Kent's request is denied, stating that he should seek a traveling team to accommodate his daughter's skills. Mrs. Hagood agreed stating that implementing such a system would eventually leave the 7-8 year teams empty. Mr. Miller informed Board Members that this will always be an issue and PALS Board will have to be firm in its decisions.

Mr. Mobley asked what is the proper procedure for addressing such issues brought up during Public Comments. He asked if it was proper to have an open discussion in a public forum. He asked if such issues should be placed on the agenda for the next meeting. Mr. Boehm advised Board Members that County Council does not permit open discussions during Public Comments. Council will discuss the issues at another time and make the appropriate decisions.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Mrs. White shared with Board Members the impact of attending the PALS/Public Works Facility Tour. She stated that because of the tour, she has a better understanding of Northern Beaufort County's needs. Mr. Middleton stated that he now has a true understanding of the stormwater situation. Mr. Middleton stated that he found the tour to be

most educational and thought that the information given to those in attendance would also be helpful to the general public. Mr. Middleton recommended the creation of a film to show stormwater drainage problems and solutions to general public. Mrs. White also shared that she found some of Council had no idea of where our facilities are located. Mr. Boehm advised Board Members that he would share their suggestion to create a film to Council. Mrs. White suggested that such a film could be shown at local theaters during the intermission.

DEPARTMENTAL UPDATES

Northern Beaufort County PALS

- A. Council Facility Tour – Mr. Miller extended his gratitude to Board Members for attending the tour. Mr. Miller advised Board Members that the tour was just a sampling of what PALS does on a daily basis. Mr. Miller also reported that Joe Penale will put together a similar tour of Southern Beaufort County facilities and will notify the Board of date.
- B. Fall Athletics- Football and soccer seasons will begin September 10 with a Jamboree at Burton Wells Athletic Complex. Participation numbers have increased with football adding two (2) teams. Northern Beaufort County has 55 registered soccer teams.
- C. Fort Fremont – With the PALS Board approving the Fort Fremont Conceptual Plan, JK Till is putting together construction documents for roads and decorative fencing. The next step will be presentation at the Public Service Committee of County Council.
- D. Crystal Lake Park – Mr. Miller reported Russ Marane is seeking land planners to develop a Master Plan for Crystal Lake. Mr. Marane will get a flat fee proposal. Mr. Mobley inquired about the schedule for Butler Marine to move. Mr. Miller reported at the time of purchase, Butler Marine had three (3) years left in their lease. Mr. Boehm suggested that Crystal Lake need to be secured now that County is liable.
- E. Trust for public Lands is looking at property at Start Point across from Whale Branch Schools. This site is a potential 38 acre passive park
- F. Shell Point Park – Mr. Miller shared with Board Members a letter received from a resident of Shell Point area concerning lights at the Shell Point Park. Mr. Miller asked if he could present concerns as an agenda item at the next meeting. PALS Board gave their approval. Mr. Mobley asked for location of Shell Point Park. Mr. Miller gave directions and described the ½ mile walking trail, tennis court and playground, as amenities offered.

Southern Beaufort County PALS

- A. No report.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Mr. Miller reported final Summer Camp numbers. In fiscal year 2004, PALS Summer Camp participation number hit an all-time low of 91 participants. With the PALS Board approval of a fee reduction, fiscal year 2005, there was a significant increase in participation numbers. There were 332 participants in the 2005 PALS Summer Camp.
2. Mr. Mobley reported that with PALS Board Members contact information being on the website, he has received his first call from a resident in reference to the Broad River Pier. Mr. Mobley shared that he finds the website has become very useful.

NEW BUSINESS

None

NEXT MEETING/ADJOURNMENT

Next meeting is **Thursday, October 6, 2005** at 2:30 p.m. at Bluffton Recreation Center, 61B Ulmer Road, Bluffton, South Carolina.

Meeting adjourned at 3:13 p.m.