

# **PARKS ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT**

## **JULY 20 2009**

**As you recall the Parks Advisory Committee was formed to address and make recommendations to the City Commission on two issues; 1. Vendors being allowed to sell or rent their products within our city parks. 2. General and specific parking problems within in our City parks.**

**In December of '08 the Committee presented its initial report. We had agreed, and still do, that the rental of non-motorized watercraft and bicycles ONLY, be allowed. At that same meeting we asked to study all of the park ordinances to, not only solve the parking problems, but to update, clarify and codify all the ordinances. Some had been written in 1960 prior to many of our current park problems- such as; the use of sound systems, portable generators, DJ's and tents: and, the severe overcrowding of our parks, especially our beach parks with Jaycee in particular, due to the explosion of our county's population along with the change in our population demographics had not yet occurred.**

**The proposed ordinance changes you have before you tonight represent the collaborative effort of your appointed citizens, Public Works, Police and, Parks and Special Permits Staff. I will say at this point, that**

without bringing in staff who deal with these issues on a daily basis, and asking for their input, our final product would not be as comprehensive and well thought out as it is.

The goals of our deliberations were to add, delete, and clarify the ordinances so that:

1. They are more easily understood by those using our parks, whether with or without a special permit.
2. They are easier to enforce by our police officers and code enforcement department.
3. The health and safety of our park visitors is better insured.

Let me quickly explain some of the hot button items that we discussed.

In that first report in December we did recommend allowing only non-motorized watercraft and bicycles to be vended in our parks. A vendor with multiple products must go through the RFP process for each product. The scope is small, we did not recommend any other items such as beach chairs, umbrellas, T shirts etc. be allowed to be vended. We also included a suggested set of vendor rules.

Our suggested parking (sec 12-12-p3) proposal has 3 components. During discussions we had many "what if" situations brought up. By using one or more of these 3 components all were able to be satisfied and enforced. Chief Baldwin is most comfortable the way they are

written and is certain that his officers will have no problem with enforcement.

Concerning oversized vehicles, there must be appropriate signage allowing them to park-if not they will be ticketed.

The committee was in support of necessary appropriate signage, but if the illegal parking can be eliminated by incorporating landscape design-trees, plants, pathways, boulders etc., we would be much happier. We have great faith in Mr. Hood's abilities in this area as is exhibited by his work in Causeway. Those big garish signs that start by saying "NO" no way give off a warm, friendly hospitable vibe to any park visitor.

Because our parks are bursting at the seams we must adopt the attitude that if there are no more parking spots at a park, the park is FULL and people must move on to another park. We strongly suggest that the city work with the county to highlight those beach parks south of the city line, perhaps through our visitor website. I've visited John Brooks, Frederick Douglass and Blind Creek. Some have restroom facilities and all have room for oversized vehicles. As for school buses, the same applies-if there is signage fine, if not you must unload and park elsewhere. This summer, at times, the school buses have taken up the whole south side parking area of Jaycee Park, thus

eliminating any parking for other visitors. Because of our population explosion and lack of prior parking enforcement, an entitlement mentality has crept into our park visitor's heads. "I want to go to this park and I will and if I park illegally so be it". This behavior must be corrected. Chief Baldwin supports this new policy and will instruct his officers to suggest using the alternative parks to our south.

This will not be an easy task, but hopefully with the completion of Pioneers Park, some of the summer children's programs will opt to go there rather than Jaycee or Causeway.

You will note in Sec12-17 (p5) Domestic Animals that we have made no major changes. We felt that the majority of people do not pick up after their dogs and with people going bare foot, it produces an unsanitary and libelous situation. One committee member suggested a dog park, but the rest of the committee did not feel that, at this point, one was viable. There is a huge county dog park out west that is available and we suggest that people take their dogs out there.

We have added section 12-22 Sound Systems (p7-8) to make the use of sound systems, DJ's etc. illegal without a special permit. These have become a noise nuisance especially at Jaycee Park. They reverberate throughout the park and disturb other visitors.

**In the Article II section Special Events, our main goals were to simplify, remove redundancies and re-organize so that all information regarding one type of an event is together.**

**We recommend that alcoholic special events permits be issued to profit organizations for private parties not charging a fee or being held for a profit, This is simply acknowledging what is already occurring.**

**We recommended that the window for applying for any special events permit should be standardized at the not before 180 days and not less than 30. Our hope is that all groups will abide by this and “not” forget and come begging to any ear they can find for an exception. In fairness to all we felt that the 180/30 window should be upheld with waivers given only to exceptional unforeseen occurrences, such as the Bill Clinton visit.**

**Our discussions also included the fees charged for special events; though we were not charged with making recommendations, we felt that the current charges need updating, as they do not reflect the actual cost to the city. They should be broken down into categories ie electric- electrician for set up- electrician on call-electrician for the entire event.**

**We understand that Greg Martzolf and his staff are working to put the entire Special Permit application**

**process on the city's website. We support this and hope that it will be available in the near future.**

**I am so proud of our committee's commitment to this monumental task. These revisions reflect the wisdom of the citizens, the staff who maintain the parks, and those who are charged with the enforcement of these ordinances. We feel confident that we have more than met our afore mentioned goals.**

**The Committee has done its work, and now it is time for action. We thank you for the opportunity to help our city and to learn more about our parks.**

**We ask that you accept both reports, including the vendors permit rules, send them to legal for review with a date certain to come back to you for a vote.**

**We need to know if this committee is a standing committee formed to advise and recommend on any or all park issues now and in the future, or a special/ad hoc committee formed to deal with current or specific issues?**

**Questions??**

**Arden Peck**

# **Chair Parks Advisory Committee**



"Peggy Hallett"  
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07/20/2009 04:13 PM

To asatterlee@city-ftpierce.com

cc

bcc

Subject Books Are Fun Book Fair

Dear Ann;

Just wanted to follow up and tell you how much I appreciated speaking to you today. The date we set for a fair is Nov. 12.

I'll be in touch in the next couple of weeks. Take care and please contact me if you need to about any questions or changes.

Peggy L. Hallett

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