

**Gadsden County, FL Parks & Recreation Advisory Board**  
**March 7, 2019 @ 6:00 p.m.**  
**County Commission Chambers**  
**9 East Jefferson St.**  
**Quincy, FL 32351**

Present: Jeff Diekman  
Mary Jack Boone  
Markey Rivers, Presiding  
Stan James

Absent: Gay Steffen, Chair  
Leroy Smith

Staff Present: Suzanne Lex, Growth Management Director  
Herb Chancey, Parks & Recreation Director  
Ellen Andrews, Principal Planner  
Laurel Bradley, Executive Assistant to County Administrator  
Marcella Blocker, Deputy Clerk  
Muriel Straughn, Clerk's office

Staff Absent: Olivia Smith, Public Information Officer

**INVOCATION, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**GENERAL BUSINESS**

In the absence of Chair Steffen, it was decided that a *de facto* chair must be appointed to preside over the meeting because there is no vice chair of the advisory board.

**UPON MOTION BY JEFF DIEKMAN AND SECOND BY MARK JACK BOONE, THE BOARD VOTED 4 – 0, BY VOICE VOTE, TO APPOINT MARKEY RIVERS TO PRESIDE OVER THE MEETING.**

**1. Welcome**

Mr. Rivers welcomed everyone then opened the meeting for business.

**2. Approval of Minutes**

- a. April 17, 2018
- b. May 8, 2018
- c. August 14, 2018
- d. November 13, 2018

**UPON MOTION BY JEFF DIEKMAN AND SECOND BY MARY JACK BOONE, THE BOARD VOTED 4 –**

**0, BY VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE THE ABOVE STATED MINUTES.**

**GENERAL BUSINESS**

**3. Expressions from Chairman of the Board of County Commissioners**

Dr. Anthony Viegbesie, Ph.D. addressed the Board. His remarks are recorded verbatim to serve as reference.

**Dr. Viegbesie:**

Good evening. I am glad to see this board in full function. On behalf of the Board of County Commissioners, I express to you a debt of gratitude for volunteering your time to work with the board to at least to improve the quality of life for the citizens of Gadsden County.

This board is actually the brain child of ours. I introduced it to the Board of County Commissioners because Gadsden County, right now, does not have a single park. All we have are play grounds, which are passive parks. We call them parks, but, they are playgrounds.

My vision is to have a full fledged park and recreational facility that will provide an outlet for our youth and our seniors and our citizens to actually engage in athletic programs and events. So, I envision something like Jack McLane Park and bringing it to Gadsden County and dropping it somewhere. That somewhere happened to be 25.5 acre lot that the Board of County Commissioners agreed with me to purchase on Fontana Trail. So, that is what we are working on right now.

We have the rendering (pointing to a drawing on the wall) and floor plan and that is actually the diagram of the building itself ( I think that is in the package you received.) with all the amenities that are to come with it – softball fields, baseball fields, soccer fields, swings and everything else that you can imagine. There are many whistles that come with an actual parks and recreation, and then you have the complex building that will have an exercise and fitness room. It will have computer rooms and after school tutorial rooms for the youth. It is going to have an indoor basketball arena that will seat about 200 with bleachers. You will have two community rooms. One to hold 50 and one to hold 170 people for community events like family reunions and class reunions and receptions and so on and so forth.

So, this board is something that I think that we must have because everywhere there are parks and recreational activities; they have a park and recreation advisory board. I was in Tallahassee for years before I came to Gadsden County. They have a parks and recreation advisory council or board. So, it is the board that will come up with the duties and responsibilities I am expecting. They are still in the works by the Board of County Commissioners.

I am glad to know that there some of you on this board right now have some recreational skill sets that will be bringing recommendations to the county commission for the kinds of things that we should be doing. What I am envisioning is athletic programs for youth. Summer programs that will keep them off the streets. I am looking at the possibility of having basketball tournaments for different communities – Shaw Quarters playing against Sawdust against Crawfish Island and so on.

There will be one trophy. The winner will have the bragging rights for the whole year. I think that will keep the kids busy and keep them out of the streets. It will help reduce juvenile delinquency.

Not only basketball, but you will have flag football and tackle football. These are the kind of things that I am looking at providing for the youth and children of this county. Then, eventually, we will be able to get enough money to have an aquatic center. An aquatic center is a part of the package. If there is a swim team, you will have swimming tournaments coming to town. You will have basketball tournaments coming to town. It is not only for wellness, it is also an economic development engine. When people come here for tournaments, that is bed tax and hotel rooms, that is gasoline, that is food, that is sales tax that we are going to generate.

So, this is actually a holistic approach to increasing and improving the quality of life in Gadsden County. I am not really very happy with those little parks that we have. I refer to the one on Charlie Harris Loop. That is a playground that is referred to as a park. As soon as we finish this, and it is in progress, I think the advisory council could have put together some activities that we can begin to engage in. I am envisioning having a Department of Parks and Recreation for Gadsden County with a future director of Parks and Recreation that will oversee all the athletic and recreational activities for Gadsden County.

My long term vision is (as soon as we finish this one on Fontana Trail, which we now call East Gadsden Recreational Park and Multipurpose Complex) ... to have one of the same nature on the west side of the county. We will use the one on the east side as a template. All of what we are doing now will be a learning process with which we will take the same thing – buy some property in western Gadsden and have something of the same size and caliber in western Gadsden County. That is my vision. That is what I am anticipating, but, I am just one of five. Luckily, I have had the support of the other commissioners for us to have gotten to this point. They are the ones that approved the money with which we bought that land. They are the ones that approved the money with which these architectural conception frameworks are being developed. They have also been able to create what I call the congruence of unity of purpose on this particular aspect of economic development.

So, on this board, rests the responsibilities and duties of coming to and advising the Board of County Commissioners, working with the director of Parks and Recreation about the kinds of programs we should be doing, the kinds of activities we should be doing. So, all you do is bring those activities and “here we go” and Gadsden County will be on a different trajectory.

That is my wish and I honestly truly appreciate your desire to help the Board of County Commission and the citizens of Gadsden County in this particular endeavor.

If you have questions for me, I will be willing to answer with regards to what you have in front in you or something else to know.

**Jeff Diekman:**

I have a question. So, we don't have this facility built yet?

**Dr. Viegbesie:**

It is not built yet, no.

**Jeff Diekman:**

From what I understood is that you are looking for from us is feedback on activities and things going forward. That is on the premise of this facility being completed. I guess our question, or my question is a member of this board is - What can we do now prior to this facility being constructed? What is our role now?

**Dr. Viegbesie:**

Right now, for example, there is going to be a hearing at the Legislature, which is actually going on, and we want to have and to show support for the program. We will call you to come and sit with us and maybe have a voice in the committee hearing. Have comments to the Legislators letting them know that this is something we want and need. You will introduce yourself as a member of the Gadsden County Park and Recreation Advisory Council. Then they will know that the County is serious about this thing. It is not just a "fly-by" thing. They will see a council of citizens and they would know that. That is the strategy. These are the kinds of things you will have to do for now.

Meanwhile, you should be thinking about what kind of program this is going to build. What kind of project. What kind of activities that fits Gadsden County at this point. So, when it is built, we will already have them in place – knowing exactly what you are going to do.

**Jeff Diekman:**

What do you think the timeframe is?

**Dr. Viegbesie:**

It depends on what comes out of the Legislature this time.

**Jeff Diekman:**

Is that where we are looking to for funding?

**Dr. Viegbesie:**

Oh, yes. We are piece milling it. The walking trail is going to be built real soon.

**Ellen Andrews:**

We have the grant funding for that now.

**Dr. Viegbesie:**

We already have the fund for the walking trail. That is going to be built real soon. As a matter of fact, within the next few weeks. The only thing that is taking a little longer is the permitting from the Department of Environmental Protection.

**Ellen Andres:**

And the storm water permitting.

**Dr. Viegbesie:**

That is the only things that are delaying it.

**Jeff Diekman:**

Are you thinking late summer or fall?

**Dr. Viegbesie:**

Oh, yes.

**Jeff Diekman:**

So, we can start thinking about a program to definitely utilize those as soon as possible. Obviously, the more people you get out there, then it starts. Maybe we might get a senior walking group like that. Maybe put something together. I can tell you that I live over real close to the Eugene Lamb Park in Havana and it gets used by elderly people.

**Dr. Viegbesie:**

Near Rich Bay.

**Jeff Diekman:**

They do a lot of stuff there and it helps the park. People take pride. We have had that discussion before. You feel a sense of ownership. When I go by that park, I feel like I own it. That is my park. So, maybe we can start thinking of some programs that as a group. These walking trails will be completed by late summer. Maybe we can think of some things we can do there to promote that. How many miles is the walking trail? How big is it?

**Dr. Viegbesie:**

About a mile.

**Jeff Diekman:**

We could have a walking contest.

**Dr. Viegbesie:**

That is where we are. This thing itself, the rough estimate is in the millions.

**Jeff Diekman:**

Well, in Havana, when we were redoing our baseball fields, they formed a park and rec committee. I sat on it. It was for basically the same thing to try to get a body together to present to get money to do that. We wrote a plan, prepared a budget and got a federal grant, then improved our baseball fields. It does help to have a board.

**Dr. Viegbesie:**

It gives a very good image and it helps a lot. You are an advisory board just like planning and zoning. You are the citizens that actually have the ear of the community. We are elected and they require us and expect us to provide solutions. But, you all are the ones that actually have the ears in the community and you bring it to us for conversation. Then you advise us as to what you think the direction of the board should go. That is what these different committees and boards and councils do for the elected officials. The direction of the Parks and Recreation is the part that you all are going to be helping us with.

Any other questions, please.

**Stan James:**

I am from the Chattahoochee area and coming from Chattahoochee to this is almost like going to Tallahassee. So, it is a long distance for that community. I am from Quincy and I have a business in Chattahoochee. I am learning a lot of stuff about logistics and people in different areas of Gadsden County. I have never experienced Chattahoochee. They come to me and talk to me about historical stuff. But, it is a ways from here. In order to reach those people over there, it has to be in your mind frame that this park is for Gadsden County and not just Quincy. The people in Chattahoochee will not have something like this in their community to enjoy. So, until we can get something like this in Chattahoochee, what can be done logistically to include them in the activities of this proposed park? There are a lot of people in Chattahoochee in poverty and without cars. I have to bring their voice to Quincy because there is a divide.

**Dr. Viegbesie:**

I am glad that you mentioned that. I was not born in this country. As a matter of fact, I did not live in Gadsden County. I lived in Tallahassee and was very involved in Tallahassee for a very long time, many years. Somehow, someday, I will use the word, theory, got me to Gadsden County. So, I am here.

What you are expressing, I have also noticed that. Gadsden County has a fragmented, cultural divide. Those from one part don't actually see themselves as being a part of the other part. Greensboro thinks they are on their own. Havana thinks they are on their own. Quincy thinks they stand on their own island. Chattahoochee thinks they stand on their own island. Midway the same thing. So, it is true. But, it is a cultural thing that we have to find a way to gradually change that culture. It is not going to be overnight because we are a group of people who are very good at fighting against ourselves. We have the "I, me, mine, I, me, mine" mentality. But, for us to do what you are saying, then we have to change that culture from, "I, me, mine" to "we, ours and us." Then it becomes inclusive. Once you become inclusive, then the whole county begins to move forward. I will my fellow board members, "I don't have a district." I am not a district commissioner. I am a county commissioner. I just happen to be elected in a single member district. Once I sit at that desk, I am now a county commissioner. So, what is good for Gadsden County should be what I am looking at. Not my district or your district, or your district, which is the same thing as Chattahoochee, Greensboro, Midway, - fragmented with no unity of purpose, so we can't move forward. That is a culture that has got to change. What you are saying, sir makes a lot of sense.

It we have a Park and Recreation Department and there are events going on over in east Gadsden, I don't see any reason why the county Park and Recreation department cannot provide some type of transportation for those from the west to the east, which means that the County has to go into a collaborative arrangement for the school district and have access to the school buses even if it is for a fee. There are many ways that we can work together to get this county where we want to get it to as opposed to the, "I, I, I, me, me, me" thing that I hear and see in the county that is holding us back from moving forward.

Yes, sir.

**Jeff Diekman:**

We have had discussions as a group before and I guess we really didn't have a clear path of where we were going. We have had discussions about existing parks. I know they are little parks, but, they do sprinkle all through the county in different communities. We have had some ideas that I thought, as a committee, were a really great idea, but, we did not know where to take them. Where to go to the next step. Just to give you some examples of things that we have talked about – a recognized day of each park in each community. In other words, we partner up with the Sheriff's department or something like that and do a blood drive at the Eugene Lamb park, basically recognizing each of the parks to do something about this separation thing you were talking about. If there is a place where you can get a senior health check in Scotland, for example, at that park, then maybe somebody from Chattahoochee goes there. It is a nice little park, but, we as a body just don't know where to go with those ideas and I think we have had some good ones. We just don't know what to do with them.

**Dr. Viegbesie:**

Thank you for that contribution. Being the kind of person that I am, there is not a single part of this county that I have not visited. I have been to Chattahoochee and talk to those people there. There are actually some citizens in Chattahoochee who have never been to Havana. There are some citizens in Havana who have never been to Greensboro. I mean, honestly, and they are born here and raised here. So, you see how much most of us stay in our little circle and our own little culture and we don't consider ourselves as part of the whole.

It would be a wonderful idea of exposing us to part of our own county that some of us may have never seen or been to. So, that is some other way of breaking this fragmented culture and begin to see that we are actually a part of the whole county. That is a wonderful idea.

**Jeff Diekman:**

Do we bring that idea to the board?

**Dr. Viegbesie:**

Yes, you bring it to the board. Right now, what you would do is bring it to the county administrator and the county administrator will then agenda it because the board of county commissioners agenda, by law, is supposed to be set by the county administrator. Then, the chair, being the one that runs the meeting, must have an overview and understanding of every item that is on the agenda so that when they sit up there, they know exactly what is being discussed and where it is coming from and what is about what. So, you take it to the county administrator, and then the county administrator will agenda it. Then the nominated chair will then come and speak and advise the body as to what we are saying that this is what you should do in this aspect like planning and zoning does. From then on, then action is taken.

**Jeff Diekman:**

I think that clarifies a lot because we have had great ideas several times, but, wondered how we take it to the next level. Where do we go with this idea?

**Dr. Viegbesie:**

Right now, it would be the county administrator. But, we will eventually get to a point where we have created the Department of Parks and Recreation and we will have a director of parks and recreation. Then, your ideas will be taken to them. The director of parks and recreation will be present every meeting that you have, to hear what you have to say; to listen to what you have to say because it directly impacts their department. The director is answerable to the county administrator. So, since we don't have one yet, then I would say to go directly to the county administrator, then the county administrator will bring it before the county commissioners for action to be taken and for approval.

**Jeff Diekman:**

When you look at other communities around us, and I am not trying to compare us to other communities, but when you look at Thomasville and Decatur County and the Bainbridge facilities and Tallahassee, they take a lot of pride in their parks and rec. The community action is what makes them grow. I think you are exactly right. We are in a stagnant spot and we have been in it for a long time.

**Dr. Viegbesie:**

Look at Wakulla. It is a comfortable county. Jefferson County is comparable. Madison has active in having parks and recreational facilities for the citizens in their county. Since we have what we call our parks now, that will be a start until this comes through. If we had a tree in the back yard that we could shake, a money tree, and let as much money as we need drop, then I would be pushing now for building one in the west and one in the east concurrently. But, unfortunately that is not a point we can get to yet. We are still fighting to get the millions of dollars we need to get to build this. When we get that, then we will have a template to work with, then going on to the west will be easier to get than the one in the east.

Jeff Kiekman:

But, we can get a little excited about the parks that we already have and get some things going there, maybe we can get some more citizens in this county to say, "Hey, look what is going on."

**Dr. Viegbesie:**

The fortunate thing, too, is the less that we have our own citizens fighting against forthwith, the parks will have a better chance to move forward.

**Markey Rivers:**

Any more questions?

**Dr. Viegbesie:**

Mr. Chair, thank you sir. May I sit down, Mr. Chair?

**Markey Rivers:**

I don't know if we are finished or not.

This has been really good. I thank you for your questions. It really feels good to know where we



are going.

Our very first day here, I asked that question. Was this going to be the same thing on the board where we sit - even though I knew your vision, that is my community. I grew up in St. Hebron, in the Shaw Quarter. I am very passionate about this vision.

I want to say something as to what you said before you sit down.

As of today, for the first time that I have been coaching, and this is my 21<sup>st</sup> year in a row, volunteer coaching in Gadsden County – today was the first day that we ever put three different cities on a schedule. We are going to play T-ball together this year. So, the county, itself, is moving in that direction. We are right along the right time frame to government. People that used to stay in St. Hebron – now, they kinda stay out in different communities. Everybody used to stay in their community. So, now, it is not so bad to say come from Chattahoochee to Quincy. People will go to where they have to go now.

If you deal with youth sports like I do. We are traveling right now. I have travel teams. You have to commute. Parents that are involved in sports know that you have to travel a number of miles to get to the field.

**Jeff Diekman:**

They will make you drive.

**Markey Rivers:**

Yes, they will make you drive. So, at this point, as a board, we just needed to hear what you said here tonight. We were coming up with ideas and everybody up here is involved in the community. I know what you do and I know what each of you do. We just want to do. We are delighted to have you come and say, “O.K. this is what you can do and this is your vision.” What we heard tonight felt good.

**Mary Jack Boone:**

It gives us something to actually move forward to instead of just bouncing off ideas.

Dr. Viegbesie:

Thank you. As a commissioner, we should have done this a long time ago.

**Mary Jack Boone:**

The very first meeting.

**Markey Rivers:**

I guess you were trying to see how committed we are. You are initiating us. The good thing about it is that we have changed some personnel, too, it is good timing. Now Stan is here. It is his first day here. So, it is good timing. I feel optimistic about it going forward.

**Jeff Diekman:**

I think we can take some of the ideas that we have already kicked around, and I don't think it will

take a lot for us to get them to a point that we can put them forward, and that would be a great thing. We do have some nice parks. Like he was saying, there are places you have never been, I had never been to the park out there on Lake Talquin until I went out there and met him that day. I was just floored. What a beautiful facility. Leon County can't touch it. That is a beautiful park.

**Dr. Viegbesie:**

Leon County is very envious of such a beautiful park. Especially with Lake Talquin attached to it. They wish they had it and they were able to organize the Crappie Fish Tournament and the Bass Tournament like Gadsden County does.

**Jeff Diekman:**

We are challenged. We are a huge county geographically compared to Leon County. Just the amount of dirt we have. We are a lot bigger county. We don't have as many people and we do all go our separate ways. When the day comes up and we all go to work. It is not like we all meet Tallahassee. They are a lot closer knit community. But, our parks are something that can bring us together as a community. It is a great gathering place. We can come up with different plans and ideas and events that we can highlight some of these parks. Some of them are better than others, but, maybe we can do so things to bring some of the others back. We just need to come up with the ideas, bring them to you guys and see what think.

**Markey Rivers:**

Just let them know that we are coming.

**Dr. Viegbesie:**

I will promise you right now that as long as I am on that board; I am your champion for parks and recreation. If it were not, I wouldn't have come up with it at all. I wouldn't be driving it like I am driving it right now. So, I think it is something Gadsden County needs and something Gadsden County is going to have.

Thank you and thank you and thank you for agreeing to work with us to move this county, recreational wise, forward.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Mary Jack Boone:**

One thing I want to mention before it is not fresh on my brain anymore is the fishing tournament.

I think that is a great thing that we can do. Those kids had so much fun and we had talked about trying to keep the kids there longer. I think that if you had activities, you could have kept a lot of those children there until the weigh-in.

**Ellen Andrews:**

Just to recap for people who were not at the fishing tournament, the kid's rodeo particularly on Saturday morning.

The Sheriff's department, Mary Kylie, brought breakfast for everybody, which was unexpected and

very, very nice. I, too, saw a lot of opportunities there for this board in the future.

**Mary Jack Boone:**

I think that would be an easy way for us to get out there and help with that tournament. We talked to the leader guy. They wanted to keep them there, but, it was such a long time. But, maybe do it a little later. He said he would get up with us before they printed anything next year. As a board, I think we should really stress Media Day. I just don't think people know. That could be huge and there were not very many of us there. The food was great. I just wanted to touch on that so everybody can be thinking on it while it is still fresh on the brain.

**Markey Rivers:**

They fished for two days. The kids only fished for one hour. I was down there and I was fishing with them. Then, they called out, "10 minutes." I was just getting the poles out.

**Ellen Andrews:**

I think too, and I don't know if they can do it within the confines of that, but, starting so early, too. It was so cold. I don't think those kids could have stood it more than one hour. They were getting excited and some of them were getting discouraged.

**Mary Jack Boone:**

If we had started it later, then there would be less time to make up until the weigh-in.

Jeff Kiekman:

When we got involved, they already had their plans made. Maybe we can go to the Tourism Board and tell them that we would like to do some things a little different. I thought it was a great idea about putting in some kind measure whereby we could insure the kids would catch fish. That isn't that hard to do.

**Ellen Andrews:**

Sometimes feeding the fish sometimes makes it worse.

Jeff Kiekman:

I am talking about where you trap them. Put them in there. I think that is something we would have to do with some involvement with FWC. They release fish all the time in those waters. We could just say, "Hey, we want to plan with you for you to bring the fish and they would be in this little area and they are trapped for the fishing rodeo. Afterwards they go into the lake and everybody is happy.

**Ellen Andrews:**

There is also an opportunity, as I realize that Joe Budd is no our facility, but, if we wanted to do something at some other time other than during Crappie Masters, we could work with them for kids.

**Jeff Diekman:**

They have a great program. My kids have been there several times.

**Ellen Andrews:**

I can tell you from having worked with Park Service for a long time, that most of the state agencies love cooperative events. They are always happy to work with counties on things.

**Markey Rivers:**

After leaving from down there with so many kids wanting to catch fish, but, didn't, I thought about my barbershop is sponsoring a "Take a Kid Fishing Day" during spring break. We are going to Apalachicola.

There were two brothers that did catch fish, but they fish all the time. We had kids there for their very first time. We had a lot of mothers that brought them. I love the saying that he said, "Instead of buying them an Xbox, buy them a tackle box." That is so true. So many moms came down. The moms have never been fishing or the kid. We are trying to fish with them for the first time and they get so excited every time their line started bobbling, they wanted to snatch too soon. I am thinking it would be good to partner with Joe Budd. We could have something a week or so earlier and give the awards out at the Weigh-In. Therefore, the kids are in a stocked pond and they know they are going to catch something. Not catching anything can spoil it for a kid, too.

**Jeff Diekman:**

This is a little off the subject, but, not really. When you have these events, you need volunteers. Every kid that is graduating from high school in Gadsden County or Leon County, to get into college today, you have to have so many hours of community service. That is something that we, as a board, maybe we go to the schools and make it known that if they come to this event and volunteer and earn some community service hours. I would think the county could sign off on that. We would need staff to verify that.

Every kid that is trying to get into college, it is not just about grades. You have to prove that you have served so many hours of community service.

**Mary Jack Boone:**

100 hours.

**Jeff Diekman:**

It is tough to do. I have a friend of mine right now, Calvin Singleton; his son is going to do a little bit of time with the Havana Library. They only give him 5 hours a week and he has to get 50 hours. You have to have so many hours to qualify for student assistance to go to college. He is very smart and very talented. But, this is another step. You talk about Bright Futures and things like that – you have to prove their community service hours. They have to prove it through a place like the county or public entity.

**Stan James:**

That is a great idea. Go to every high school and even 8<sup>th</sup> graders. They can form some type of committee where they come together with us. Kids are very creative. They could give us some great ideas because recreation is really for the kids. We adults try to think for them, so, why not bring in the people we are doing this for to help us. That would add hours to their community service requirements. They could work the ideas they come up with alongside us.

**Jeff Diekman:**

My son got some of his hours at Havana Parks and Rec as being an Umpire. It counts. It just has to be something that you don't get paid for. It has to be something you are giving to the community. That community has to sign off on it. It has to be the director or whoever has to sign off on it.

Anyway, Mr. Chair, I didn't mean to get you too far off your agenda.

**Markey Rivers:**

No. It actually helped me out.

**4. Discussion of Board Membership Terms and Vacancies**

It was brought to everyone's attention that Leroy Smith, a board member, has been absent at several meetings calling into question how to deal with his absenteeism. According to the board's By-Laws, appointees are required to attend at least 33% of the meetings regardless of circumstances that contribute to an absence.

Chair Rivers stated that he felt as though this meeting was really the first meeting of significance even though there have been others. He said that he is well acquainted with Mr. Smith and knows what he can bring to the table for this board. He asked the other members to allow him to contact Mr. Smith to discern his ability to participate and his level of interest in remaining on the council. He agreed to report back to the board at the next meeting.

There was a consensus of the board to have the Chair contact Mr. Smith.

No other action was taken.

**5. Discussion of Duties and Responsibilities**

The chair stated that Dr. Viegbesie covered the duties and responsibilities during his discussion above.

Ellen Andrews called attention to the material provided to each member regarding the By-Laws etc. of the Parks and Recreation Board.

Jeff Diekman asked for clarification about how the Sunshine Law affects this board with respect to talking to each other about business relating to the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board.

Suzanne Lex addressed the board. She explained, "If you do send an email about something that comes before the board, and you copy your fellow councilmen, then you request that they reply to all so that everybody gets the same communications and it keeps it open so that there is no question there in terms of doing any email communication. You copy everybody and you ask that any response goes back to everybody so that it is kept out in the open. That is not a violation of Sunshine Law."

He then asked how to go about adding an item of business to the agenda. He was advised to make the chair aware of whatever he wanted on the agenda.

He said that he would like to agenda some discussion regarding funding for events in various parks to showcase the park and bring the community together. He cited the possibility of having several types of events, but noted that none of it could happen without funding from the county. He went on to say he would like to have a serious discussion about that at the next meeting.

Suzanne Lex replied that if they may want to discuss the ability to do some fund rising on behalf of the parks. It was decided to discuss this with Clerk Thomas prior to starting any fund raising efforts.

Ms. Lex then told the board that her son attends a school which has a fishing club. She suggested that other schools may have them as well. Those fishing clubs could be a great resource for helping with the children activities at the next tournament.

Ms. Boone reported that they had asked the Jr. Bass Masters club to help; however, they had a tournament already scheduled for that day on Lake Seminole. They did express their eagerness to help the next time.

It was suggested that some activity could be planned over the summer using their help.

Mr. James stated that the fishing culture in Chattahoochee is prevalent. There is a great park there for such a fishing project.

Upon inquiry by Mr. Diekman, Chair Rivers stated that the three cities involved in the T-Ball program in the county at present is Gretna, Midway and the City of Quincy. While he was hopeful that Havana would join in, there had been no formal reply as of the date of this meeting. It was explained that Havana has a new director and he may not have had sufficient time to respond.

## **6. General Discussion**

Ms. Andrews asked to address the St. Hebron Park project once again. She referenced Page C5 in the Architect's drawing of the park. She explained that the grant would cover the cost parts that are highlighted in yellow. They were: The access road, paved trail, trail-head restrooms, sidewalks, picnic table area, storm-water management facility and green/event space, parking spaces, and solar lighting around the trail. There will also be an informational kiosk.

Mr. Diekman suggested that they highlight the parks with a walk-a-thon for Breast Cancer Awareness in the fall.

Mr. James stated that he has a disabled son with cerebral palsy and cannot walk or talk. He asked

if this facility would be handicap accessible.

Ms. Andrews replied, "Yes. The trails are going to be paved with pervious asphalt. "She added that the county is also applying for a grant for an ADA playground.

This first grant is specifically a trails grant through the Department of Environmental Protection. The next one would be working toward a grant to do all the outdoor facilities – the fields and all of that."

**CITIZENS REQUESTING TO BE HEARD**

There were no comments from the public.

**MOTION TO ADJOURN**

**THERE BEING NO OTHER BUSINESS BEFORE THE BOARD, PRESIDING CHAIR RIVERS DECLARED THE MEETING ADJOURNED.**

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Markey Rivers, Presiding

Date Approved

Attest:

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Nicholas Thomas, Clerk