

**DONATION REVIEW COMMITTEE
MEETING
OCTOBER 22, 2020**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Bradford Gamblin, Chairman
Valarie Colbert, Donna Peterman,
Janet Watermeier

MEMBERS ABSENT: Theresa Murtha

OTHERS PRESENT: Mitchell Austin, Chief Planner
Kent Kretzler, Lindsay Harrington

CALL TO ORDER/ANNOUNCEMENTS

- A. Roll Call
- B. Next Scheduled Meeting
- 1. January 28, 2021

CITIZENS COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS ONLY

- None.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- A. April 25, 2019
- Ms. Peterman MOVED, Ms. Colbert SECONDED approval of the April 25, 2019, minutes.
MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

NEW BUSINESS

- A. Deed of Gift – Kent Kretzler – Bronze Bust
- Mr. Mitchell Austin, Chief Planner, announced the Royal Order of Ponce de Leon Conquistadors (Conquistadors) were moving forward with their donation proposal for the Ponce de Leon Park (Park) to accompany the rehabilitation of the Park previously approved by Council.
- Mr. Kent Kretzler, Conquistadors, provided a detailed review of the Ponce de Leon Monument presentation, denoted in the agenda material, which included the Conquistadors history and involvement in the community. He stated the organization planned to donate a bronze bust of Ponce de Leon and place it atop a large pyramid-style granite marker with a plaque, which would contain a quick response (QR) code to provide additional information. He expressed desire for the City to make improvements around the monument and for the donation to be incorporated into the City's Park renovation plans. He commented the monument would be presented to Council at an upcoming meeting, concluding the Conquistadors hoped to hold an event for the donation to coincide with Charlotte County's centennial celebration.

- Ms. Peterman verified the monument would not replace the current plaques at the Park as those were donations and property of the City. She then inquired whether backlash regarding Ponce de Leon's colonization had been considered, particularly due to current issues with statues of certain historic figures being removed throughout the country.
- Mr. Kretzler responded affirmatively, noting same was the reason the base would be made from granite.
- Ms. Peterman indicated her concerns were with community controversy rather than potential damage, emphasizing the importance of the context presented in the historic information regarding Ponce de Leon.
- Mr. Kretzler explained the intentions of the QR code was to include historical information on the indigenous people, adding there was unlimited space for information.
- Mr. Lindsay Harrington, Conquistadors, stated the organization was aware of the history of the conquistadors, providing a brief history of the Spanish influence in the area.
- Discussion ensued regarding certain aspects of and opinions on the history of the conquistadors.
- Mr. Austin indicated the current plaques at the Park could be considered inappropriate, advising appropriate communication was vital to diffuse potential adverse reactions.
- Mr. Kretzler concluded the intent was to communicate the entire story.
- Ms. Watermeier questioned whether the City would be committed to building a plaza if the donation was accepted.
- Mr. Austin replied with a brief review of the agreement between Fishermen's Village and the City as well as the decisions made by Council relating to funding and rehabilitating the Park, explaining there was potential for a plaza to be constructed with funds allocated for rehabilitation of the Park.
- Ms. Watermeier MOVED to recommend acceptance of the donation to Council, subject to the needed funds to complete the work.
- Ms. Peterman inquired whether the donation was contingent on a plaza being constructed.
- Mr. Kretzler clarified the plaza was for the security of the bust and to enhance its visibility as well as to improve the Park.
- A brief discussion ensued regarding the rationale for the plaza.
- Ms. Watermeier indicated she was in support of the donation as long as there were no cost commitments to the City.

- Ms. Watermeier AMENDED the motion to recommend acceptance of the donation to Council.
- Ms. Peterman SECONDED the motion.
- MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- No items.

STAFF COMMENTS

A. 2021 Meeting Dates

- Mr. Austin pointed out the 2021 meeting dates included in the agenda material.
- Ms. Watermeier questioned when the donation would be presented to Council.
- Mr. Austin responded with uncertainty regarding same, noting it should be before the end of 2020.
- Ms. Peterman suggested the rehabilitation efforts should include review of the language on some of the historic markers in the Park.
- Mr. Austin stated same could be part of staff's recommendations when presenting the donation to Council, adding the recommendation could state acceptance of the donation would be contingent on removing some of the existing statues and evaluating replacement of the existing markers.
- A brief discussion ensued regarding potential historical information to include in revised markers.

COMMITTEE/BOARD COMMENTS

- None.

CITIZENS' COMMENTS

- None.

ADJOURNMENT

- Meeting Adjourned: 10:45 a.m.

Bradford Gamblin, Chairman

Leah Pues, Recording Secretary