



**Victoria Park Civic Association  
May General Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, May 3, 2023  
In-Person & Zoom Format**

President Richard Van Berkel (RVB) called the meeting to order. Audio difficulty so general conversation for a few minutes.

At 7:07 PM RVB asked for and received a successful motion to accept the April minutes.

**Fort Lauderdale Police Update:**

**REPORT FROM FLPD OFFICER** Officer Nicholas Herring

<b>Crime</b>	<b>Stats</b>	<b>March and April</b>	
Aggravated assaults and/or batteries		1	3
Burglaries Business::		1	0
Burglaries Vehicles Increased:		3	9
Residential burglaries Increased:		3	6
Sex offenses:		0	1
Vehicle thefts:		1	4

Residential burglaries have increased. Some are porch pirates, but some are people who are breaking into unoccupied homes. Be vigilant when you are out walking your dogs; if you see anything suspicious, please let FLPD know immediately.

Plainclothes detectives are out in our neighborhood regularly.

Three or 4 of the vehicle burglaries were committed on the same day by the same people and FLPD detectives were able to catch them

Lock your car, make sure your key fobs are in your home, not your car. Don't leave valuables in your car. Juveniles are back to smash and grabs, using window punches to shatter the window and steal your possessions.

The increase in residential burglaries is mostly seen in unoccupied homes, like AirBnbs where people are in and out all the time. Thieves that frequent our area know when people will be



home or not. Example cited of two apartments near 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Broward Boulevard that were broken into on the same day, but only when unoccupied.

### **Fort Lauderdale Code Enforcement:**

#### **CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE CODE ENFORCEMENT – Paulette DelGrosso.**

Paulette reported that she had no statistics for Victoria Park for the month; the City suspended code violation operations due to the flash flooding. Code department has been working with the County, delivering emergency supplies and helping them with code operations.

Paulette explained that the City would be resuming code enforcement the week after our last meeting on Wednesday, May 3, in order to give people impacted by flooding time to regroup.

Paulette acknowledged that at the time there was a question about Bulk Trash being picked up since the storm. She had been told by the contractor that they were doing drive-bys.

The City planned to take no action until the week of May 8, when Bulk Trash will be able to resume fully. Paulette apologized to any neighbors who received her notice on Bulk Trash.

Paulette was asked by her supervisor to bring up these issues:

- if your neighbor is shining bright lights at night and disturbing your peaceful enjoyment of your home, the City, will come out and take a reading and try to find a solution to the problem—shielding, redirecting, etc.
- Swales are public right of way, but homeowner responsible for maintaining them. Please trim your coconuts, before Hurricane Season to prevent them from dropping on a sidewalk or street—they can be very dangerous.
- The City has never planted palm trees, so they do not maintain them.. It is the owners' responsibility to do so over a sidewalk, swale or any public right-of-way.
- Dog droppings not picked up are illegal and unsanitary. There are many ordinances on the books, but they aren't normally enforced by the police. If you have a repeat offender that you know of, that is not picking up after a dog repeatedly, let Paulette know and she will reach out and talk to that neighbor so that you don't have to confront yourself



- Regarding areas where apartment-dwellers are walking their dogs but not cleaning up after them, Paulette will contact building management to make them aware that their tenants must pick up their dogs' poop!

RVB reminder to stay vigilant on Keyes Realty property

Reminder: Great American Beach Party is Saturday May 27

**CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE PARKS BOND UPDATE re HOLIDAY PARK: Enrique Sanchez  
esanchez@fortlauderdale.gov**

Technical difficulty presenting visual on concept plan. RVB will post on VPCA.org website.

BACKGROUND: The bond was awarded to Holiday Park in 2019. The City has held multiple meetings with VPCA along the way. While the City was organizing the project, they faced significant Covid-related delays, but now they are moving the project forward as quickly as possible. They now have 30% drawings and are aiming for 60% soon.

What Enrique presented at the meeting is the third iteration of the design.

They are open to tweaks and limited substitutions but are past the point of redesigning the plan. Please e mail all suggestions to him at [esanchez@fortlauderdale.gov](mailto:esanchez@fortlauderdale.gov)

When work begins, the PLAYGROUND will be the focus.

**Highlights:**

- brand new, improved and expanded playground
- Splash pad
- Additional restroom within 400 feet of Splash Pad
- Expansion of Pickle Ball Courts to the south – 9 added



- requests that City find a way to ameliorate the noise from the Pickle Ball Courts Enrique will look into wind screens, trees or other noise dampening systems
- Dog Park will be moved to an area where it can be better tended, east of current location, which will allow Parks Department to keep it sodded twice a year, the way they do at Snyder Park.
- Small and large sections will remain
- Changes to Jimmy Everett Tennis Center
- Eventually there will be a parking structure but that will be in a later phase because additional funds are needed. Located between Parker Playhouse and War Memorial. The City is working with the Panthers to see if they can contribute any money.
- Open area to the south will be greenspace instead of parking.
- Walking path will be re-imagined and added to around the sports fields and around the perimeter of the park, so that people can do a loop around the perimeter as well.
- City regards Holiday Park as center of Downtown Fort Lauderdale, much the way Central Park is to New York City
- Currently, walking paths are cut off by Panthers construction.

#### **CONSTRUCTION & WORKERS**

- Construction workers will park In the southwest lot near the Panthers construction trailer
- Construction will be Monday through Friday during regular work hours.
- Construction will not interfere with events like Starlight Musicals

#### **TIMELINE:**

- City hopes to have all design and permitting completed by the end of 2023
- Out to bid by end of 2023
- Shovels in the ground early 2024
- Playground top priority because City is aware Holiday Park has been without one for several years
- City plans to demolish the current playground early on in the project

#### **PLAYGROUND HIGHLIGHTS:**

- Larger footprint for playground with cool features.
- Big Florida themed climbing structure
- Natural colors like green and brown
- Cool slides for the kids



- Swings
- Zero Depth Water Playground, more like a spray ground so fewer staffing needs
- Additional thematic elements
- Not a “pool” because of lifeguard and other shortages
- Way for kids to cool off and have fun!

**YMCA** nearby, NOT part of Parks Bond Project plans underway

#### **TREASURERS’ REPORT – Diana Prkacin**

- Review of weekly, monthly Treasurers’ duties
- Brief overview of forecast on Spring Festival budget...will update fully at June meeting when all the numbers come in
- Brief review of various expenses that Diana is working very hard to bring under control
- Finances report
- Diana in process of modernizing VPCA processes and procedures for maximum efficiency
- Megan Probst out of country but she would say “See you Sunday!”

#### **PRESIDENT’S REPORT – Richard Van Berkel**

- **VPCA has open positions as follows:**
- **Secretary—take monthly General Membership Meeting minutes, create meeting agendas with President, hold VPCA documents**
- **Traffic Chair – inform City’s LauderServe and work with appropriate entities to improve traffic /address issues in Victoria Park**
- **Utility Chair – work ebbs and flows; our prior Chair was very active during the Redundant Main Project, and is tasked with dealing with projects by and activities of FPL, Comcast, etc.**
- **Children’s Committee – one of our most fun committees, we usually ask 2 or 3 Moms to co-chair and share the job. Pre-covid, the committee is involved in VPCA’s signature events like Halloween and Spring Festival and impromptu events like Sunday Family Bike Rides, annual Easter Egg Hunt in Holiday Park, etc.**
- **These positions are vital; recently we had an FPL project on Victoria Park regarding some damage to the power poles and we had no real relationship or information. Damage occurred that might have been avoided**
  
- **Work not voluminous but critical**
- **Recent request to liaise with League of Women Voter’s, immediate response from Andrew Johnson, who is on the organization’s Board and will serve as liaison.**
- **Reminder on Spring Festival**
- **Reminder to please complete survey, so that Officers & Chairs can better serve neighborhood**



- **Retreat for Officers & Chairs Saturday June 10 AM to 2 PM for purposes of review and planning for the year ahead.**