

PARKS AND RECREATION REPORT

August 31, 2020

PARKS AND BEACHES

- Since re-opening the beach during the pandemic, we have had a lot of visitors occupying the beach from all parts of South Florida and other places. These large numbers of visitors have brought a large amount of trash to the beaches especially Sombrero Beach during the weekend. We decided to remove the grills from the pavilions and told visitors they were not allowed to bring grills on the beach. Visitors started to sneak grills onto the beach from the east and west ends of the beach, so we decided to lock the gates from the east and west ends and have visitors enter through the main entrance of the beach. This change worked for a short period of time. After speaking with my staff who worked over the weekend, they noticed people trying to climb the fence at the east and west end of the beach. They also noticed that many visitors were only occupying the central part of the beach which caused social distancing issues. We also noticed not too many visitors were using the pavilions instead they would set-up on the beach which caused more social distancing issues. With the removal of the grills we noticed many pizza boxes and chicken boxes from KFC in the trash.
 - I would like to recommend we put the grills back and place galvanized trash cans with scoops to dispose of the ash from the grills and empty those cans periodically. These cans will be chained to the grills to prevent them from being moved around or possibly stolen.
 - We're also going to purchase portable trash cans to be placed along the beach area during the weekend days so visitors will have more options to dispose of their trash instead of leaving it on the beach or near the trash cans we currently have on the beach.
- We have also implemented the following changes as well:
 - Beach hours are now Monday – Sunday 7:00 am to 7:00 pm
 - All barbecue grills were removed from the pavilions and signs were placed at each entrance letting visitors know that grills are not allowed on the beach.
 - Larger “No glass bottles” on the beach signs were placed at each entry onto the beach.
 - Assigned staff to work in shifts (2-hours a day) during the week at the beach to do the following:
 - show a presence at the beach
 - Answer any questions from visitors
 - Monitor the beach for grills or glass bottles
 - Sanitize bathrooms, playground equipment, and pavilion tables
 - Assigned two staff persons to work over the weekend at the beach to monitor the beach and be available if anyone had questions or needed assistance.
 - These changes at the beach have made some progress, but we continue to have large amounts of people and trash during the weekend beach hours.
- We implemented a weekly sanitation schedule to have a staff person visit each park and Coco Plum beach to sanitize the bathrooms and picnic (pavilion) tables. This is done during the morning and afternoon shifts.
- We moved 4 trash cans from Rotary park to Sombrero Beach to help with the large amounts of trash at the beach during the weekend.

- There was an issue with the local Kayak companies using the double gates on the west side of Sombrero Beach to set-up and launch their kayaks. We decided to lock the double gates because there were traffic jams from vehicles being parked in the “No Parking” area at the roundabout trying to drop off or pick up kayaks. We also notice kayak businesses putting kayaks over the fence which can cause damage to the fence and possible injury to someone trying to climb or lift a kayak over the fence.
- I met with the local kayak businesses to discuss these issues and we came up with a plan so they could access the westside of the beach to drop off and pick up their kayaks without using the double gates at the roundabout. We are currently working on a license agreement with our legal team for these local businesses to have access to the kayak release area.
- We purchased signs that were either damaged or destroyed during Hurricane Irma. Signs we replaced are 33rd street boat ramp, Jesse Hobbs Park, Community Park, Ocean Front Park, Coco Plum Beach, and Sunset Bay Park in Grassy Key. These signs will be going up the week of August 31st – September 4, 2020.
- People were bringing in old worn plastic and metal chairs and using them to sit on at the tennis courts here at Community Park, so we ordered new benches for the tennis courts which enhance the look and safety of the tennis courts. These benches are chained and locked to the fence, so no one can steal or move them around.

PROGRAMS

- Since the beginning of the COVID-19 Pandemic back in March we discontinued our in-person programs with the community and ceased all large gatherings (events) at the parks.
- We decided to do virtual programs for the kids in our community. Below is a list of current virtual and drop-off/pick-up programs we are conducting in the Parks and Recreation Department :
 - **Camp Crafts to Go (Kyrstyn Ransom)**
 - This program is for all ages.
 - This is a 6-week program that started August 10, 2020.
 - Each week a different craft bag will be put together for participants.
 - Each week parents will have an opportunity to register their kid(s) for a craft bag, so if they missed the prior week, they could participate in the following weeks activity.
 - Bags can be picked up at the Park office Monday – Friday of that week.
 - **Fortnite Free Play Friday’s (Jen Ward, Dequian Youngblood, and Austin Tubbs)**
 - Open to the first 10 registrations.
 - Play from 6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.
 - Participants sign up each week through a registration form located on the City website along with a waiver for each participant
 - Rules and regulations are sent to participants after registering for the free play
 - Participants are linked through an app called discord where participants will find the information for how to play.
 - We have been averaging around 6 participants each Friday night.

- **Home Depot Craft Drop Off (Genesis Villatoro and Jen Ward)**
 - This program is for all ages
 - This program will run for one week beginning August 31, 2020
 - Only 20 participants can register for this activity
 - These crafts are buildable crafts from the Home Depot Kids Workshop.
 - The building kits will have all the necessary items needed for the build.

- **Photography Scavenger Hunt (Jen Ward)**
 - This program is for all ages.
 - Each day participants will be given a list of items from various parks and beaches here in the City of Marathon to take a photograph of.
 - The photo with the most likes will receive a prize.
 - Photos must be submitted by 8:00 p.m. that day.

- **It's in The Bag (Ali Adams)**
 - This program is for kids ages 5-12
 - Hurricane preparedness bags for kids
 - Bags are filled with card games, travel size toothpaste and toothbrush, coloring book, treats, etc.
 - Bags can be picked up at the Park office (limited supply of bags)

In-Person (face to face) Programs

- Once we get the okay from Chief Johnson and Risk Management (Elizabeth Schut) we are going to have in-person programs with limited participation according to CDC guidelines
- Below is a list of possible programs and programs we have done in the past
 - **Creatures in the Sea (Ali Adams) –**
 - Children will learn and create creatures living in the ocean using a variety of materials (ribbons, tissue paper, buttons, etc.)
 - Targeted age group: 4-8 years old
 - Max number of participants: 10
 - Program start and finish time: 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

 - **Arts in Motion Dance Program (Jen Ward)**
 - Target age group: 3 – 18 years old
 - Classes: Dance fusion, ballet 1 & 2, jazz 1 & 2, Tap 1 & 2, Boys hip-hop, Pre-dance, and Mommy and Me
 - Classes will be held Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday

 - **Adult Basketball (Dre Garvey and Dequian Youngblood)**
 - Target age group: 18 and up
 - Gym will open Monday nights from 7:00 p.m. 9:30 p.m.
 - Provide adults an opportunity to play basketball at Marathon Middle High School during the evening hours
 - There will be a limited number of participants in the gym at one time.