

MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING, S.T.A.R.S MANAGEMENT ADVISORY BOARD

January 18, 2023

The S.T.A.R.S. Management Advisory Board of the City of Fort Myers, Florida, met in regular session on Wednesday, January 18, 2023, at 4:00 o'clock p.m. Board Members present were, Michael Morris, Neale Montgomery, Ross Webb, Shanell Harleston and Ron Inge. Advisory Board Members; Amber Ware and Jazzmen Williams. Board Liaisons Absent: Dr. Shadrecka McIntosh.

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order at 04:00 P.M. by Neale Montgomery.

(04:02) Roll call was performed.

NO. 1 MINUTES: (04:02) Ross Webb moved and seconded by Shanell Harleston to approve the minutes of the August 17, 2022, meeting. The motion carried.

NO. 2 Public Input: (04:03) No public input.

NO. 3 Monthly Report (04:04) Amber Ware, Center Manager stated that a lot has gone on since Hurricane Ian. Mrs. Ware stated that we were only closed the day that the Hurricane hit, and were back open the next day to assist with community outreach. Mrs. Ware stated that due to the Hurricane and the kids consistently being out of school we have been unable to keep up with our reports how we would like to, but we have been doing our best with keeping up with making sure that their homework is complete, and keeping in contact with all of the schools. Mrs. Ware stated that the STARS did not gain anything from the budget hearing, we asked for several positions but none were granted, but we were given an increase on our revenues side. Mrs. Ware stated that our numbers now for the first of the year are back strong, all of our programs are back open, we have lights on all of our fields and minimal damage to our fencing and light poles but nothing that is going to keep us from being functional. Mrs. Ware stated that although we did not receive anything that we requested we will be sending that same request this year, and have been having discussions with the Parks and Recs Manager, Elgin Hicks, and he is well aware of how the board feels about STARS, and the direction that they want the STARS to go in, and understands strongly what we anticipate to go on in the budget this year. Mrs. Ware stated that the good news with the budget is that we did receive an additional \$600,000 for design costs to finish the STARS master plan and design to 100%. Mrs. Ware stated that we had our end of the year celebration for all of our students, we had a Christmas tree decorating contest amongst all of the age groups and the students at Billy Bowlegs won with their Candy Land themed tree. Mrs. Ware stated that in addition to hiring more tutors, we will also have Basic Learning Skills coming back with their traditional tutor methods.

NO. 4. Rising STARS- Step up to work teen program and Budget/ 2023 Fundraiser(04:14) Mrs. Ware stated that we have 22 students on our waiting list and we are at capacity. Mrs. Ware stated that they have been volunteering with Harry Chapin, at the Community Cooperative, and working within the STARS. Mrs. Ware stated that unfortunately we have no where to put them until we have the expansion. Mrs. Ware stated that she has a ballpark figure for hiring of the teens for Step up to work, last year the was 22 of them, in addition to hiring 8 of them who really exceed the standard as year round employees of STARS. Mrs. Ware stated that last year we had the assistance of Mr. Forest Banks to assist with the salaries of these students, this year we do not have that assistance so we are out trying to raise money, one of those fundraisers was the River Run, which was the first week of December, it was hard to get sponsors for it, and the turn out was not what we expected, we only had about 100 participants. Mrs. Ware stated that we are now working with the Fort Myers track club

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to prepare for the River Run 2023, and really feel like this could be a major fundraiser for us and we need something that is annual to really assist us with keeping money for the teen program. Mrs. Ware stated that the program was originally funded through the Rising STARS committee and had enough funding for the first three years, and our goal is to make sure that we are self sustainable. Mrs. Ware stated that she is going to look to the committee to assist with helping to get sponsors, ideas for additional fundraising activities, gala's, dinners, anything to assist with keeping the program.

NO. 5. Policies and Procedures Manual (04:43) Mrs. Ware stated that we have been working on putting bits and pieces of a policies and procedures manual together to get prepared to take STARS to accreditation, that is one of the major parts to become accredited through Parks and Recs department and Afterschool program. Mrs. Ware stated that it will be submitted to the National Parks and Rec Association and will formalize us and how we do business, and bring an extra layer of recognition to the STARS. Mrs. Ware stated that having the accreditation does assist when applying for grants, we are not a non-profit but we are deemed as one, and function as one, but we do not have the non profit points when it is time for grants to be given out.

NO. 6. Budget

NO. 6. ADJOURN (04:52) Shanell Harleston motioned to adjourn the meeting seconded by Michael Morris. Motion carried.