

MINUTES

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

March 16, 2022

The S.T.A.R.S. Management Advisory Board of the City of Fort Myers, Florida, met in regular session on Wednesday, March 16, 2022, at 4:00 o'clock p.m. Board Members present were, Michael Morris, Dr. Shadreka McIntosh, Neale Montgomery, Ross Webb, and Shanell Harleston . Advisory Board Members; Jazzmen Williams. Board Liaisons Absent: Dr. Jesse Bryson, Wilbur Smith, Ron Inge, and Amanda Mingione.

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order at 04:01 P.M. by Neale Montgomery.

(04:02) Roll call was performed.

NO. 1 MINUTES: (04:02) Ross Webb moved and seconded by Michael Morris to approve the minutes of the February 16, 2022, meeting with corrections. The motion carried.

NO. 2 Public Input: (04:03) There was no public input

NO. 3 Monthly Report (04:03) Bertram Brinson, Sr. Program Coordinator stated that we have had our afterschool students participate in a read aloud, over at the Dunbar library. Mr. Brinson stated that on an out of school day, February 18th we had a field trip to Manatee park to kayak, and we also had a group of students participate in sailing at the Edison Sailing Center. Mr. Brinson stated that the lights on afterschool program has been very successful, every week we feed around 170 kids, the kids in the afterschool program and kids that come in after hours, we also feed our middle school students every morning and on Friday mornings they receive a hot breakfast. Mr. Brinson stated that the opening day for baseball was amazing, and we had a great turn out. Mr. Brinson stated that the Rec Cheer program is still thriving and the first competition of the season is scheduled for April 23rd in Orlando, FL, the Marching Diva's majorette team has also been practicing, parade season is near and they will be participating. Mr. Brinson stated that our girls flag football team has their second tournament coming up, and the boys flag football came in second place at their recent tournament. Mr. Brinson stated that we had our first spades tournament and it had a great turn out, everyone who participated enjoyed their time and said that we need to do it more often. Mr. Brinson stated that as far as revenues go they are strong and above what they were last year, we are trying to make sure that whenever anyone enters the STARS that they are receiving top notch customer service along with a great product. Mr. Brinson stated that we are doing well with rentals, all of our weekends are booked until July with the exception of two Saturdays. Ms. Montgomery wanted to know how we are dealing with the wear and tear of the facility from the rentals. Mr. Brinson stated that the staff are working hard to maintain the building, they are working before the event to set up and after the event to clean up and put things away. Ms. Montgomery stated that last month Amber and Shanell brought up about the impact COVID had on specifically second graders, and there was an editorial in the Wallstreet Journal that shows how devastating that is in terms of dropouts that unfortunately impacts all of the kids especially minorities and the percentages are scary if this does not get fixed. Ms. Montgomery stated that we estimated one person to be around \$14, 000.00, this editorial enforces the things that we have stated and this is something that we need to get fixed or the kids are going to suffer. Mr. Brinson stated that she is currently working on the grant with United Way. Ms. Montgomery stated that if we can go to the Southwest Florida Community Foundation, this is not something that can wait, the kids need it now, based on the data, we have to do something before it is to late. Mrs. Harleston stated that its not just the second graders, it's the students that transitioned from elementary to middle and middle to high school, the reason the transition works is

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because they have those years to get ready, but if you missed your last years of elementary and jumped right into middle school that is a big transition from being at home to moving to middle school. Mr. Brinson stated that he was a teacher at Lehigh Acres middle school for four years, there is a difference from when the kids were in school to the pandemic it changed everyone's mindset, even the adults as you can see now, no one wants to come to work, so just imagine what it is like for the kids, being home all day, and being able to play video games in between classes to now wanting them to be in school all day.

NO. 4. Rising STARS Update (04:19) Mr. Brinson stated that the Rising STARS teen program has been excellent. Mr. Brinson stated that he started in October and it is now March, currently there are 30 students enrolled, we are in the process of finding a counselor to help with the teen program, on average we have about 15 students a day. Mr. Brinson stated that he has one student named Jacoby Mason, when they first met Jacoby was not interested in the program or even speaking to him, and now he can not get him to leave him alone, he is always calling, and even has a job now where before he was on the track of saying he did not even care what happened to him after high school, now he is growing into becoming a great young man. Mr. Brinson stated that he has also been taking them on college tours, back in February they went to Florida Memorial University in Miami, to introduce them to Historical Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) and then next week for Spring break we will be going to Tallahassee, to visit the capitol, the governors mansion, and also visiting Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University and Florida State University. Mr. Brinson stated the program is growing, at first he was out begging kids to come and join the program now we have an abundance of people applying for the program, which is why we are in need of additional assistance, we are slowly trying to grow one of our Recreation leaders into someone who can help but it is not set in stone.

NO. 5. Adjourn (04:29) Michael Morris moved and seconded by Dr. Shadreka McIntosh to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried.