

WELCOME

City Council Presentation for Honorary Naming Motion

Roland Paz, Sr.

May 22, 2025



Roland Paz, Sr. – Honorary Naming

City Council Motion CM23-1002 (11/2/2023)

That Staff be requested to report on naming the Multisport Field after the late Roland Paz, Sr. Motion carried unanimously with Miranda being absent at vote, and Clendenin being absent. (Viera-Henderson)

Roland Paz, Sr. was a dedicated member of the Forest Hills community, known for his deep involvement in local initiatives. Born in Spain, he played First Division Soccer and immigrated to the U.S., where he built a successful business, Roland's TV and Electronics. Along with his wife, he raised four children in Forest Hills, frequently attending the Forest Hills Recreation Center. There, he played guitar, participated in meetings, and enjoyed ping pong.

In 1973, driven by his passion for soccer, Mr. Paz founded the Forest Hills Soccer League, which called the Forest Hills Recreation Center home. In addition to starting the league, he also coached a team, making a lasting impact on many young players. Recognizing the need for improvements, Mr. Paz worked tirelessly to organize projects and advocate for field enhancements, resulting in the addition of tennis and racquetball courts, but the sport field was left mostly undeveloped.

The new Multipurpose Sports Field at Forest Hills Park now sits at the exact location where Mr. Paz envisioned one for many years prior to his passing in 1977.

Proposed Honorary Naming of the Forest Hills Multipurpose Sports Field after Roland Paz Sr.

Roland Paz Sr. (April 3, 1926 – August 12, 1977).

- Was born in Spain and played First Division Soccer as a young man.
- He came to the United States, obtained citizenship, and eventually owned his own successful business, Roland's TV and Electronics.
- The Paz family was the second home in their block in 1955 on N Otis Ave.

The Paz family of six were regulars at the Forest Hills Recreation Center and products of the Forest Hills Community.

Mr. Paz was a regular at the Forest Hills Recreation Center where he played guitar, attended meetings, and played ping pong.

Mr. Paz really respected the value of the Forest Hills Recreation Center to the community.

Due to his passion for soccer, he started the Forest Hills Youth Soccer League in 1973 and made the Forest Hills Recreation Center field its home. The Forest Hills Youth Soccer League was a large league that served youth of all age groups.

Mr. Paz coached his own team, the Forest Hills Hurricanes, and positively influenced many young lives. One of those young players now coaches three teams. Mr. Paz instilled a passion for the sport in his players and set an example for giving back to your community.

At that time the Forest Hills Recreation Center field was nothing but sand, weeds, sand spurs, and palmetto bushes. Mr. Paz lobbied and met with the City of Tampa Mayor Greco on several occasions asking to transform the field into a Multipurpose Sports Field. Due to limited funding, other amenities were added to the complex, but the field remained undeveloped for a long time.

Mr. Paz was so determined to provide a proper sports field that he rallied soccer teams and members in the community to come out to try to improve the field themselves. In 1975 close to 100 people showed up on a Saturday morning with rakes, shovels, and hand tillers trying to level out the field and make it usable. They all worked very hard throughout the day and finally realized the task was too big to make the field a real Sports Field. Mr. Paz never gave up hope and continued to lobby the City to make the field a true Sports Field.

The Forest Hills Soccer League continued to thrive and grow, but before the sports field could become a reality, Mr. Paz contracted lung cancer and quickly succumbed. Before his passing, the Forest Hills Community rallied together and supported the Paz family during that difficult time.

The Tampa Rowdies provided Mrs. Paz a soccer ball signed by the entire team and also signed by legendary soccer player Pele, in honor of Mr. Paz's efforts for youth soccer.

The Forest Hills community credits Mr. Paz and all his efforts with the eventual development of a multipurpose field at the Forest Hills Complex.

Forty-eight years later, if he could see the transformation of the field now, he would be so proud.