

# ADOPTED

**MARION OAKS MUNICIPAL SERVICES ADVISORY BOARD  
PRE-BUDGET WORKSHOP FOR RECREATION SERVICES AND FACILITIES  
Tuesday, February 10, 2026  
9:30 AM**

**ROLL CALL:**

***Board Members***

Kathleen "Kathy" Martin - Chairperson  
Alice Mitchell  
Muriel "Mim" Chappell-Eber  
Rebecca "Becky" Lewis – *Not Present*  
Teresa "Terry" Newcombe

***Marion County Marion Oaks MS Representatives***

Marion County Municipal Services Director, Chad Wicker  
Marion Oaks Community Center Manager, David Pierce  
Marion Oaks Facilities Trades Supervisor, Charles Aman  
Marion Oaks Staff Assistant III, Gwen Bittner

***Marion Oaks Citizen Representatives***

Marion Oaks Civic Association President, Florence "Punkie" Charbonneau

General Public: See Sign In-Sheet

Community Center Manager Dave Pierce called the meeting to order at 9:30 AM.

**REPORTS**

**COMMUNITY CENTER MANAGER – David Pierce**

**Reoccurring Operating Expenses FY 2026-27**

Dave Pierce presented the board with a report of annual reoccurring operating expenses for the next fiscal year beginning on October 1, 2026-2027.

"That's what it takes to pretty much run the facilities," Pierce said.

Pierce announced he would not be discussing every line item, but highlighting the items that there are changes to, as there is need for discussion on expanding the community center.

"Pretty much, they stay the same," Pierce said. "They fluctuate a little bit year-to-year, but there's not a big different variance."

"One of the bigger changes is the Repair/Main- Building 546101; there's an increase of approximately \$30,000, as we were looking to replace two A/C units this year," Pierce said. "We usually put in the budget to replace one; Chip has told me that we still have two that are dated from 1992, that are the original ones, and that the average cost of replacing an A/C unit, believe it or not, is \$18,000 apiece."

Another item that has gone up is operating supplies for programs – line item 552111. The reasoning behind that increase is adding an additional staff member, Recreation Supervisor Eva Sanders, whose job was created to create recreation programs for the working class on nights and weekends.

# ADOPTED

Other capital items include getting the Ballpark Concession Stand building reroofed and little Golf Cart building reroofed.

"The cost of that last year came in at \$28,000; I bumped it up to \$35,000 just to make sure that we have enough money in there," Pierce said.

"Besides that, as far as machinery and equipment, 564101, you'll see that I put \$20,000 in for a new sound system and microphone system in building A," Pierce said. "We have kind of an outdated 3-pin system, so we're looking to have that upgraded."

An additional \$35,000 was also put into the budget to add one large piece of playground equipment, as several smaller playground structures have failed over the past year, and have been removed by Charles "Chip" Aman.

"That's about the average cost of a really nice piece of equipment," Pierce said. "And then when the time comes for next year's budget, the Board can actually choose what type of equipment that we want out there."

Since no additional treadmills are needed in the next budget year, Pierce announced he put \$8,000 in for a piece of resistance weight equipment in the gym. The piece of equipment was referred to Pierce by Sheldon Grant, Manager of the Marion Oaks Library branch.

"That pretty much is all that I put in there that's not your standard, reoccurring operating expenses," Pierce said.

## **EXPANSION DISCUSSION**

### **How Do We Want to Grow?**

Manager Pierce directed the conversation to the next phase of growth at the Marion Oaks Community Center.

"Marion Oaks has grown significantly over the last several years," Pierce said. "That adds a lot of funding to our budget, #1 — it also adds a lot of stress on our existing facilities."

With an increase in citizenry has come an increase in need for expansion; not only in program offering, but in basic and recreational facilities.

"We owe the community an obligation as they grow, to try to grow with them," Pierce said.

Pierce noted that in recent months citizens have been solicited for their input in what their needs are, and how they would like to see the community center complex be enhanced. Surveys have been collected during Marion Oaks Civic Association meetings with the help of Florence "Punkie" Charbonneau netting eight common reoccurring requests from residents:

- Indoor/Outdoor Community Pool
- Indoor Full-Size Gym/More Gym Space
- State-of-the-art Conference Center
- Expand Annex Building
- Larger Playground/ADA Playground
- Outdoor Restrooms at Dog Park

# ADOPTED

- Veterans Park
- Outdoor Remote Control Course

Pierce posed the question: "How do we want to grow?" and told the Board he was looking for where support falls for these items.

## Options

Running through the eight options most requested, Pierce said that the number one amenity that has been requested is an indoor or outdoor pool. The second most requested is an indoor full-sized gym, followed by more gym space in the annex. Following those, the most requested items are a state-of-the-art-conference center and expansion of the Annex Building.

"It doesn't matter what time of day you're there, truly," Charbonneau said. "There might be a little lull around 2:30-4pm, but after that you cannot get in that building. There's not enough parking; there's not enough anything."

"We want to continue the programming, but not right now; we're at a stalemate where we can't add anything over there because every room is full," Pierce said. "The same thing when you want to apply to Building A; you can't get a rental in here for 9 months."

Other community needs with traction are a larger playground/ADA playground, a veterans park, outdoor restrooms at the ballpark field/dog park, and an RC course.

"We've had a lot of requests to do an ADA playground too," Pierce said. "Would that be in the same playground or an additional site? That would be determined."

Pierce also mentioned a lack of adequate restroom space at the ballpark field/dog park when it is used for practice football.

"We have single use restrooms on the backside of the convenience center. MCYFL uses that for their practice football field; we have a flag football team that's going to be using that. There's no place for the kids to use the bathrooms," Pierce said. "There's a lot of requests for us to build a self-standing restroom out there as well."

"I know when I'm trolling through the neighborhood pages, the thing I see the most is gym," Chairperson Kathleen "Kathy" Martin said. "A full-service gym with more equipment."

## Pool

Pierce segued the conversation to the idea of a community pool, as at the last Advisory Board meeting in January, the Board decided to travel together to visit surrounding successful pool facilities.

"Cara looked into it with administration; we are not allowed to go there as a group," Pierce said. "It's a violation of the Sunshine Law."

Municipal Services Director Chad Wicker let Board members know they'd have to visit facilities on their own, or they could travel individually with Pierce. Pierce offered for Board members to go with him or staff to look at the Silver Springs Shores, SummerGlen and YMCA facilities individually.

# ADOPTED

Pierce noted that currently in the Capital Improvement Fund the Marion Oaks MSTU has \$1.479 million.

"Most likely because of the continued growth in Marion Oaks, it's going to be significantly more than that," Pierce said. "We really need to think this out and do it the right way."

"Any of these projects will take us more than that to complete," Wicker said.

Charbonneau interjected and said she asks those who come into the Civic Association, new and current residents, what their community desires are.

"The number one thing has been the swimming pool," Charbonneau said. "I really think maybe an indoor pool would be the best way to go."

Wicker mentioned the Silver Springs Shores Community Center pool has fencing, alarms and cameras to deter vandals.

"Indoor does add quite a cost because you do have to have a ventilation system," Wicker said. "It's a lot more cost, but it's something we can look at."

"I really think that is the biggest draw for the community that they want," Charbonneau said.

Wicker suggested the board refine their vision and direction.

"Either way, you're going to have to take a couple years to save up for the project anyways," he said.

"Swimming lessons, adult exercise classes — those things are important to a community," Charbonneau said, noting the closest place to get swimming lessons is across town. "We need to keep that here in the community especially as the community grows. I think if we don't do it, it's a disservice to the community."

Pierce suggested the Board go through the list and pick out a couple projects to support as a group.

Martin mentioned the indoor walking trail at the Mary Sue Rich Community Center, and how it would be nice to have one in Marion Oaks as well.

"If we are looking at like, an indoor pool, we could combine some of these," Muriel "Mim" Chappell-Eber said. "Like gym space."

"And meeting rooms," Wicker said.

Pierce mentioned that because of the way the Annex building is situated, the only way to expand would be back behind the building. Also of note, Deed Restrictions and Senior Services needs more space.

Chappell-Eber announced she's still going to look at pool and rec facilities, and other Board members agreed, on their own, they will look.

Pierce asked the Board what their overall feeling of the pool was: Do they want to explore financial feasibility of that option in Marion Oaks?

# ADOPTED

Martin, Chappell-Eber and citizen participant Charbonneau all voiced in favor. Mitchell announced she already thought the decision had been made to do that.

Without opposition, the Board voted to have county staff talk with a consultant, designer and get true costs of building, maintenance and staffing costs.

Pierce suggested the Board define the idea between now and the October meeting, look at pools, and ultimately decide exactly what the vision is for the next growth phase of the Marion Oaks Community Center.

## **Combining Needs into Large Facility**

With support for a pool from the Board, Pierce advocated for some of the other community wants to potentially be added into the design for the pool plan.

"There might be 3-4 of these projects; we combine them into one big project," Pierce said.

"I think we should explore the community pool, the gym, and indoor track," Chappell-Eber said.

Mitchell and Martin agreed.

Ultimately the Board decided the vision is for a large facility encompassing a pool, gym, indoor track and meeting space, however more research is needed to see how much funding would be needed, and how to execute full funding of the desired facility.

"First we have to figure out what it is you want, then we have to have an architect draw it out and tell us exactly what that looks like, give us a set of sign-and-sealed plans that we would know how to get quotes and know much money we need to raise," Wicker said.

## **Veterans Park**

"I would like Veterans Park; I don't think that would take much," Mim said.

Board members agreed to explore that option as well.

## **Large Community Building Expansion**

Wicker asked Board members if they want to proceed with a large pool facility or have that option on a survey to present to the public.

Charbonneau said she thinks there's a good sampling of surveys already with a lot of feedback from the community, through civic engagement.

Wicker asked the Board if the Advisory Board wants to move forward beyond a survey to find out the feasibility of the large community facility.

Martin, Chappell-Eber, Newcombe, and Mitchell unanimously voiced in favor.

The Board agreed to have the county fund research to plan and design a facility (to include a pool, showers, lockers, gym, indoor track, and meeting space), so the plans can be presented to the public.

## **ADA Playground**

# ADOPTED

Pierce again mentioned an ADA playground, and suggested to meet the needs of the community, to add that in to find out what the cost would be. He suggested installing a separate ADA playground, away from where the average child and teenager would want to play.

"ADA would be specifically for people with disabilities," Pierce said.

"We don't have a lot of room to expand our current playground; there's no way to go out either way," Pierce said. "We've also been told with the amount of equipment in there, you can't add anything to it. To do a true ADA park, there's not enough room in there."

The Board unanimously voted to support an ADA playground.

## **Ballpark Restrooms**

Pierce brought up the desire for more restroom stalls at the ballpark field/dog park. There are currently two stalls in the women's restroom, and one stall and one urinal at the baseball park, he said.

"When we get overrun is typically during football season," Pierce said. "We have MCYFL, they've used that as a practice field for 9 years now. So when they're over there practicing, you have well over 100 players and cheerleaders there, trying to use two little bathrooms."

Charbonneau asked if there was room to expand the building. Pierce said he wasn't sure, but that the building is old.

"It probably would make more sense to have a stand-alone (restroom)," Pierce said. "My thinking is down the road we're going to do more and more. I think we're going to see a lot of growth at that ballpark. Obviously, were going to need the facilities to accommodate the amount of use."

The Board unanimously supported plans for outdoor restroom at the ballpark field/dog park.

## **Project Priority & Growth Awareness**

Wicker asked if the Board wants the bathroom project to be a priority over the pool? The Board said no.

Wicker said he will put in the budget money to get plans for a pool, noting that the number one Board priority voiced is a pool center.

Pierce offered to take Board members to pool facilities separately, so did Wicker. Wicker also announced he will find out how much an architect will cost.

"This is a significant investment in the community, you want to make sure were doing it right," Pierce said.

"I also think when we do this, we have to make sure the plans include plans for expansion, because we're only half built out," Chappell-Eber said. "We have what, another 15,000 lots?"

"15,000 more homes can go in," Charbonneau said.

"All that will be looked at," Wicker said.

## **GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENTS**

# ADOPTED

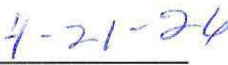
None.

## NEXT ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

Pierce reminded the Board of our next meeting on April 14th, 2026, at 9:30 a.m. Meeting was adjourned at 10:54 a.m.

Minutes Submitted by Gwen Bittner

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Chairperson, Kathleen Martin

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date