

**PARKS & RECREATION ADVISORY COUNCIL
MINUTES FROM MEETING OF JUNE 19, 2024**

The Marion County Parks & Recreation Advisory Council (PRAC) held a public meeting on June 19, 2024 at the Marion County Parks & Recreation Main Office, 111 SE 25th Avenue, Ocala, FL 34471.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT

Jerry Furlong, Chair
Pat Gabriel
Joe Reichel
Brian Cretul

COUNCIL MEMBERS ABSENT

Kat Kelly

STAFF PRESENT

Kelsey Mears, Assistant Director
Sara Lambert, Community Engagement Coordinator

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was officially called to order at 3:37 PM by Chair, Jerry Furlong, followed by the invocation and the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION: Jerry Furlong made a motion to accept the February 2024 minutes as presented; Pat seconded; unanimous approval; motion carried.

ROLL CALL

Sara Lambert took roll call

STAFF ITEMS

A. Staff Items

1. Ocala Park Estates Park Naming Contest

- i. Kelsey thanked everyone on PRAC for their participation in this process and explained the Commissioner selection process- adding that they do have the right to reject all of the options presented to them.
- ii. Joe asked about the names that were selected and sent to PRAC and why those were the ones chosen. He followed that up with a question about the playground installation, specifically the swings.
- iii. Kelsey answered both questions, adding that in response to the swing install the trench cannot be too deep for ADA compliance purposes.
- iv. Sara added that what Joe saw implies the playground is getting used and he agrees.

B. Project Update

1. Kelsey gave an overview of ongoing and current projects
2. Sara shared photos of the work being done at Wrigley Fields for the safety net installation and it's progress.
3. Kelsey shared with PRAC the progress made in getting Heagy-Burry

funded, the park's upcoming groundbreaking and our partnership with FWC. She gave a brief history of how we got to where we are now and how we plan on moving forward.

4. Kelsey gave a Rotary turf project funding update and shared all upcoming groundbreaking and ribbon cutting dates with PRAC membership.
5. Kelsey and Sara shared images from the SELP Campground Ribbon Cutting. Kelsey gave a rundown of all who attended and summarized the presentations. She explained the scope, size and layout of the campground spots and reiterated its proximity to downtown.

C. FY 25 Budget Workshop

1. Kelsey shared that our workshop is right around the corner and she invited all PRAC members to attend.
2. So far the only major rejection from the administration was the denial of a position being moved from one account to another.
3. Both of our Admin. reviews were very well received with only a few minor changes. We kept our budget below a 6% increase across all 9 accounts.
4. We asked for one new position, a Park Operations Supervisor and a reclassification, Administrative Assistant to Fiscal Manager. SELP and X35 have no personnel requests.
5. We had no equipment requests so we could supplement projects and personnel.

D. Staffing Update

1. We have 74 positions, 69 are filled with 4 vacancies on the verge of being filled.
2. Two of the open positions are some of our hardest to fill; Athletics Supervisor and the Natural Resources Specialist. Both positions require a candidate who is extremely specialized with a high set of skills.
3. We're hoping to incentivize the Athletics Supervisor position with the Wrigley caretaker house because the bulk of our applicants have been from out of state.
 - i. Joe asked how applicants hear about the position and Kelsey shared that it's advertised nationally across several industry specific platforms like NRPA and FRPA.
 - ii. Joe added that providing housing is a smart move and Kelsey agreed.
4. Seasonal staffing; 23 seasonals in Parks, 11 in Recreation- which allowed us to add 300 more camp spots.

E. Parks & Recreation Month

1. Sara gave a breakdown of this year's theme, Where You Belong, and explained what our outreach campaign would consist of for the month of July.
 - i. Two recreation programs; Chalk the Walk and the photo contest.
 - ii. Two events; Heagy-Burry Ground Breaking & OPE Ribbon Cutting
 - iii. Two BOCC Appearances; One to kickoff the month and another to recognize Parks & Recreation Professionals Day
 1. At the first BOCC meeting in July, Jim will give a "State of the Union," for Parks.
2. We encourage PRAC to participate in all of these events and to share what's being touted on social media.

F. Discussion

1. Kelsey brought up the upcoming World Series at Rotary Sportsplex at the end of July and she and Sara shared with them the video VCB had produced of last year's tournament.
2. The Cal Ripken Experience will be at SELP this year. This is an event where all of the teams and players are recognized and they get to participate in cute activities.
 - i. We are adding some baseball themed activities this year like pitching challenges, batting challenges, et.
3. This event has a massive economic impact because of all the money being spent in Marion County.

Old Business

None.

Council Items

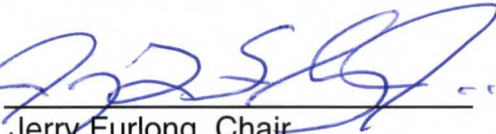
Closing Comments

Joe really appreciated the Spring Park Tour and he found it very eye opening to the challenges that we face as a department.

Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned at 4:22 PM

SIGNED



Jerry Furlong, Chair

DATE: 11/20/24

Minutes submitted by Sara Lambert