

ADOPTED

MARION OAKS MUNICIPAL SERVICES ADVISORY BOARD FOR RECREATION SERVICES AND FACILITIES

Tuesday, April 14, 2026

9:30 AM

ROLL CALL:

Board Members

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

Marion County Marion Oaks MS Representatives

Marion Oaks Community Center Manager, David Pierce
Marion Oaks Facilities Trades Supervisor, Charles Aman
Marion Oaks Recreation Specialist, Kari Coates - Not Present
Marion Oaks Recreation Supervisor, Eva Sanders - Not Present
Marion Oaks Staff Assistant III, Gwen Bittner
Marion Oaks Facility Trades Tech I, Thomas Wilcox

General Public: See Sign In-Sheet

Community Center Manager Dave Pierce called the meeting to order at 9:33 AM.

Pierce requested everyone rise for the Pledge of Allegiance.

VOTE ON ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES:

Chairperson Kathleen "Kathy" Martin presented the January 13, 2026, draft of minutes, and February 10, 2026, Prebudget Workshop minutes for adoption. Board Member Alice Mitchell arrived to the meeting at 9:39 AM. An affirmative motion was made by Muriel "Mim" Chappell-Eber, followed by Rebecca "Becky" Lewis. Approved by all board members present.

REPORTS

RECREATION SPECIALIST - Kari Coates (presented by Gwen Bittner in Kari's absence)

Activities, Programs and Events with Kari or Arranged by Kari

Memberships at the Marion Oaks Recreation & Fitness Center continues to grow rapidly. Members can take advantage of 15 exercise classes a week, one Spanish 101 a week, two Tai Chi classes, two Women's Strengthening classes, two billiards tournaments, table tennis, puzzles, dominos, darts and more. Members only programming is also available.

Open to the public includes:

Van trips offered include Manatees, Lake Sumter, On Top of the World Farmers Market, Boat Ride, Zoo, Plays, musical, Ocala Wetland, Mary Sue Rich, Lady Lake Historical Center, and Ft. King.

The Annual Health Fair gave the public the opportunity to visit with several dozen vendors. Participants received give-a-ways and opportunities to leave with great prizes. Our health fair is offered twice a year and is always well-received.

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Marion County Health Mobile Bus is available at our location twice a month offering shots, WIC appointments and more. ShotVet offers affordable pet shots at the Marion Oaks Ball Park every other Saturday.

Community Dinners have been offered each month. We are finding that 90% that attend are folks that are available during the day. Review of the dinners has resulted in a change to move them to Community Luncheons. A review of this change will take place in May to see which does better.

For our Trading Card event 10 participants attended. The Annual Autism Awareness offered 5 vendors providing information for services and contact information. 10 Families participated. Both vendors and families gave positive feedback.

The UF Center for Autism and Related Disabilities meets at our location once a month. They offer socialization and assistance/guidance. Kari is on a CARD board which assisted in bringing this program to our facility. They have been meeting at our location for several months. Additional programming via UF CARD will be continuing.

Cook-offs included a Chili Cook-off and Soup Cook-off. Clam Chowder by the cup was a hit and a sellout.

Annual Community Yard Sale averaged over a couple hundred shoppers and 25+ residents selling. Yard sales take place in the fall and spring. The demand for more community yard sale dates continues to grow. Due to this, a late spring early summer date will be added.

Jello Guess the Flavor - Kari was out ill but did have all the supplies prepared in advance. Staff members Gwen and Wendy stepped in making sure the activity could take place.

Meet Winnie the Pooh was canceled and rescheduled due to facilities being closed unexpectedly due to water issues.

Valentine's Day Luncheon - Kari was ill but everything was pre-organized with food and supplies. Kari's husband picked up food that had been ordered from Publix and delivered it to the community center. Staff members Gwen and Wendy along, with resident Janis Brennen, jumped in to assist/take over in making sure the luncheon would not be canceled. Gwen and Wendy saw a needed and filled it without being asked. Because of these ladies the luncheon went off without a hitch.

**** Kari notes that Gwen and Wendy are a dependable asset to our department and the community. They both understand it takes a village.*

**** Wendy has stepped in posting my activities, programs and events on Facebook while I was out. This is something she did on her own, showing her commitment to the community and the services we offer.*

Kari's Annual Luau offered a traditional family-style meal, Hula entertainers. 51 participants attended. Both participants and hula dancers have asked for the opportunity to hold another. No complaints on this Luau.

Easter Event offered something for all ages. Scavenger hunt, coloring contest, free games, egg toss for youth with thousands of filled eggs with candy/prizes, business vendors, food trucks, craft vendors, Ross Prairie Elementary performed, The Bounce Kings provided the opportunity to purchase unlimited bounce and slide during the event. The Bounce King owners stated that they were very happy with the business they received and they are looking forward to coming back. They are already working with Kari on upcoming partnerships. Signature Brands donated 250 egg coloring kits that were given out during the

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event. Signature Brands has been a great supporter of our Easter Event for years and I am grateful for the relationship. Marion Oaks residents Jackie Kimball and Terri Newcombe volunteered to assist with free games during the event. These ladies have been volunteering for me for years. Staff member Wendy was at our Municipal Services tent providing information on all our offerings. Staff member Eva volunteered to be the Easter Bunny, anyone that wanted to have photos taken were able to for free. Staff member Chip assisted the Easter Bunny along with taking photos. Eva and Chip did a hip hop of a good job. Filling of the thousands of eggs was done by members of Kari's Kool Klub. Staff members Jose, Marilyn, Wendy, Gwen and Sugrim volunteer filled eggs.... filling eggs is not a simple job, but they did it with a smile on their face.

Easter Luncheon was successful as always - it is one of our smaller holiday lunches offered. A traditional Easter meal was served; participants received a bunny Easter basket. Kari was the Easter Bunny taking photos. Staff members Chip, Ian and Thomas helped assist with set-up, serving and clean-up...they all were an asset with this luncheon.

Other offerings included Tug-of-War, Superhero Day, Fairy Day, Barbie Day and Scrabble Day.

Shuffleboard with Brian is on Monday nights and Shuffleboard with Ruthie Tuesday mornings. Outside instructors offer 17 classes a week ranging from TangSooDo, Zumba, Yoga, Salsa and more. All of these classes have a huge following.

Our traveling billiards league continues to take place. With the travel league doing well, Kari is in the process of hosting a traveling table tennis league. Both of these leagues are for 55+ due to most locations are 55+ Adult Communities. We will be looking at family developments to extend opportunities to other ages.

Kari also was personally invited to participate in Marion Oaks Elementary Literacy on the Yard, Scott Cameron State Farm Marion Oaks grand opening and SummerGlen Community Meeting. Marion Oaks Elementary has partnered with Kari for years. Scott Cameron has participated in many of our events and has been a sponsor for several years.

Activities, Programs and Events with Wendy

- Tiny Tots averaging upward 30+ children, not including caregivers
- Family Fun Night 4-15 youth, not including caregivers (*this is an outdoor program so weather determines participation*)
- Tiny Tots Valentines Party had 40+, not including caregivers
- Tiny Tots Easter Party 50+, not including caregivers
- Masterpiece Mondays averages 4-10 participants weekly
- She has scheduled a homeschool information night in mid-April. At this time, 30+ caregivers have already RSVP'ed.

Wendy is part-time and does an outstanding job with her offers for the short number of hours that she works.

Board Member Alice Mitchell asked approximately how many members the center currently had. Gwen reported there were about 1,900 members in the Recreation & Fitness Center's paper files.

RECREATION SUPERVISOR – Eva Sanders (presented by Thomas Wilcox in Eva's absence)

January - April programs/events

- The Community Soundtrack regularly attracts an average of about 100 or so attendees and 11 vendors. There's no cost associated with participation of vendors or attendees.

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- Giant Volleyball – Weekly every Monday, regularly attracts an average of 10 attendees. No cost.
- Beginner Belly Dance Classes are offered Wednesday mornings and Friday evenings. Regularly attracts an average of 7 attendees. There's no cost for that.
- Dinner Social for Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities – Offered on a quarterly basis. Regularly attracts 50+ attendees, individuals and caregivers alike. There is no cost for that.
- One Short Mile – A Fun Run in collaboration with the Girl Scouts attracted 70 attendees. There was a \$2 fee for runners to secure their position in the lineup. That was on April 11.

Upcoming Programs/Events

- Giant volleyball is still going to be weekly every Monday.
- Beginner Belly Dancing Classes offered Wednesdays and Fridays. There is still no cost.
- Saturday Hiking Trips (Van Trip) – Transportation will be provided or meet up. These will be offered on a monthly basis. There will be no cost but there will be a waiver that must be filled out.
- Dinner Socials for those with Intellectual Disabilities – April 28, 2026. There will be no cost.
- The Community Soundtrack will be the first Saturday of every month. There's no cost for that. It starts again on May 2.
- Rock N' Roll Skating Party – Open to the public on the basketball courts. There's no cost. That will be on May 23.
- Chalk Your Spot – There must be an application filled out by May 29 to reserve a spot. There is no cost.
- Frozen Fridays will be returning for the summer starting June 5 through August 7. There's no cost for that.
- Beginner Youth Pickleball – It will be RSVP by June 5. Camp dates are from June 8 to June 12 and that's \$5 per child.
- Senior Dog Summer Social – That will be on June 22. There's no cost for that.
- Youth Beginner Dance Camp – RSVP by July 10. The camp is July 13 through July 17 and that'll be \$5 per child.

FACILITIES TRADES SUPERVISOR – Charles Aman

- The splash pad is up and going. There were a couple hiccups but we got through it no problems there.
- At the Annex we had two condenser fan motors that we had to replace on A/C Units #2 and #4.
- We did have three trees removed that were dead and needed to be removed because they were a safety issue.
- We did just have three new LED lights installed on the grounds. Over by the dumpster, one by the playground parking lot, and one by the tennis courts.
- The crew is getting ready to start mowing the grounds and pressure washing the buildings.
- We are waiting on three quotes to replace one A/C Unit in Building B.

COMMUNITY CENTER MANAGER – David Pierce

Pierce highlighted that based on the recreation reports, there's something offered at the facility for everybody.

Staffing Updates / Developments

Currently fully staffed.

- Ian Thornton - Full Time Lead Custodian started on March 2, 2026.
- Jaime Martinez- Full Time Recreation Leader (transfer from Parks & Recreation Department). He is predominantly going to be working weekends and nights.

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We're getting into the mowing season. The Splash Pad opened on April 13. Kudos to Chip and Tom for keeping it open all the time. It's 7 days a week, open from 10am-6pm. "We average 100 kids per day in that splash pad," Pierce said.

Budget Update

At the last advisory board meeting the board approved purchasing 250 new black vinyl chairs for Building A. Cost was \$16,957 with State contracting price. They have been received and will debut at the May 14 Veterans Dinner. Pierce noted he is currently getting confirmation to donate the old chairs.

Three trees also removed at State contract pricing: \$4,500.

Veterans Dinner

We're doing a Veterans Dinner on May 14. There's no cost for the local veterans and their guests. Pierce noted a special thanks to MOCA. They graciously donated \$300 toward the cost of that program. This is just a way to honor and pay respects to our veterans. Kari is working on a menu from Sonny's. We have arranged to have someone from Veterans Services to come and give a talk on the services and benefits that are available that a lot of our veterans might not even know about. Kari is working on a menu from Sonny's.

Wi-Fi Available in Building A

After 4 years of going back and forth with the county, we finally have Wi-Fi available in Building A.

Pickleball

Our pickleball program continues to grow. That's something that continues to grow. That's something that's going to be our largest recreation program in the immediate future.

Marion Oaks Civic Association Survey

Marion Oaks Civic Association created a survey for what the residents in Marion Oaks are looking for. So far they have already had 205 residents that have already participated in the survey. Pierce noted that the survey can be a very, very useful tool for board members to use for projects and more.

Citizen attendee Florence "Punky" Charbonneau noted that the results Pierce presented were just the English version of the survey, and that 200 results were also collected in Spanish. The survey can be found at www.moca1973.org.

Pool

Pierce stated that Board Members cannot travel together to view swimming pool facilities discussed in previous meetings, but urged them to make contact with himself or a staff member to arrange individual travel to see pool facilities.

MCYFL Day

MCYFL is hosting their first MCYFL Day here on May 9 on the back grounds. There will be a BBQ and informational. If you have a neighbor or friend or know anyone that might be interested in playing football or getting on their cheerleading squad, this is the time to do it. There will be representatives from the new high school.

Board Member Comments

Board member Rebecca "Becky" Lewis questioned why the southwest side of Ocala doesn't have the playing fields that other areas of Ocala do, for example, Jervy Gantt Recreation Complex. She also mentioned finding a better way to reach out to and communicate with residents.

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Board members discussed shade structures for the playground as it was noted in the community survey that many would like additional shade at the playground.

Board Member Muriel "Mim" Eber brought up the idea for a Marion Oaks flag. She suggested a contest for kids or to have someone design one. There was support for the idea among Board members.

Board members also discussed better signage for the Community Center Complex. Pierce said he would do research into the topic.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENTS

No public comments.

NEXT ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

Pierce reminded the Board of our next meeting on July 21, 2026, at 9:30 a.m. Kathleen Martin made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Muriel "Mim" Chappell-Eber.

Meeting was adjourned at 10:54 a.m.

Minutes Submitted by Gwen Bittner



Chairperson, Kathleen Martin



Date