

**PARKS & RECREATION ADVISORY COUNCIL
MINUTES FROM MEETING OF OCTOBER 25, 2023**

The Marion County Parks & Recreation Advisory Council (PRAC) held a public meeting on October 25, 2023 at the Marion County Parks & Recreation Main Office, 111 SE 25th Avenue, Ocala, FL 34471.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT

Jerry Furlong, Chair
Pat Gabriel, Vice Chair
Brian Cretul
Joe Reichel
Kat Kelley

COUNCIL MEMBERS ABSENT

STAFF PRESENT

Kelsey Mears, Assistant Director
Sara Lambert, Community Engagement Coordinator

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was officially called to order at 3:04 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 June 2023 minutes as presented; Brian Cretul seconded; unanimous approval; motion carried.

ROLL CALL

Roll call was taken by Sara Lambert

STAFF ITEMS

A. Staff Introductions

1. Kelsey wanted to introduce Trevor Smith, the new South District Ranger, and Charles Dobson, the new Recreation Supervisor but both were unable to attend.

B. CIP Update:

1. Heagy Burry: Kelsey gave a timeline on the project's status and reiterated how long it's been on the books, including that various issues out of our control but Joey is now ready to go to bid after cost analysis.
2. Blue Run- Kelsey explained that the City of Dunnellon pulled their funding. Pat questioned why and Kelsey stated it was the new leadership. Commissioner Bryant is now involved and something will be worked out to move the project forward.
3. Rotary Turf Fields- The project is fully permitted, funding sources are still being determined due to some project additions. Brian asked if it was all the fields and Kelsey answered that it was just two soccer fields. Additional discussion occurred between Kelsey and Brian regarding what sort of teams use the fields and what types of teams will be able to once the construction is complete.

C. Budget

1. Kelsey presented the approved FY24/FY25 budget, breaking down the various funds for our new member, Joe Reichel.
2. She explained overages on fuel and electric and how such issues would be addressed.
3. She broke down the Fees Fund and this past year's total generated revenues, we're up 22% in revenue from 2020-2023.
4. The SELP budget had a 34% increase in revenue, the venue consistently stays booked almost every weekend and is basically booked out through the coming year.
5. The SELP campground has a mid-spring ribbon cutting and completion is set for sometime in March.
6. Airport had a 41% increase, Jerry asked who we attribute this to and Kelsey said the t-hangar rentals and Aergility lease. It was also added that the Airport needs to self-fund all projects so this increase is very helpful.
7. Jerry inquired about the parallel taxi-way system and Kelsey said that the project is coming along with 90% FAA funding with the connector being funded through FDOT.
8. 20 more t-hangars will be built and they'll get an updated Airport Masterplan in the future.

D. Carnival Update

1. Sara gave a Carnival update, stating that this year's event had more turnout than we've ever seen. She did mention that it was a struggle to get donor funds this year. Pat asked why and Sara stated it was hard to compete for Give4Marion.
2. The event garnered a handful of large money donations but was lacking in smaller dollar amounts that helped push fundraising forward.
3. As the event grows it becomes more expensive and the push for donor funding becomes more important.

E. Staffing Update

1. Kelsey gave the staffing update which included: Jeff Smith being promoted to Athletics Supervisor, and the upcoming hiring of new Staff IV for upfront. Kelsey mentioned that Missey receives a lot of calls so hiring a second person can alleviate some of that stress.
2. The 2nd round of Athletic Superintendent interviews are taking place, we have 2 candidates.
3. A new SELP position was interviewed this week.
4. Airport is now fully staffed with the addition of George who starts Monday.

F. FRPA (Florida Recreation and Parks Association) Park Management Institute

1. We will be hosting this institute in February at SELP and Silver Springs
2. FRPA members from across the state will be in attendance.
3. Marion County was chosen due to its central location.

G. Senior Games

1. Recreation will be hosting the Senior Games in Nov 24.
2. This week-long event is a statewide competition and is like an Olympics for seniors and active adults.
3. It's a great tourism draw.

Old Business

None.

Council Items

Pat asked about the archery range and Kelsey sate that the Silver Springs Archery Assoc. is still using it and the facility looks good. She's hoping that they'll begin hosting more tournaments. Brian did state that he met with Chair Curry and it went very well. Pat is curious as to whether Matt is keeping Kat and Sara said yes, he is.

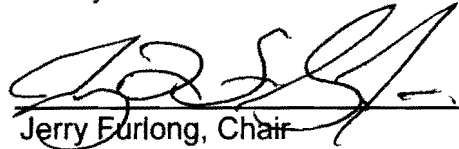
Closing Comments

None.

Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned at 4:01 PM

SIGNED


Jerry Furlong, Chair

DATE: 21 Feb 2024

Minutes submitted by Laura Cooper