



Keep Winter Park Beautiful & Sustainable Advisory Board Work Session Minutes

March 26, 2025 at 9:00 AM

City Hall Commission Chambers
401 S. Park Avenue

Present

Sam Stark, Zeina Matar-Ghantous

Staff Present

Director of Natural Resources & Sustainability Gloria Eby, Director of Parks & Recreation Jason Seeley, Assistant Director of Parks & Recreation Mike McCosker, Sustainability Manager Sara Miller, Sustainability Specialist Nicole Marshall

1. Meeting Called to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:01 a.m.

2. Discussion Item

a. Green Events

Mr. Stark initiated the work session by stating that the meeting is intended for brainstorming ideas for green events, following up on a discussion from a regular board meeting. Ms. Eby reminded the group that this is a work session, not open to public comments, a space for board members and staff to discuss strategies and ideas. She introduced the director of parks and recreation, Jason Seeley, and assistant, Mike McCosker. Mr. Seeley advised that Parks handles all the athletic and rental venues, as well as special events.

Ms. Eby proposed a walkthrough of the existing process. The event center operates under a different set of criteria, specifically for events with 75 attendees or more. The event permit page provides details about the permitting requirements. Notably, under other requirements, it states that plastic bags, straws, stirrers, and polystyrene cannot be sold or distributed on city property by either staff, contracted vendors, or permit holders. Instead, the use of reusable, recyclable, biodegradable, or compostable materials is encouraged.

The contractors at the event center maintain compliance, along with 75% or more of the farmers market vendors. Mr. Stark inquired whether the five contracted caterers accept the requirements. Mr. Seeley mentioned it depends on the type of event. The current approach is a resolution, a pilot project focused on single-use plastics. The caterers noted that many of their clients have made similar requests.

At the bottom of the page, you can apply for an event permit that is sent to various city departments. One of these is a workflow system named Asana. When the Sustainability

department receives the event permit application, Johnny Miller, the events manager, informs the applicant about the sustainability criteria. Mr. Seeley mentioned that there is a regular in-person meeting for special events with all departments and applicants to discuss the events in detail and set expectations. This meeting provides staff with the opportunity to request additional sustainability efforts.

After the event concludes, the parks department handles the closure. Ms. Eby advised that the sustainability team does not have enough staff to oversee compliance with any sustainability regulations during the events.

Ms. Matar-Ghantous proposed three steps: establish guidelines or policies, educate the public, and offer incentives for their involvement. She emphasized that green events primarily concentrate on food consumption. In her view, the education phase has already commenced.

Those present agreed on guidelines rather than policies. They explored incentives for recognizing green practices at events. Guidelines will be developed, and a liaison consultant will be designated. The group also discussed methods for evaluating achievements post-event. It was proposed that participants mark off actions taken during the event. Mr. Stark mentioned that the discussion must be presented to the board to decide if this should be incorporated into their priorities.

The guidelines were defined as a one-page checklist. The designated liaison was defined not as an individual, but as the meetup group discussing the event. Follow-up on events will be managed by volunteers.

Ms. Matar-Ghantous inquired with staff about the city's offerings, such as recycling bins, composting resources, and water bottle fillers or fountains. The installation of water fountains and fillers is ongoing in public facilities.

To prevent contamination of recyclable materials, staff would need to monitor public recycling bins at events, but current staff resources are insufficient. Mr. Seeley proposed that vendors sort their waste. Ms. Eby mentioned that the Earth Day event includes a staffed waste diversion center. Mr. Seeley suggested that Parks and Recreation collaborate with Natural Resources and utilize the staffed waste diversion center at larger events.

It was decided to place the green events on the agenda for a board vote regarding whether to continue with the green event initiative.

3. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:54 a.m.

/s/ Bahiyyah Layton, Board Coordinator