



Keep Winter Park Beautiful & Sustainable Advisory Board Regular Meeting Minutes

April 15, 2025 at 11:45 AM

City Hall Commission Chambers
401 S. Park Avenue

Present

Becky Distad, Mark J. Yonker, Stephen Pategas, Sam Stark, Zeina Matar-Ghantous, Terry Hotard

Absent

John Page

Staff Present

Director of Natural Resources & Sustainability Gloria Eby, Sustainability Manager Sara Miller, Sustainability Specialist I Nicole Marshall, Natural Resources and Sustainability Administrative Coordinator Victoria Tabor

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 11:47 am.

2. Consent Agenda

- a. Approve the minutes of March 18, 2025

Motion made by Mr. Yonker to approve the minutes, seconded by Ms. Distad. Motion carried unanimously with a 6-0 vote.

3. Public Comments (for items not on the agenda): Three minutes allowed for each speaker

Hattie Bryant, residing at 1240 S Pennsylvania Ave, stated that she addressed the Commission at the most recent meeting, requesting the removal of the League of Women Voters from the official Earth Day event organized by the City of Winter Park. She noted that the Commissioners have not made a request to this board for their removal. In her opinion, the decision to politicize city events is wrong, as it transforms the city into a marketing entity for the Democratic Party, which she deems unfair considering the finances of two-thirds of the populace are used to support the causes of one-third. Therefore, she advocates for eliminating all groups associated with any form of political messaging. Furthermore, she reiterated her request to remove the League of Women Voters from the Earth Day event scheduled for April 26, 2024.

Gigi Papa, residing at 1440 Hibiscus Ave., expressed her disappointment during the last meeting regarding a comment made by one of the board members. The comment suggested that if Trinity Preparatory School could afford to pay for their tuition, the

green school grant should not be considered. In my view, this perspective is discriminatory, as income should not serve as a criterion for exclusion. It is my sincere hope that, in the future, equitable treatment is extended to all applicants, and an apology is issued.

4. Action Items

a. Green Event Initiative

Ms. Miller described the work session regarding the current green event initiative and reviewed the special event permit application. A discussion was requested of the board on how to proceed with a green event checklist or consider enhancing what is already in place.

Ms. Distad mentioned that she listened to the work session and appreciated the ideas, believing it would be beneficial to proceed. It's challenging to determine a starting point, so it's essential to convene again to further discuss the initiative. Mr. Pategas expressed his desire to see the initiative progress.

Motion made by Ms. Matar-Ghantous to move forward with the green event initiative, seconded by Ms. Distad. The motion carried unanimously by a 6-0 vote.

5. Non-Action Items

6. Staff Updates

a. Natural Resources & Sustainability

- Community Needs Assessment
- Food Insecurity Initiatives: Killarney Elementary Community Program and Community Gardens at Winter Park Housing Authority
- Landscape Ordinance Subcommittee Meeting
- Past Event Successes
- Earth Day Event

Ms. Miller presented the Natural Resources & Sustainability staff updates:

- The community needs assessment survey requires more responses and remains open. Residents within the CRA have been invited to take the survey.
- The liaison for the Killarney Elementary program is no longer employed at the school. Staff continues to coordinate with 4Roots for next steps. Other ways to connect with families in need includes bringing the 4Roots mobile bus to the Winter Park Community Center or the Library to provide access to fresh organic produce. The Meadows WPHA location community gardens project has held two workday events. The last one in April attracted nearly 30 volunteers, including Commissioner Russell and some of his football players, as well as Water and Wastewater Director David Zusi and families with their children. All the garden

beds have been built and lifted. The next event is on May 3, 2025, for adding soil, compost, and planting.

- Mr. Pategas' term on the board has been completed. He will be invited to the landscape ordinance revision subcommittee meetings as a subject matter expert. Ms. Matar-Ghantous volunteered to replace Mr. Pategas at the meetings until the new board members come on board.

Ms. Marshall provided updates on past event successes and the Earth Day event. The stage will be moved outside for the Green School Events Awards. Earth Month was kicked off with the Orange County litter clean-up.

b. Past & Upcoming Events

- Gardening Day - 4/12 9am @ The Meadows
- Run for the Trees/Earth Day Block Party - 4/26 8am @ Ward Park
- Shoreline Restoration - 5/3 9am @ Lakes Temple & Tuscany
- Gardening Day - 5/3 9am @ The Meadows
- Fix It! Don't Pitch It - 5/17 9am @ Winter Park Events Center
- Ballroom Dance Lessons - Monday Nights 7pm & 8:15pm @ Winter Park Community Center

On behalf of the staff, Ms. Marshall thanked Stephen Pategas for serving on the board.

7. Board Comments

Mr. Hotard commented that Winter Park is a better place because of Stephen and Kristen Pategas. He thanked Gigi Papa for her comments as they resonated with him.

Mr. Yonkers apologized for his comments regarding Trinity Prep.

Mr. Stark expressed gratitude to Ms. Marshall for sharing her story on the Rollins podcast, detailing her journey to and through Rollins and her remarkable work at the City.

Ms. Matar-Ghantous thanked the public commenters for their input.

Mr. Stark asked the board if anyone felt that the Orange County League of Women Voters should be removed from the Earth Day event. He personally does not believe they should be removed, considering their core mission and the main focus of the event; he thinks they should be welcomed to help spread the word about sustainability.

Ms. Miller provided background information on the partnership with the League of Women Voters since 2020, specifically regarding the election sign recycling campaign program, where they educate on basic voting guidelines and how to get involved in the community, as well as on water conservation. They are sustainable and environmentally focused, which aligns with the mission of education for Earth Day.

Ms. Eby pointed out that the materials presented by vendors are reviewed to ensure they fit the KWPBS mission.

- a. Green Minutes
- b. New Business/Announcements

Mr. Yonker announced his farewell to the board, calling it a learning experience, and expressed gratitude to them and the community. The board members thanked him and encouraged him to continue attending the events.

8. Upcoming Agenda Items

- a. Discussion of Upcoming Agenda Items

In response to Mr. Hotard's inquiry, Ms. Eby announced that next month's agenda will include an update on the Park Ave refresh provided by Clarissa Howard.

9. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 12:34 p.m.

Approved by the board on May 20, 2025

/s/ Bahiyyah Layton, Board Coordinator