



Parks & Recreation Advisory Board

Regular Meeting Minutes

April 16, 2025 at 5:30 PM

City Hall Commission Chambers
401 S. Park Avenue

Present

Leah J. Bonich, Thomas Sims, Ellen Wolfson, Lisa Tinker Marsh, Anne Mooney

Absent

Ginny Enstad, Lawrence Lyman

Staff Present

Parks and Recreation Director Jason Seeley, Assistant Directors Cathleen Daus and Mike McCosker, Recreation Coordinator Laura Halsey

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:33 pm by Chairperson, Leah Bonich.

2. Consent Agenda

- a. Approve the minutes of March 29, 2025

Motion made by Lisa Tinker Marsh, seconded by Thomas Sims, to approve the March 29, 2025 minutes. Motion passes 5-0.

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

None present

4. Action Items

- a. Master Plan Scope/Proposal

Cathleen Daus, Parks & Recreation Assistant Director, provided an overview of the masterplan and the scope of the plan. The goal is to ensure all the pertinent items are aligned with the masterplan, including accreditation. It consists of four major tasks: Project Initiation, Needs Assessment, Recommendations, and Additional Services. Mr. Sims commented that the plan seems very thorough and well-thought out.

Motion made by Thomas Sims, seconded by Ellen Wolfson, to approve the masterplan as presented. Motion fails 2-3 with Leah Bonich, Lisa Tinker Marsh, and Anne Mooney opposing.

The board would like additional time to review the agenda packet and requested to have the item presented as an action item at the May 2025 board meeting.

The board inquired about having the agendas ready for viewing earlier each month. Mr.

Seeley, Parks & Recreation Director, committed to Friday evening prior to the meeting dates.

5. Non-Action Items

a. Self Guided Park Tour for Members

Mr. Seeley provided the board with a presentation regarding self-guided tours for the city parks. The parks were set up as zones to provide a more efficient route planning process for the board members. Supporting documentation would include the most recent schematics for projects, location of the parks, photographs, etc.

Mr. Sims suggested issuing a list of all the parks to the board and asking them to identify the top 5 that are of most interest to them in order to streamline the process and ensure staff time is used efficiently. The board agreed and discussion ensued. Mr. Seeley will provide the board with a list of parks and asked how they would like them categorized. He will provide the list to the board by the end of the week.

Ms. Bonich inquired about additional lighting in the MLK park and Mr. Seeley stated there will be additional lighting at Unity Corner, the playground has motion sensor lights, and the lighting between Unity Corner and the events center will be functioning again soon. One of the struggles comes from field rentals, which provide a lot of light throughout the park, but when they aren't rented it can be a little dark, so bollard lights are a potential solution. There should also be decorative lighting throughout the park as well. Her concern is the area nearing the playground. Mr. Seeley reminded her that hardscape improvements are going to be in progress and landscape beds will be redone, so lighting can be a discussion.

Other topics of concern were the quality of the sports fields. Mr. Seeley informed the board that the goal is to perform regular closures to allow the fields to recover, but that also causes backlash from the community for not allowing the fields to be accessible.

6. Staff Updates

a. Project Update

Mr. Seeley provided updates on the improvements at the Rollins softball fields on Harper Ave. along with a rendering of what the completed building would look like. Other updates included the geothermal heating for the pool, the pickleball courts, and Unity Corner which is on hold until staff receive the statue from the artist.

The board inquired about the public restrooms in West Meadow. He stated the project is actually ahead of schedule. It will be a public restroom but includes an overhang area that provides shade and seating. There is also a second portion that will provide a storage area with a window that can be used as a service area for EMS/Public Safety staff during larger events.

Staff anticipate hearing from the contractor soon regarding the playground plans and hope to have that started soon.

The board feels there is a lot coming up between the master plan, MLK playground, Rollins softball field, and the Blue Dolphins project. Mrs. Daus reminded the board that there would be a public meeting in the near future as well.

The special event fee waiver item is being presented to the city commission in mid-May.

Staff is pushing for July to present the budget to the board but it is typically August. Mrs. Daus updated the board on the increased par and increased rating on WP9. Hole # 1 used to be on the left is now on the right, and hole #10 is now hole #1.

The Easter events will be taking place this Saturday at Seven Oaks, Phelps Park, Farmer's Market, MLK Park, and Ward Park.

A list of March - May Events was presented to the board as well, with the upcoming events being Easter in the Park, Run for the Trees, and Pilates in the park at Seven Oaks. However, staff is mindful that with summer approaching, it is not an optimal time to promote outdoor exercise classes, and it may be something they put more focus on in the Fall. Staff is working with businesses near the park to see if they are interested in hosting Saturday morning classes.

Ms. Marsh informed Mr. Seeley that there is a den of coyotes in the former Tree Farm property. Staff informed her that it is something that is not handled in-house and when FWC is called they recommend the wildlife be left alone.

7. Board Comments

8. Upcoming Agenda Items

9. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 6:35pm

Approved by the Board on May 21, 2025
/s/ Laura Halsey, Recreation Coordinator