



Keep Winter Park Beautiful & Sustainable Advisory Board Regular Meeting Minutes

January 20, 2026 at 11:45 AM

City Hall Commission Chambers
401 S. Park Avenue

Present

Becky Distad, Zeina Matar-Ghantous, Terry Hotard, Susy Scarlatos, Tom Mould

Absent

John Page

Staff Present

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

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 11:45 am. Decorum statement was read.

2. Approval of Minutes

- a. Minutes of December 16, 2025

Motion made by Ms. Matar-Ghantous to approve the minutes, seconded by Mr. Hotard. Motion carried unanimously.

3. Public Comments (for items not on the agenda)

4. Action Items

- a. 2026 Green School Grant Program

Ms. Marshall noted that the Green School Grant will be voted on today by the board and provided background information on the program to the newest members. The Winter Park Beautiful and Sustainable Advisory Board Green Schools Grant Program offers mini grants to public and private schools serving Winter Park residents. These grants aim to support schools in reaching sustainability goals, beautifying campuses, and involving students in sustainability practices. Ten applications were received for 2026, with \$5000 in available funding. An email was sent two weeks ago containing all the applications, allowing the board to review them. The email included a link to view each full application and its details. Staff has recommended awarding the following schools:

- Edgewater High School: \$500
- Audubon Park School: \$565
- Dommerich Elementary School: \$920

- Orlando Gifted Academy: \$1500
- Howell Branch Academy: \$1515

Ms. Distad expressed appreciation to the staff for the detailed spreadsheet and invited further discussion. Mr. Hotard confirmed that last year, funds were evenly allocated among 10 out of the 12 schools. Staff stated their recommendations were based on the diversification of sustainability projects.

Mr. Mould recommended allocating \$565 to Audubon Park. He viewed the Dommerich smoothie bicycle more as a physics lesson and was uncertain about its environmental benefits, suggesting half the amount—\$460 instead of \$920—if it proceeds. He agreed with \$500 each for Edgewater and Glenridge Harmony Garden, and proposed half of \$1515 for Howell Branch Academy. For Orlando Gifted Academy, the \$1500, and for Welbourne Nursery & Preschool, \$250. Altogether, this totals less than \$5000. The extra could be given to another board member's recommendation or divided among the selected schools.

Ms. Scarlatos recommended considering Welbourne Nursery & Preschool, highlighting that it's a garden project. If not the whole amount asked for of \$1000, then a portion. Ms. Matos-Ghantous was pleased with the staff's recommendation or proposed allocating \$500 each.

Motion made by Mr. Hotard to spread the funds over the applicants evenly; seconded by Mr. Mould.

Discussion – Mr. Mould mentioned that schools engaging in innovative thinking should be recognized, and it's acceptable to decline funding for some schools. Ms. Scarlatos inquired how projects are managed if certain schools do not receive the full amount awarded. Ms. Miller responded that staff are able to offer resources to support the schools.

Motion passed with a 4-1 vote. Mr. Mould voted no.

5. Non-Action Items

6. Staff Updates

a. Natural Resources & Sustainability

Martin Luther King Jr. Learning Garden Update - Ms. Miller explained that KWPBS received a grant and introduced the MLK Learning Garden near the library. With this funding, staff purchased 10 raised beds and plan to include a fence, arbor, storage shed, gardening tools, and educational materials for partners. The list of partners was shown on the slide, and she described the garden and its related events. The project also features six fruit trees, a tree stump outdoor classroom area, provided by the Parks and Forestry division, a washing station, a composter, native landscaping and aquatic shoreline demonstration, and interpretive signage. The ribbon-cutting ceremony is scheduled for April and will be attended by the board and Commission. She also shared photos showing progress made and the final design.

KWPB&S Note Card Update - Ms. Miller showcased the new 2025 nature photography note cards and mentioned they are now available for purchase. There are 30 remaining from the 2024 stock.

Ms. Eby provided an update regarding the beautification of the electric utility boxes. She reported that a GIS tracking system combined with a work order process has been established, incorporating a priority ranking system. Not only are electric utility boxes included, but communication companies are also responsible for the maintenance of their respective boxes. Mr. Hotard expressed appreciation to Gloria for her persistent efforts and recommended that the most visible boxes should be given priority. He also proposed collaborating with civic and social clubs within the community. Ms. Eby assured that graffiti-covered boxes are prioritized and that the Utilities Advisory Board will be kept informed of these updates. Mr. Mould inquired whether the boxes will be wrapped, to which Ms. Eby responded that the electric utility's primary concern is safety.

b. Upcoming Events

MLK Park Litter Clean-up — January 24th 9 am @ MLK Park

Love the Earth Tree Planting — February 7th 9 am @ Howell Branch Preserve

7. Board Comments

Mr. Hotard and Ms. Scarlatos asked about a section on North Park Ave. in front of the Park Grove neighborhood wall, which is partly broken and requires landscaping. The homeowners of Park Grove are responsible for the maintenance of the interior of the wall. However, the outside, street-facing portion within the easement needs upkeep. Ms. Eby will look into it.

a. Green Minutes

Ms. Matar-Ghantous praised a restaurant for its environmental efforts and inquired if they knew about the Green Business Awards. She mentioned that the staff was unaware of the program and recommended that the board increase its promotion of the award, similar to the Green School Grant program.

b. New Business/Announcements

8. Upcoming Agenda Items

Ms. Matar-Ghantous motioned to include the Green Business Awards in the next agenda; Mr. Mould seconded. The motion passed unanimously with a 5-0 vote.

9. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 12:21 p.m.

Approved by the board on February 17, 2026
/s/ Bahiyyah Layton, Board Coordinator