Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes
October 20, 2026 – 4:01PM
City Hall – 2nd Floor – Open Planning Area

Present: Patt Sned, Perry Douglass, Jill Merrell, Mary Murphy, Jacquelyn Taylor
Staff Present: Leah Rockwell, Erin Paige, Linda Madigan
Absent: Phil Growick
Guest(s):

Topic	**Discussion / Action / Follow Up**
Call to Order	Meeting called to order by *Patt Sned* at 4:01p.m. Motion made to approve September 8, 2026, meeting minutes; made by *Patt Sned* with a first by *Mary Murphy* and a second motion by *Jill Merrell*. All in favor.
New Business	— *Leah Rockwell* stated we are moving forward with the new fiscal budget year. — *Leah Rockwell* stated that with construction at Gaines Park Community Center, we have Art in Public Places requirements. Art in Public Places will work with Friends of Gaines Park to put art into Gaines Park. Once Sybille Canthal, Director of Art in Public Places, works with the community in choosing an artist then she will come and make a presentation for the PRAC Committee.
Old Business	**Bond Projects Update –** — *Currie Park* – *Leah Rockwell* stated that we anticipate a Ribbon Cutting of phase one on March 6th, 2027. Phase one is everything south of the new entrance way, as we have a delay in doing work in the parking lot where the tennis courts and boat ramp are located. There was utility work done for the lift station and pipes had to be replaced. Now it has been completed, construction can move forward. *Jill Merrell* asked what this phase includes. *Leah Rockwell* stated that it includes the resiliency center, the playground, walkways, pickleball courts, green spaces, and new parking lot by the MLK Memorial. The parking lot, tennis courts and boat ramps will be completed in phase 2. *Leah Rockwell* stated that phase three will be the above water board walks and at this time we are unsure of where we will get funding to do this. We need matching funding to be able to get a grant from any grant organization. We have interest from F.I.N.D. (Florida Inland Navigation District), in funding the board walks at fifty per cent. We need to find $1.5 million to match that. *Patt Sned* asked what phase the restaurant is in. *Leah Rockwell* stated that the restaurant is in its own phase and that she considers it to be part of phase three but right now we are still in negotiations with their contract. Once the contract is complete then we will receive some conceptual designs for consideration to give to the community. *Patt Sned* asked if the negotiations include the decrease of the number of people the restaurant can accommodate. *Leah Rockwell* stated that as far as the seating, the 9,000 square foot building cannot accommodate 400 people. *Patt Sned* also asked if there was a discussion on parking and *Leah Rockwell* stated she did not know. — *Gaines Park – Community Center & Tennis Center* – *Erin Paige* stated that we are finishing out the door framing, and the last of the interior trim. We are working on hooking up the gas for the commercial kitchen. We are doing touch up painting. There is minor work to be done in the gymnasium such as finishing up the padding. The work on the tennis courts, that needed to be adjusted for regulations, started this week and should be completed in two weeks. We have a Ribbon Cutting date set for December 12th. At the Ribbon Cutting we will have programs taking place such as First Aid/CPR classes, Senior classes, Nikki Sweets doing a baking class, instructional basketball, pickleball lessons and soul line dancing. The Ribbon Cutting with the Mayor is at 10:30 AM, with programs running until 1:30/2:00PM. On

November 2nd, we will be doing the furniture build out and the IT to be ready to go. *Leah Rockwell* suggested that we hold the next PRAC meeting at the Community Center, to allow the PRAC Committee members to walk through the Community Center and Tennis Center. *Mary Murphy* and *Patt Sned* agreed.

- *Dreher Park* **–** *Leah Rockwell* stated that even though everything is done at the playground, there were comments about shade at the Ribbon Cutting. We have a contract going through to bring in several twenty-foot trees for more shade quickly. The cost will come from the General Fund budget.
- *Village Paws Park* – *Leah Rockwell* stated that the Ribbon Cutting is on October 31st. The Park has been open, but the neighborhood wants an official Ribbon Cutting. Commissioner Warren will attend and we will be doing a Dog Costume Contest for any dogs that show up.
- *Brian Chappell Fishing Pier* **–** *Leah Rockwell* stated that we had the Ribbon Cutting and it was a wonderful success. The Police Department attended in dress uniform, and we were delighted to have them there as the park is named after a fallen officer. *Mary Murphy* stated that she spoke with *Sargent Lewis* and suggested that the Police Department provide a plaque stating who *Brian Chappell* was and have it put up in the park in his honor. *Leah Rockwell* stated that was a wonderful idea. *Leah Rockwell* stated that the Office of Sustainability approached her asking about putting in an oyster garden at the fishing pier. She informed them that she would have to talk to the PRAC Committee and the Neighborhood Association. *Leah Rockwell* explained that an oyster garden is an apparatus that we hang near the pier or off the pier that oysters grow on to help clean the water and help create a place for fish to eat and provide a habitat for wildlife. *Leah Rockwell* stated she is all for it as it helps the environment. *Jill Merrell* asked if there are any negative results from doing this. *Leah Rockwell* stated that there would not be anything negative, except if someone tried to harvest the oysters. She said she would ask the Manager of Sustainability to put together talking points for the neighborhood to make sure they are all in agreement in doing this. *Mary Murphy* asked if the Department of Sustainability would maintain them. *Leah Rockwell* stated yes, they would. *Patt Sned* asked what they would use to create this hanging garden. *Leah Rockwell* stated that usually is a vertical apparatus but unsure.
- *Warren Hawkins Aquatic Center* – *Leah Rockwell* stated that it was out to bid but we had to cancel the bid because of an issue with the IT specifications in the documents that had to be corrected. We will be putting it back out to bid this weekend. The consultant who did the work had to incur the cost of the corrections.
- *Lincoln Park Lighting* – *Leah Rockwell* stated that we are waiting on the environmental to be completed for HUD (Housing and Urban Development). HCD (Housing Community and Development) are working on this for us, we have checked all the boxes, and hope to get funding by the end of the week or early next week for both Lincoln Park and Gaines Park to do the lighting. We have approximately $350,000 for the lighting at Lincoln to light the multipurpose field. It is going to cost us close to $800,000 so they will subsidize the difference.

Penny Sales Tax –

- *Howard Park Community Center* – *Leah Rockwell* stated that the fence has gone up, and the contractor is starting to stage. The official groundbreaking will be December 5th at 10AM. We are in the process of getting a demolition permit for portions of the building. *Leah Rockwell* stated she ordered small toy trucks so that kids can play in the piles of dirt we will have at the groundbreaking to bring families out to see it.

General Fund –

- *Maintenance Complex – Leah Rockwell* stated that everything has been completed. There are a few other upgrades that we want to make with the money set aside for the renovation.
- *Evergreen Cemetery – Leah Rockwell* reported that the findings from the Evergreen Cemetery consultant's public outreach were presented at a Mayor City Commission Workshop. The recommendations focused on maintaining and improving the historic cemetery, and funding has already been allocated. Planned improvements include repaving cemetery roads, installing wayfinding signs, lot and block markers, and a historical kiosk. We will create a dedicated section for the cemetery's military crosses that are in the cemetery. We will be making minor repairs to the maintenance building and upgrading its restroom, this will provide staff with a place to cool off and get water. We will be upgrading the lighting, with additional light poles added if needed. *Leah Rockwell* stated that we have a database that is going to have an online presence through the City website. Loved ones can go in and look up where their relatives have been laid to rest and they can add further information about the person. Then we will review the information to determine if it stays or not. We would like to do the same thing in Woodlawn at some point. *Jill Merrell* suggested that we go to Palm Beach Atlantic to ask students to go to the cemetery to help in getting the information to upload. *Leah Rockwell* stated that this is a very specific job with rules and the professional we brought in has knowledge in this area. She added that the professional could certainly use the manpower to help him. *Jill Merrell* stated it's important for the community to work together and get involved in maintaining the cemeteries. She said that they need to appreciate all that we as a city are doing. *Patt Sned* agreed and said it is very important that involvement by the community is part of the solution. *Leah Rockwell* stated we have done cleaning events in the past and it was a great success with the community's help, so we will be doing the same again.
- *Gaines Park Lights – Leah Rockwell* stated that we are getting HCD funding of approximately $1.5 million to upgrade the metal halogen lights to LED at Gaines Park. There are close to 300 lights that must be replaced.
- *Woodlawn Cemetery – Leah Rockwell* stated that during the budget process she had asked that money be moved from the cemetery sinking fund for Woodlawn Cemetery so we can repave the roads. Once we do Evergreen we will start on this project. *Jill Merrell* asked about the event the Historical Society does at Woodlawn. *Leah Rockwell stated* that during the fall season, once a month, with members of the team that does this Historical Society event, we do a walk-through historical tour of the cemetery to learn about the people who are buried there. Some of the history is unique and mysterious. *Jill Merrell* is concerned that the information is not getting out there regarding the tours. *Leah Rockwell* stated they are not currently available as the dates are being confirmed but they are advertised on the city website under Parks and Recreation.

Parks Maintenance -

- *George Petty Park – Leah Rockwell* stated the contract is in for improvements. We noticed that during the King Tide the debris from the intercoastal came halfway up into the park. We are talking to Engineering Department about that as there are depressions where the water came halfway up, we want to know if this part of their

stormwater design. *Patt Sned* asked about the donated playground equipment that was offered. *Leah Rockwell* stated they are still working on the design, and the neighborhood is in contact with the generous donor also.

The TREEmendous WPB Program –

- *Leah Rockwell* stated that we are still creating videos talking about parks. Once they are complete, she will bring them to the PRAC Committee to review. The Office of Communications is focusing on that right now and after that will focus on the naming of the trees. *Mary Murphy* asked if this was the same program we did in the past at Osprey Park. *Leah Rockwell* stated that yes, it was. *Mary Murphy* stated that it was a great program.

Staff Comments

- **Recreation Programs** – *Erin Paige* stated:
- *Basketball* – Registration has begun.
- *Flag Football* – First week started and the first game was held last night. It is being held at Gaines Park.
- *Winter Camp* – Registration opened on September 1st.
- *Fall Festival* – Saturday, October 24th is our Annual Fall Festival at Gaines Park. It starts at 4 pm at the multipurpose fields. There will be bounce houses, music, food trucks, games, candy, and facepainting.
- *Early Voting* – Early voting is at Gaines Park. All our community centers will be open for voting on November 3rd.
- *South Olive* – We are finalizing the paperwork for art and dance classes. We continue to work on our programming.
- *Volleyball* – We are looking into bringing this to the north end of town as the south end already has a club.
- *Let's Play Tennis* – Negotiations are done and they received the final contract today. We are very happy with the negotiations. *Let's Play Tennis* are excited to bring quality tennis to all the facilities. Fees will go up for the use of courts, nothing different than fees charged by other municipalities. We made a comparison with Palm Beach Garden, Boynton and Wellington. The fees are comparable, in some instances fees are less. *Patt Sned* asked how much it will cost to use a court for an hour. *Leah Rockwell* and *Erin Paige* stated that the court fees depend on the center and their peak times. For instance, the fees may be South Olive, it is $9 per hour and in Gaines Park it is $5. Howard Park Clay courts cost $15 per hour.
- **Community Events** – *Leah Rockwell* stated:
- *Green Market* – Started on October 3rd and is doing very well.
- *Clematis by Fright* – Thursday, October 29th for Halloween.
- *Sandi Tree* – We are currently working on preparation for Sandi Tree. The sand will be delivered in November.

Board Comments

- *Mary Murphy* stated that the lights are off in Brian Chappell Park. *Leah Rockwell* stated she will ask *Todd Snyder* to follow up with FPL. The lights were disconnected because of the property next to the park.
- *Jill Merrell* asked about Trinity Park. *Leah Rockwell* stated that Phillips Point is doing the work and that she does not know if the Utilities Department has started to do their work there yet to upgrade the lift station. *Leah Rockwell* stated she will ask the Engineering Department, as they know more about the Trinity Park utilities project. *Jill Merrell* stated that there is a lot of work being done. *Patt Sned* stated that it still is a city park, Phillips Point just have the maintenance contract on the park for a period of time.

— *Mary Murphy* stated that in the 9/11 Park, the tombstone in front of the 9/11 stone has been inscribed with "9/11 Memorial Park". *Jill Merrell* asked where this was, *Leah Rockwell* stated that it is along Flagler.

Public Comment

— None.

Next Meeting

Tuesday, November 10, 2026, at 4:00 p.m. at the Gaines Park Community Center.

Meeting Adjourned

Patt Sned made a motion to adjourn at 4:51 p.m. First by *Mary Murphy* with a second by *Perry Douglass*. All in favor. Meeting adjourned at 4:51 p.m.