

## Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee

### Meeting Minutes

December 9<sup>th</sup>, 2025 – 4:00PM

City Hall – 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor – HR Training Room

**Present:** Patt Sned, Perry Douglass, Mary Murphy, Niels Heimeriks, Jill Merrell  
**Staff Present:** Leah Rockwell, Todd Snyder, Erin Paige, Linda Madigan  
**Absent:** Michael Odum, Jacquelyn Taylor, Phil Growick  
**Guest(s):** Gail Levine

#### **Topic**                      **Discussion / Action / Follow Up**

**Call to Order**                      Meeting called to order by *Patt Sned* at 4:00 p.m.  
Motion made to approve November 4, 2025, meeting minutes; made by *Patt Sned* with a first by *Perry Douglass* and a second motion by *Niels Heimeriks*. All in favor.

**New Business**

- *Leah Rockwell* introduced *Jill Merrell*, our new Parks and Recreation Committee member. *Jill Merrell* stated that she was part of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee in the City of Wellington. She moved to the City of West Palm Beach fourteen years ago. She said that she loves the city and wants to do more, which is why she is delighted to be part of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee for the City of West Palm Beach. All the existing PRAC members introduced themselves and welcomed *Jill Merrell*.
- *Leah Rockwell* introduced *Erin Paige*, our new Assistant Director of Recreation. She has worked with the city for twenty-one years. *Leah Rockwell* stated that *Erin Paige* was a Recreation Manager where she oversaw Gaines Park, the Youth Empowerment Center at Pleasant City, Coleman Park and all our out-of-school programs before becoming our Assistant Director. All the PRAC members welcomed *Erin Paige*.

#### **Old Business**                      **Bond Projects Update –**

- *Currie Park* – *Leah Rockwell* stated that everything is looking great. *Patt Sned* stated progress looked slow. *Leah Rockwell* stated that it looks slow because we are currently working on the infrastructure below ground that can't be seen. Once that is complete then we can start building up which will take less time than the underground infrastructure. *Leah Rockwell* stated she just received the monthly report for November's work progress, and you can see the horseshoe shoreline cut out taking shape. Also, all the footings are starting to go in for the resiliency hub center. *Patt Sned* asked about the latest plan being proposed shutting the two lanes on Flagler, for more greenspace to activate that space downtown. She is concerned about this and asked if they could wait until Currie Park is done before closing the two lanes of traffic. *Leah Rockwell* stated that these are conceptual designs and are being further vetted. *Leah Rockwell* stated that they are holding multiple community meetings and everything relating to the initial plan can be discussed at the meetings. *Jill Merrell* asked for further information about the Downtown master plan. *Leah Rockwell* stated that there is a Downtown master plan meeting happening tonight at 5:30pm and the waterfront redesign which is part of the plan may also be discussed.
- *Gaines Park – Community Center & Tennis Center* – *Leah Rockwell* stated that there was a fire in mid-November. Someone gained access to the electrical room in the community center, and we think they put a cigarette out on the cardboard that the main electrical switch was covered in that was waiting to be installed. The switch was damaged in the fire. It took us six months to get the switch initially, so we were very

concerned about having to wait another six months. The contractor was able to expediate a new switch which will now take six to eight weeks. We should have it by mid-January. The completion date for the community center and tennis center will now be pushed back by another month or two. *Perry Douglass* stated that luckily that was the only damage. *Leah Rockwell* stated that thankfully our staff saw the fire and were able to act quickly and called 911. There was no additional damage. We hope to open the courts for play in early January.

- *South Olive – Tennis Courts and Parking Lot* – *Leah Rockwell* stated that all twelve courts are open for play. There was an issue with three of the courts which have now been corrected.
- *Warren Hawkins Aquatic Center* – *Leah Rockwell* stated we should have a full set of preliminary designs by February which we will bring to the committee once we review.
- *Brian Chappell Park Fishing Pier* – *Leah Rockwell* stated we should have the pilings in by February or March. Once they are in, they can start construction and it should go very quickly. We hope that the project will be complete by mid-summer.
- *Village Paws Park* – *Leah Rockwell* stated that we went to commission on Monday to move money to be able to move forward with the project. The project should start in February.

#### **Penny Sales Tax –**

- *Howard Park Community Center* – *Leah Rockwell* stated that she was told by our procurement department that the bid will hopefully go out by the end of this month. We are three months behind on getting it out. But what we are putting out is a better product so we should get better bids back. The timeline for putting the bid out is thirty days. We hope to be able to go under contract by March, and to break ground in April. *Jill Merrell* asked what improvements are being made. *Leah Rockwell* informed her of the history of the original community center and then explained the improvements we plan to make. *Patt Sned* asked if All Site are allowed to bid on this project. *Leah Rockwell* stated that their performance on Coleman Park is on file, and that will be considered should they decide to bid on the Howard Park Community Center improvement.
- *Dreher Park Playground* – *No update.*

#### **General Fund –**

- *Village Boulevard* – *Todd Snyder* stated we have been replanting the medians with new plant material. We are now seventy percent complete with that project.
- *Okeechobee Boulevard* – *Todd Snyder* stated we just planted five more royal palms in the center median. We are finding it difficult to get royal palms that are tall. We have a further twelve that need to be delivered and planted.
- *Palm Beach Lakes* – *Todd Snyder* stated that we are going through our Procurement Department for the contract to replace the dead royal palms there. We are now outsourcing fertilization of the new palms that we are planting. *Gail Levine* (public guest) asked if they are the trees that are on the medians beginning on Australian going west. *Leah Rockwell* confirmed that they are.

#### **The TREEmendous Program –**

- *Leah Rockwell* stated that *Phil Growick* has started conversations with *Joe Capozzi* of the Palm Beach Post. The department of communication in the Mayor's office gave him permission to discuss the program with *Mr. Capozzi*. *Leah Rockwell* spoke in detail about the proposed program to *Jill Merrell*. *Jill Merrell* stated that she thought it was a wonderful program to teach members of the community about the importance of trees. *Leah Rockwell* stated that we are also working on a logo for the program.

**Staff  
Comments**

- Recreation Programs – *Erin Paige* stated tomorrow will be the last day for the youth flag football playoffs which is being run at Gaines Park. We are now in the middle of registration for our Tiny Tots soccer program for four- to six-year-olds as well as our High School basketball program.
  - Coleman Park is having a drop-in program for teens. In the evenings they are running some open gym time slots. Last Friday was their first day for their soul line dancing class. Next Friday will be the first day for the Smart Cats senior program.
  - Pleasant City just hosted Share a Supper, which was very successful. *Leah Rockwell* and *Erin Paige* both thanked *Patt Sned* for volunteering with her grandsons, As well as *Jackie Taylor*. Pleasant City is wrapping up the holiday toy season. We are grateful to the Blum Foundation who donate money to buy toys for children in the community, the elementary school and two of the daycare facilities.
  - South Olive is having their after-school program holiday show next week. There is also a door decorating contest that will take place, and winter camp registration has begun.
- Community Events – *Leah Rockwell* stated that Holiday in Paradise started last Thursday for the month of December. Winter Wonderful at Heart and Soul was held on Saturday night with the tree lighting in the park. We had breakfast with Santa at the Lake Pavilion on Sunday and Green Market is happening every Saturday. “Nights on Northwood” event is this Friday. On Wednesday, 12/17, Valarie Tyson is at the Sunset Lounge doing Jazz and Blues. *Jill Merrell* complimented the events division for the Boney James event at the Sunset Lounge.
- Parks Maintenance – *Todd Snyder* stated we are renovating the restrooms at our park’s maintenance complex. We are in the process of our annual mulching for playgrounds and trails which do not have pour in place surfacing or asphalt.
- *Niels Heimeriks* asked about the tennis center RFP. *Leah Rockwell* stated we are currently in a cone of silence.
- *Gail Levine* stated that she would like a sign with a biography like the one at Alice Mickens Park for Mary Brandon’s Dog Park. *Leah Rockwell* stated that she will discuss with *Todd Snyder* and *Michelle Terebinski* about possibly putting a QR code on each sign where people can scan it with their phones and be able to read about each of our parks.

**Board  
Comments  
Public  
Comment**

**Next Meeting  
Meeting  
Adjourned**

Tuesday, January 13<sup>th</sup>, 2026, at 4:00 p.m. 3rd Floor HR Training Room, City Hall.  
*Patt Sned* made a motion to adjourn at 4:49 p.m. First by *Perry Douglass* with a second by *Niels Heimeriks*. All in favor. Meeting adjourned at 4:49 p.m.