

## Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee

### Meeting Minutes

June 10<sup>th</sup>, 2025 – 4:01PM

City Hall – 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor - Open Planning Area

**Present:** Michael Odum, Mary Murphy, Perry  
Douglass, Phil Growick, Niels  
Heimeriks, Patt Sned, Jacquelyn Taylor

**Staff Present:** Leah Rockwell, Linda Madigan, Tracy  
Merrill

**Absent:**

**Guest(s):** Alfonso Hernandez – Architect  
Tarelle Goldwire on behalf of  
Commissioner Warren

#### Topic

#### Discussion / Action / Follow Up

Call to Order

Meeting called to order by *Michael Odum* at 4:01 p.m.

Motion made to approve May 13, 2025, meeting minutes; made by *Michael Odum* with a first by *Perry Douglass* and a second motion by *Niel Heimeriks*. All in favor.

**New Business**

- *Michael Odum* read the agenda public policy with meeting attendees relating to engagement and behavior during our public meetings.

**Old Business**

#### Bond Projects Update –

- *Currie Park* – *Leah Rockwell* stated that construction has begun, and they are starting to excavate for the cut out into the seawall. *Leah Rockwell* stated that she will take progress pictures as these improvements happen and present them to the PRAC committee. *Perry Douglass* asked about the timeline for completion. *Leah Rockwell* stated that by December 2026, early 2027, the project will be complete.
- *Gaines Park – Community Center & Tennis Center* – *Leah Rockwell* stated the project is moving forward and that it is on schedule. *Jacquelyn Taylor* asked about honoring *Tiffany Morgan*, who worked for The City of West Palm Beach, by naming a room after her. *Leah Rockwell* stated that the community needs to prepare a letter requesting the naming of a room. This will come to PRAC and this will be brought to Administration and Commission.
- *South Olive – Tennis Courts and Parking Lot* – *Leah Rockwell* stated that the final underground work is being done, we are doing the compacting for the courts and all the fencing came down. We can now do the new fencing and upgrade the lighting. Everything is on schedule. We are very happy with Lox Construction, the contractor doing the project.
- *Warren Hawkins Aquatic Center* – *Leah Rockwell* stated that a design team has been selected, and we are working with the legal department in finishing their contract so they can start the design for the renovation of the aquatic center.
- *Village Paws Park* – *Leah Rockwell* stated that we had hoped to have *Lorenzo Rivera*, the project manager, to make a design presentation today, but the in-house design team have not finalized the plans. We should have the design ready to present to the PRAC committee at the next meeting in July.
- *Brian Chappell Park Fishing Pier* – *Leah Rockwell* stated that at the Commission Meeting last night, funds were moved from Bond Reserves into the project so that we can now move forward with the contract to award it to the only bidder that bid on the project and get the fishing pier back in place.
- *Dreher Park Playground* – No Update.

#### Penny Sales Tax –

- *Howard Park Community Center* – *Leah Rockwell* introduced *Mr. Alfonso Hernandez*, Architect, who made a presentation to the PRAC Committee showing his design of the new Howard Park Community Center. *Mr. Hernandez* stated the Royal Poinciana tree at Howard Park was the source of inspiration for the design. *Mr. Hernandez*

explained that DD Howard the Founder of Howard Park, who was the first Superintendent the City had in the 1930's, had the idea of creating Howard Park, and he donated thousands of Poinciana trees throughout South Florida. This dedication to nature has been a huge influence on the design concept for the Howard Park Community Center. Funding overall will be for the community center, but the parking lot will also be resurfaced. The timber trussed roof that is in the existing community center will be repurposed as an outdoor pavilion. There will also be a small café in the lobby area. There will be three multipurpose rooms. Two alternates for the kitchen were shown. One is a warming kitchen, and the alternative is a small commercial kitchen. Funding will determine which one will be built. *Leah Rockwell* stated that at the beginning of this project there were two design companies that submitted plans and the community preferred *Mr. Hernandez'* design. *Perry Douglass* concurred stating the design is beautiful. *Mr. Hernandez* stated that the plans are permit ready and he was approved to bring in these alternates to the plans. Now these alternates will go back to permit. Once the project goes out to bid, we then wait for bids to come in and contracts completed. This process could take up to five months. After this, *Mr. Hernandez* hopes construction will begin before the end of the year. The estimated timeline for completion will be a little over a year all going well. *Ms. Tracy Merrill*, The Howard Pk Recreation Campus Manager, asked *Mr. Hernandez* about the design relating to storage and accessibility which *Mr. Hernandez* explained and satisfied any concerns of *Ms. Merrill*. *Jacquelyn Taylor* complimented *Mr. Hernandez* on his presentation. The PRAC committed all agreed and thanked *Mr. Hernandez* for his wonderful design and time.

- *Coleman Park Community Center and Gymnasium* – *Leah Rockwell* stated we met the contractor, and we are working with him to make sure all the punch list items left to be done are completed. We hope that by the end of June we will be able to start to move in. We will be better able to let the community know when we will be having the ribbon cutting ceremony once we move in.

#### **Public Works Bond –**

- *Dreher Park Restrooms* – *Leah Rockwell* stated all restrooms are currently going through the electrical and plumbing hook up process.

#### **General Fund –**

- *Bill Moss Hillcrest Paseo Athletic Fields* – *Leah Rockwell* said it is completely sprigged now, and we will be putting up an 8' fence protecting the park during this maintenance renovation.
- *Gaines Park Restroom* – No update.
- *Heart and Soul Park* – *Leah Rockwell* stated that the park has been vandalized. The sign was broken, the lights on the wall have been kicked in and destroyed and the swing was torn down. We are moving forward with fixing everything.
- *Dreher Park Tree Relocation* – *Leah Rockwell* stated that the Dreher Pk Neighborhood Association, Wendy Cox and the City worked together to save ten trees that would have otherwise been destroyed during the construction of the Boys & Girls Club. We will use the tree mitigation fund to move the trees and save them to plant elsewhere in the park.

- *Programs* – *Leah Rockwell* stated that the summer camps are well underway and that there may be a couple of spots available in our specialty camps. It is day two of our regular summer camps and all is well.
- *Community Events* – *Leah Rockwell* stated the Community Events team is currently working on 4<sup>th</sup> on Flagler

**Staff  
Comments**

- *Pickle and Plunge* – Leah Rockwell stated there is an outside contractor doing this event at Howard Park for over two hundred people which has sold out.

**PARKS:**

- *Parks Maintenance* – Leah Rockwell stated we are happy to be in rainy season.
- *Patt Sned* asked about the roads at Dreher Pk. Leah Rockwell stated that the Cox Science Center have requested a minor reconfiguration of the roadway from Southern to Summit in the park. This involves the two major roundabouts in the park on the north end being removed, and the roadway being direct. They will also add some additional parking spaces which they would fund. The Mayor asked staff to look at the plan. It must go through pre permitting plan review. Once a decision is made and if we might want to move forward, Leah Rockwell stated we would bring it to the PRAC committee to review. Leah Rockwell stated she expressed her concern about removing the roundabouts, saying they are crucial in slowing vehicles down when driving through the park. She stated she sent an email to planning office saying at a minimum if the reconfiguration does go through there needs to be speed control in the design other than signs.
- *Niels Heimeriks* asked about George Petty Park. Mr. Fritz and a developer have asked if they could donate funding for more playground equipment in the park. Leah Rockwell stated that the underground utilities in George Petty Park to stop the neighborhood from flooding cannot be hindered. Leah Rockwell stated that she suggested donating to another park close to that neighborhood that needs playground equipment instead. We are awaiting a response.
- *Niels Heimeriks* mentioned the Pocket Parks that were suggested by Michael Schmitt in a previous meeting. He looked at CRA and City owned properties, and he stated that there are opportunities to do Pockets Parks that could be used for dog parks.
- *None*

**Board  
Comments**

**Public  
Comment  
Next Meeting  
Meeting  
Adjourned**

Tuesday, July 8, 2025, at 4:00 p.m. on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Open Planning Area, City Hall.  
*Michael Odum* made a motion to adjourn at 5:27 p.m. First by *Niels Heimeriks* with a second by *Perry Douglass*. All in favor. Meeting adjourned at 5:27 p.m.