

CITY OF CLEWISTON
Parks, Recreation & Leisure Services Advisory Board
Regular Meeting Minutes

August 21, 2025

The City of Clewiston Parks, Recreation & Leisure Services (PR&LS) Advisory Board held a regular meeting on February 20, 2025, at 4:00 p.m., in the Commission Chambers at City Hall. The meeting was called to order at 4:02 p.m. by Chair Melissa “Dusty” McDuffie. The Chair then led all in attendance in the Pledge of Allegiance. Board Member Ryan Duffy offered an invocation.

PR&LS Advisory Board Members Present: Melissa “Dusty” McDuffie, Ryan Duffy, Ian Stone and Joe Foote.

PR&LS Members Absent: Jamie Redish

Personnel Present: Human Resources/Parks & Rec Director Ashly Sergent and Human Resources and Program Coordinator Jeanie Orozco.

Others Present:

Additions/Deletions/Changes and Approval of the Agenda – Agenda approved.

Public Comments – Bree Rojas, president of Little League. She wanted to stop by and touch base, she’s been in contact with Ashly. Trying to get on board, the Little League has already asked if we could run some tournaments. Just a couple of things that have to be done in the fields, nothing major. We are buying breakaway bases for all the fields. She would like to stay in touch with Ashly and work together to try and get those tournaments brought here. Little minor things, we are looking at the brick clay for the mounds. It’s a huge thing. It’s something some of the leagues talked about. It does require more maintenance; it would have to be maintained all year. It is more expensive, but we are willing to work with the city to see what we need to do to help maintain these fields where people would want to come to these fields. There are a lot of tournaments that can run through the summer. Allstars are random tournaments here and there, but we want to help where we, the League, can help. Getting the clay paths, base paths, are we able to do that, whatever we can do to get them together. Ms. Rojas says last year was the best year, field-wise, it was amazing. Director Sergent stated that Bree has been very helpful, and they have talked quite a bit. Somebody brought up putting a new roof on the concession stand and we have money to put into the facilities, but she wanted to look at what is most important or is there something else more important that should be done before the roof. Ms. Rojas says Little League does offer grants and she is looking into what they have to offer for her to request the funds. If we get all this stuff, how will we be able to maintain it? They may not even need the big quad next year. She has to look at the numbers but with Middle School

having girls' softball now Little League won't have enough to make a team. If they aren't using them then it will be little less maintenance. She is trying to do whatever she can to provide opportunities for those who don't make the team at the middle school level they can still play for Little League. Same thing with the Senior Boys. Vice chair Duffy asked if it's possible to get the minimum requirements to host a tournament to see what we don't have. Ms. Rojas said with us getting the breakaway bases we would meet the requirements. Board Member Joe Foote asked what the cost would be to do the brick clay for one mound. Ms. Rojas said "don't quote me" but it was like over \$600 for just the clay. Vice Chair Duffy says last year they had a workday out there and Ridgill sourced the brick clay, and he thinks they were the ones that got it to the High School. So, it's really a matter of finding the right supplier and lining it up. Board Member Foote said he knows that from that coast the grounds crew for the Twins or Redsox, not sure if he does that or not but he can see if it's the same source. Director Sergent said that Craig Dobson came over and helped us with the High School field. The reason we got him was because of one of our contractors, Cameron Carter, who knows him and brought him over to help install the brick clay for the mounds for the High School. She also said that we can decide what projects we want to work on together, but she did budget on things such as that because she knew we would have to do that for next year. Rodney will be doing a great job maintaining the fields even after the season is over. Vice Chair Duffy asked Bree when the scoreboards are up and operational who would be operating them? The league or parents? Ms. Rojas stated that based on what the new boxes look like and what they require. Is it something that we can trust the parents to operate. It is something the League will have to look into. Vice Chair Duffy said the more people that learn the rules of baseball and get involved the better. Director Sergent mentioned that these boxes come in their own little bag and are more updated than what was used in the past. She thinks they are very simple and yes, they will need to be taken care of, and she thinks the responsibility should fall on the people who need them and use them. She agrees with Vice Chair Duffy that the more people get involved and understand the rules the better because you have to know the rules and understand them to keep the score fair. Ms. Rojas said there are a lot of advantages with Little League like the grants and tournaments. Chair Duffy said it would be a good day when Clewiston is able to host a tournament. She said if we could host an Allstar it would be great. Ms. Rojas said this past year it was done in Labelle but they are even struggling to find volunteers to have a league. She also mentioned that when she travels to other cities their concessions are never busy and ours feeds Clewiston, we are always busy. Our concession is also getting deep cleaned this Saturday, August 23, 2025. Chair Duffy thanked Ms. Rojas for taking on that task, she knows it's a really, really big one and she thinks it's great that all this is coming together and the thought of hosting a tournament is just a dream. Getting the scoreboards and the fields in good condition we will be able to take pride in hosting people. Ms. Rojas also mentioned that scoreboards was on the list of things that you had to have to host tournaments, and we have those now, so she thanked everyone.

- 1. Department Reports, Program Plans & Project Updates** Director Sergent covering Sport Complex plans/reports and what's going on and what we are looking forward to. We had a great Summer Camp, it ended a few weeks ago, there were no injuries, and everything went well with over 60 kids at our camp throughout the summer. For our first

year we actually broke even, which is great, and we didn't have any negative feedback. All the scoreboards are up, and the team is working on the power as of now and everything should be done by the end of this week or early next week. The fields look great, and they are already being used. The racquetball court is getting redone so it can be used by the community. Our team is working on the racquetball court to finish it up with the painting. We are also talking about a system for the Splash Pad to recycle the water as the utilities cost to operate the Splash Pad is excessive. Our day to day has kicked off and we have a bunch of our facilities are getting booked steadily. This year we are charging some fees to all who use our Youth Center, i.e. Taekwondo, Sugardolls, etc. Jeanie mentioned taking on Golf, so it was a little more added to Parks & Rec. Director Sergeant went on to elaborate a little into what that means. She stated that the administrative function of the Golf Course is under Director Sergeant and Robbie is as well. It's fine, it's good but Jeanie is now helping out with payroll, billing all of those things for the Golf Course now. Robbie is now able to do his thing as far as being a pro out there and start to do some player development and new ideas for tournaments. The golf course is fully staffed for the first time in quite a while. Parks & Rec has taken back a lot of the mowing from Cross Training, it's a big task to take on but it frees up Cross Training on staying on top of our other parks that need attention. We have a couple of guys on our team that have higher skill sets to do things. Like having our guys paint the John Boy, it was a huge undertaking, but it was a really good way to save money. It looks so much better than before, we also had the sound dampers cleaned so the building immediately started to look a lot better. We are taking on more than Parks & Rec has ever tried to but it's saving the city money and it's obviously looking a lot better too. Orozco mentioned that after Summer Camp we did a deep cleaning of the back part of the Youth Center. One of our internal employees did the deep cleaning along with touching up paint to areas that needed it. Fall Break is being rolled out the first week of September for the start of registration. We will be hosting a mini-Fall Camp for the community. We will be capping out the number of kids to 25.

2. **Board member comments/questions/future meeting discussion topics** – Chair McDuffie asked when we would start taking Summer Camp inquiries. When did we start doing it last year? Director Sergeant stated that last year we didn't start putting anything out until Spring Break. It will probably be around that same time next year. We will also be putting out information for counselors as well. We think we will be needing more as we anticipate the Camp to grow so we will be looking during that February/March timeframe. Chair McDuffie said it seemed to be a real success. It was really nice seeing kids leading the little ones, the pool, splash pad and field area was packed when she drove by. Director Sergeant said that everyone seemed to like it, we just didn't know what to expect but she thinks that we got the right message that the community wants it, let's bring it back again let's figure out a way to make it bigger and better. It was way smoother than we anticipated. We are hoping to find more counselors for next year that really enjoy what they do for the kids. Board Member Joe Foote mentioned us staging at the John Boy once a week to use the ball fields. Director Sergeant said the only thing that

became an issue was the transportation and it can be costly so we have to figure out what to do on the transportation side so they can do other things in our community. Director said she budgeted for more money for next year to be able to do things of this nature. Board Member Joe Foote said his thoughts were that parents could drop them off at the beginning of day and pick them up at the end of day. Board Member Foote said he went by the park, and it looked great that it looks the best that it has been in months. That they are doing a great job. Board Member Stone said he has school organizations asking about Trunk or Treat. Ms. Rojas mentioned they would be doing it. Details to make it more spread out than just at the Sweetest Town Playground so there is more area for the number of people that come out. A list of vendors will be emailed to Bree so she can reach out and see who is able to participate. Board member asked when Fall Festival will be, it is scheduled for October 11, 2025. Director Sergent said we are partnering with HRMC who will be doing the warrior 5K walk and immediately following we will go into the Fall Festival. Any directional information provided by HRMC will be shared with the board.

3. **Next Meeting:** Next scheduled meeting is Thursday, September 18, 2025 @ 4:00 p.m., in the Commission Chambers at City Hall. The board agreed by consensus.

Adjournment

Board Chair Melissa “Dusty” McDuffie then declared the meeting adjourned with unanimous consensus of the members present @ 4:41 p.m.