



**Parks & Recreation
Advisory Board Meeting
December 14, 2023 at 6:00 PM
Howey-in-the-Hills Town Hall
101 N. Palm Ave.,
Howey-in-the-Hills, FL 34737**

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Board Chair Jim Steele called the Parks and Recreation Board Meeting to order at 06:02 p.m.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Joshua Husemann, Board Member | Staci Mauro, Board Member | Mary Arnold, Board Member | Vicki Steele, Board Secretary | Jim Steele, Board Chair

STAFF PRESENT:

Morgan Cates, Public Works Director | Brianna Pino, Public Works Administrative Assistant

Prior to agenda item #1, Public Works Director, Morgan Cates, informed Board Member Mauro that her term on the Board was ending and asked her if she would like to reapply to be a Board Member. Board Member Mauro stated that she would reapply to be a Board Member.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Consideration and Approval of the November 9, 2023, Parks & Recreation Advisory Board Meeting Minutes.

Board Chair Steele stated that the minutes for the 11/09/2023 Parks and Recreation Board Meeting were not completed prior to the meeting and could not be approved.

Motion made by Board Member Husemann to table the approval of the 11/09/2023 Parks and Recreation Meeting Minutes to the next Board Meeting; seconded by Board Member Arnold. Motion approved unanimously by voice vote.

Voting

Yea: Board Member Husemann, Board Member Mauro, Board Member Arnold, Board Secretary Steele, Board Chair Steele

Nay: None

OLD BUSINESS

2. Discussion: **Parks Assessment**

Board Member Husemann gave his park assessment of Central Park. Board Member Husemann stated that the basketball court had cracks in it.

Board Member Arnold gave her park assessment of Sara Maude Mason Nature Preserve. Board Member Arnold stated that the bushes on Lakeshore Blvd were overgrown and needed to be trimmed.

Board Member Mauro gave her assessment of Taylor Memorial Cemetery. Board Member Mauro stated that the cemetery was in good shape.

Board Secretary Steele gave her assessment of Griffin Park. Board Secretary Steele stated that the trash cans and water fountain needed to be painted. Public Works Director, Morgan Cates, stated that he could have an employee take care of it. Board Secretary Steele stated that the padding on the exercise equipment needed to be replaced. Board Secretary Steele stated that the weeds around the playground were an eyesore, and that the Town may need to resod around the playground, as the grass was thin.

Board Chair Steele gave his assessment of Blevins/Patriot Park. Board Chair Steele stated that the park looked good and was happy with the mulch.

The Board was happy with the new Town Christmas Tree outside of the library.

3. Discussion: **Staff Parks Update**

Public Works Director, Morgan Cates, stated that the Public Works employees have been adding mulch around Town buildings and parks.

4. Discussion: **Tree Planting Program**

Public Works Director, Morgan Cates, stated that he had spoken with Cherrylake Tree Farm, and will contact other tree farms for pricing on trees. Mr. Cates stated that he will need the Board to brainstorm location ideas for where trees will be placed. Mr. Cates stated that the trees would need to be "Street Trees", also known as "Street Canopy Trees", per the Town of Howey-in-the-Hills' code. Mr. Cates requested the Board's leadership to come up with a program.

Mr. Cates stated that when a tree dies instead of just taking it down, the Town should be replanting. Board Member Mauro asked if there was a list of the trees that have been removed to know where to replant. Mr. Cates stated that he will research past invoices from contractors that contain this information.

Board Secretary Steele asked if this initiative was included in the budget. Mr. Cates stated that there is a tree fund. Mr. Cates stated that he spoke with Sean O'Keefe, Town Manager, regarding allocating money every year into the fund.

5. Discussion: **Pine Park Design Update**

Public Works Director, Morgan Cates, stated that the Pine Park Design was introduced to the Town Council in the previous Town Council meeting. Mr. Cates stated that the only opposition was from Venezia HOA, regarding the section that would go into their property, designated for recreation. Mr. Cates stated that the Town Engineer was working on designing the driveway and the parking area to get a permit. Mr. Cates stated that the Town is working on retaining ownership of the property. Mr. Cates stated that he has put in for the next years to come \$200,000 each year towards Pine Park to start adding amenities and more overtime. Board Member Husemann stated that the Town Council discussed widening the sidewalk along 19 for the bike trail head.

NEW BUSINESS

6. Discussion: **Sara Maude Boardwalk RFP Update**

Public Works Director, Morgan Cates stated that the Sara Maude Boardwalk RFP has been completed and sent to the Town Clerk, John Brock, and the Town Manager, Sean O'Keefe, for review. Mr. Cates stated that the RFP is projected to be sent out at the beginning of January.

Board Member Husemann asked if there will be a timeline for the project. Mr. Cates stated that there will be a timeline. Mr. Cates stated that the timeline is estimated to be 6 months once the bidder is selected by the Town Council.

7. Discussion: **Lakeshore Finger Piers**

Public Works Director, Morgan Cates stated that he is working on an RFP for the replacement of a few finger piers. Mr. Cates stated that the money in the budget will not cover the full amount needed to replace the finger piers since the previous repairs done were not up to code and notwithstanding. Mr. Cates stated that the RFP should be done within a few weeks.

8. Discussion: **Rent.Fun**

Public Works Director, Morgan Cates stated that he received an email forwarded by the Mayor, Martha Macfarlane, from a company named Rent.Fun. Mr. Cates stated that this company is a kayak rental service. Mr. Cates stated that he will get together with Board Chair Steele to schedule a presentation. Mr. Cates stated that the City of Mount Dora is currently in partnership with Rent.Fun.

Mr. Cates advised that he put this rental service in the Capital Improvement Plan as a placeholder to be reviewed by the Town Council. Mr. Cates stated that this would also help with grants.

Board Chair Steele asked where this would be located. Mr. Cates stated that this would be located at Griffin Park by the boat ramp.

BOARD COMMENTS

None


PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

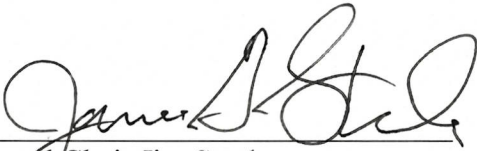
ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss, a motion was made by Board Member Husemann to adjourn the meeting; Board Member Mauro seconded the motion. Motion was approved unanimously by voice vote.

The Meeting adjourned at 6:45 p.m. | **Attendees: 7**

ATTEST:


Brianna Pino, Public Works Administrative Assistant



Board Chair Jim Steele