

LONGWOOD PARKS & RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD

Longwood City Commission Chambers

175 West Warren Avenue

Longwood, Florida

MINUTES

May 6, 2025

6:30 PM

Present: Larissa Morgan, Chair
Amanda Sackett, Vice-Chair
Jennifer Barr, Member
Ardel Cheffer, Member
Chris Capizzi, Leisure Services Director
Ryan Rinaldo, Recreation Manager
Donna Alt-Bowes, Recording Secretary

Absent: Judi Coad, Member
Abdallah "Albert" Ghazzawieh, Member
Jason Jose, Member

1. **CALL TO ORDER.** Chair Morgan called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Chair Morgan reminded all Board Members to please ask the Chair for recognition to speak when they have a question or a comment.

2. **PUBLIC INPUT**

A. Public Participation.

Mark Schneider, 264 West Magnolia Avenue, Longwood, Florida 32750. He spoke with William Watts, Acting City Manager and expressed his concern over the exceedingly amount of Muscovy ducks that are present in the park and in the parking lot to the south of it. He said according to his information Muscovy ducks are not an indigenous species of Florida and there is a Muscovy Duck and Migration Bird Treaty Act. This act states the ducks are considered a migratory bird and his concern is the amount of Muscovy ducks impacting the park are pushing out mallards, sand hill cranes, and other indigenous wildlife in the area. He said they are creating a lot of fecal matter on the bridges, the grass, the sidewalks, and it is a concern for getting diseases and sick from the fecal matter. He said there are signs up in the park that say "Do Not Feed the Ducks" but he has witnessed people feeding the ducks directly in front of the sign. He said someone has been putting up signs in the retention pond at South Seminole Hospital that says "Duck Feeding Area". There are continuous amounts of debris, litter, plastic materials, that ends up floating in the water in the retention pond. He said he has almost been hit by the Muscovy ducks and they cause a traffic issue. He would like the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board and hopefully the City Commission, to take a look at removing a good portion of them, or all of them because they are an invasive species. He said it does not seem like it takes a permit to remove them but he is not a professional trapper. He said they are supposed to be removed and euthanized and then buried

or burned according to the documents he has from Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC).

Chair Morgan advised Mr. Schneider that his three (3) minutes were up and asked staff how this is normally addressed.

Mr. Capizzi advised he could address it under his Staff Report.

3. ACTION ITEMS

A. Approve Minutes from the April 1, 2025, Meeting.

Vice-Chair Sackett moved to approve the April 1, 2025 minutes as presented. Seconded by Member Cheffer and carried by a unanimous voice vote with Member Ghazzawieh, Member Coad, and Member Jose absent.

4. BOARD MEMBER REPORTS

Member Cheffer reported she attended the Autism Event and worked the food area. She recommended that the MC not announce the food is available until it has arrived. She said the walk itself was great and asked about drone capabilities. She said it would have been cool to tape everyone coming and going at the walk.

Mr. Capizzi responded they do have drone capabilities and advised her to see the drone shots that are on the website.

Chair Morgan thanked the staff for everything they did for the Autism Walk. She said she was nervous and pleasantly surprised. All of the vendors were very autism focused and many of them said this was the greatest number of families they have spoken with. She said overall it was a success.

Discussion ensued regarding the outcome of the Autism event.

Chair Morgan stated that the Longwood Luau went well. She said Channel 6 along with the radio station 88.3 were both advertising the event. She was pleasantly surprised by the amount of people.

Discussion ensued regarding to the outcome of the Luau and the PA system.

Vice-Chair Sackett reported that she attended the Longwood Luau, which had a great turnout. She asked for staff to give an update on the Mother & Son Dance in their report. She knows Longwood Babe Ruth season has ended and All-Stars is beginning. She said she noticed at the female bathroom at Candyland Sports Complex the paint has been chipped away and not sure if it could be repaired. She asked for an update on the haunted house.

Member Barr reported she attended the Food Truck Battle and asked how the votes are tallied for the winning truck.

Mr. Rinaldo explained that there are different judges for each Food Truck Battle and they vote based on taste, smell, appearance, etc.

Discussion ensued about the Food Truck Battle, the price of each truck, and how they are judged.

Member Barr said she received the list about helping at the events but this time of year is busy and she is not available. Moving forward she would be able to help. She asked about the Memory Wall former Member Putz spoke about and asked if the project could be discussed in the future. It is something she would like to work on.

Vice-Chair Sackett asked if staff could speak to Kat with the Food Trucks about offering samples or a smaller portion, and suggested \$5.00. She said this would allow everyone an opportunity to taste something from all of the trucks.

Discussion ensued about the price of the Food Trucks.

5. STAFF REPORT

A. Staff Report for May 6, 2025.

Mr. Capizzi reported on the issue with the Muscovy ducks at Reiter Park. He said we have had this issue before. He advised that FWC does not remove Muscovy ducks and they are very adamant about it. Trappers have been hired in the past to remove the ducks. He said unfortunately when they are removed, three (3) weeks later others come in from other areas. He is looking into getting quotes to see about having them removed. He advised that additional signs have been put out and asked park staff to let people know not to feed the ducks and they can be removed if they do not abide by the rules of the park.

Discussion ensued regarding the Muscovy ducks at Reiter Park and at Orlando Health.

Mr. Capizzi said the Mother & Son Dance was almost sold out. There are about six (6) tickets currently available. He said the haunted house contract is on the City Manager's desk for approval. He said that it is an 80/20 contract. Once the contract is signed, they will meet with the group and get the specifics on the cost, days, and times for the event. He said there are a couple of tournaments coming at Candyland Sports Complex. There is the Warren Brown Rookie T-ball Invitational Tournament and then a district tournament right after that. He said the closing ceremonies for Longwood Babe Ruth were this past weekend and the park was packed. He said after the tournaments they will be doing major field renovations. The Longwood Babe Ruth President Patrick McFadden, was at the Commission meeting last night and advised the Commission that they have received their 501(c)(3) status. He said the Wildflower Foundation came in with fifty (50) plus plants at no cost to the city, and helped replant a lot of Florida native friendly plants that are very drought resistant. In the next couple of months, they will begin flowering. The amphitheater support beams are being repainted. He spoke with Eric Swenk from the Boy Scouts of America and he is going to be doing the Flag Retirement Ceremony on June 14th. He advised the Board that it will be a more concise and appropriate ceremony about the burning of the flags. There will be singers present as well, after the ceremony singing USO style songs. He said he met this week regarding the Easy Ad TV at Reiter Park on the restroom facility and explained what it is. He said they will be looking into that once the cameras are installed at the park. He went over the specifications for the cameras being installed at the park and who will have access to them. He said they are looking into the impact fee projects they want to accomplish and that Finance will bring that up at the next Commission meeting. He advised what projects they want to accomplish with the impact fee monies. He said he met with Chad DeGroot

about updating the Skate Park related to the Florida Recreation Development Assistance Program (FRDAP) grant for \$50,000.00. He said \$32,000.00 of that was going towards the Skate Park. He said there was someone doing the design for the new update and they would be able to remove some of the modular equipment and put in concrete obstacles.

Member Cheffer asked if staff was able to reach out to the Rotary Club of Longwood in reference to the message board.

Mr. Capizzi said he has not reached out yet but he was planning to in the near future.

Discussion ensued about reaching out to the Rotary Club of Longwood and what projects they want to talk to them about.

Vice-Chair Sackett said she likes the lines at Candyland Sports Complex for the middle section of the parking lot. She stated that the white has faded and would like to know if there is a brighter color or if it could be extended to the farther parking lot for more defined parking spaces.

Discussion ensued about the lines in the parking lot at Candyland Sports Complex.

Mr. Capizzi said they are planning for Summer Camp.

Mr. Rinaldo said Summer Camp was all planned and staff went to the food training class today at Seminole County. He advised they offer free lunch to the kids at camp and are one of the only municipalities that use the free lunch program in Seminole County. He said we have two (2) returning staff members and two (2) new staff members. He said they filled up in about two (2) weeks.

Mr. Capizzi advised that they have budget meetings with the City Manager and Finance Director to go over the budget and make any adjustments for the department. He said he was hoping to bring forward the 131 Fund as well as the 5200 lines at the next meeting.

6. ADJOURN

Vice-Chair Sackett moved to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Member Barr and motion carried by a unanimous voice vote with Member Ghazzawieh, Member Coad, and Member Jose absent.

Chair Morgan adjourned the meeting at 7:04 p.m.

Minutes approved by the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board: 06-03-2025

Larissa Morgan, Chair

ATTEST:

Donna Alt-Bowes, Recording Secretary