PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD
LONGWOOD CITY COMMISSION CHAMBERS
175 WEST WARREN AVENUE
LONGWOOD, FLORIDA

MINUTES
June 2, 2026
6:30 PM

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

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

2. **PUBLIC INPUT**

   A. **Public Participation.** None.

3. **ACTIONS ITEMS**

   A. **Approve Minutes from May 5, 2026, Meeting.**

   Member Sackett moved to approve the May 5, 2026, Minutes. Seconded by Member Jose and carried by a unanimous voice vote.

   B. **Discuss Light Bollard Project with Recreation Impact Fees.**

   Mr. Capizzi presented a proposed project to replace the existing lighted bollards in the Historic District, including the Clock Tower area, Community Building parking lot, gazebo area, and Heroes Monument. He advised that many of the existing bollards are more than twenty years old, are no longer manufactured, and have sustained damage over the years.

   He explained that staff is proposing the replacement of fifty-two bollards with new LED louvered dome bollards utilizing Recreation Impact Fee funding in the amount of approximately $17,056, with installation costs to be funded through the department's operating budget. He stated that the new bollards would improve lighting, aesthetics, and safety within the Historic District.

   Discussion ensued regarding the possibility of installing similar lighting at Reiter Park and future connections to the park area adjacent to the new fire station.

   C. **Budget.**

Mr. Capizzi reviewed the preliminary FY 2026-2027 budget and advised that the department's event budget reflects an overall three percent reduction.

He reviewed proposed adjustments to several event budgets, including minor reductions to BarkFest, increases for the Christmas Parade and Rock, Freedom, and Fireworks due to rising vendor costs, and the elimination of the New Events budget line.

Mr. Capizzi advised that the proposed budget also eliminates funding for the Juneteenth Celebration due to the event's cost compared to attendance. He noted that the event could continue in the future if sponsorship funding becomes available to cover costs for the event.

Discussion ensued regarding event sponsorship opportunities, parade sponsorships, Juneteenth programming, and long-term funding strategies for special events.

Mr. Capizzi also reviewed the General Fund event budget and advised that there are no significant changes other than a slight decrease in rental and lease expenses.

Discussion ensued regarding Recreation Impact Fee funding, future park projects, shade structures, splash pad improvements, maintenance equipment, and the potential purchase of a large event tent.

4. BOARD MEMBER REPORTS

Member Barr reported concerns raised by residents regarding shade at the Reiter Park splash pad and requested that comments and concerns posted on social media be addressed when possible. She also inquired about conditions at the Candyland Park pickleball courts.

Mr. Capizzi advised that staff is aware of the concerns regarding the splash pad and that communication efforts will continue. He further advised that repairs to the pickleball court cracks have been approved and that replacement of the perimeter fencing has been included in a future Capital Improvement Project. He noted that resurfacing of the courts is planned for the next fiscal year.

Member Coad reported that she had no updates regarding the holiday events. She suggested including a schedule of upcoming City events in City communications and inquired about conditions at the tennis courts.

Mr. Capizzi advised that the tennis courts remain in good condition and are not currently experiencing any issues.

Member Nichols reported that she met with an individual involved in organizing pageants and advised that discussions continue regarding incorporating a pageant component into the Strawberry Festival. Discussion ensued regarding pageant concepts, sponsorship opportunities, prizes, and potential participation in future parades.

Member Sackett inquired about hurricane preparation efforts, skate park improvements, the pump track, bat boxes, ant treatment at Candyland Park, speed bumps, and future basketball court improvements.

Mr. Capizzi advised that staff continues to prepare facilities for hurricane season and provided updates regarding ongoing maintenance and capital improvement projects. He reported that the pump track remains in good condition and that a seal coat project is being considered to extend its useful life. He also advised that skate park improvements have been successful and that additional enhancements are planned for the future.

Vice-Chair Morgan reported that the Longwood Luau has been rescheduled to **June 14, 2026**. She thanked staff for coordinating the date change and discussed event logistics, including shade, cooling stations, and spectator seating.

Discussion ensued regarding cooling stations, tent placement, and event accommodations.

Vice-Chair Morgan also introduced the concept of a future park project involving communication boards and encouraged further discussion at a future meeting.

Member Jose reported that he had been traveling and inquired about preparations for the Rock, Freedom, and Fireworks event.

Mr. Rinaldo advised that the city continues its partnership with iHeart Media and that sponsorship and promotional support remain in place for the event.

Mr. Capizzi advised that FDOT permits have been secured and that preparations for the event are progressing as planned.

Chair Cheffer shared examples of event and communication materials from neighboring municipalities and discussed educational opportunities related to Florida's wildlife corridor and environmental conservation.

Discussion ensued regarding possible environmental programming, educational seminars, and future Movies in the Park opportunities.

5. STAFF REPORT

A. Staff Report for June 2, 2026.

Mr. Capizzi advised that significant renovations are underway at Candyland Sports Complex, including complete replacement of the infield turf on Field 1.

He reported that Summer Camp has begun and is operating at capacity.

Mr. Capizzi provided an update on upcoming events, including the Longwood Luau, Rock, Freedom, and Fireworks, and other summer programming. He advised that a detailed schedule for the Rock, Freedom and Fireworks event will be distributed prior to the event.

He further advised that the event will include a Liberty Tree dedication ceremony, patriotic programming, live entertainment, food vendors, and family activities.

Discussion ensued regarding event promotion, parking, road closures, food vendors, and entertainment.

6. ADJOURN

Member Coad moved to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Member Sackett and carried by a unanimous voice.

Chair Cheffer adjourned the meeting at 7:38 p.m.

Minutes approved by the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board: 07-07-2026

Ardel Cheffer

Ardel Cheffer, Chair

ATTEST:

Alt-Bowes

Donna Alt-Bowes, Recording Secretary