

LONGWOOD PARKS & RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD

**Longwood City Commission Chambers
175 West Warren Avenue
Longwood, Florida**

**MINUTES
February 4, 2025
6:30 PM**

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

Absent: William “Bill” Overbeek, Member

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

2. PUBLIC INPUT

A. Public Participation. None.

3. ACTION ITEMS

A. Approve Minutes from January 7, 2025, Meeting

Vice-Chair Sackett moved to approve the January 7, 2025 minutes as presented. Seconded by Member Coad and motion carried by a unanimous voice vote with Member Overbeek absent.

B. Chili Cook-Off

Mr. Capizzi provided an update on the Chili Cook-Off advising there are eleven (11) teams signed up and there are two (2) that are interested.

Discussion ensued regarding the number of teams signed up, the weather and DJ for the event, the arrival of Board Members for set-up, ticket sales, judges, sponsors, which Board Member have taken on the difference positions, and where the winners will be announced.

4. BOARD MEMBER REPORTS

Member Cheffer had no report and was looking forward to her first event.

Chair Morgan reported that they had their first Autism Walk meeting. She confirmed that staff had reached out to all former vendors and the event had been extended to three (3) hours versus two (2), and there will be a different t-shirt vendor with larger size shirts available. She said they received their first sponsor, AC Cowboys, and asked if they had turned in the money yet.

Mr. Capizzi responded they had not.

Discussion ensued about the vendors for the Autism event and if AC Cowboys would be bringing any of their animals.

Chair Morgan said she will miss everyone this weekend as she will be on her way to Hawaii.

Vice-Chair Sackett reported it was nice attending the Battle of the Food Trucks and felt like it was ending at what seemed like an early time. She asked if that was because of neighborhood noise.

Discussion ensued about the Battle of the Food Trucks end time, the bands that are playing at the park, and the attendance with the time change.

Member Coad reported that all her events are over. She advised staff that she has begun shopping for the events and that she will keep them up to date on her progress. She asked if inventory had been done yet. Staff advised they were busy preparing for the Chili Cook-Off and had not had time to do inventory.

Member Putz reported that this was his second to last meeting. He advised his daughter had applied for his open position.

Member Coad asked for a copy of the Special Events List to be forwarded to all Board Members as it was not included in the physical agenda packet, she received at the meeting that evening. She also advised the Board that the Commission has appointed a gentleman to take the open seat on the Board and his name is Abdallah Ghazzawieh.

Mr. Ghazzawieh was present and introduced himself to the Board and said he goes by Albert.

5. STAFF REPORT

A. Staff Report for February 4, 2025.

Mr. Capizzi reported that Longwood Babe Ruth Opening Day was Saturday, which was why Longwood Babe Ruth cannot enter the Chili Cook-Off. Staff was preparing for opening day. He said they have updated the toilets, installed a new water heater, replaced some of the netting, and done a large amount of field work. He and Mr. Rinaldo were meeting with Lynda Miller and Gary Adams to discuss the Halloween event and work out more details. They will have an update at the next Board Meeting. The Smash Beer Festival is being rescheduled to May 31, 2025. He said they are continuing to talk to Chad DeGroot about the upgrade to the Skate Park and Mr. DeGroot has raised over \$4,000 to add to what they have allotted for the improvements.

Discussion ensued about the upgrades to the Skate Park.

Mr. Capizzi said in accordance with the Parks and Recreation Board's request to upgrade the PA system at Reiter Park, they are obtaining quotes. He stated they have had three (3) companies come out, Teer, Jinx-It, and Reliance AV and are expecting to receive quotes this week and next week.

Discussion ensued regarding the current sound system and what they are looking to get at Reiter Park.

Mr. Capizzi said everything had been completed at the Community Building with the exception of the air conditioning. He said they have received three (3) different quotes and according to the Finance Department they requested one (1) or two (2) more quotes. He noted they should be coming in under what was allotted in the CIP. He advised the Board that he was working with the Community Development Department to use the Tree Fund to spruce up the back portion the Police Department that faces Florida Avenue. Staff was looking to put in some Japanese Blueberry Trees mixed in with some Muhly grasses.

Member Coad asked staff to report on the Strawberry Festival.

Mr. Capizzi stated the Strawberry Fest was coming up and going to be on March 1.

Discussion ensued about the Facebook interest, the bands, the games, and the produce.

Mr. Capizzi advised there was a rental at Reiter Park for the Ukrainian Festival but since it was a rental, the city is not promoting the event. He said they are bringing in some good talent and food for the event.

Member Coad asked if the event would be cordoned off, if they were charging admission, or open to the public.

Mr. Capizzi responded it was open to the public.

Discussion ensued about the city promoting the event.

Member Coad asked what the status was of the Dog Park.

Mr. Capizzi responded that the Dog Park was open.

Member Coad asked about the Ronald Reagan Boulevard (County Road 427) flags. She said she noticed they had been removed and asked if they were going to drop it or discuss something else.

Mr. Capizzi stated he would talk to her about that.

Member Coad asked if Board assistance was needed for the Strawberry Festival.

Mr. Capizzi responded maybe, for the carnival games, and would send a reminder to the Board to let them know.

Discussion ensued about the carnival games for the Strawberry Festival.

Mr. Capizzi said they had a great meeting for the Autism event and the Luau would be terrific. He advised they will be holding Summer Camp at the Historic Center and that Mr. Knowles would most likely be the Camp Director again. He advised they have already started receiving applications for counselors.

Member Coad asked about the fireworks.

Mr. Capizzi said they have the same vendor, same price.

Member Coad asked if we would have a band that day.

Mr. Capizzi responded yes.

6. ADJOURN

Member Coad moved to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Vice-Chair Sackett and motion carried by a unanimous voice vote.

Chair Morgan adjourned the meeting at 7:09 p.m.

Minutes approved by the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board: 03-04-2025

Larissa Morgan, Chair

ATTEST:

Donna Alt-Bowes, Recording Secretary