

March 15, 2023

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
PARKS & RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD

Naples, Florida, March 15, 2023

LET IT BE REMEMBERED, the Collier County Parks & Recreation Advisory Board, in and for the County of Collier, having conducted business herein, met on this date at 2 P.M. in REGULAR SESSION at North Collier Regional Park, 15000 Livingston Road, Naples, with the following members present:

CHAIRMAN: Edward "Ski" Olesky
VICE CHAIR: Joshua Fruth
Paul DeMarco
Rebecca Gibson-Laemel
Kristina Heuser
Lee Dixon (excused)
Jessica Bergel
Donna Fiala (alternate; via Zoom)

ALSO PRESENT: Olema Edwards, Director, Parks & Recreation
Miguel Rojas Jr., Admin. Assistant, Parks & Recreation
Jeffrey Newman, Mgr., Financial Ops, Public Services Dept.
Chris Harmon, Region 1 Parks Manager
Dayne Atkinson, Principal Project Manager, Public Services
David Michel, Interim Region 4 Parks Manager
Aaron Hopkins, Region 2 Parks Manager
Randi Swinderman, Region 3 Parks Manager
Kyle Pryce, Supervisor, Immokalee Parks
James Hanrahan, Interim Region 5 Parks Manager

Any persons in need of a verbatim record of the meeting may request a copy of the Zoom recording and PowerPoint presentations from the Collier County Parks & Recreation Department.

I. Call to Order

Chairman Olesky called the meeting to order at 2 p.m. A quorum of six was established.

II. Pledge of Allegiance and Invocation

They recited the Pledge of Allegiance and observed an invocation/moment of silence.

III. Approval of the Agenda

Ms. Edwards said they will move Item 8.b, Veterans Community Park – Pickleball to 8.c., “East Naples Community Park – Resurfacing,” and move 8.d, “East Naples Community Park – Parking,” to next month’s meeting. It’s not supposed to be on this month’s agenda.

Mr. DeMarco asked if a representative of Naples Pickleball will be speaking.

Ms. Edwards said they were invited but couldn’t make it. She wants to do a presentation before Veterans Park – Pickleball.

Mr. DeMarco moved to approve the agenda, as amended. Dixon seconded it. The motion passed unanimously, 6-0.

IV. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

Mr. DeMarco asked if they followed up with the Pop Warner representative who didn’t know where they’d be able to practice.

Ms. Swinderman said they’ve had follow-up discussions with the Boys & Girls Club, which has a turf field. Said Gomez, a supervisor at the Sports Complex, reached out and they said as long as they’re not using the field after their program hours, we can use it after 6 p.m., which is when Pop Warner teams usually start. We’re looking at other options and are in contact with other sports partners about challenges. We spoke to a school representative a couple of weeks ago and we’re looking at middle schools as an option. There are no lights there for practices, but it’s an open field space, so we’re working on it.

Mr. DeMarco asked if it’s during the time they’re going to resod, September.

Ms. Swinderman said it will be down for a year and they’re working with other groups to find fields.

Mr. DeMarco moved to approve the February 15, 2023, meeting minutes. Ms. Laemel seconded it. The motion passed unanimously, 6-0.

V. Public/Board Comments

(None – see specific agenda items)

VI. New Business

a. National Bike Month Event

Skip Riffle, founder of Bikes for Tykes, told the PARAB:

- Bikes for Tykes has been around since 1987.
- Since then, we’ve produced over 43,000 bikes for the needy and Collier County kids who would never have a chance to have a bike.
- National Bicycle Month is approaching and he wants to partner with Parks & Recreation to hold a joint family ride in Sugden Park around the lake, which is about 1¼ miles long.

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- You seldom see kids riding bikes on the roads, so if we offered them a place and time to do it. Families would like to bring their kids out to ride with them in a safe and eye-appealing environment.
- There won't be amplifiers, just acoustic music by a Bluegrass group and a hot dog stand.
- It would be nice to get it advertised through Parks & Recreation and would be a nice kickoff to National Bicycle Month.
- It would be held on the second Saturday in May, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. May 13. We'd get there early to set up everything if we're fortunate enough to get Parks & Recreation to partner with us.

Chairman Olesky asked Ms. Edwards if she'd like a partnership.

Parks Director Edwards said she'd love to do it.

A discussion ensued and the following points were made:

- There would be no race, just family biking from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
- Bikes for Tykes would put up signs and have a truck to offer free bike repairs.
- Bikes for Tykes did this yesterday at Catholic Charities, where it offers free bikes to the homeless on the second Tuesday each month. On the third Saturday, they'll be doing free bike repairs at the Golden Gate Community Center.
- There are 12 mechanics, depending on whether it's season. Eight regulars come Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, from noon to 5 p.m.
- Bikes for Tykes is at 5950 Copa Lane, off County Barn Road.
- This event doesn't conflict with any others.
- Mr. Riffle asked if they could ask a commissioner to write a National Bicycle Month proclamation.
- Bikes for Tykes also will be offering free repairs at Golden Gate High School on April 1.
- On April 1, there's a Special Olympics event at Golden Gate High School. Bikes for Tykes will offer free bike repairs for our teams and others that are participating.
- They love to work with kids, the Special Olympics and the State Games.

Dixon moved to approve recommending that Parks & Recreation partner with Bikes for Tykes to hold a family biking event at Sugden Park from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. May 13, 2023. Ms. Heuser seconded it. The motion passed unanimously, 6-0.

Chairman Olesky asked Ms. Edwards to work with the group to ensure it goes smoothly.

Mr. DeMarco asked if alcohol would be served.

Mr. Riffle said just hot dogs and soft drinks.

Parks Director Edwards told Mr. Riffle she'd be in touch.

b. ENCP Court Resurfacing

Jeffrey Newman, manager of Financial Operations for the Public Services Department, told the PARAB:

- He's the business manager behind the scenes trying to get money to cover what PARAB discusses.
- Last year, the PARAB recommended approval of a \$670,000 grant application that was then approved by TDC and BCC.
- PARAB usually comes first, followed by the TDC and BCC, but because of the way the pickleball season worked with different county board recesses last year, it was out of order and was first approved by the TDC, then PARAB and then the BCC.
- Of the \$670,000, \$20,000 was allocated for windscreens, which has been expended; \$50,000 was allocated for site staging and preparation of East Naples Park for the event; and \$600,000 was set aside for court resurfacing.
- When we start approval from the different governing bodies, we requested approval for 40 courts. We came up with \$600,000 after we did price comps and asked what it was costing others to have courts done.

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It cost \$15,000 per court multiplied by 40, \$600,000. We wanted to do the 40 courts that were most in need.

- The Southwest Florida sun causes courts to deteriorate quickly.
- Our first step was the general contractor agreement. To fit everything in with season, we requested quotes before final board approval, so we could be shovel-ready if they decided to move forward.
- We got a quote from one of our established contractors that met all our materials requirements for \$220,000, when we had \$600,000 set aside. Once the board approved everything, we approached them to approve awarding it to the contractor.
- The 40 courts came in at about \$5,500 apiece, which will leave \$380,000 uncommitted, but still reserved for the courts.
- Because we have 60 courts to maintain, we're seeking your permission to do the 20 remaining courts using that allocated money. They weren't scheduled to be resurfaced because we only asked for 40 to be done. Now we're asking to have the other 20 done. Per the agreement, the championship courts used for the U.S. Open are not covered. They're the responsibility of the U.S. Open concessionaire.
- Regardless of what the PARAB decides today, any remaining funding cannot be allocated elsewhere, but would have to be returned to the TDC. So Parks & Recreation wants to use the savings to resurface the remaining courts. We'll have more than enough funds left.

[Ms. Heuser left the meeting at 2:23 p.m.]

Ms. Laemel asked when the work would be done.

Parks Director Edwards said they weren't done already because they weren't the worst of the worst. We're trying to work construction in between play.

Mr. Newman said correct, they were not the worst of the worst. We're trying to work out a schedule now. The perfect construction scenario would be to shut the park down for two weeks in the middle of the season and do all 60 courts at once, but players don't want that.

A discussion ensued and the following points were made:

- The courts are resurfaced every three to five years.
- The U.S. Open does its every year, the stadium court and Courts Areas 3 to 5.
- Due to extreme use, there's no surface that stands up to manufacturer agreements. They fade are surrounded by rock and stone and other variables that speed up deterioration.
- Courts are maintained by TDC funds because they're often used by tourists.
- We asked for a TDC grant so it wouldn't come out of park funds, which covers playgrounds and community pools, etc.
- We will continue to ask the TDC for funds to maintain the courts.
- It's not part of the concessionaire's agreement to maintain the courts, just the nets.
- We should use this money to resurface the courts.
- This money is reserved for resurfacing until the end of the construction cycle.
- If they're not used, they're returned to the TDC.
- The TDC is amenable to using TDC funds for court resurfacing and it passed unanimously.
- There are legal requirements that must be met to expend TDC money, which prohibits you from using them for playgrounds. It must be tied to tourism.
- On a construction project costing more than \$500,000, only 70% can be paid for by TDC funds.
- They can't be used for other courts, such as Veterans Park, unless you can show a clear nexus to tourism.
- Resurfacing at Veterans Park would have to be treated as a separate application. It requires its own legal review and approval as a separate project. Nothing forbids the TDC, provided everything is legally approved by them, from allowing us to spend remaining funds at a different site, but there are certain benchmarks we'd have to hit to make that happen.
- These remaining funds have been carved out for us by the TDC for our use. The project cap is \$600,000.

- Because we got a good rate, we can do the remaining courts.
- There's no downside to this.

Mr. DeMarco made a motion to recommend approving the resurfacing of 20 additional pickleball courts at East Naples Community Park, an expenditure that promotes tourism. Second by Ms. Laemel. The motion passed unanimously, 5-0; Ms. Heuser was outside the room.

**c. VCP – Pickleball
Public Speaker**

Christine O'Sullivan, who last spoke to the PARAB in November, told the PARAB:

- In November, she asked that the PARAB not issue an RFP for a Veterans Park concessionaire.
- She now has a petition signed by 245 players at Veterans Park, both the 3.5 five players and 3.0 players.
- *“We, the paying members of Veterans Park, request and petition that Collier County return the pickleball management of Veterans Park to the players themselves, with no outside concessionaire management, and that all fees for membership, if such are required by the county, be remitted directly and in full to the county.”*
- She asked 248 people, but three didn't want it and two people didn't want the county to deal with it and make it worse. She told them it couldn't be worse.
- There are no services, there is no concession, there is no pro shop, there is no management whatsoever by the concessionaire at Veterans Park.
- She's read all the PARAB and BCC minutes since 2016, the start of the Pickleball Enterprises contract, and through the new concessionaire, Bob Strommen, who operates under the name Naples Pickleball.
- She applauds the PARAB and Parks & Rec Department for the improvements at the parks and their work.
- What happens now at Veterans Community Park involves a whiteboard that people sign up for on four squares that represent players. When it's filled, they're entitled to go to the next available court.
- There are people who stand at the board and call out the players listed on the board to get on the courts. We haven't had reserved courts since 2015.
- You can see the red color beneath the blue court surface, which is peeling.
- In November, the nets were ragged and had holes. She asked Bob Strommen what his responsibilities were and he said nets, so she asked him to repair the nets. Since then, they weren't repaired, but were replaced with old nets from East Naples Community Park.
- We are the ugly stepchild of Collier County. The Naples Pickleball contract speaks very clearly about the responsibilities of the concessionaire to manage the pickleball program. There is no program. We have eight courts on the upper level for higher level players and for the other players, we have six courts, including two modifiable tennis courts with nets that can be put up and down.
- The eight upper-level courts are in bad need of resurfacing and nets. The six lower-level courts are missing temporary nets, which were removed because East Naples needed them. We have fewer courts now.
- She passed out a letter from Carmela Holder, dated Jan. 23, 2023, which outlined how the pickleball program started with 12 players in Veterans Park in 2015.
- That grew to 25 people and the county dealt with it and hired a man to help and put up nets. They rented courts from Veterans Park Community Center and dropped the fees \$2-\$3. Players managed the whiteboard themselves and they ended up charging in 2016, a \$25 fee, but the free balls ended. The man was a county employee who showed people how to play effectively, provided lessons and ran round-robins and tournaments. He was wonderful.
- Then you hired a concessionaire to provide the management services to do what the county employee did.

[Ms. Heuser rejoined the meeting at 2:45 p.m.]

- Players are now paying \$50 yearly just to walk on a county court. All the concessionaire does is walk around and collect money.

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- Having a concessionaire is counterproductive and just ends in 87.5 cents of every dollar being put into the concessionaire's pocket and 12.5 cents going to the county under the contract. That's not fair to taxpayers or players. We're getting nothing for it. We don't even get resurfacing and the red beneath is bleeding through the blue surface.
- If the county took control again, there are players who are willing to step up and be a liaison with the county. They'd be a committee to advise you. They think that Mr. Strommen is advising you of our needs. There is no such advice coming to you.
- Bob Strommen doesn't care about Veteran's Park. East Naples is a money-making operation and he gets 87.5 cents on every dollar, a sweetheart deal. He probably expected that at Veterans Park.

Mr. DeMarco asked if she was asking the PARAB to take action.

Ms. O'Sullivan requested that the PARAB take no action and not issue an RFP for a Veterans Park concessionaire.

Mr. DeMarco asked if she was requesting that they dissolve the fee.

Parks Director Edwards said the contract ends on May 11. There are separate contracts for Veterans Park and East Naples Community Park.

O'Sullivan told the PARAB:

- She leaves the fee question up to the county and the PARAB.
- There are many people who want no fee and to leave it as a community park.
- If you choose to have a membership fee, remit the \$50 directly to the county, so members can play from 7 a.m. to 11 a.m. or noon. We don't have a problem if you rent the courts in the afternoon to make money. At least the county would be getting money to put up new fences and resurface courts.
- She'd rather have the county get the money and have no outside concessionaire because we get nothing for the fee.
- She wants to eliminate the concessionaire contract. It's offensive to have someone come around to say they're the park manager.
- She heard a man tried to give lessons to his friends one afternoon and he was stopped because the concessionaire said they run the park.
- We don't need management. Players are doing well managing themselves.
- Let Naples Pickleball make as much money as they want in East Naples, but it's silly to allow them to take 85 cents on every dollar.
- She thanked the PARAB for listening.

Vito Mitalo told the PARAB:

- He's been playing pickleball for five years.
- The county has a bad rap. It's been rectified, but Veterans Park gets nothing.
- The benches there are at least 6-7 years old. They're wooden, very porous and cracked, so when you perspire that's left on the wood. Women won't sit and that's why everybody stands. People are starting to bring beach chairs to sit there.
- Why are we getting nothing? We found the concessionaire isn't responsible for that. He learned at the last meeting that it's the county's responsibility.
- We asked Mr. Strommen to address us and we asked questions, but he said it's not his responsibility. It's the county's. The county doesn't want 200 people calling about our needs.
- Veterans Park runs very efficiently. We haven't had anybody doing it except for ourselves.
- The county put in nice fencing, but the courts haven't been resurfaced in about eight years.
- There are many people who spend time at Veterans Park volunteering like a professional committee.
- There are many levels of players, but many people want to come to Veterans Park due to the various levels of play there. But others play in their own communities.
- Why is pickleball the fastest growing sport in the United States and the world? The learning curve is less than tennis or golf. People thought it was an old person's game, but everybody is playing. Kids are turning pro at age 15-17. They have a pro league, which is unique.

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- There's a lot of open space here and they're building 10,000 homes around Immokalee, east of Airport Road. Where are all they going to play? There's a big demand coming. The wait time will get longer.
- You've got land and parking at Veterans Park.
- The county should take all the money. It isn't about \$50. Put it to use where we see a benefit.

Ms. Laemel said she used to teach pickleball in the 1960s. It's growing fast and she plays when she has time.

A discussion ensued and the following points were made:

- There's not a lot of support for Naples Pickleball.
- The concessionaire doesn't have internet at Veterans Park so they can't take credit cards.
- Maybe a Naples Pickleball employee comes to Veterans Park for a few hours and return to their real position in East Naples.
- Management of Veterans Park isn't up to par.
- Mr. DeMarco went to Veterans Park four to five times last month and never saw a Naples Pickleball representative. Everything seemed to be managing itself, and he walked right in. There was a line and everything was in place. Between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m., it was packed. He's not sure if doing training, managing the pro shop and taking credit cards is what the county needs to do.
- Having the county take over is an option.
- There's an overflow at Veterans Park when the U.S. Open is at East Naples Community Park. Can that be considered tourism?
- Parks Director Edwards said the players have her attention and there were three requests from staff to see what we're charging and what they're getting. Staff offered recommendations.
- If it falls under Parks & Rec, do we charge?
- Mr. Strommen was alerted to this meeting and did not come. He could have sent a representative. (He had a conflict with something in East Naples.)
- Mr. Strommen gets 85 cents of every dollar for hundreds of members.
- His contract extension ends May 11. The county considered soliciting for another concessionaire, but stopped after hearing from residents and players.
- If we don't charge, we lose \$280,000 from the concessionaire.
- We don't charge for pickleball at Big Corkscrew Regional Park.
- Parks Director Edwards is looking at both sides. We can do open play, open play with rentals that are reserved or open it back up for solicitation.
- There are different ways to bring in revenue. You don't have to get rid of memberships.
- If we decide to take the \$50 membership route, what's included in the membership? Is it something tangible? Do we add staff there? Do we bring balls?

Mr. Newman told the PARAB:

- From a financial management standpoint, membership fees are a significant revenue stream, but there are others.
- We have significant income that funds court rentals, tournaments, pro-teaching events, etc., and there's a remittance to the county from instructors.
- Losing \$280,000 is the worst economic-impact scenario. He'll work with his staff because they're entering the budgeting process and will present harder numbers so we can track the various revenues and come up with a game plan.
- They can look at a structure with and without a concessionaire. He can't speculate on how to manage something, but he'd urge a pay rate, which is ideal with concessionaires on a daily basis. Pre-hurricane, some marinas involved a dock master, a Park Ranger and two employees to a sense of semblance. What he doesn't want is no structure and no arrangement, and no county staff onsite if a private business or pro comes at 7 a.m. to claim six courts. He wants a structure in place to support members and what the members want and to be able to bring a proposal to the PARAB.
- He doesn't want a free-for-all, which would recreate some of the challenges we've had with our

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commercial vendors at marinas, where there's no concessionaire for all the shelling, rowers and others.

- He asked for 30 days to come up with hard numbers and a proposal. There's a cost to everything, but we need to decide.

Chairman Olesky asked how many courts they use during the U.S. Pickleball Championships.

Parks Director Edwards said the U.S. Open uses all the courts at East Naples Community Park, so members are displaced because of the international and other players who come to play. Local players then come to Veterans Park or Big Corkscrew Regional Park for nearly two weeks. We only have 14 courts at Veterans Park.

Mr. Dixon told the PARAB:

- Our original intent was to deal with the concessionaire error.
- But he's torn when it comes to a fee structure. People paying the fees say they don't have a problem paying fees. His inherent nature is to object to fees because residents pay tax dollars to use the park. They're paying twice. In his private-sector job, when members pay annual dues as golf club members, they don't have to pay to play golf every day. They've paid annual dues.
- The pickleball players don't have a problem paying a membership fee to maintain structure, so he's conflicted. He never believed the county should be paying, or having a concessionaire hire someone to do the job and work for the county. We get nothing for it. Do it in-house.
- He never agreed to have an outside concessionaire, whether at Veterans Park, East Naples, or Caxambus Marina.
- He's had an issue with Bob Strommen/Naples Pickleball ever since he showed up before the PARAB to try to get us to double the membership fees. The numbers he showed on the screen were blatantly deceptive. Not incorrect, but blatantly deceptive, so he's had a problem with him since then.
- Whether or not we choose to go without a concessionaire, Bob Strommen should be out of the equation at Veterans Park and East Naples Community Park, when that contract comes up.

Mr. DeMarco noted that he wouldn't tell the PARAB how many employees he had. The employees write 30 checks. What does that mean?

Mr. Dixon said he's OK with membership fees, but we shouldn't hire a concessionaire. If we do, it shouldn't be Bob Strommen.

Ms. O'Sullivan told the PARAB:

- There are many who feel the same way, but others are OK with it because the fees are not excessive.
- We were hoping the fees would go toward maintaining the courts. They weren't.
- Can you set aside our fees for Veterans Park? That would make a membership fee more palatable.
- Could we get new nets, not recycled nets, and get the courts resurfaced? That hasn't been done in seven or eight years. We want something for our money.
- We have diseased benches on the upper level. The lower level has good benches but they're in the sun. They used to have shades. The shades and temporary nets are gone.
- People want lights. They've been in the budget for years. After the pandemic, the light issue was gone, the lights for the 3.5 upper courts. That was apparently in the budget and evaluated. That would be a wonderful thing for our membership money to go to.
- Can that money be allocated directly?
- They're public courts and should be available for public play. You can make money renting courts in the afternoon.

Ms. Laemel asked if there were better options.

Parks Director Edwards said they will come back in April with a game plan.

A discussion ensued over the Naples Pickleball contract at Veterans Park:

- Mr. Newman said every contract has a cost.

- The contract was extended by six months to May 11, when it ends.
- We thought we'd be doing another RFP.
- Mr. Newman said he'd check on this and other capital projects the speakers mentioned, but many employees are out of the country or off this week.
- Mr. Newman said he'd check into the feasibility of something like an enterprise fund. When you pay your water bill, that remains within Public Utilities. The board has the authority to set up an Enterprise Fund. He'll check with the Budget Office and County Attorney's Office to determine a park-centric enterprise fee, if that's what you want.
- Is there a reserve fund for Veterans Park and pickleball there?
- Veterans Park and pickleball exist on a capital plan. One of the consequences of 2020 was that the county wanted to be fiscally very responsible and conservative. When 2020 rolled out, many capital projects were suspended during the pandemic to ensure there was a cash reserve available. He'll check the capital plan.
- Parks Director Edwards said that as the new parks director, she may hold a meeting in April to hear players' concerns about pickleball at Veterans Park.
- Mr. Newman said it's good to send out survey questions first to frame the discussion and ensure it won't become a free-for-all.
- Ms. O'Sullivan asked for a copy to post at the courts.
- Mr. Newman said the county can put that information on a sign at the park.

Mr. Dixon asked who the contractor was who did the resurfacing.

Mr. Newman said the vendor for the resurfacing was the county's general contractor.

Mr. Hanrahan said it was Capital Consulting Solutions.

Mr. Dixon said he's ecstatic to see the cost so low since he'd complained since the beginning about the high cost.

d. ENCP – Parking

(Moved to the April meeting)

VII. Staff Updates

Region 2 [Aaron Hopkins]

Mr. Hopkins reported that:

- Registration for our junior leader program in Immokalee is now open on our website. We've already had some of our future leaders sign up.
- We have two leadership programs, a new program for new people, the junior leader program, and a returner program for junior leaders who have done it in the past.
- Summer camp counselor positions went live last Friday afternoon on the county website. We're recruiting for all parks with a summer camp. The starting pay is \$15.58.
- Summer Camp registration will open at 7 a.m. April 1. It's available to view now.
- The 2023-2024 VPK calendar has been approved. He can provide a copy. Collier County Public Schools is now on spring break, so we're offering a spring break camp at most locations.
- Adaptive-Inclusive Recreation has 10 kids registered; Big Corkscrew has 38; Eagle Lakes, 15; East Naples, 19; Golden Gate Community Center, 8; Golden Gate Community Center's Wheels BMX Camp, 9; Immokalee Community Park, 16; Immokalee South Park, 3; Max Hasse Jr. Park, 50; Veterans Community Park, 56. We have about 250 kids signed up for spring break camps.
- For Region 2, Adaptive-Inclusive Recreation is having an Easter egg hunt at the Golden Gate Community Park on April 1.
- Golden Gate Community Center will be hosting an Easter egg hunt on April 1st and on April 7th, there's a CCPS no-school day.
- Max Hasse Park will be doing a full day with an Easter theme on no-school day.
- On April 8, Golden Gate Community Park is partnering with Region 5 (James with Eagle Lake Community Park) to do an underwater, aquatic Easter Egg Hunt.

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- An employee named Ruth received her 20-year award at the end of February.
- Our next summer camp meeting is March 24.
- On March 28, he and our Adaptive-Inclusive Recreation staff are attending the Exceptional Student Education ESE Expo at Gulf Coast High School.
- We did a clean-up day at Caxambas Marina on March 7.
- All park managers now have access to our social media and Facebook accounts. Expect more posts and social media activity.

Ms. Heuser asked what the Adaptive-Inclusive Recreation covers.

Hopkins said all of parks programs and amenities are all-inclusive. Universal is another term that's used. It's for anyone and everyone. We're going to be talking to our teenagers and our future leaders about how to include everyone in all aspects of life.

Ms. Heuser asked if it includes someone with disabilities.

Hopkins said yes, but it also could be age. It's nothing specific.

Ms. Heuser noted that adaptive-inclusive is a buzzword now, so she wanted to make sure parents aren't sending their kids to summer camp, where they would be getting indoctrinated into things that are contrary to what their parents are teaching them.

A discussion ensued and the following points were made:

- The parks system tries to include everyone at all ability levels. We focus on abilities, not what a person can't do.
- The park doing that has a manager with a master's degree in therapeutic recreation. She's well-versed and is just providing general information.
- All camps revolve around CCPS's calendar, which was revised on March 7, so the county had to revise its calendar.
- Mr. Hopkins said he'd be at the expo and hopes to add value to that.

Maintenance Report [Rick Garby, Parks Superintendent]

Mr. Garby reported that:

- We need more pickleball courts, but the U.S. Open is a much different level.
- We have 60 other courts that need to be resurfaced.
- We need funding for the other sites.
- We have a maintenance cycle, but we need funding available and then we prioritize.
- There's never enough money or time for closures to do what we want to do.
- People need to find another area to play when maintenance occurs.
- We just did pressure washing around the Veterans' rink, outside pavilions, piers and fencing. We did a huge tree cleanup along the back property line. We completed the playground and built a new walkway near the playground that links to both walkways.
- Something is always being done at a park.
- The Barefoot Beach Preserve boardwalk was completed. We relocated all the garbage cans, removed fencing, installed orange fencing, installed portable toilets and we now have another beach access open.
- But we now have red tide and must work around contractors, Facilities and Park Maintenance.
- At Golden Gate Community Park, new main fencing was installed.
- We're working on irrigation countywide. It's dry season and irrigation is breaking down everywhere. Last month was the driest month on record. Water bills are through the roof. We're spending thousands of dollars more to run beach sites, showers and flush toilets.
- We had a maintenance field day at Caxambas and put down 500 bags of mulch and pulled up thousands of plants. It was a team-building exercise.

Mr. DeMarco said there's a water line at the small dog area in Veterans Park that has no water

coming out.

Mr. Garby said one line was killed off by the Facilities Division due to non-potable water.

Mr. DeMarco said it would be good to have water for large and small dogs at different ends of the park. It gets packed at 5 p.m.

Mr. Garby agreed, but said the water-pressure there is very low.

Ms. Laemel asked Ms. Edwards if her title was official now.

Parks Director Edwards said she was appointed parks director on November 28.

Ms. Laemel congratulated her. [*Audience and PARAB applause*]

Region 3 [Randi Swinderman, regional manager]

Ms. Swinderman reported that:

- We held the truck event in February at Airport Park, where over 3,000 people showed up. The truck show was in the center and there was a stage with live music from noon to 10 p.m.
- South Park is getting repainted this week. They painted outside last week and the interior is being done now.
- Big Corkscrew Island Regional Park has subcontractors there for 10 more days. We'll have full lighting.
- Kyle is the supervisor of the Community Park and Community Family Camp, which is held over the weekend at Pepper Ranch. About 20 families showed up, many from Naples. That sells out every year. Conservation Collier provides talks and nature walks and Park Ranger Jimmy brings his tarantulas, bearded dragons and geckos. His pets cost him about \$450 monthly in food. It's a great experience. We do one in spring and another in December after it dries up.
- We're trying to do more activities with Park Rangers and the Boys & Girls Club and more outreach to get our names out there.
- We sent eight kids to "emerging leaders" at Florida Parks & Recreation Association's Leadership Academy. They're learning about their strengths, how they can work with people with different strengths and how to network within the community. It's a great experience. The president said the kids are very talkative in a group. We're excited they have the opportunity to grow their skills.

Region 4 [David Michel]

Mr. Michel reported that:

- The Gene Cusik Collegiate Classic softball tournament is going on now. There are 32 D3 schools across the country participating in the two-week tournament.
- The parks maintenance staff did an unbelievable job preparing fields. After games, they also have to prepare 25 to 30 fields daily to turn them over.
- The northern schools say the weather and our facility is great.
- Trilogy Lacrosse is this week and the next two weeks. High school teams come from all over and use our facilities here and at Paradise Coast.
- They started staging at Sun-N-Fun for construction of the family pool.
- The Rec Plex started their middle-school and high school basketball league, which has been going on all weekend. He refereed last weekend because they were short staffed.
- We finally got a new playground installed at Veteran's Park and the VPK and spring break camp kids have been utilizing that. It's a huge upgrade from what we had.
- Veterans Park has one of the biggest spring break camps, 56 kids. It's been great and the kids enjoy it.

Ms. Laemel asked why the numbers of kids at camps differed by location.

Mr. Garby said they differ due to staff availability.

Michel continued his presentation:

- There will be extra lifeguards for the aquatic Easter egg hunt.

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- Vinny, who served in the military and nearly died after an accident, held a vintage bike ride with 60 motorcycles driving in his honor. He tells his story nationwide.
- About 12 veterans are in the free sailing program. A lot of volunteers also are veterans.
- There's a duck race on April 1 at Sugden Park, a partnership with NCH. The ducks are hard to control but the Fire Department's dive team will create the course and push the ducks with hoses.
- NCH has already sold 6,000 ducks and expects to sell another thousand leading up to the event. It's a chance to win \$5,000. The proceeds buy life jackets for various park locations.
- He was at the Naples Zoo with Parks Marketing Manager Peg Ruby, and there was a spring safari with hundreds of families, but only 24 were from Collier County. They came from all over the U.S. and Canada. We were there to promote summer camps and our Easter egg hunts. We'll be there again tomorrow and Friday.

Mr. Hanrahan thanked Chairman Olesky for allowing them to present to the TDC. They want to ensure they're on the agenda.

VIII. Director Highlights (Parks Director Edwards Edwards)

Parks Director Edwards told the PARAB:

- She officially became director on November 28.
- Mr. Hanrahan just got married.
- Randi Swinderman is now the permanent regional manager for Region 3, effective last Saturday.
- The Caxambas boat ramp opens officially today for non-recreational, non-motorized vessel activity, kayaks and canoes. When she was there at 8:30 a.m., there weren't kayaks there, but people were walking to the park.
- We have opened nearly every beach access point, except two that we're getting ready to fix. Barefoot Beach Preserve will take a while, and then Vanderbilt Beach Access Point No. 3, the last access point that Collier County hasn't opened.
- She's proud of her team, which has done well in the last five months after the hurricane to get nearly everything almost back to normal.

Mr. DeMarco noted that he went to Bonita Beach, where he could see dead fish and crabs by the entrance. He can't imagine many people want to go in the water and asked if that's a priority for parks.

Chairman Olesky said it's a high priority for the TDC. It should be a high priority here.

IX. Adjournment

Next Meeting Date:

April 19, 2023, 2 p.m. – TBD

May 17, 2023, 2 p.m. – North Collier Regional Park

There being no further business for the good of the County, the meeting was adjourned by order of the chairman at 3:59 p.m.

Parks & Recreation Advisory Board

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Edward "Ski" Olesky, Chairman

These minutes were approved by the Board on _____, (check one) as presented,
_____ or as amended _____.