

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE  
PARKS & RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD

Naples, Florida, February 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 Immokalee Community Park, 321 N. 1<sup>st</sup> St., Immokalee, 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 (via Zoom)  
Donna Fiala (alternate; excused)

ALSO PRESENT: Miguel Rojas Jr., Admin. Assistant, Parks & Recreation  
Tanya Williams, Department Head, Public Services Division  
Chris Harmon, Region 1 Parks Manager  
Dayne Atkinson, Principal Project Manager, Public Services  
Commissioner William McDaniel, District 5  
David Michel, Interim Region 4 Parks Manager  
Aaron Hopkins, Region 2 Parks Manager  
Randi Swinderman, Interim Region 3 Parks Manager  
Kyle Pryce, Supervisor, Immokalee Parks  
Christie Betancourt, Program Manager, Immokalee CRA  
James Hanrahan, Interim Region 5 Parks Manager  
Summer Araque, Conservation Collier

*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 (Ms. Bergel participated via Zoom.)

**II. Pledge of Allegiance and Invocation**

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

**III. Approval of the Agenda**

(No changes)

**Mr. Garby** said Olema Edwards can't be here today so he's representing her.

**IV. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes**

*Vice Chairman Fruth moved to approve the January 18, 2023, meeting minutes. Ms. Gibson-Laemel seconded it. The motion passed unanimously, 6-0.*

**V. Public/Board Comments**

**Mr. DeMarco** asked for an update on Caxambas Park, noting that the city sent out an email saying it will remain closed while they work on fixing it, but they are working on opening some areas.

**Mr. Garby** said there are many factors involved. The majority of parks are open. They're working toward opening it for kayak use only and sections of the park will be closed/fenced off. The sea walls and docks were jeopardized. Dayne Atkinson and Facilities Management are working on what we can do. It can't be used for commercial use until we make the repairs. We will open it temporarily, but it was scheduled to close for repairs prior to Hurricane Ian.

**Mr. Atkinson** said we're going to the Marco Island City Council on February 21 about the use of kayaks there only. We also want to get recreational boat use if Marco City Council says that's OK. We're opening on March 15, depending on when we get bids back. It will open for kayaks and recreational boat use and not commercial vendors. We're also scheduled to close Caxambas Park in fall 2023 for sea wall repair and it will probably be closed for a year.

**Mr. DeMarco** asked if they've considered limited parking if it's closed that long.

**Mr. Atkinson** said that's tied to rezoning approval by the Marco Island City Council. They have a problem with using it for commercial purposes.

**Mr. Garby** said there's parking there, grass and gravel. We have to install a new fencing system. It will be installed on February 27-28.

**Ms. Gibson-Laemel** asked if that would eliminate parking on the grass, cut off that parking.

**Mr. Garby** said they don't have that parking area anymore. Just the asphalt area will be used for parking, unless additional parking is approved.

**Mr. DeMarco** suggested they invite Marco Island City Council members to come to a PARAB meeting.

**[Public Speakers]**

**Eric Martinez** asked about fields for youth programs. He lives in Immokalee and his kids are

involved in Little League. He said there are building maintenance issues. After season, their issues aren't seen to. Fields are limited. He has only one field to practice on. They are fixing things, but more is needed. These meetings are difficult to attend because many attend work. Can you schedule them during the evenings? Can you set up clinics for various sports for kids? Naples and other schools provide that, but it's limited here.

**Mr. DeMarco** asked what fundamentals he wanted at clinics.

**Mr. Martinez** said he wanted basketball clinics at an affordable price to teach kids how to play basketball or volleyball so they don't have to travel to Naples or Fort Myers for that. His kids play all sports. This is a community issue. We need to get the kids off the streets. Parents can't travel far for kids' sports. He had to take the day off from work to attend this meeting to voice his concerns.

**Ms. Swinderman** told him they are looking into basketball and other programs to offer to families in Immokalee.

**Mr. Garby** said he'd speak to him offline.

**Manny Touron**, coach of the Immokalee Soccer Pit Cobras, told the PARAB:

- These meetings should be held later so more people can attend. Many people work.
- He's been complaining about the Immokalee Sports Complex and the number of fields for two years. There were 800 people at the Sports Complex on Friday night and there was no place to park, even on the streets.
- We were expecting at least 275 kids and had 302, with 40 coaches and kids playing every Friday night.
- We have nowhere else to go to play. Eden Park is total chaos with irrigation issues. You can't play there.
- He's gone to all the commissioners, who said they'd help and asked what his needs were. He's relying on PARAB for help.
- You can't play lacrosse at the high school because they're playing there every day after school.
- He was hoping to hear a report about when the turf field project will begin. He heard it will be closed for a year for that. Where are we going to put 350 kids playing soccer? All three fields will be shut down.
- The water-retention project should have been done years ago. The people who said they'd do it are gone and now there's a new administration.
- He thought the Sports Complex was a dream 15 years ago and now it's a reality.
- If you watch YouTube, you will see a drone's view of what happens at the Sports Complex on Friday nights.

**Christine O'Sullivan (via Zoom)**, who spoke about the pickleball concessionaire in November, asked if anything had been done about the pickleball concessionaire contract for Veterans Park. She also contended that there was no mention of the public comments in the minutes for November.

[All public remarks were included.]

**Ms. Gibson-Laemel** said the public remarks were included in the minutes, which were 14 pages long.

**Mr. Garby** said the follow-up meeting is next month.

**Lavonte Dale** asked where his Pop Warner kids would go to practice if the fields are closed.

**Vice Chairman Fruth** told him that Dayne Atkinson would be providing a full updated report on the Sports Complex.

**Jonas Mervilus** asked who would hold down the fort when the expansion occurs. We used to use the middle-school fields. Twelve NFL players are coming down here to do investments. We had an opportunity to hold a town hall meeting and it was jam-packed between 6-8 p.m., with more than 100 people. It's hard for parents to come to 2 p.m. meetings. Can this be pre-recorded and can the

county provide a liaison so we can reach out and ask questions? Even a 6 p.m. meeting would work. **Mr. DeMarco** said committee members can add that to the agenda. Miguel has a form to fill out. If you can't make the meeting, we will discuss it. We meet the third Wednesday of each month.

**Mr. Mervilus** said his biggest focus is tourism. He's launching [www.visitimmokalee.com](http://www.visitimmokalee.com). He wants PARAB meetings to be available at any time to view. That will have a dramatic effect.

*A discussion ensued with the PARAB, staff and public and the following points were made:*

- PARAB meetings are stored on a server.
- They are available by request and a link can be provided to view them.
- Anyone can request the meeting by emailing [info@collierparks.com](mailto:info@collierparks.com)
- Someone always manages the parks website.
- Zoom also has recording capabilities; Mr. Mervilus said that's his expertise and he can help set that up.
- Mr. Mervilus suggested placing the link on Facebook or a link to the request form.
- The public can call 311 or send a question through the 311 website (<https://colliercountyfl.qscend.com/311>) and it will be routed to the correct county department.
- The county must provide a timely resolution to all queries sent to 311.
- The county could send out a link to request a meeting by email or attach a link to the Parks & Recreation website (<https://www.collierparks.com/>) so all meetings are archived and viewable.
- Meeting minutes also are accessible through the website.

**Ms. Gibson-Laemel** asked if the public on Zoom can hear the speakers. [The listener notes on Zoom show they cannot hear speakers and the sound was fading in and out.] She said the county may have to provide microphones if they plan on providing recordings to the public.

## **VI. New Business**

### **a. Capital Projects – Immokalee [Dayne Atkinson, Principal Project Manager, Public Services]**

*Mr. Atkinson detailed a PowerPoint presentation about the Immokalee Sports Complex:*

- The stormwater system will be upgraded.
- Fields 2 and 3 will be converted from grass to turf.
- A new bathroom will be added between Fields 1 and 2.
- The competition pool will be renovated, including the slides.
- The pump house will be renovated.
- ADA improvements will be made to the pool deck and bathrooms.
- Field 1 will be closed during construction; that area is needed for construction staging.
- There's only one stormwater retention area on the site. It doesn't meet code.
- No other improvements can be made on the site until the stormwater improvements are made because we don't have adequate stormwater retention. This is required.
- The county received a CDBG grant to upgrade the gym and the roof.
- This started as a pool renovation, which led to the stormwater issues.
- The stormwater system will be connected to swales surrounding the park.
- An extended covered deck will be added.
- Field lights will be upgraded to LED.
- A new pool will be added. The pool is over 30 years old, out of compliance and needs improvements.
- The pump house is in terrible shape.
- Bathrooms are out of compliance and don't meet ADA requirements. That's part of the expansion.

- The project has been in the design stage for close to a year; 90% plans are expected on Friday and he will review them with staff on Wednesday.
- Permitting with South Florida Water Management has begun.
- Building permits will be submitted to the county in March.
- The procurement process will start in March; bids will take at least 60 days.
- Various contractors are needed for each section, such as the pool, utilities, turf fields, etc. Several unique skillsets are needed.
- It should take nine to 12 months and the goal is to open in August 2024.
- They hope the county will expedite permitting.
- It will be shut down in late August to September if the BCC awards a construction contract in July.

***A discussion with the public, staff and PARAB ensued and the following points were made:***

- There is no good time to close down fields anywhere in the county. Someone will be displaced with a project this size.
- The Pop Warner league needs fields for practice during the week.
- The county can look into coordinating fields with the school district.
- Olema already is discussing this with the school district athletic director.
- The county is aware kids and parents will have no place to go and is looking at options.
- The county doesn't want youth sports shut down for 12 months, which is unacceptable.
- School fields are being used by lacrosse teams after school.
- Finding fields with lights is difficult.
- The Boys & Girls Club has a field, but it's not regulation size. No one uses it except during programs there and there are no lights.
- The only park with lights is Eden Park. There is so much that can be done there.
- The county will continue to apprise the public so they know what's being done.
- The county may look into temporary lighting and green spaces.
- It would be a disadvantage to Immokalee residents to have to transport kids to Big Corkscrew Regional Park.
- Many kids play games on Saturday mornings.
- Once fields are constructed, the Immokalee community will grow and be at the same level as neighboring parks.
- Can the county contact the Boys & Girls Club to discuss Immokalee's needs?
- Mr. Touron worked with the club years ago, but it wasn't a good solution because it was later in the day and the temperature was 106 degrees.
- Maybe the Boys & Girls Club could consider a donation of their fields.

***Mr. Atkinson detailed a PowerPoint presentation about Sun-N-Fun Lagoon and other projects:***

- Bids for the stair tower ended up with zero bids after four months. The county is trying to determine how to repackage that bid to put it out again.
- The Lazy River is in the design stage for renovations.
- We hope to start both projects this fall and open in May. There will be no more renovations after that.
- We're hoping to have the front access open for Caxambas Park and Barefoot Beach on March 4.
- They are expected to open within nine to 12 months.
- Other beach accesses are open.

**Mr. Garby** noted that Barefoot Beach and Vanderbilt Beach 3 are not open.

**Ms. Gibson-Laemel** noted there are no chairs there, so people have to bring chairs and a blanket.

**Commissioner McDaniel** asked if the fields have sprinklers.

**Mr. Garby** said he spoke to the school district and they said if you irrigate an artificial turf field, it becomes hotter and ends in steam. A lease would turn into a major project.

**Commissioner McDaniel** said it's hot for kids playing at North Collier's turf fields. He asked if someone could look into cooling technology.

**Vice Chairman Fruth** said they can change the infill that's put in the field and use cool chill. It costs about \$0.10 more per square foot and cools the field. It was used at the Paradise Coast Sports Complex.

**Commissioner McDaniel** said they're losing time on the fields because they're too hot.

**Mr. Atkinson** said Vice Chairman Fruth will provide him with the cool chill info and he'll get back to him on it.

***A discussion ensued and the following points were made:***

- There's going to be a downward spiral with Immokalee youth sports and football. There are other parks here that can take the kids. We need a temporary solution.
- Consider designating a field at Airport Park and using temporary lights.
- The county is looking at all options available with Tanya Williams. Space is at a premium for soccer countywide, especially in Immokalee.
- The county looked at temporary lighting a few years ago. Risk Management doesn't want it, but we can revisit that. Light is needed for liability reasons.
- Randi and Rick have been talking with Musco Sports Lighting, which has a much better lighting system than the county has.
- The county can consider a Memorandum of Understanding. If we can take another MOU, we will consider it for all rentals. We're looking at redoing the MOU procedure.
- Schools have temporary lighting; the county has no jurisdiction over schools.
- The county needs more fields and lighting. It's a critical need in Immokalee.
- The county will look at fields with no lighting and fields to purchase. We need to start working with landholders.

**Commissioner McDaniel** said we have a GMP. Has anyone on staff looked at the deficiencies in Immokalee? It's benchmarked somewhere. Someone should show that to the PARAB and BCC. The PARAB needs to discuss it and tell the BCC what's needed. We need to start the process of looking at deficiencies now so we're not talking about this again in two years. Let's establish the necessary processes.

**b. Maintenance Report – Immokalee [Rick Garby, Parks Superintendent]**

***Mr. Garby detailed a PowerPoint presentation and reported that:***

- We've been discussing the fields for two years. The process takes time due to permitting and code requirements. We are working on this.
- Field 3 opened early last week after being painted. Fields 1 and 2 also were painted.
- It takes one week for maintenance, which includes rest, grass and insecticides.
- University standards say we should be using our fields 200 hours a year. We are doing 150% more than that.
- Fields 2 and 3 opened February 10.
- Non-county fields used for county sports are maintained by the county only when the county uses them or rents them out.
- The county is trying to maintain 67 fields, which get destroyed by leagues.
- Softball field maintenance at Immokalee Community Park includes edges, adding clay, installing new anchors, bases and home plate.

- Parking lot stones were installed at Immokalee Airport Park, Tony Rosbough Park and Immokalee Oilwell Park, which also got stone in walking areas and a renovation of the picnic table shelter and tree trimming.
- Stone was installed in the maintenance area at Immokalee Community Park.
- All fields at Tony Rosbough Park got top grass and sand. Field maintenance involved edge turf, adding clay, top-dressing with sand and aerating fields.
- Fields there received new bases, pitching rubbers and a home plate; renovation of the dugouts is in progress (delayed by the hurricane) and a new net was installed. The dugouts were not up to code, too low and had many issues. A new metal roof will be installed, and it will be ready for opening day. Others will be ready by the end of season.
- Work has been delayed due to necessary Hurricane Ian repairs in the county.

***A discussion ensued and the following points were made:***

- Mr. Martinez has to pay \$15/hour to rent a room in Immokalee for board meetings because he can't use Tony Rosbough Park, which is where they do all their board business. They're limited to two or three meetings a year there.
- Mr. Garby explained that this is due to staff, contractor and material shortages.
- Ms. Swinderman said the county can only do work when labor is available, which affects construction schedules.
- Supplies are not always available. Other things come up with higher priorities.
- The county tries to work with everyone's schedules.
- Ms. Williams asked the public to give the county a year to get Immokalee up to standards.
- Mr. Garby told the public they could contact him with concerns.
- The county can use tents to replace dugouts during the week; they're being replaced for safety reasons.

**c. Recreation Report – Immokalee [Rick Garby]**

***Mr. Garby detailed a PowerPoint presentation and reported that:***

- We need to close the fields for maintenance to paint them and make them presentable. We overuse our fields.
- Immokalee Airport Park improvements include painting, renovations, new lights and fixtures.
- Work is being done by Facilities Management.
- Mr. Martinez complained that there was only one plug/outlet, forcing people to bring their own generators. The county will look into adding outlets.
- The county is working through several concepts for the Immokalee South Park playground.

***A discussion ensued and the following points were made:***

- Infrastructure at Eden Park is maintained by the county, but they're limited in what they can do. The county has spoken with the school district about why problems are occurring. It's a vicious cycle.
- The county can only use the fields for a specified amount of time but must maintain them and pick up trash.
- Eden Park is the only school site in Immokalee.
- The public can call 311 to alert the county to problems.
- The public also can email Parks & Rec photos from their phone, which will help identify the problem and location.

**VII. Staff Updates**

**Region 3 [Randi Swinderman, interim regional manager]**

***Ms. Swinderman and Immokalee parks staff reported that:***

- Someone requested that new mirrors be installed at the Immokalee Sports Complex and they've been installed. It's a safety feature. You can now see what's occurring in the back.
- New lane lines were added in Immokalee.
- The slide is now operational.
- Equipment was moved around in the fitness center to make it more efficient, accessible and streamlined. Floors were buffed and scrubbed.
- New benches were added at Zocalo Park.
- Zocalo Park is owned by the CRA. The Parks Department maintains it.
- The county learned that the property line at Immokalee South Park is 30 feet down the road, so they're now moving the fence and adding an additional entrance to access storage.
- A new sign was erected with information about the park and hours.
- The conference room walls were repaired.

**Immokalee Community Park [Kyle Pryce, supervisor]**

***Mr. Pryce reported that:***

- New carpeting will be installed on the walls at Immokalee Community Park, which will be better for rentals and other functions. It was outdated.
- The game room wall was fixed and reinforced at Immokalee Community Park.
- Two old, dying trees (oak and pine) were removed in the parking lot. One was becoming a hazard. That also will help with gutters.
- The Kiwanis Club donated \$13,000 for three new playground structures. A plaque memorializing that will say "Dedicated to the kids of Immokalee."
- A contractor leveled out some unusable green space during the carnival. Sod was added to make it usable. It's used for Easter events, summer camp, after-school events and football practice. It's a space people like to use.
- Naples Botanical Garden donated plants last Earth Day.

***Ms. Swinderman said her group sat down with Dayne to discuss needed improvements:***

- The skate park will be remodeled and repairs will be made. They won't be able to add new fencing and lighting.
- Grills and benches will be replaced.
- Outdoor restrooms will be added due to heavy traffic there.
- Upgrades at Immokalee Community Park are focused on the skate park.
- Carpeting will be removed from the walls and replaced with something more durable that can't be destroyed easily.
- Courts will be resurfaced and the parking lot will be repaved.
- All the Immokalee facilities are 20 years old and need to be resurfaced.
- The walking path around the baseball field will be completed and additional lights will be installed.

**Immokalee South Park:**

- Another exit door is needed at Immokalee South Park because it doesn't meet DCF requirements. It requires a structural change.
- Green space will get irrigation and temporary lighting may be added.
- A shade structure will be added over the playground at South Park and basketball courts will be resurfaced.

*[Ms. Bergel left the Zoom recording at 3:36 p.m. due to technical and audio problems.]*



**Immokalee Sports Complex:**

- The fitness center is packed between 5-6 p.m. and more ventilation is needed.
- They have a grant for a hardening project but can't start that until required work is completed.
- The old gym floor, which scuffs easily, needs to be resurfaced.
- The parking lot will be resurfaced.
- The back-office area, which is an open space, will be redesigned into an exercise studio or team room for staff to enhance programs.

**Oil Well Neighborhood Park:**

- The park will get a new parking lot. It will be resurfaced and repaved.

**Ann Olesky Park:**

- The seawall project has started.
- Ms. Swinderman can provide a more detailed update after meeting with FWC tomorrow.

**Tony Rosbough Park:**

- The concession stand will be renovated.

***Ms. Swinderman also reported that:***

- There were two focus groups last summer with 79 participants.
- They looked at the RCMA property and what fields can be used consistently without restrictions.
- Our two top interest areas were fitness and land acquisition.
- People are scouting properties for an additional fitness center.
- They also need more soccer fields.
- The Immokalee community feels separated from the rest of the county.

***A discussion ensued and the following points were made:***

- The county is looking for 30-40 acres.
- Ms. Betancourt has a property she shared with staff that's a possibility.
- There's a push for kids to get a library card and join reading programs.
- Mr. Martinez hopes to start a newsletter for kids and have a program where kids will be mentored by adults.
- Mr. Martinez is looking for basketball courts for kids and has discussed a partnership with Walmart, which will offer a 70-inch TV as a prize.
- They want to ensure that all Immokalee kids have bikes and want another Ciclovía Immokalee. They want to start with walking programs and move to bikes.
- Ms. Swinderman said he could use this park, but if a larger park was needed, he'd have to speak with Risk Management due to the requirements for larger numbers of attendees.
- [www.collierparks.com](http://www.collierparks.com) has a calendar that shows events and spaces available.
- Lighting for the Skate Park must be procured separately from other lighting projects.
- The old gym floor was left over from the old middle school. It's a vinyl rubber floor and has bubbled up.

**Ms. Swinderman** assured the public that they are working hard to get improvements in Immokalee. We will have to partner with other organizations to come up with solutions to get us through the next year. We care about the kids in this community. She urged everyone to report any problems to park staff. She said the truck show is this weekend and everyone is invited.

**Region 1 [Chris Harmon – [interim manager, beaches and water]**

***Mr. Harmon reported that:***

- Dayne covered most of his updates.
- We had a follow-up public meeting about boat and vendor permits. We're not making any changes to the commercial permit process this year but will be making policy changes.
- We got a lot of feedback from the group at the meeting and are trying to balance the diverse needs and desires.
- All beaches are open again, except Barefoot Beach access, Barefoot Beach Preserve and Vanderbilt Beach.

**Mr. DeMarco** asked if there's an alternative to launch 3.

**Mr. Harmon** said Goodland is taking all the overflow. Port of the Islands could be another but it has a different waterway access so it depends on the vendors' needs.

**Region 2 [Aaron Hopkins]**

***Mr. Hopkins reported that:***

- The Junior Leaders Training Program will go live on March 1 and will cover a variety of topics, such as accountability, respect, empowerment, inclusion, all taught by regional managers.
- It will be a four-week program – April 29, May 6, May 13 and May 20.
- The age range is 12- to 16-year-olds.
- The 16-year-olds use the program to gain volunteer hours and experience. They hope to transition into the Junior Leader Internship program.
- Residents were surveyed about a camp theme for this summer; 80 people responded and chose a theme.
- Summer 2023 will be Cruising Through Summer 2023. Week one will be Bon Voyage; week two will be Jungle Cruise Week; week three will be Sea of Stars; week four will be Atlantis; week five will be Navy Week or USS (insert the name of the park); week six will be Treasure Island; week seven will be Alaskan Adventure Week; week eight will be Carnival/Circus; and week nine will be Land Ho, Farewell to Summer.
- Four Easter events are coming up at several parks, including the adaptive-inclusive program and an aquatic egg hunt.
- Parks & Rec will be ordering eggs as a group for all parks, cutting costs.

**Region 4 [David Michel]**

***Mr. Michel reported that:***

- The new playground at Veterans Park is finished.
- We had some yard sales this past month and some coming up this month and March.
- North Collier Park hosted a big tournament, the Men's Winter National Softball Championship, fast-pitch softball for men. We had teams from across the country, from Wisconsin, Minnesota, Ohio, Texas and a few from Canada. We partnered with Lee County.
- Today we have the Senior Expo at the Rec-Plex Recurse and had 43 vendors there and 250 people already came through before 2 p.m. today.
- The upcoming Weston Cup Soccer Tournament, the largest in Florida and one of the largest nationwide, will be held at North Collier Regional Park, Paradise Coast Sports Complex and Big Corkscrew Regional Park. They have over 900 teams and about 250 teams will be participating in Collier County from February 18-20.
- In March, we'll partner again with Lee County for the Gene Cusic Collegiate Classic softball tournament. It's about 2½ weeks, with teams from across the country March 3-16.

**Region 5 [James Hanrahan]**

***Mr. Hanrahan reported that:***

- Eagle Lakes held the Senior Expo, with 43 vendors, compared to 25 last year.
- We hired two full-time lifeguards (not KeyStaff) because the positions have been vacant for two years.
- We're gearing up for the U.S. Open Pickleball Championships in East Naples at the end of April. We already sold-out seats and have a waiting list in the hundreds.
- The Naples Boat Show was held at Sugden Regional Park and the City Docks. There were more than 5,000 people who attended over four days. One boat sold for \$1.4 million on the first day. Aaron handled that all the way through. They want to come back to Sugden next year with 250 boats.

**Commissioner McDaniel** said they're starting to work on a lease agreement for that.

**Mr. DeMarco** asked how the shuttle service worked.

**Mr. Hanrahan** said people liked being able to park at the government center and taking the shuttle from there. There was a bit of seasonal traffic. We had a post-event meeting and agreed we need to increase the number of shuttles.

**Commissioner McDaniel** said kudos to Aaron. The event went very well.

**Mr. Michel** said there was a water ski show on Saturday. We got a lot of statistics from that, but they aren't available yet. There were about 15 participants. Gulf Coast Sailing had an event Sunday.

**Mr. Hanrahan** said people feel Sugden Regional Park is a hidden gem. We're seeing about three times more people there because the beaches aren't as accessible now.

**Conservation Collier [Summer Araque, Principal Environmental Specialist]**

***Ms. Araque reported that:***

- We added 312 acres in 2022.
- We added one new preserve that was 256 acres. Others were additions to existing preserves, a total of 4,700 acres.
- Staff is busy now with prescribed burning. It's getting dry and windy, so we may not be able to continue prescribed burning and may have to hold off until summer. We have limited staff and a limited amount of equipment and coordinate with other agencies.
- Although we've only done one burn, we coordinate with other agencies and have been on four other burns to help out and get them for reciprocal work and equipment.
- All the information is on [www.conservationcollier.com](http://www.conservationcollier.com).
- Pepper Ranch is our largest preserve at 2,512 acres. It's a working cattle ranch on Lake Trafford Road. There's a campground with a host during open months, a visitor center and restroom, along with hiking trails, mountain biking, wildlife viewing, western trails and photography. The campground is open on weekends and opens in early June, from Friday through Sunday on non-hunt weekends. It's open to hunters and youth hunters on hunting weekends.
- Every year in October, we have sunflowers and many groups come out to take photos. It lasts only a few weeks. We didn't have it last year due to the hurricane.
- Our Facebook page shows wildlife photos. Cameras on the preserve capture photos.
- We continue to acquire property. Anyone is welcome to nominate properties to acquire.

**VIII. Advisory Board Manual Workshop**

(Postponed to the March 15 meeting)

**IX. Adjournment**

**Next Meeting Dates:**

March 15, 2023, 2 p.m. – North Collier Regional Park

April 19, 2023, 2 p.m. – TBD

February 15, 2023

**There being no further business for the good of the County, the meeting was adjourned by order of the chairman at 4:13 p.m.**

## Parks & Recreation Advisory Board

## Edward "Ski" Olesky, Chairman

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