MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE

PARKS & RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD

Naples, Florida

April 17, 2024

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 Vineyards Community Park Community Center, 6231 Arbor Blvd. W., Naples, with the following members present:

CHAIRMAN: Edward “Ski” Olesky (excused)

VICE CHAIR: Joshua Fruth (Acting Chair)

Jessica Bergel

Lee Dixon

Rebecca Gibson-Laemel

Kristina Heuser

Eric Kelly

Donna Fiala (excused/alternate)

ALSO PRESENT: James Hanrahan, Assistant Director, Parks & Recreation

Laurie Johnson, Supervisor, Vineyards Community Park

Desiree Sawyer, Seniors Program Leader, Vineyards Park

Gisele Tadros, Program Leader, Vineyards Community Park

Lena Dye, Program Leader, Vineyards Community Park

Dorothy Overcash, Customer Svc. Specialist, Vineyards Park

Renee Darroux, Recreation Asst., Vineyards Park

Miguel Rojas Jr., Admin. Assistant, Parks & Recreation

Said Gomez, Region 2 Interim Parks Manager

Randi Swinderman, Region 3 and 4 Parks Manager

Sidney Kittila, Region 5 Interim Parks Manager

***Anyone who needs a verbatim record of the meeting may request a copy of the recording and PowerPoint presentations from the Collier County Parks & Recreation Department.***

# Call to Order

**Acting Chairman Fruth** called the meeting to order at 2 p.m.

# Pledge of Allegiance and Invocation

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

1. **Welcome by Director**

**Mr. Hanrahan** read the Parks & Rec mission statement:

*The Parks & Recreation Advisory Board serves as a vital bridge between the community and Collier County’s Parks & Rec division and is dedicated to enhancing local recreation facilities. Working hand-in-hand with staff, our board members actively contribute to programming, fundraising, special events, maintenance, and recommendations for physical improvements. Our primary goal is to continuously elevate recreation services for all residents of Collier County.*

*Through careful evaluation and thoughtful analysis, PARAB provides recommendations to Collier County Parks & Rec, striving to improve, modify or develop services to better meet the diverse needs of our community. As outlined in our ordinance, PARAB’s functions include evaluating park property acquisition, analyzing development of Parks & Recreation facilities, reviewing programs and special events and providing input on the Parks & Recreation Master Plan. We actively seek input from the public to inform our decisions and recommendations.*

*Additionally, PARAB may provide recommendations to the Board of County Commissioners on relevant issues. Public participation is encouraged, with members of the public being allowed three minutes to be heard on any proposition before the board, ensuring that community voices are heard and valued in the decision-making process.*

1. **Roll Call**
2. **Verification of Quorum**

The roll call was taken and a quorum of six was established.

# Approval of the Agenda

# (No changes)

***Ms. Heuser made a motion to approve the agenda. It was seconded by Ms. Laemel. The motion passed unanimously, 6-0.***

# Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

**Acting Chairman Fruth** noted that time on the title page should be changed to 2 p.m. It says 6 p.m. due to the Immokalee meeting.

***Ms. Heuser made a motion to approve the March 20, 2024, meeting minutes, as amended. Mr. Kelly seconded it. The motion passed unanimously, 6-0.***

# New Business

**Mr. Hanrahan** told the public that the board meetings alternate between locations, North Collier Regional Park, and various community parks and centers. This month, we’re highlighting Vineyards and it supervisor of parks, Laurie Johnson, who will give a presentation.

# Welcome To Vineyards Community Park

# *Ms. Johnson detailed a PowerPoint presentation on Vineyards Community Park:*

* She’s the park supervisor at Vineyard Community Park, was a program leader at Veterans Park for about eight years prior to that, and she’s worked for the county for about 20 years.
* She introduced her staff: Desiree Sawyer, program leader for seniors; Gisele Tadros, program leader; Lena Dye, program leader; Dorothy Overcash, customer service specialist; and Renee Darroux, recreation assistant.
* They created a PowerPoint because this is a quiet time of day and she wants the board to see what we do. We work hard and put a lot of love into the community.
* Occasionally, we have after-school kids or summer camp kids paint the rocks in our butterfly gardens.
* It’s a 32-acre park that’s behind the elementary school but we’re visible to the public because we’re right off a main road. After Hurricane Irma, a lot of trees on the buffer side by the canal were ripped down so we’re even more visible.
* We’ve got three soccer fields, two softball fields, a playground, water feature, four tennis courts, shuffleboard courts, two sand volleyballs courts, a racquetball court area, and eight pavilions for picnics or rentals.
* We rent this room for events, we have a VPK room and a child-care or game room that we use for our VPK and camp programs, and we use every bit of green space.
* Vineyards partners with a lot of local groups. The Girl Scouts made us a book box that’s used a lot. People put books in and take books out.
* We partner with the Sheriff’s Office and the Fire Department in the summer.
* We do a special event, a Heart Run in the spring.
* We partner with the county Risk Department and county employees can earn healthy bucks, so we do different partnerships in the community.
* We partner with the elementary school, which does author readings and other events. We also use them when the weather is bad, so we stay there when the after-school program can’t walk over here.
* Many people use our parks. They bring sit and relax or walk their dogs. It’s a habitat for many wonderful birds. We also have some invasive lizards and natural lizards and occasionally get some alligators. We have a beautiful pond.
* Lena Dye does lot of programs with the kids about recycling and using various recycled materials. This chandelier that she created is made from recycled water bottles. It was recently installed and we’re very proud of it.
* We have a splash pad the kids like to use.
* We have childcare programs, after-school programs, voluntary pre-kindergarten, “no school” and holiday camps, and the summer camp program.
* They don’t just do homework. Lena partnered with another park to hold a race with after-school kids in February.
* We offer various themed activities and games to keep it exciting for kids all summer, nine to 10 weeks. It’s 10 weeks this summer.
* We get VPK kids, ages 4 and 5, ready for kindergarten. They have assessments they go through.
* We’ve got beginning, intermediate and advanced line-dancing classes.
* We have a boat builders group that’s coordinated by Health & Human Services.
* We have basketball classes, pickup basketball and lots of evening pickup basketball, when the courts are filled.
* We’ve got volleyball classes and tons of tennis, Pee-Wee, junior, youth and adult tennis classes. We have a lot of rentals and adults from round-robins in the park.
* We’ve got beginner, intermediate and advanced fencing classes.
* We do many special events, including Boo-Tacular. We partner with countywide parks, so we can go to another park and do a Halloween event.
* We can offer very small events, but partner with other parks for large events. The Heart Run is a partnership.
* We hold six yard sales a year, three in spring and three in fall and winter.
* We have eight partners, including Optimist Soccer, Azzurri , Collier County lacrosse, which uses our fields.
* We do a lot of rentals and reservations, such as party rentals and baby showers. We have setups that are very elaborate or they come and grill. We have Zumba and Candy House Creations, which rent here. We have a flower arranging class.

***During questions by the board, the following points were made:***

* The summer camp fills up in a minute because we keep kids busy with lots of games and guest speakers.
* If anyone knows of a good speaker, we’ll take them.
* The splash pad is about as old as the park.
* Before Ms. Johnson arrived, the splash pad never had any glitches.
* The public and kids enjoy it but the setup isn’t great maintenance-wise. It would be better if it didn’t require a lot of maintenance. The sun and the water takes a beating on the fixtures and storms don’t help.

**Mr. Hanrahan** said many summer camps are filled and this is a very popular one.

1. **Pelican Bay Community Park Update**

***Mr. Hanrahan reported:***

* The concessionaire, Chuck, has officially left. His last day was April 9th and he and Randi met with the Pelican Bay Community Foundation representative, Maury Bozman, and they have taken over the operations for Pelican Bay.
* We learned that Chuck was basically doing drop-ins. Those will continue, but as they start the building process, they’re going to look at fees, the fee policy and programs they want to offer. The County Manager’s Office also is looking at it.
* They’re going to keep it *status quo* until the real changes happen. They don’t want to do something robust and have to shut it down for the changes.
* Maury Bozman, director of the foundation’s Executive Leadership Team, has been amazing to work with. We met a couple of his staff and parks maintenance was there, so it’s been seamless.
* Randi Swinderman had the keys changed for all the facilities because Chuck was there for years and we don’t know how many keys are out there. We just provided the foundation with new keys.
* The foundation feels good about how it’s going.

**Ms. Laemel** asked if anything is torn up yet.

**Mr. Hanrahan** said not yet.

***Mr. Hanrahan continued his report:***

* Our maintenance team is doing a good job of keeping our grounds clean.
* We looked at the basketball courts because we’re doing a lot of resurfacing and don’t want to start anything in case the foundation needs a staging area and the courts are messed up.
* He directed county Maintenance staff to have communication with the community and to tell them that Parks & Rec, in conjunction with Pelican Bay, will be making wonderful changes.
* They’re representing us now so we established a line of communication. Shannon Darrow, the Veterans Community Park supervisor, will be our main contact.

1. **Superintendent and Director Update**

# *Mr. Hanrahan told the board:*

* We talked about Olema coming back at the last meeting, but since then, both Olema and Rick Garby accepted positions in other areas.
* Olema decided to move home to take care of her mother. We miss her but support her. It was one of the toughest decisions she’s ever made and she still calls him every day. He told her to focus on what’s next for her. He helped her move and pack up Saturday, so she’s officially gone.
* Rick accepted a position in Virginia at Hampden-Sydney College, his last day was yesterday and we wish him the best. Team members are stepping up to help. He’s an expert when it comes to fields, so he will be overseeing all of their grounds, their collegiate fields and this is up his alley so we’re excited for him.
* We gave Olema a grand goodbye but Rick didn’t want a party or to be in the spotlight so he walked him to his car yesterday and gave him a hug.
* Because Rick was in that position for 10-plus years, he’s working with the County Manager’s Office and his homework is to look at current job descriptions for his job and to see what we need to add or take away because Rick was a catch-all. He did an amazing job and we miss him. Those will be big shoes to fill.
* He and Miguel put together a staff email that he can send the board. His directive to staff is we’re taking it 30 days at a time. We don’t know how the selection process is going to look, but we can do a great job and own it at our level.

***Action Item: Mr. Hanrahan will send the PARAB the staff email he and Miguel put together.***

# Parks Short-Term Goals

# *Mr. Hanrahan reported:*

* The first 30 days will be brilliant at the basics, exceptional customer service and making sure our parks are clean.
* We’re challenging staff to do something different from their normal scope of work. Our inspector of projects is doing look up-look downs and providing him with a report on what he sees at each location. Then the supervisors and crew leaders will work on getting those things cleaned up. The parks look amazing, but the inspector has a professional eye to observe and see, so that will start next Monday. He’ll give the inspector a list. He’s already unofficially started with Said.
* He wants to give Said credit. Said had an idea about looking at fencing and he (Hanrahan) said we should just do the entire park. He’s had several conversations with the supervisors. Laurie agreed to look and said we can control what we can control. We’re not worried about anything else except those three things: customer service, clean parks and being brilliant at the basics.

**Ms. Heuser** asked if he’s the interim director now.

**Mr. Hanrahan** said it’s not official. (Public Services Department Head) Tanya (Williams) mentioned that they’re looking to make that happen so we’re going to continue. He’s making the decisions, along with Tanya and (Deputy County Manager) Dan (Rodriguez). If he can’t make a decision, he can ask them, but we’re used to handling day-to-day operations.

**Ms. Heuser** asked if he knew the next steps for the search and filling the position.

***Mr. Hanrahan said not yet and reported:***

* He has two weeks turn review Rick’s position and turn that in. Miguel just returned from a vacation, so that will be on his to-do list.
* One of the things we’ve started is called “What’s on Your Desk?” We meet every morning to go over what’s going on. HR is going to be a big part of this.
* For the director position, he’s meeting one-on-one with Tanya next Thursday and will have more information then. His recommendation has been to do a search and do whatever they feel is necessary, but to know this team can handle it. They can take their time, if needed, to ensure their decision is right because staff has gone through many changes and wants continuity and stability.

**Ms. Laemel** asked if there was anything PARAB could do, such as a letter of support for you and your team.

***Mr. Hanrahan responded:***

* The main thing is to be our advocate, someone to lean on and be our voice. If you hear things, tell us.
* With Rick, we lost someone with over 20 years of experience. Olema was a visionary and was blazing new paths. When you lose those kinds of people, we need to have grace and patience and we know what the objectives are.
* For Immokalee, he’s working on an aquatics presentation for next week.
* If someone sent something to parks and didn’t hear back, please tell us. Tell everyone who to email now that Olema is gone.
* Just be that support out there. You’ve always done it.

# Public Comments

**Cindy Dolmage, president of Friends of the Barefoot Beach Preserve**

* We volunteered at the park preserve for over 30 years.
* During that time, we built a tiki hut, gave lectures during season, added a pond, waterfall, garden, cactus garden, maintained the sailor trail, led nature walks, and whatever was needed.
* That stopped after Hurricane Ian. Commissioner Hall’s newsletter two weeks ago said they were going to completely restore Barefoot Beach, so she emailed to ask him to define that. Does that mean you’re going to rebuild the tiki hut, does that mean you’re going to put a new pond together? That was 16 days ago and she got no answer.
* The Friends have funds and volunteers and want to know what’s going on. Nobody seems to be able to answer that question.

***Mr. Hanrahan responded:***

* It’s two-fold. He’ll need to catch up with the Friends, which normally contributed.
* Rick, who is gone, was the main point of contact, but on the facilities side, they’re working with FEMA on the needed renovations.
* He has a twice-monthly meeting with the Facilities Division on the renovations. If you can email him the list, he can see what’s in their scope of work.
* If there are things that aren’t in there, then we as a team can look at it and see what we can budget for and see what you’re willing to budget for.
* He can follow up with her in early May, provide more information and then we can put together a plan.

**Ms. Dolmage** said Friends pays $1 yearly to rent that area from the county. Is it our obligation to repair it? Is it your obligation to repair it? She wants to move forward.

**Mr. Hanrahan** said he’d check.

**Acting Chairman Fruth** asked if she was referring to the Tiki Hut.

**Ms. Dolmage** said yes, as well as the garden, sprinkler system and pumps for the pond. Inside the Tiki hut, we had cabinets and displays. We had a volunteer willing to spend the money to completely rehab the pond, but they weren’t letting us in, particularly Parking Lot 1 and she respects that. They were using it for staging, but there’s no power. When will there be power there? We can’t put in a pump, a garden or make the water sprinkle on the garden so we’re trying to figure out what’s going on.

**Ms. Laemel** asked what they’d been doing since they couldn’t go there.

**Ms. Dolmage** said that unfortunately, most volunteers went elsewhere and we’re losing them. They tried to set up temporarily and were in a parking lot for a weekend. Historically, we’ve handed out over 100,000 pieces of literature during season. We have a handout about the butterflies, another about the birds, another on shells, etc. Unfortunately, they got chased out by someone who was manning the front gate.

**Mr. Hanrahan** asked if they’d been able to get in and clean up your trail.

**Ms. Dolmage** said not at all.

**Mr. Hanrahan** said he’d look into it. Parking Lot 3 is open and we’re going to have Risk Management assess what can be done because to the untrained eye, it looks OK. But he heard we need to work on some of the sand and they’re working on that. He’ll ask the Facilities project manager what the next steps are and what the timeline looks like.

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

* The Friends of Barefoot Beach Preserve needs to know because they may need raise money to replace the cabinets if the county isn’t replacing them.
* The cabinets were made out of strong plywood, cost about $6,000 and were supposed to last forever.
* The group needs to know where we go from here. Our year is coming up in terms of renewing memberships and our fund drive, etc. We’d like to be able to let people know.
* Mr. Hanrahan said she can get his card from Miguel and send the list of what The Friends donated or purchased and the associated costs. Estimates are fine.
* Mr. Hanrahan will take the list to the project manager and his department head, Tanya Williams, and can probably get back to her by early to mid-May, after a meeting with Tony Barone from the Facilities Division.
* Because Rick is gone, he can ask two others on the team if they’re aware what was done historically.
* Years ago at North Collier, something donated by the softball team broke and we didn’t have the budget to replace it. When it becomes a donation, it becomes the county’s property and then we have to look at budgeting priorities.
* The previous storm tore up the roof on the tiki hut and Ms. Dolmage, who said she was impatient, found a Miami company, which came in and repaired the roof and she got into a lot of trouble, so she wants to avoid that.
* The county has permitting processes it must adhere to.
* Mr. Hanrahan will ensure she’s updated.

**Ms. Dolmage** said she appreciates that and thanked staff and the board for their time.

**Ms. Laemel** asked where the lectures were held.

**Ms. Dolmage** said in the tiki hut, then the lab room. There was always a Park Ranger present. We tried five times to start again and hope to start in the spring. The lectures are very informative and they give volunteers something to do.

**Denny Dolmage** (her husband) said he was The Friends former president and volunteer coordinator. The volunteers pick shifts. There are about 50 volunteers and 150-200 members. We’re the first people visitors see when they come to the park.

**Ms. Dolmage** said many are scared to take that role, but the usual first question is, “Where’s the bathroom?”

***Action Item: Determine how donations from The Friends of Barefoot Beach Preserve are handled if damaged after becoming county assets. Stay in communication with its president, Cindy Dolmage.***

# Staff Reports

# Mr. Hanrahan said Mike Ossorio is on vacation.

***Region 1 [James Hanrahan]***

* From a Park Ranger standpoint, they’re doing an incredible job. We’re not seeing a true tourism slowdown but we’re noticing that some beach accesses and marinas aren’t as busy now. When boat season starts this summer, we’ll see that ramping up.
* Eric Short (head of Park Rangers) is doing an incredible job and the Rangers’ turtle crew is getting ready for turtle season on May 1st. They’re already out there.
* He plans to shadow them for a day to fully understand what they do.
* Eric also was dealing with the U.S. Open Pickleball Championships.

***Region 2 – Said Gomez***

* He covers Max A. Hasse Jr. Community Park, Golden Gate Community Park, Golden Gate Community Center and Therapeutic Recreation, the AIR program.
* We just finished our AIR spring event at Golden Gate Community Park. It was well attended, with over 200 participants, and involved therapeutic recreation for special-needs kids. It’s impressive to see that many kids come out.
* We had something for all ages. We broke it into groups of 0-3, 4-7, and 8-12.
* There were different organizations there, including Golisano, DAS, Therapeutic Dogs.
* There was another event that Golden Gate Community Park partnered with at Eagle Lakes, but Sid (Kittila) can speak about the underwater egg hunt. It was impressive. It’s underwater with eggs, but the team is well-versed after doing it many times. They put life jackets on and are good to go.
* Max Hasse has 100-plus kids in VPK now and they’re doing a great job. They’ve got a couple of dances planned for the summer and after summer.
* Golden Gate Community Park offers swimming lessons and out of all parks, it offers the most swimming lessons. They have all of the elementary schools, middle schools and high schools, as well as one for parents who can’t swim. It’s a great thing we do for the kids, bringing parents in because if the kids aren’t learning, the parents are learning, and we want to have them all participating in lessons.
* Golden Gate Community Center had its regional BMX race for wheels, which was impressive. We had at least 200 vendors.

**Ms. Laemel** asked if we could do something for special-needs adults.

**Mr. Gomez** said it’s mostly kids now but we could look into that. Right now, it’s mainly kids.

**Ms. Laemel** asked if there’s anything for special-needs adults.

**Mr. Hanrahan** said when he was a supervisor at the RecPlex at North Collier, we teamed up with STARability and they used the gymnasium and fields for athletic activities that also involved adults. Monica Cummings is a supervisor of our therapeutic recreation and is looking into that, but our strong suit now is children. We’re looking to increase it to adults, as well.

**Ms. Swinderman** said Ms. Cummings offers an art class at Golden Gate and Big Corkscrew that involves recycled art, similar to what we’ve been doing and it’s for all ages.

**Mr. Gomez** said they offer a program for Wounded Warriors and a program for older special-needs people at Sugden Regional Park that involves water. Sid handles that.

***Region 3 [Randi Swinderman]***

* She oversees eastern Collier County, which is Corkscrew Island Regional Park, Immokalee South Park, Immokalee Community Park and Immokalee Sports Complex.
* In Immokalee, we’re renovating. The women’s restroom is completely done at Community Park. They’re working on the men’s room and they’ll be moving to the outdoor restrooms.
* Next Friday, we’re going to start renovating pathways around the park. We’re starting at where the concession stand is and alerted Little League because they use the high school fields for baseball and softball. We partnered with them and they’re aware.
* The next Monday and Tuesday, we’re going to go all the way around the park. The path is highly used during the day and a lot of people use it to exercise. A future project we’re looking into is adding more pathways around the park because it’s so heavily divided.
* At the Sports Complex, we’re ordering eight new treadmills, one or two other pieces of equipment, and a Smith machine, which is like a guided bar that helps you on the way down and up. We’re working through procurement issues now but have a backup plan if we can’t use our first company. We have a second vendor available that we’re looking forward to using. She hopes to have more information at the next meeting.
* The cracked mirror in the fitness center was replaced last week.
* The lights are staying on until 10 p.m. This Friday is Manny Touron’s last Friday Night Lights soccer program and 300 kids will be on the fields.
* We added a summer sports camp at the Sports Complex.
* At Easter, we partnered with the library and Robert’s Ranch Museum to put our funds together. Over 680 people attended the free event. We had vendors and there was a Santa Claus piñata that they transformed into an Easter bunny and the kids had fun. Some kids got to pick mulberries, which was a cool opportunity.
* We’re going to continue collaborating throughout the summer and for our other projects.
* Big Corkscrew will have over 205 kids at its summer camp this summer. It’s the first year that the pool is fully operational. We saw a big boost in numbers. When she reviewed aquatics yesterday, there were days with 50 people on the deck and 122 people in pools, not counting those on the pool deck, so it’s well over 200.

***Region 4 [Randi Swinderman]***

* Region 4 is Vineyards, Veterans, and North Collier Regional Park.
* At North Collier, we partner with Paradise Sports Complex for a large facility, or large tournament. The South Florida Showcase is next weekend, April 27-28, and it will be hosted at Paradise Coast, Big Corkscrew and North Collier. They have over 300 teams.
* They called this morning and were trying to use our softball fields as soccer fields because they’ve got more teams than expected. We partner with the Tourism Division on those events because they involve people across the country.
* We have a low-ratio camp at North Collier that was intended for a smaller group of kids but wasn’t being used for that purpose, so we re-branded it to AIR2 (Adaptive Inclusive Recreation). Monica will run that camp, which is for kids who don’t need a one-to-four ratio, but a one-to-eight. One-to-10 is more than they need. They don’t need the loud chaos of 120 kids. It seems to have taken off into what we wanted it to accomplish. It didn’t fill up as fast, so people read the description and we’re excited to offer that in a new capacity and get kids the help they need.
* Pickleball meetings at Veterans Community Park have been going really well. They decided to take a summer break because many people have gone home.
* For baseball and softball, all of our youth sports facility partners will start to wind down in mid-May, when field closures start coming into play.
* South Park’s playground is getting installed on May 1. We finally got through all the permitting issues so they’ll be able to start construction.
* *[Ms. Johnson already covered Vineyards.]*

# *Region 5 [Sidney Kittila]*

* Region 5 covers Donna Fiala Eagle Lakes Park, East Naples Community Park and Southern Regional.
* Pickleball is going crazy. It’s been wonderful. She’s been over there with all the participants during some games and things are going smoothly.
* Over 3,200 people paid. There were many more who could have paid, but we didn’t have enough courts, people to play or parking. They had so many people throughout the country reach out, including France.
* East Naples has a senior center and has a large number of players, 38 for Euchre and 51 for Mahjong. They pay a fee and it keeps people busy, so kudos to them for hitting the seniors. They do a lot of work with seniors there, not just young kids. They’re trying to hit all the demographics.
* They’re getting the pathways resurfaced May 2-3 and it shouldn’t interfere with programs. It may be done sooner, possibly a week earlier, if the company can get there.
* Sugden Regional Park had the Murdo Smith Adaptive Sailing Regatta, which was named after a former co-worker who has passed away. There was a large turnout and it went well.
* They’re now preparing for summer camp. She was there yesterday and they’ve got sailboats out and they’re cleaning them, getting sails ready. They have a great group of volunteers, so we thank them.
* Sugden’s ski camp and sailing camp fills up in less than a minute and we’re full.
* At Donna Fiala Eagle Lakes Park, everybody’s preparing for summer camp. They just had the Easter event with Golden Gate, so they’re getting into the mode of helping each other. We can do a much better job funding, staffing, etc., when we work together and it brings in more patrons.
* Swim Central collaborated with Golden Gate Aquatics at Golden Gate Community Park. Over 15 lifeguards came to Swim Central, which was about two weeks. They had over 80 participants, kids who were learning. We’re in Florida, so it’s important to learn about the water, skills and safety. That event was with Avalon Elementary.
* They’re planning a Kids Night Out this Friday. You can drop your kids off for $10 and have 2½ hours to yourself.
* Water safety month is May and that’s posted. A lot of people aren’t aware.
* They’re holding a pool fiesta event at Eagle Lakes’ aquatics area. It’s a taco eating contest, fun and music for only $3.
* A lot of our fees are very reasonable, sometimes too reasonable. We try to offer events to the community at a fair price. Hopefully, we’ll get people out there.
* They’re also going to try something new this summer, a four-week sports camp.

# Director’s Report [James Hanrahan]

***Mr. Hanrahan reported:***

* He’ll start with what Kristina asked about at the last meeting, an update for the Immokalee Sports Complex, from Tanya Williams.
* The original scope was to develop sports field alternatives, including one artificial turf soccer field and improve grass fields in Immokalee.
* The Public Services Department admin drafted an executive summary for the May 14th BCC meeting: *Recommendation for the board to approve establishing a project budget for a capital project for the renovation of the Immokalee Sports Complex to include the conversion of two existing grass fields to artificial, construction of an additional restroom facility, address identified stormwater management issues, and approve the necessary budget amendment. Estimated costs, $4 million.”*
* The budget will be set for fiscal year 2024 and construction will begin in 2025. Upcoming discussions will identify the Immokalee community leaders.
* He has a meeting this Thursday, April 18, at the County Manager’s Office, with the Facilities Division, Public Services Division (PSD), along with Manny Touron, one of the main sports partners in Immokalee.
* On May 10th, we’ll have a meeting in the County Manager’s Office with PSD and parks admin and they’ll meet with RCMA (Redlands Christian Migrant Association), which has a school that’s opening there.
* In late May or early June, PARAB will meet with Immokalee’s community leaders.
* He will provide more information at the May PARAB meeting.

# Ms. Heuser asked if the BCC executive summary was approved by the County Manager’s Office.

**Mr. Hanrahan** said there’s a process it goes through in MinuteTrack. It’s been uploaded and there have been a lot of signatures and he believes he’s one, but he hasn’t seen his step yet. This is a priority for the County Manager’s Office and commissioners and should be on the May 14th agenda.

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

* Is it a priority for all the commissioners? At the meeting, you will hear a discussion by the commissioners. It’s No. 1 on the Strategic Plan for the BCC and the County Manager’s Office.
* With everything that needed to be done at the Sports Complex, it’s nearly $12 million.
* We’re now looking at how we’re phasing Big Corkscrew’s work.
* We plan to phase the Immokalee Sports Complex and fields will be the priority and then aquatics will be the second phase. When you look at usage and safety, etc., the fields are No. 1 and the aquatics facility is No. 2.

***Mr. Hanrahan also provided an update on vacancies, answered questions and the following points were made:***

* We posted the initial round of vacancies and we’ve been able to fill a lot of the positions internally and externally.
* He just sent Dan and Tanya the next round of vacancies we’d like released and hope to hear back soon.
* As we get into the summer season, aquatics is important. This is the first year we’ve been able to hire summer camp counselors this early in the year. Some locations already have all their counselors hired. In past years, we were scrambling to find people the day before camp started. We’re able to move training to mid-May, as opposed to the Saturday before camp starts.
* We are fully staffed with lifeguards. We put together training and Sun-N-Fun will soon be doing training and marketing that.
* The directive he’s given staff is to make sure you’re not dependent on other locations. You have enough staff to operate your location.
* Dane has been working and provided PARAB with an update last month. Nothing has changed.
* We’ll be presenting recommendations for Sun-N-Fun for summer ‘24 and what calendar year ‘25 looks like. There’s a lot of work that needs to be done that’s contingent upon potential contractors and whether companies can secure equipment. He hopes to present it to the County Manager’s Office next week or the week after.
* Dane, who handles our aquatics projects, moved back to the Facilities Division. That’s why he keeps mentioning the facilities team. We’re going to make that presentation together and will provide realistic dates based on true project-management calendar dates. It may be a delayed opening, so we’re exploring all opportunities.
* He commended staff for doing an incredible job. Even without Olema, we were able to run the department without problems thanks to everyone stepping up.
* Said stepped in when Sid stepped out and he owned it. He helped people who had never seen the budget before, sat down with them, worked with our partner, Operations & Veterans Services, which handles our budget. Kudos to him. He owned it as if he’d been in that position for 20 years.
* He thanked Sid, who came back from being gone a while and then jumped into the U.S. Open Pickleball Championships. She was physically there working and handling that.
* Randi has been running two regions for quite some time. It was only supposed to be until December. Laurie asked to keep Randi, so that was a compliment to her work there. She’s been amazing, so thank you to Laurie for those kind words and thank you for doing what you’re doing.
* Miguel also stepped it up. He’s my assistant and has done an incredible job with reports, with HR and helping him understand priorities. He has access to his e-mails and ensures they’re all taken care of by telling him which are a priority. Tanya was very impressed with the letter we wrote.
* We’re going to continue to move forward and will tell the board if there are any updates.
* The employees who left us gave us great direction and great leadership and the team has carried on as a team. As a team builder and after seeing so many recreation departments in his career, this team is truly impressive.

# IX. Adjournment

# Next Meeting Date:

# May 15, 2024, 2 p.m. – North Collier Regional Community Park

**There being no further business for the good of the County, the meeting was adjourned by order of the chairman at 3:06 p.m.**

# Parks & Recreation Advisory Board

**Josh Fruth, Acting Chairman**

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