MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE

PARKS & RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD

Immokalee, Florida

February 19, 2025

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 6 p.m. in REGULAR SESSION at Immokalee Community Park,

321 N. 1st Street, Immokalee, with the following members present:

CHAIRMAN: Edward “Ski” Olesky

VICE CHAIR: Joshua Fruth

Jessica Bergel

Lee Dixon

Eric Kelly

Rebecca Gibson-Laemel

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

Miguel Rojas Jr., Admin. Support Specialist II, Parks & Rec

Jaime Cook, Director, Development Review, Growth Mgt.

Randi Swinderman, Region 4 Parks Manager

Said Gomez, Region 3 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.***

**I. Call to Order**

**Chair Olesky** called the meeting to order at 6 p.m.

1. **Welcome by the Director**

b. **Roll Call**

The roll call was taken.

c. **Verification of Quorum**

Six were in attendance

**II. Pledge of Allegiance and Invocation**

The board recited the Pledge of Allegiance

**III. Approval of the Agenda**

(No changes)

**IV.** **Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes**

***Motion was made to move approval of previous minutes to the next march meeting. The motion passed unanimously***

1. **New Business**
2. **Meeting begins with a presentation about new renovations at Immokalee community Park as well all the programs they offer**

* Rooms that are rented out for birthday parties and kitchen areas have been cleaned out, countertops redone, as well as cabinets.
* Restrooms inside the Immokalee Community Park have been completely renovated.
* New lighting has been added outside around the parking lot and other walking areas around the park
* New asphalt has been laid out around the concession stand, and all the walkways around the baseball fields.
* Immokalee community park is very engaged with the community with the help of programs such as family camp out, community yard sales, VPK program, and afterschool programs.
* Another program that keeps the community engaged is the summer program, registration starts MARCH 1st. During the summer program, every week the park takes kids on field trips outside of town; which has been very successful among the community

1. **Immokalee High School field update**

* The Collier County school system has begun to turf all the softball and baseball fields.
* The county commissioner is working with the county schools to come with an agreement where the fields will go to the schools so that turf can be added but the park will still be able to have access to use the fields
* James Hanrahan has mentioned that before the March meeting he will ask the county’s attorney’s office about the documents they’re working about the fields; so that it will be added to next meeting’s agenda.

***A question from the board was asked***

* Are we still looking at purchasing more areas for fields?
* James Hanrahan responded: we do have the Williams property
* Jaimie Cook: The County is still working through the process on the Williams property, which is 2,200 acres. There is a portion of that would be designated for our fields, not sure yet if that’s for multipurpose, soccer, football, baseball fields, or combination of those. It is still going through the new diligence period with the environmental testing.
* The last board meeting passed an extension so that some more of those testing results could be obtained before we take a purchase agreement back to the board

1. **Old Business**
2. **Immokalee Sports Complex- Update**

* Jamie Cook has met with the consultant that is designing the Immokalee Sports Complex and updates to include the turf fields and a new swimming pool.
* Jamie Cook: they were gonna need a variance for some items including landscaping. They are going to be moving forward with that variance request very shortly. To get back done while they finish up the other comments and some revisions to the swimming pool design.
* Jamie Cook: The variance is expected to be submitted and go through the review process starting in March, then hopefully following that’s a typically a four-month process. But following that so July, August, they’ll be submitting the site development plan review.

1. **Board/ Public Comments**

**Public speaker Marissa Ocanias (issue with Fields):**

* In 31 years of living in Immokalee there has not been any new fields, there has been talks of making progress, but they don’t see any progress being made. While Naples’ communities get more things built, Immokalee only gets minor fixes here and there. Another big concern is that during the summer turf fields get dangerously hot during the summer. There’s also an issue with mosquitos on the field and little league and other groups is limited and running out of space.

**Maria Salinas (issue with Immokalee Sports Complex):**

* Waiting on the sports complex update, it was said that restrooms were going to be built, so far nothing has been built.
* Jamie Cook: So, any site plan changes all requires to go through permitting through the County, as well as the State. I met the consultant doing the project and they are getting ready to start their permitting in March. I believe the projected timeline the construction would start in December.

**Lupita Vazquez Reyes (issue with Fields):**

* As member of the CRA board and a member of the community, seeing how other projects are being built such as in big corkscrew; it feels like there is inequality here in Immokalee when it comes to how fast plans are being approved and construction being done.
* James Hanrahan: Before then, Parks was on the public services but we have now since moved under the growth management. Growth Management is they’re in control of permits. But with my new staff, things are going to move quicker. I do wanna say that moving us from public services to growth management, I’ve already seen the enhanced movement and speed on how we do things.

**Manny Turron (issue with Immokalee Sports Complex):**

* The issue is that if construction for the Immokalee Sports complex is projected to start in December, that would put his soccer programs out of commission for 12 to 14 months; and this will affect many kids and their families.
* Jamie Cook: I will tell you that I am advocating for pushing for and told both the consultant and parks that we are doing is we’re going to face this project, the fields being the first phase and the pool coming after.
* Joshua Fruth: I want to add to that this issue with growth shortage is an issue countywide
* However, unlike Naples, the only thing that kids have in Immokalee is the ball fields; what’s the use of making small changes.

**Amy Davenport (issue with Fields):**

* Wanted to reiterate the problems the ball fields have such as no lighting, out of date concession stand and storage, and no restrooms.

**Manuel Preciado**

* There is nothing for the kids to do but the parks, but we see nothing done in the past 20 years, only the small details. We understand that there is new people in the Parks & Rec department but how hare things going to be different?

**Lupita Vazquez Reyes**

* I have a procedural question, can the board recommend something as a letter or do something to present to the Collier County board of commissioners about the needs of the people.
* Joshua Fruth: We understand all of your frustration, we’d be happy to do something like that.

1. **Manager Updates**

(none)

1. **Director’s Report**

***Mr. Hanrahan addressed the board:***

* 951 Boat ramp is closed for seawall repairs
* The Naples pier which is in the City of Naples, they are working on an agreement with the county manager to use Bayshore, when they’re breaking down the pier. It would take six spots away for four to six months
* Summer Camp goes live on March 1st, online 7am and in person at 9am
* We received Kristina Heuser’s email today about her resignation from the board

1. **Adjournment**

**Next Meeting Date: March 19th**

**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 7:09 p.m.**

**COLLIER COUNTY**

**PARKS & RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD**

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**Edward Olesky, Chairman**

These minutes were approved by the board on , (check one) as

presented, \_\_ or as amended \_\_\_.