



Town of Southwest Ranches
Parks, Recreation, Forestry and Natural Resources Advisory Board
Official Minutes

Via Zoom

March 9, 2021
7:00 pm

Board Members

Chris Brownlow, Dena Butler, MaryGay Chaples, Lana Eichel,
Debra Goff-Rose, Debbie Green, Wendi Halberg, Sheryl Melson,
Laurie Morse, Marie Nix

Council Liaison

Gary Jablonski

Staff Liaison

December Lauretano-Haines

Members present:

Chris Brownlow
Dena Butler
Debra Goff-Rose
Debbie Green
Wendi Halberg
Laurie Morse
Sheryl Melson

RFNRAB Members absent:

MaryGay Chaples
Marie Nix
Lana Eichel

Staff present:

December Lauretano-Haines

Council present:

Gary Jablonski
Mayor Steve Breitkreuz
Jim Allbritton
Bob Hartmann
David Kuczenski

Call to order at 7:00 PM.

Staff notified the board that Marie Nix has resigned from her position on the board.

The members present reviewed the minutes of the January 2021 meeting.

Debbie Green motioned to approve the minutes of the January 2021 meeting. Debra Goff-Rose seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Staff briefed the members present of the funding needed for this year. She reviewed the grant commitments on each park, and the priority of funding for each park as recommended by staff. We have development on all the parks except for one, Southwest Meadows Sanctuary Park.

The recommendations by staff in priority order are as follows;

1. Southwest Meadows Sanctuary Park - The recommendation is to make a road into the park and a parking area. We should be able to accommodate some of the improvements by taking some of the fill on the 5 acre parcel (just west Dykes Rd and Griffin Rd). There's a lot of work to be done to the earth because it is undeveloped. Recommend funding request of \$50k, which should accommodate funding for the road into the park and a parking area.
2. Calusa Corners Park - We can add more native plants and can delineate nature trails from wetlands and fulfill some grant commitments.
3. Frontier Trails Park (end of 193rd Lane) - Already existing at this park are picnic pavilion, parking area, and archeological site. We can meet some of the commitment with environmental and archeological educational spots at this park. 26 of the 30 acres are jurisdictional wetlands, so decided to make it a perimeter trail. Staff is looking for partners that need mitigation credits (builders for example). FDOT is a serious potential partner. \$60k was previously funded for this park. Staff's recommendation is to request council to move the \$60k approved funding from Frontier Trails Park to Southwest Meadows Sanctuary Park.

4. Sunshine Ranches Equestrian Park – This park was completed in 2005. It needs some maintenance on the playground equipment and silo roof replaced. Important to note that the recommendations are cosmetic issues, not safety issues. Funding needed is about \$32k
5. Country Estates Park – Already existing are trail area, playground, picnic pavilion, grass field, and improved wetland areas maintained with native vegetation. Some future projects to look at are an actual fishing hole, better ball field, remove evasive exotic vegetation, a horse ring, shade over the playground. To improve the ball field would require about \$31k.
6. Rural Arts and Design would like each park location to have entranceway signage according to our Rural Identification Program. A funding request is offered this year for \$60k (\$15 – 17k per sign) for three signs, with a follow up request for 2023 for the remaining 2 parks that would need signs, were this year's request approved.

A question was brought up if it was appropriate to ask Davie to share in the cost of repairs of the Equestrian Park because many of their residents use the park. Staff stated that the Town of Southwest Ranches received County and State funding up front, so it is our obligation to fund.

Debbie Green motioned to accept the priorities as listed by Staff and to request that Council approve moving the \$60k previously funded for Frontier Trails Park to Southwest Meadows Sanctuary Park. Debra Goff-Rose seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Rick Cormier has generously offered free mulch to residents. His company furnished and installed some of the mulch at two town parks and probably saved the Town about \$10k.

We have a very good relationship with Cooper City and they helped us in achieving our Community Wildlife Habitat Certification. Paul Kragh's non-profit supports burrowing owls. Paul assisted the Town in identifying and protecting the owl burrows in Rolling Oaks Park and other locations. He requested permission to release a rehabbed owl in one of our parks and the owl was successfully released at Rolling Oaks, not far from where it was found. Chris discussed that we have to maintain our wildlife habitat certification. We need to share the information and educate our neighbors and continue to add more properties and maintain the current properties with the wildlife habitat certification. We should start promoting how to certify properties at all the Town's advisory boards and then reach out from there.

Brought back discussion of design parameters for the entranceway for the Country Estates Park. Request to put on the next meeting agenda. Also addressed possible increase of basketball amenities requested by a resident. The basketball hoop is currently used a lot. If the Council opts to prioritize this request over grant commitments, Staff recommends placement in NE quadrant of the park. Invasive plants would be removed, and some earthwork would be needed.

A resident requested improving trails in Rolling Oaks Park for walking and running. The Southern edge of the park would be great, but there is currently no access. Staff will add a small gate to the fence to provide direct access to the trail for walking and running.

Maintenance Report - Councilman Jablonski shared that he noticed that the split rail fencing is broken in the tot lot at Country Estates Park. Until repaired, should have the fence posts removed for safety. Plans for painting Country Estates Park, Rolling Oaks, and Equestrian Park. Staff is in the process of getting proposals so she can move ahead. Wendy noticed at the Equestrian Park there was a lot of water at the park by the little building that overlooks the ring and flowing water into the drainage grate. December said she will check it out.

Reminder to complete the Town's survey and return to the box at Town Hall or mail it in. The input of these surveys will assist the Town in prioritizing what is most important to the community.

Reminder of the upcoming Town Workshop on Thursday, March 10th at 6PM to discuss properties that are subdivided and impact on density.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 8:45 pm.