

**MEETING MINUTES
CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE
PARKS, RECREATION AND BEACHES ADVISORY BOARD MEETING
FIRE STATION # 2
528 NW 2ND STREET
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 26, 2025 – 6:30 P.M.**

Cumulative Attendance

Board Members	Attendance	Present	Absent
Alex Collazo, Vice Chair	P	5	0
Ruchel Coetzee	P	5	0
Vanessa Apotheker	A	1	2
Ronald Goff	P	3	0
Anna Vratsinas	P	2	0
Solomon Schoonover	A	3	2
Joy Oglesby, Chair	P	5	0
Idan Eckstein	P	3	2
Colette Keno	A	2	1
Marta Reczko	P	5	0
Sean Fee	P	2	0

Oct 2024 - Sept 2025

As of this date, there are 12 appointed members to the Board, which means 7 would constitute a quorum. A quorum was present.

Staff

Ben Rogers – *Acting Assistant City Manager*

Amy Jean-Baptiste – *Deputy Director of Parks and Recreation*

Leana Suarez – *Senior Administrative Assistant*

Patricia SaintVil-Joseph – *Assistant City Attorney*

Vicki Gargano, *Community Outreach Director to Commissioner Ben Sorensen*

Alex Torres – *Senior Project Manager of Parks and Recreation*

Sgt. Brandon Diaz, *FLPD*

Others

Marilyn Mammano – *President, Harbordale Civic Association*

Karen Cruitt – *Prototype-Inc.*

Pledge of Allegiance

Chair Oglesby led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of the February 26, 2025, Meeting Minutes

Motion was made by Alex Collazo and seconded by Ruchel Coetzee, to approve the February 26, 2025, meeting minutes, as distributed. In a voice vote, the motion passed 8-0.

1. Parks Bond Update

Mr. Ben Rogers, Acting Assistant City Manager, stated staff had been providing a

citywide report of all parks bond projects to the City Commission by the 15th of each month. The report included status updates by district, outlining responsibilities, pending items, and feedback needed from permitting agencies, stakeholders, or community meetings. The report was approximately 15 pages and included timelines and progress for each project.

Acting Assistant City Manager Rogers reported staff planned to bring an item to the City Commission to piggyback off an agreement with Clay County for \$6 million in procurement, focused primarily on playground equipment and park features. He explained this would streamline purchasing and reduce delays associated with individual solicitations. Mr. Torres had also been exploring alternative procurement strategies to support efficiency. Staff intended to return to the Commission in April or May with financial updates and status reports for signature parks. The upcoming solicitation process would include built-in alternatives to improve cost control and ensure flexibility. Acting Assistant City Manager Rogers offered to begin sharing the monthly report with the PRAB.

Vice Chair Collazo asked whether AECOM was involved in streamlining processes and if another project manager had been assigned.

Acting Assistant City Manager Rogers clarified city staff managed projects under \$200,000, while larger projects were assigned to AECOM. He cited the Mills Pond restroom as an example. Acting Assistant City Manager Rogers stated staff would continue working to improve transparency and would provide the financial documentation as requested.

2. Budget Transfer and Scope of Work swap from Chateau Park to Lauderdale Manors Entranceway (Alex Torres)

Mr. Alex Torres, Senior Project Manager of Parks and Recreation, presented agenda Items 2 and 3 together and reviewed the following: Agenda; Current Scopes and Budgets; Option #1: and Option #2.

Ms. Reczko asked whether it was correct the playground and pavilion could not both be included previously due to limited funding. She referenced the new \$235,000 proposed and asked if the scope now included both the playground and pavilion installation. Mr. Torres confirmed.

Acting Assistant City Manager Rogers clarified there were two different situations shown on the first slide. The first scenario, in District Three, included two options: option one would swap the scopes and still attempt to complete the work; option two would relocate the funds and scope to Chateau Park. Acting Assistant City Manager Rogers stated there appeared to be support for option two for scenario one.

Vice Chair Collazo supported option two and asked whether there was a quality assurance process in place to prevent future issues, such as funds being allocated

to private areas. Mr. Torres responded the Master Plan had been created to address such concerns and confirmed a process was in place.

Vice Chair Collazo noted the area was private property but appeared open to the public and asked what existed there. Mr. Torres responded it was a green area.

Motion was made by Idan Eckstein and seconded by Alex Collazo, to remove Lauderdale Manors Entrance from the bond and transfer its full funding to Chateau Park In a roll call vote, the motion passed 8-0.

3. **Bond Fund Reallocation from Welcome Park (Alex Torres)**

Mr. Torres continued the presentation and reviewed the following: Location; Current Scopes and Budgets; Proposed Scope and Budgets; and Financial Analysis.

Ms. Marilyn Mammano, President, Harbordale Civic Association, stated the request was to reallocate approximately \$183,000 from Harbordale Welcome Park to the joint-use playground at Harbordale Elementary. The Welcome Park was a passive space not suitable for a pavilion and was already well-maintained. The joint-use playground had been added to the bond list three years ago, but delays and rising costs meant the original \$275,000 allocation was no longer sufficient. The estimated cost was now \$450,000. The proposal included replacing a 20-year-old playground, adding protective surfacing, expanding the play area, and enhancing fencing.

Discussion ensued about funding. Acting Assistant City Manager Rogers stated the goal was to expedite funding under current conditions and move the project forward as quickly as possible for the community.

Ms. Mammano submitted letters of support for the record; stated the Harbordale Civic Association unanimously approved the transfer and the school was in full agreement.

Mr. Fee suggested Welcome Park could be enhanced as an entry point to the city.

Motion was made by Ruchel Coetzee and seconded by Idan Eckstein, to remove Welcome Park from the Parks bond and allocate \$ 183K to the Harbordale Elementary School joint use playground.

Vice Chair Collazo stated support for reallocation and shared experience transiting the area regularly due to maritime work and described Welcome Park as surrounded by commercial properties and located under a flight path. Vice Chair Collazo also suggested the site could benefit from minor improvements but emphasized support for redirecting funds to Harbordale where the community would benefit more from a playground.

In a roll call vote, the motion passed 8-0.

4. **Department Update (Amy Jean-Baptiste)**

Ms. Amy Jean-Baptiste, Deputy Director of Parks and Recreation, provided a presentation and updates on the following: Community Camps; Specialty Camps; Aquatic Summer Programs; Sunday Jazz Brunch; Viernes Musicales Concert Series; Carter Park Jamz; and Pro Swim Series.

5. **Spring Break Update (Sgt Brandon Diaz)**

Sgt. Brandon Diaz reported that Spring Break had been relatively quiet. Over 3,000 citations were issued, and 32 arrests were made for the month, most related to trespassing after warning.

Ms. Coetzee asked if there had been any dangerous incidents. Sgt. Diaz confirmed it had been a safe and quiet season.

6. **Board Meeting Time (Joy Oglesby)**

Chair Oglesby opened discussion on a proposal to change the board meeting start time from 6:30 P.M. to 6:00 P.M. to align with other city meetings.

Board discussion ensued.

Motion was made by Marta Reczko and seconded by Alex Collazo, to move future board mtgs from 6:30 P.M. to 6:00 P.M., starting next month. In a roll call vote, the motion passed 8-0.

7. **New Business (Joy Oglesby)**

Mr. Goff commended Carl Williams, Amy Jean-Baptiste and staff for an exceptional job on Bay View Park on behalf of himself and neighbors. Ms. Jean-Baptiste responded it was a team effort.

Vice Chair Collazo asked about the new pickleball complex at P3 and its progress. Ms. Jean-Baptiste stated a soft opening had occurred and a grand opening was being planned with an update to be provided at the next meeting. Acting Assistant City Manager Rogers added there was a small stage, and the team was aiming for an end-of-April or May completion. He noted the City Commission had approved moving forward with the Parks building.

Vice Chair Collazo inquired if the complex had its own entrance. Acting Assistant City Manager Rogers confirmed there was a fence with a gate, and access was locked off to avoid using park space.

Mr. Fee referenced the last meeting and raised concerns about overflow parking for

Parks, Recreation and Beaches Advisory Board
March 26, 2025

the Fourth of July. Acting Assistant City Manager Rogers said they were costing options and engaging the HOA.

8. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:22 P.M.

[Minutes prepared by TBaclawski, Prototype-Inc.]