

## **Recreation and Open Space Advisory Committee**

### **Annual Work Plan and Accomplishments Report**

**October 1, 2023, to September 30, 2024**

**Chair:** Steven Scott

**Board Liaison:** Shantel Walker-Bernard

**Brief History of Board/Committee:** The Recreation and Open Space Advisory Committee was established in 1983. It is currently Govern by Resolution 21-14.

#### **Responsibilities and Duties**

Establish an annual work program for the Advisory Committee.

Engage in an annual review of the Capital Improvements Projects List pertaining to recreation projects and the Recreation and Open Space Element Update.

Assist and advise the Commission on future policies and directions concerning parks, recreation, and open space projects for Alachua County.

Assist the Commission in promoting community awareness of parks, recreation, and open space projects that are being considered by the Commission.

Assist the County to apply for eligible state and federal grants to provide enhanced parks, recreation, and open space opportunities for Alachua County's citizens.

Educate and advocate at the state and federal level on issues affecting parks, recreation, and open space.

Develop an inclusive Master Plan for county-wide parks, recreation and open space that is reviewed every two (2) years and updated every ten (10) years.

Report annually, or as necessary, to the Alachua County Board of County Commissioners on the goals and accomplishments of the Advisory Committee.

**Mission Statement:** To represent the citizens of Alachua County, promote community awareness of the recreation and open space projects under consideration, and assist and advise the Board of County Commissioners on future policies and directions concerning recreation and open space projects for Alachua County.

#### **Prior Year Accomplishments:**

Regular updates were given on park improvement as well as progress on the Risk Assessments.

Meetings were held every other month on November 21, 2024; January 9, 2025; March 13, 2025; and May 8, 2025.

West End hosted the cross country, javelin, discus, and hammer events for the World Masters. A second community engagement meeting was held on April 29 to obtain input from interested residents on future park improvements, which will be presented to the Board in June.

All Committee positions were filled.

An update was given on the Department's tentatively approved budget enhancement requests and park amenity replacement plan, which includes a 10-year staffing plan.

Many master plan projects were completed including:

1. the playground and parking lot improvements at Veterans Memorial Park.
2. A new playground restroom was installed at Santa Fe Lake Park and the old lakeside restrooms and associated septic system were demolished.
3. A pavilion was installed over the existing sports court at Cuscowilla Nature & Retreat Center.

Future improvements are underway including:

1. A restroom and dock at Poe Springs
2. The Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings/Kate Barnes plan was approved by the State.

### **Goals for the Upcoming Year**

Add restroom at Squirrel Ridge Park.

Formalize a youth advisory board position on ROSCO.

Provide input on Park needs.

Initiate West End Phase 2 development plans.

Complete Kate Barnes dock replacement.

Develop a new pocket park at Pinesville Park (St. Peter/St. Paul)

Construct the new soccer stadium, additional parking, better accessibility, and new pickleball courts at Jonesville Park.