



**Pinellas County Parks and Conservation Resources
Advisory Board
Minutes of the Meeting on October 15, 2020**

PARK BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Mr. Michael Bauer, Mr. Connor Carlisle,
Ms. Debbie Chayet, Ms. Peg Cummings,
Ms. Lindsay Cross, Ms. Manitia Moultrie,
Mr. Dan Savercool, Mr. Brian Scott,
Dr. Brandon Shuler

PARK BOARD MEMBERS NOT PRESENT: Ms. Maryann Renfrow

PARKS & CONSERVATION RESOURCES STAFF: Mr. Paul Cozzie, Director
Mr. Spencer Curtis, North County Operations Mgr.
Mr. Lyle Fowler, South County Operations Mgr.
Dr. Steve Harper, Resource and Asset Mgr.
Ms. Jolanda Jordan, Sr. Dept. Admin. Manager
Mr. Diriki Geuka, Assistant County Atty.
Ms. Deann Baker, Administrative Support Spec.

A virtual meeting of the Pinellas County Parks and Conservation Resources (PCR) Advisory Board (Board) was held, Pursuant to Executive Order No. 20-69, issued by the Office of Governor Ron DeSantis on March 20, 2020 and extended by Executive Order 20-112, local government bodies may conduct meetings of their governing boards without having a quorum of its members present physically or at any specific location, and utilizing communications media technology such as telephonic or video conferencing, as provided by Section 120.54(5)(b)2, Florida Statutes, on September 30, 2020.

I. Open Meeting/Introductions

Debbie Chayet, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 9:40 am. Roll call was taken by the meeting moderator. Chairman Chayet introduced the newest Youth Advisory Council member, Connor Carlisle.

II. Approval of Minutes

Chairman Chayet entertained a motion to approve the minutes of the August 20, 2020 meeting. A motion was made by Brian Scott and seconded by Michael Bauer to accept the PCR Advisory Board minutes as written. Motion unanimously approved with a

minor correction. Section IV verbiage will be changed from “turtles” to “gopher tortoises”.

III. Citizens to be heard

There were no citizens to be heard. A letter received from citizen Mickey Zucker, M.D. regarding the proposed Walsingham Park Mountain Bike Trail was read to the PCR Advisory Board and participants by PCR Director Paul Cozzie.

IV. Old Business

- Walsingham Park Mountain Bike Trail Proposal – S.W.A.M.P

Lyle Fowler provided an update. There will be a public participation meeting held this Saturday, October 17th, 2020 from 9:00 am until 10:00 am at Shelter #4. There is a link to the proposal, as well as the 3rd party survey published on the Parks website: <http://www.pinellascounty.org/parks>. There is also temporary signage throughout Walsingham Park with the meeting information. The signs have been posted for 2 weeks. Following the public meeting, the survey results will be reviewed, including any comments received prior to any notice to proceed with trail activity. At the PCR Advisory Board meeting held on 8/20/20 there was a vote to proceed, however, there was not a quorum. Mike Bauer would like to have a site visit with guidance on what is being proposed. Brian Scott voiced concerns about the size of the trail being too small for a mountain bike trail. Paul proposed putting this item on the next agenda with S.W.A.M.P in attendance to have an opportunity to review. There would then be a vote by the board to recommend approval or denial for building of the trail. A motion was made by Dan Savercool and seconded by Mike Bauer to move the vote for/against the trail to the next meeting. Motion was carried unanimously.

- Integrated Vegetation Management Working Group Update

This manual was created for two purposes: 1) Reduce overall use of herbicides on public lands. 2) Provide general guidance for decision makers concerning vegetation management that will lead to consistent approaches across participating organizations. Reviews have been completed with cities, sustainability coordinators, UF/IFAS and other agencies. A working draft was sent to the Advisory Board on 10/16/20. As part of the review process, Parks would like the board to review the document and provide any comments to Deann Baker at dbaker@pinellascounty.org. If feasible, comments may be incorporated into the manual. The manual is intended to be used as a tool and not considered a policy manual. Target date for this is early next year. Peg thanked Paul for the collaboration effort that Parks has taken with this.

V. New Business

- Pinewood Cultural Park Masterplan, Phases 1 & 2

Parks was tasked at looking at the Pinewood campus, which is referred to as the Pinewood Cultural Park. This is comprised of the Florida Botanical Gardens, Heritage Village and the formerly Gulf Coast Museum of Arts building which is currently occupied by various tenants such as Creative Pinellas, EMS and the Florida Botanical Gardens Foundation who uses a classroom to store the holiday lights. Questions surround the reactivation of Pinewood Cultural Park. RS&H was engaged to start a Masterplan. Phase 1 was completed at the end of September. This was a review of all of the Master Plans completed independently of each other. A request has been made to look at an overall masterplan to compile previous masterplans and fill in some of

the gaps. The 2nd phase will begin soon and includes a site analysis, site inventory, goals and objectives, space activation and an assessment of the former Gulf Coast Museum. We anticipate a phase 3 which will include a development of a brand identity for Pinewood Cultural Park as part of the reactivation. Once complete, we will move to public engagement. One of the drivers of this is that we have proposed projects in the new penny that started in January that includes a new archive storage facility and other activities in the immediate area. The Advisory Board will be seeing more of this at future meetings and Parks will be seeking input from the board.

- Baypointe Stormwater and Conservation Area

The county recently acquired the Baypointe Golf course, located in the mid county area. The golf course was acquired with two purposes in mind. The first is stormwater improvements for that area of the county as well as providing a conservation area and public park area. The county has had the course for several months, but it's not officially open to the public. It's not closed off to the county, so it's being used. Public Works crews are maintaining the trails. Parks, Public Works and Real Estate Management are doing site assessments to look at the buildings that were left on the property. Public Works is managing the project. They will be doing the design work for the stormwater portion and will also be working on the public amenities. There will be public participation meetings held and surveys conducted to see what type of amenities the public would like to see. There has been a suggestion to have a disc golf area. Brian Scott asked about the acreage and is there any water on the property. There are 34 acres and does have numerous ponds on the property. Brian suggested that this could be a possible location for the S.W.A.M.P. mountain bike trail.

- Gladys Douglas Property/FCT Grant Application

This property is 44 acres and is located at Virginia and Keene in Dunedin. It fronts Jerry Lake, which is SWFWMD's property and includes about another 50 acres of surface water and surrounding uplands. Gladys Douglas owned the property and passed away a year ago. Her estate was left with the parcels to be sold. The county was approached several times to acquire the properties. Nothing came to fruition, so it was left to her heirs and Trustees to disburse her assets. Although appraisals were completed by the county, no offer was made. A contract with Pulte Homes was made. Pulte is in the process of doing their due diligence. The county is in a dead period where we can't be involved in any negotiations. Pulte has the first right of refusal. Both the City of Dunedin and the County continue to express interest in acquiring the property. The county has \$15 million from the Penny for Pinellas fund to spend in the next 10 years. The property was offered to the county for about \$11.5 million. Our priority would be to preserve the rosemary bald and the sand pine rosemary scrub community, which makes up about 16 ½ acres. We've been in discussion with the City of Dunedin and SWFWMD to acquire Jerry Lake. We're currently in The Florida's Community Trust Grant window which runs from 10/1/20 through 12/15/20. Our intention is to apply for the grant to acquire the property. The limit for the grant is \$10 million and we would be looking to acquire \$5 million of what is available. Peg Cummings had a concern regarding the allocation of funds in the amount of \$15 million over the next 10 years. More funds should be allocated for land acquisition. Lindsay Cross advocates for funding at the State level and would like to see the Advisory Board draft a letter in support of purchasing this land. Dan Savercool also is in support of acquiring this land. The BCC will be conducting a work session on 12/8/20. Paul will be presenting our land acquisition ranking process. There is a concern surrounding the lack of funds. There are currently 60 parcels that are on the list, but not all 60 are worthy of

purchasing or preserving. The evaluation process assists in the purchasing process. The lack of funding in the FCT program and the limited budget will potentially impact what can be done for the Douglas property and future acquisitions. Evaluation of properties are done using 3 categories of ranking: Environmental purposes, Parks and Recreation purposes (a need for active recreation vs. something we would put into a preserve or management area) and lastly, the combined score of both. Peg asked if monies could be taken from reserves and Diriki Geuka (County Attorney), said that it is not an option. Paul suggested that each board member speak with their appointing Commissioners voicing their vote to purchase the property. Debbie suggested that the board members who are on other boards draft a letter to go along with the grant application. The letters will assist in the application process. Please send the letters to Paul for review. The Advisory Board would like to recommend support of the FCT grant application to purchase the property and to write a letter from the Advisory Board in support of the land acquisition. **A motion was made by Mike Bauer; seconded by Lindsay Cross. Motion carried unanimously.** Peg Cummings added that she would like to have a letter written that would accompany the FCT grant application requesting that the BCC increase funding for acquisition of future environmental properties. Diriki commented that this should be considered as a separate action item. **Peg made a motion that the BCC review the allocated budget for preservation land and significantly increase that funding source. Dan Savercool seconded the motion. Motion was carried unanimously.**

- Tarpon Rotary Trail Restroom Project

This item is a potential grant application through the Rails to Trails program. Jennifer Calvert (PCR's Sr. Grant Specialist) gave a project description. There will be a prefabricated restroom installed about .16 miles West of the Brooker Creek Preserve main entrance on Keystone Rd. A water fountain with a water bottle filling station will be installed. It will include a small picnic area, a bench, bike racks and will be connected to the Pinellas Trail. Tarpon Rotary has committed \$25 thousand dollars to the project. The restrooms will be handicap accessible. A request was made by Brandon to add a mechanic station with air pumps, wrenches, etc. for bike repairs on the trail. Jennifer will check into the additional funding. There are various groups such as the Friends of Brooker Creek Preserves and Pinellas Trails Inc., that we could potentially provide funding for this amenity. **Motion was made by Brian Scott and seconded by Brandon Shuler to submit a grant application. Motion passed unanimously.**

VI. Parks and Conservation Resources Director's Report

- COVID Update

The interior facilities at the Florida Botanical Garden remains closed with limited services. A phone number is posted at the door if a patron wants to purchase passes for the boat ramps or if they need to speak with a Horticulturist. For the safety of staff, public and our volunteers, we have not gone back to a full scale volunteer program, limited contact. There are a few volunteers working independently.

- The Holiday Lights event has been called off this year by the Florida Botanical Gardens Foundation.

- Education Specialists and agents with extension at Brooker Creek and Weedon Island are doing virtual programming and are giving Webinars on YouTube.

- FY21 Budget
PCR is recruiting for a new GIS Analyst position. This is a key position for the Enterprise Asset Management System, as well as our CityWorks work control system.
- On December 5th, anniversary celebrations are tentatively scheduled. There will be a 30-year celebration for the Pinellas Trail and a 20-year celebration for the Florida Botanical Gardens. PCR will make sure that they pass on any information to the Board regarding these celebrations.

Adjournment

Brian Scott made a motion to adjourn; seconded by Mike Bauer. Meeting adjourned at 11:50 am. The next meeting of the PCR Advisory Board meeting is scheduled for January 21, 2021.