

# Parks, Recreation and Cultural Affairs

## Manager's Updates: Recreation Division– December 2019

### I. Sports Section (Aquatics & Athletics)

1. Attendance at city pools for the month of December was 3,100, compared to 2,241 for the same period last year, giving us a great start in attendance in the first quarter of the new fiscal year.
2. Staff is in the process of setting dates and planning for **Spring Group Swim Lessons**, which will run during the months of April and May. Registration will begin March 3<sup>rd</sup>. Classes will be held in the afternoons at Westside Pool.
3. Staff is in the process of setting dates and planning for spring **Private Swim Lessons**. Lessons will take place on Saturdays at Northeast Pool beginning in April. Classes are in 4-week sessions. Registration begins March 3<sup>rd</sup>.
4. Dates for spring **Lifeguard Certification Classes and CPR Classes** have been set, and information will be posted on the city's website by the beginning of February. As we have done in the past, classes will be offered in March, April, May and June, to prepare for the summer season.
5. The RFP to replace the **pvc vinyl pool liner at Mickle Pool** is currently being routed through city hall for approvals to go out to bid. The liner currently in place is the oldest of the liners at all three city pools, having been installed back in 2003. This project will be funded through WSPP funds. The goal is to have the liner replaced in the spring, with a completion date set before the pool opens in the summer.
6. Staff continues to work on the project to install a **permanent shade structure at Westside Pool**, similar to the ones installed at Northeast and Mickle Pools. This project will also be funded by WSPP funds.
7. **High school water polo season** will be starting up in January. Practices and meets will take place at Northeast Pool during winter and spring. In the past, only Gainesville High School has fielded a team, but this year Buchholz High School is trying to start up a team. The sport continues to grow at the high school level.
8. **Citywide Tennis Services:** USTA-FL staff continues to set programming and add events and activities to their website. For court reservations, program information, and other general information, patrons can visit [www.playtennisgainesville.com](http://www.playtennisgainesville.com). Registration for winter programming is currently underway, so please make sure to keep checking back on the website for updated information. New programs USTA-FL has offered this year are Friday night adult mixers, and Saturday morning free family play dates. USTA-FL will also be offering Gainesville's first Glow in the Dark Tennis Event, which will take place on January 31<sup>st</sup>!
9. **Adult Softball:** Registration for the spring season is underway. League play will begin on Monday, February 3<sup>rd</sup>. Divisions play on Monday, Tuesday and Friday nights. New this season, the Tuesday night co-ed league will add a third location, playing games at the newly renovated Lincoln Field, as well as ARM Park and Greentree Park.

10. **Gainesville Youth Sports:** Information on the spring season can be found at [www.gainesvilleyouthsports.com](http://www.gainesvilleyouthsports.com). Gainesville Youth Sports provides both youth baseball and girls fast-pitch softball programs, utilizing Albert Ray Massey Park, Greentree Park, and Tom Petty Park. A park improvement project will be underway in February at Albert Ray Massey (Westside) Park to improve drainage and increase parking. This project will affect the two youth baseball fields at the park, as included in the project is the complete renovation of those two fields. Staff will continue to work with GYB to identify alternate field locations that can be used during the spring season to help lessen the impact of losing the two fields at ARM.
11. **National Flag Football:** The fall season concluded in mid-December. It was originally scheduled to end November 24<sup>th</sup>, but due to rainouts had to be extended a few weeks. Registration for the spring season is now open, and parents can register their children on NFF's website at [www.nationalflagfootball.com](http://www.nationalflagfootball.com). The registration flyer is being sent to the school board the first week in January, for distribution in all the local schools by the end of the month. Games are played on Sunday afternoons at Possum Creek Park. The league has 97 participants last season.
12. **Pickle Ball:** Pick-up play continues in the fall at the MLK Center, in the mornings. Santa Fe College will offer a Wednesday morning pickle ball class as an elective with the college starting in mid-January and continuing through February. This class has become a popular elective with Santa Fe College students.
13. **Youth Basketball** season is currently underway, with teams practicing since mid December. Two coaches meetings have already been held, as well as player evaluations, skills clinics, and parent meetings. The City participates in the ACTFOR league, with other local municipalities around the county (and a few outside the county) participating. Games will begin in January, and will run through mid-March. Games are played on Saturdays at various locations throughout the north central Florida area. The league is capped at 170 participants, and fills up every year. This season we have 17 youth teams participating.

## II. Education Section

1. We have received the applications for the vacant Recreation Aide II positions and are in the process of setting up round one of interviews through Spark Hire. Once we fill this position we will have all of our vacancies filled with the exception of the Recreation Supervisor.
2. We offered Winter Break Camp at both Eastside and Albert Ray Massey Recreation Centers throughout the holiday break from school. Camp activities were filled with holiday and New Year's activities along with some character building using Fairness and Trustworthiness as our two pillars of focus. Camp hours are from 7:00am until 6:00pm.
3. We are finalizing out Black History Month calendar of events for February, staff have really put their creativity to the test and are implementing some new ideas, providing some individuality to the monthly activities.
4. The Education Staff are beginning the works for Spring Break Camp and summer programming. Discussions are taking place and pre-planning meetings are on the horizon. Pulling out our debriefing notes from last year are always a tool for success moving forward.

### **III. Facilities Section**

1. We are currently preparing for Martin Luther King weekly celebration in which majority of the events are hosted at the MLK center for a total of about eight days.
2. We are currently reviewing applications for the Temp Facility assistant position. The position has been advertised as open until filled in efforts of filling various vacant positions. We are hoping to get these positioned filled as soon as possible.
3. We have purchased and received new tables for the Martin Luther King Center. The new tables replaced the old ones that had been in use for over 15 years. As we enter the new fiscal year we are making plans to move forward the addition of new equipment at the Thelma Bolton Center as well.
4. We have been busy working with various organizations and groups for rentals. Our staff has done a great job responding to the additional work load very well. They have all given their best, and stepped in to provide assistance willingly when needed. Beverly Perry has been a great addition to our facility team. She has been learning very quickly and doing an awesome job of helping our section improve and grow.

### ***IV. Wild Spaces Public Places Updates***

1. The Wild Spaces and Public Places webpages are active on the City's website:  
<http://www.cityofgainesville.org/WildSpacesandPublicPlaces.aspx>.
2. *This month's WSPP Project Updates:*

**Bo Diddley Plaza Improvements:** On December 2, work began on accessibility improvements at Bo Diddley Plaza. For safety purposes, two sections of the plaza will be blocked off while the work takes place. Events scheduled at the plaza will continue as planned and construction is expected to complete in mid-February 2020. The work being done at the plaza will address bricked areas that have settled and formed uneven walking surfaces. To level those areas, a concrete base will be poured before re-laying the brick pavers to meet ADA standards. Additional bricked areas are also being added to increase accessibility with every effort being made to preserve the existing trees. Areas getting a new surface are those most significantly worn due to the amount of foot traffic that Bo Diddley Plaza experiences. Improvements to the plaza are expected to cost \$130,000. For more information, please contact Betsy Waite, project manager, at 352-393-8187 or [waiteed@cityofgainesville.org](mailto:waiteed@cityofgainesville.org).

**Northside Park Improvements:** The City of Gainesville's Wild Spaces & Public Places program, in conjunction with the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Affairs Department and the Rotary Clubs of Gainesville Foundation, is pleased to announce that a large park renovation project is underway at Northside Park, located at 5701 NW 34th Blvd.

Improvements include the addition of 40 parking spaces, a new playground and construction of a new multi-generational play area, the "Generations Play Zone". The Generations Play Zone was designed to provide activities for all ages and will include outdoor games such as bocce ball, pickleball/tennis courts, pétanque, table tennis, checkers and chess. It will also include an outdoor patio, a large pavilion with grills, shaded seating and viewing areas and a walking path with outdoor exercise equipment. Completion of the project is estimated for May of 2020. The approximate construction cost of the project is \$2 million. Scherer Construction of North Florida is facilitating the work. For more details about the project, [click here](#). For more information, please contact Betsy Waite, project manager, at 352-393-8187 or [waiteed@cityofgainesville.org](mailto:waiteed@cityofgainesville.org).

**Hartman House Improvements:** The circa 1890 farm house at Hogtown Creek Headwaters Nature Park is being renovated to become a nature center. Construction is anticipated to complete in June of 2020. The project, located at 1500 NW 45th Ave., is expected to cost approximately \$400,000. J.E. Decker Construction is facilitating the work. For more information, please contact Betsy Waite, project manager, at 352-393-8187 or [waiteed@cityofgainesville.org](mailto:waiteed@cityofgainesville.org).

**Lincoln-Williams Drainage Improvements:** The City of Gainesville's Wild Spaces & Public Places program, in conjunction with the School Board of Alachua County, is pleased to announce that work has begun on drainage improvements at the fields between Abraham Lincoln Middle School and Joseph Williams Elementary School. These improvements will improve field conditions after heavy rainfall and allow for greater recreational use. For more information, please contact Betsy Waite, project manager, at 352-393-8187 or [weberjf@cityofgainesville.org](mailto:weberjf@cityofgainesville.org)

**Oakview Park Improvements:** The City of Gainesville's Wild Spaces & Public Places program, in conjunction with the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Affairs Department, is pleased to announce that work has begun at Oakview Park (formerly named Kiwanis Girl Scout Park), located at 810 NW 8th Ave. Improvements include updating the nearly 64-year-old building, a new modern playground, new plants, removing invasive species and adding parking. Completion of the project is estimated for July of 2020. The approximate construction cost of the project is \$998,000. To allow for improvements, the existing playground at Oakview Park will be unavailable to the public during construction. Park patrons are encouraged to utilize other parks while this work is taking place. For information on other nearby parks, please [click here](#). For more information, please contact Betsy Waite, project manager, at 352-393-8187 or [waiteed@cityofgainesville.org](mailto:waiteed@cityofgainesville.org).

**Reserve Park (a new Neighborhood Park):** This new neighborhood park located at 700 NE 11th Street will include playground equipment, a community garden, traveling rings, an obstacle course with fitness stations, picnic areas, and a memorial to Reserve Soldiers. Work began in May and is anticipated to complete January of 2020. Anglin Construction Company is facilitating the work. For more information, please contact Betsy Waite, project manager, at 352-393-8187 or [waiteed@cityofgainesville.org](mailto:waiteed@cityofgainesville.org).