

# Parks, Recreation and Cultural Affairs

## Manager's Updates: Recreation Division– January 2020

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

1. Attendance at city pools for the month of January was 4,429, compared to 4,135 for the same period last year, giving us a great start in attendance in the first month of the new calendar 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 mid-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 bid out. 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 a combination of CIP and WSPP funds. The original goal was to have the liner replaced in the spring, with a completion date set before the pool opens in the summer, but because of delays in getting the bid out, the timeline has been pushed back to November after the pool closes for the season..
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** started up in January. Practices and meets will take place at Northeast Pool during winter and spring. Although Buchholz tried to start a team, currently only Gainesville High School has a team. Most matches will take place on either Wednesday or Saturday afternoons.
8. The City, in partnership with the Gainesville Sports Commission and Florida Sports Foundation, have won the bids to host the **2020 Sunshine State Games Synchronized Swimming and 2020 Sunshine State Games Swimming** events at Westside and Northeast Pools, respectively. The SSG Synchro event will take place on June 5-7 at WS, and the SSG Swimming event will take place on June 12-14 at NE Pool.
9. **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). Gainesville's first Glow in the Dark Tennis Event took place on January 31<sup>st</sup>, and despite a light rain, over 50 participants came out to the event!

10. **Adult Softball:** 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.
11. **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.
12. **National Flag Football:** 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 last 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 had 97 participants last season.
13. **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.
14. **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 began play 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. The Recreation Aide II position for the Porters Community Center has been filled by Tia Menna. She will begin her new role on Monday, February 10<sup>th</sup>, 2020. Tia has been with us as a Temporary Recreation Assistant since June 2017. We are excited to have Tia as part of the team, she shares such passion for children, teaching them the importance of fitness, exercise and healthy eating.
2. We are in the process of interviewing to fill one Temporary Recreation Assistants position. We hope to have someone on board by the end of the February.
3. Black History Month programming has been finalized and there are an array of activities planned for February. We look forward to a field trip to the local Cotton Club Museum, Top Chef Competition, Spelling Bee and Skits Performance on famous African Americans. Again for 2020, we've taken advantage of the state contract with Enterprise Rentals that we used during summer camp to provide transportation for the kids for the Wednesday events.

4. The science and gardening club will get started again after the holiday break at the Clarence R. Kelly Center through our partnership with GDNA. The kids look forward to these guests each week.
5. Through a partnership with SBAC, UF students with the Pro-Teach program received a tour of Porters Community Center on January 14<sup>th</sup> and learned about our afterschool program and what a day in the program resembles.

### **III. Facilities Section**

1. During the month of January we hosted the Martin Luther King celebration at the MLK recreation center. The event carried on for a total of 8 days offering various programs and activities in memory of Dr. Martin Luther King. Staff did a great job of working with the MLK commission when necessary to make sure the event was a total success. .
2. We are currently still reviewing applications for the Temp Facility assistant position. We have made several offers, but the individuals has been unable to clear background checks. We are continuing to work with HR to staff these vacancies as soon as possible.
3. We will be working with the chemical company state chemical to provide chemical use training for our staff. Majority of the chemicals used from this company are considered green chemicals, and are environmentally safe. The training would be refresher for some staff and will definitely be a very useful tool for others in the facility section.

### ***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:*

**Albert "Ray" Massey (Westside) 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 improvements at Westside Park, located at 1001 NW 34th St., will begin in February and continue through fall 2020. The Westside Park project includes upgrades to baseball fields 1 and 2. Improvements include field regrading, new turf, reconstruction of ramps to the scorer's platform, a new ADA accessible viewing area over field 1 and erosion stabilization. Access to fields 1 and 2 will be limited during construction.

Improvements to the park's Northwest 34th Street/SR 121 parking lot will also take place. The southernmost driveway entrance will be relocated for increased safety, and the parking area will be reconfigured to provide 40 additional spaces. Dedicated bus, scooter and motorcycle parking will also be added. At least half of the parking spaces in Westside Park's 34th Street lot will remain available for patrons throughout construction. Work will be done incrementally to allow access to the Westside Park Recreation Center, tennis courts, pool and other amenities. The approximate project cost is \$739,499.35. Hicks Asphalt Paving & Concrete Company, a small, local vendor, is the general contractor for the project. 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 is underway on drainage improvements at the fields between Abraham Lincoln Middle School and Joseph Williams Elementary School. This construction project 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 [waiteed@cityofgainesville.org](mailto:waiteed@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).

**TB McPherson 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 to rebuild the tennis courts at T.B. McPherson Park, located at 1717 SE 15th Street. This is our most recent effort towards fulfilling the City Commission’s stated goal of having a *world-class* park system in Gainesville. After many years of continuous community use, the T.B. McPherson Park tennis courts have developed significant cracking. [Nidy Sports Construction Company](#) has been hired to demo and rebuild the courts, and provide new nets, posts, perimeter fencing and windscreens. The courts are expected to be completed by April, 2020. The cost of the project is approximately \$172,000. For more information, please contact Pete McNiece, project manager, at 352-393-8544 or [mcniecepr@cityofgainesville.org](mailto:mcniecepr@cityofgainesville.org).

## **Recently Completed:**

**Bo Diddley Plaza 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 completed on accessibility improvements at Bo Diddley Plaza in early February. The work done at the plaza addressed bricked areas that had settled and formed uneven walking surfaces. To level those areas, a

concrete base was poured before laying new brick pavers to meet ADA standards. Additional bricked areas were also added to increase accessibility. 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 were funded with the Wild Spaces & Public Places half-cent sales tax and cost \$130,000. For more information, please contact Betsy Waite, project manager, at 352-393-8187 or [waiteed@cityofgainesville.org](mailto:waiteed@cityofgainesville.org).

**Boulware Springs 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 a new metal roof was installed in January on the pavilion at Boulware Springs Park. American Roofing Company, a small, local business, was the contractor for the work. For more information, please contact Pete McNiece, project manager, at 352-393-8544 or [mcniecepr@cityofgainesville.org](mailto:mcniecepr@cityofgainesville.org).

**Reserve Park (a new Neighborhood Park):** 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 **construction completed in January on a** neighborhood park located at 700 NE 11th Street. The park includes 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 Anglin Construction Company was the general contractor. A community celebration will take place on February 22<sup>nd</sup> at 11am at the new park. For more information, please contact Betsy Waite, project manager, at 352-393-8187 or [waiteed@cityofgainesville.org](mailto:waiteed@cityofgainesville.org).