

NATURE CENTERS COMMISSION

Thomas Center, Bldg A, Long Gallery
302 NE 6th Ave

June 10, 2021
5:30PM

AGENDA

- I. Call to Order and roll call. Recognize guests (5 min.)
- II. Agenda Approval (1 min.)
- III. Approval of Minutes (1 min.)
 - a. February 11, 2021
 - b. May 13, 2021
- IV. Chair Report (5 min.)
- V. Treasurer's Report (1 min.)
- VI. PRCA Staff Report (5 min.)
- VII. Committee Reports (5 min.)
 - a. Policy
 - b. PR & Awards
- VIII. Liaison Reports (10 min.)
 - a. Bicycle & Pedestrian Board (Leanne)
 - b. Recreation & Open Space Advisory Board (Karen)
 - c. WSPP Working Group (Penny, Michael)
- IX. Friends of Nature Parks Report (Penny) (5 min.)
- X. Old Business (60 min.)
 - a. Annual Retreat/Annual Work Plan
- XI. New Business (5 min.)
- XII. Board or Citizen Comments (5 min.)
- XIII. Adjournment

Next meeting, July 8, 2021

Persons with disabilities who require assistance to participate in the meeting are requested to notify the Equal Opportunity Department at 334-5051 (TDD 334-2069) at least 48 hours prior to the meeting date.

NATURE CENTERS COMMISSION

Virtual Meeting

February 11, 2021
Thursday – 6:30PM

Minutes

I. Call to Order – at 6:35pm

Members Present	Members Absent	Staff Present
Jon Reiskind - chair	Grace Crummer -vchair	Linda Demetropoulos
Michael Hill	Cindy J Boulware -sec	
Bruce Blackwell - PR	Jessica Wilson - treas	
Karen Garren -PR		
Marilyn Prado		
Leslie Straub - PR		
Penny Weber		

Guests Ewen Thomson, Warren Neilson

II. Agenda Approval – Move Ewen's presentation to after the treasurers report

Motion By:	Seconded By:
Moved To: Adopt the agenda as submitted.	Upon Vote: passed 4-0

III. Approval of Minutes – No changes

Motion By:	Seconded By:
Moved To: Approve January regular meeting minutes as submitted.	Upon Vote: passed 4-0

- IV. **Chair Report** – There was no Chair Committee Meeting. Steve Phillips is retiring. There was discussion on moving to in-person meetings.
- V. **Treasurer's Report** – Linda reported that there is a budget balance of \$5,573 available. There were no recent expenditures
- VI. Ewen Thomson gave a presentation on the "Benefits of the Infinity Loop Concept to provide public, healthy access to parks." This proposal is for a multiple use trail connecting parks and people. Since this looked like it was well into the planning stage but was all new to everyone present, there were many questions and concerns. Discussion included financial concerns, current park restrictions, parking and current intergovernmental agreements.
- VII. **Committee Reports**
- a. Policy – no report, no meeting
 - b. PR & Awards – no report, no meeting – set next meeting before the March meeting at 6pm
- VIII. **PRCA Staff Report** - Farm and staffing updates were reported.
February 22 is the Hogtown Greenway presentation

February 25 is the City general policy committee meeting.

IX. Friends of Nature Parks Report – No report since the Board did not meet

X. Liaison Reports

- a. Bicycle & Pedestrian Board – Jon R -no report.
- b. Recreation & Open Space Advisory Board – Cindy B – not present
- c. WildSpacesPublicPlaces – reports quarterly

XI. Old Business - none

XII. New Business

- Policies up for 5 yr review will be distributed to the board
-

XIII. Board or Citizen Comments

- McCarty Woods on UF campus is asking for support to protect that area
- February 20 is a County event at the Lynching Memorial

XIV. Next Meeting

- Next meeting will be held on either March 11 or 15, 2021 at 6:30pm. Linda will survey the board for attendance.
- The Policy Subcommittee will meet on March 4 at 6pm
- The PR and Awards Subcommittee will meet before the March meeting at 6pm

XV. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:15pm.

Chair

Date

NATURE CENTERS COMMISSION

May 13, 2021, 6:30 pm at Thomas Center, 302 NE 6th Ave, Bldg A, Long Gallery.

MINUTES – recorded by Karen Garren

I. Call to Order at 6:33 No guests attending.

Members Present	Members Absent	Staff Present
Jon Reiskind – Chair	CJ Boulware	Linda Demetropoulos (via speaker phone)
Jessica Wilson - Treasurer		
Grace Crummer – Vice Chair		
Karen Garren		
Michael Hill		
Marylin Prado		
Bruce Blackwell		
Leanne Sheffer		
Leslie Straub		
Penny Weber – FONP rep		

II.

Motion by: Grace	Seconded by: Leslie
Moved to: Approve agenda	Upon vote: unanimous

III. Approval of Minutes. March 15, 2021

Motion by: Grace	Seconded by: Michael
Moved to: Approve minutes	Upon vote: unanimous

Approval of Minutes, April 8, 2021

Motion by: Leanne	Seconded by: Jessie
Moved to: Approve minutes	Upon vote: unanimous

IV. Chair Report

Jon attended the monthly Advisory Board Chairs meeting with Interim Director Roxana Gonzalez. Ms. Gonzalez gave a budget request update and noted that she is advocating for requesting a full-time Recreation Leader for Sweetwater Wetlands Park. Geoff Parks, Nature Operations Supervisor, last day of employment was April 29th. The City's Strategic Plan is in the works. PRCA is waiting to update the Master Plan and see where they coincide.

V. Treasurer's Report

\$5,523 balance, same as last time. Purchase of large screen television with mount for new nature center approved in April will be reflected in next month's budget report.

VI. PRCA Staff Report

April monthly report was distributed to all members.

Penny Weber generously donated three pairs of binoculars.

Linda reported on a few of the highlights which included a staffing update, and reported on a prescribed burn at Morningside which spotted over to another unit and burned an additional 20 acres for a total of 26 acres.

- VII. Committee Reports
- Policy – no report
 - PR & Awards – no report
 - Nominations – no report
- VIII. Liaison Reports
- Bicycle & Pedestrian Board – no report
 - Recreation & Open Space Advisory Board – no report
 - PRCA WSPP Working Group – Mike and Penny attended April 14th meeting. Betsy Waite commented on improvements at NE and McPherson parks. 2021 project list includes Boulware Park renovation, Loblolly boardwalk, Ring Park and Duval Park signage. There was also discussion on the County's efforts to extend the Wild Spaces and Public Places program which is funded by a half-cent sales tax.
- IX. Friends of Nature Parks Report – Penny sent a handout describing Morningside's Earth Academy Day Camp outline for five weeks of summer camp. Two students received scholarships for 4 sessions, met with them and their families, approved. Next FoNP meeting June 6th.
- X. Old Business
- "Wish List" - There was discussion of putting the "Wish list" into annual retreat agenda. After discussion of annual retreat format, Leslie returned to discussion of "wish list" expenditures. Having summed projected costs in the written list that was presented at the April NCC meeting, and subtracting totals from NCC finances, leaving surplus of \$1,188, Leslie moved to propose approval of the list's expenses. No one seconded and discussion continued. Jon said the fiscal year starts in October. Grace asked if anyone objected to any expenditures. Leslie pointed out that if the monies were not used, they would be lost. Marilyn said someone had offered to donate school supplies. Michael asked if Natural Resource Management staff had any requests. Linda said none had been made. Jon read the written list aloud and summarized expenses which included trail maps for Sweetwater Wetlands Park. Marilyn seconded Leslie's motion, unanimous vote to approve "wish list" expenditures.

Wish list:

Flat Screen TV for multi-purpose classroom ~\$2,500

Equipment (~\$1,560)

- Binoculars for staff and visitors (4 pair @ \$150) \$600
- Composter \$90
- Bird feeder and seed (1 year) \$400
- Various field guides (Birds, reptiles, etc.) \$150
- Laminator and sleeves \$150
- Hand lenses (multiple) \$50
- Bug nets for catching insects and butterflies (multiple) \$120

General Program Material (~\$225)

- Construction Paper \$20
- Pens \$20
- Pencils \$10
- Colored Pencils \$20

- Markers \$20
- Crayons \$15
- Glue \$10
- Glue sticks \$10
- Hot glue gun \$15
- Paint \$20
- Paint brushes \$20
- Clip Boards \$25
- Scissors \$20

Additional Wish List

- Flat Screen TV (~50" for general programming) This is for slide presentations at end of summer camp, programming at Sweetwater Wetlands Park, and other programs. \$300
- Binoculars for EE staff at Morningside (2-3 pair) \$300-450

Trail maps for Sweetwater Wetlands Park

Motion by: Leslie	Seconded by: Marilyn
Moved to: Approve "wish list" expenditures	Upon vote: unanimous approval

XI. New Business

- Annual retreat - Linda has reserved Thomas Center Long Gallery for June 10th, day after Bruce's birthday. Usually catered but last one in 2019 was potluck. All agreed to make it a potluck. Grace asked if we could start earlier, all agreed on 5:30, meeting to last 2 hours. Leanne suggested bringing our own utensils; Karen asked if we could bring wine. Leslie asked how many vegetarians, all encouraged to accommodate non-animal product options.
Penny Weber requested two items be placed on the retreat agenda. 1.) She asked for the NCC to consider lobbying for Wild Spaces to pay for staffing and maintenance for Morningside Nature Center in FY21-22. 2.) She asked for the NCC to consider how the stature of Morningside Nature Center, with its diversity of plants and significant habitat, could be elevated as a teaching site in FY22-23.

- Board or Citizen Comments – Karen asked about signage for Greentree Park. She was told by an NCC board member that would come out of the Nature Ops. budget and would need a work order.

Next meeting June 10, 2021

- Adjournment: 7:33 pm

Chair _____ Date _____

City of Gainesville
Advisory Board/Committee Workplan

Nature Centers Commission

FY 2018-2019 through FY 2019-2020 WORKPLAN PROJECTS

Project Title

Status

2018/2019 Accomplishments -2019/2020 Workplan

2018-2019 Accomplishments

2018/19 FY Workplan

1. NCC provided a liaison to the WSPP oversight committee. NCC discussed recent developments in possible use of WSPP funds. NCC continued to advocate for improved progress on deferred maintenance issues, and nature parks needs, and provided input on 2 year work plan.
2. NCC and its members continued to provide information to educate City Commission on history, extent, and provisions of the master plan and vision 2020.
3. NCC approved expenditure of its funds for several purchases to support Environmental Education programs and improve visitor comfort and information at parks such as interpretive materials, maps, picture identification cards of flora and fauna, and water stations.
4. NCC presented STAR awards to 5 good neighbors and 1 volunteer group to acknowledge their contributions to nature parks and environmental awareness in the City.
5. NCC continued to provide input to staff on acquisitions, improvements, and management.
6. NCC continued to work with staff to identify and resolve issues of access, signage, public safety, and vandalism in nature parks.
7. NCC provided input on draft city park design standards and wayfinding guidelines
8. Poetry in parks
9. NCC initiated regular publicly noticed site visits to city parks

2019/20 FY Workplan

On-going Activities of Nature Center Commission

1. Support environmental programs and other outreach activities at Morningside, Sweetwater Wetlands, and in-school programs such as Kids in the Woods and Friends of Nature Parks' poetry competition.
2. Advocate and promote family/parent-child participation and visitation to nature parks and programs.
3. Work with academic collaborators to evaluate current/historic participation in parks/programs through trail counters, surveys, and program data. This will include addressing recreation, management, and utilization plans.
4. Support Friends of Nature Parks activities.
5. Review and approve land management plans as needed.
6. Maintain liaisons with other citizen committees, advisory boards, and agencies such as the Tree Advisory Board, Bicycle/Pedestrian Board, ROSCO, City Beautification Board, and Florida Forest Service, as well as university strategic planners.
7. Collaborate with staff on implementing nature-related WSPP projects and advocating for nature park improvements in accordance with the Master Plan.
8. Continue monthly site visits.

Policy Committee Initiatives

9. Work with staff to develop policies for appropriate access to city's nature parks and conservation areas as well as for responsible and appropriate types and levels of use of these areas for the public in accordance with city staff and WSPP funding, policies, and standards. Advise the City Commission regarding appropriate funding to accomplish access and use, including signage.
10. Review and make recommendations on grant applications and land acquisitions.
11. Review city codes and policies that protect and maintain the integrity of our tree canopy, parks, and conservation lands.
12. Liaise with city staff through GAP Foundation to obtain additional PRCA department-wide funding that is consistent with the Master Plan.

Public Relations Committee Initiatives

13. Develop, enhance, track, and monitor tools for environmental education, outreach, and advertising events.
 - a) Large storyboard, small table-top, and interactive electronic displays
 - b) Radio commercials, PSAs, newspaper articles, posters, social media, and other forms of advertisement.
 - c) Cooperation with partner organizations; participation of board members where feasible.
 - d) Update short descriptions of parks in promotional materials as needed, including for the new Friends of Nature Parks website.

Awards Committee Initiatives

14. Recognize businesses for their environmentally friendly policies and activities.
15. Seek out outstanding individuals and organizations who are achieving significant results in environmental education and awareness at nature parks. Recommends awards to entire NCC.
16. Review award nomination process.

2019/20 Specific Projects

16. Continue to provide input on priorities for WSPP funding related to needs of nature parks.
17. Champion groups and policies that support the enhancement and enjoyment of our nature parks.
18. Provide forum for concerned citizens to present nature-parks-related concerns. Move citizen comments to beginning of meeting when citizens join meetings.
19. Advice on solutions for park name confusion for parks with similar names.
20. Address ongoing issues of access and appropriate use.