

**SEMINOLE COUNTY
PARKS & PRESERVATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
NATURAL LANDS SUBCOMMITTEE
MINUTES OF MEETING May 20, 2016**

ATTENDANCE:

Members:

Tom Boyko, Barbara Whittier, Ed Ghiglieri

Staff:

Jim Duby

LOCATION:

EYNC/Geneva Wilderness Area
3485 N. County Rd. 426 Geneva, FL 32732

TIME:

8:00 a.m.

The meeting was called to order at 8:00 a.m. at the Ed Yarborough Nature Center. The minutes from the February 22, 2016 meeting were reviewed and approved.

OLD BUSINESS:

NEW BUSINESS:

Monthly Reports – Jim Duby provided a copy of the April 2016 Natural Lands monthly report for the groups review. Several comments were made as to the benefit of having this to make members aware of what is happening with the NL program. Barbara stated she would pick a few highlights to present to the PPAC next Wednesday. Ed Ghiglieri stated he was not receiving notifications of events and volunteer opportunities and Jim stated he would make sure all PPAC members were included on the email list for NL programs and volunteer opportunities.

Adopt-A-Park Form Review – Jim provided a copy of the latest form which is labeled “Adopt-a-Park Program Including Parks, Trails, Trailheads and Natural Lands.” There was discussion as to whether there was another form for just Parks and Jim recommended this be asked at the PPAC meeting next week. Jim suggested that for this meeting only questions in regards to how this program will work for and benefit the Natural Lands should be discussed. Other questions about the Adopt a Park program in general should be addressed at the PPAC as well. Barbara Whittier made a good point as this relates to Natural Lands, that being, individuals or groups may just want to adopt a portion, section or area of a NL site. For example the red trail at Lake Proctor Wilderness Area or the Native Plant Garden at the Geneva Wilderness Area. Jim stated staff could look at each property and identify specific areas to be adopted.

Current Volunteer Use on Natural Lands – The topic of how volunteers are signed up was initiated and Jim explained that it may be through walk-ins, referrals or applications received via the Leisure Administrative offices. Jim also stated that the NL program does not have volunteers just for the sake of having volunteers but to address specific tasks or needs. NL staff each work individually with volunteers to address needs such as trail maintenance, educational programming or natural resource monitoring.

A question was raised regarding security and back ground checks and Jim explained that if a volunteer will be working with children a background check is required and conducted through our Human Resources Department. Jim also stated release forms are signed by all volunteers. This initiated a discussion as to whether the PPAC members

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should sign volunteer release forms as they are often traversing natural areas, trails and parks where accidents can and do happen. Jim recommended this be brought up at the PPAC meeting.

Project Origination & Funding Priorities – Tom Boyko inquired as to how projects are selected and funded in the NL program. Jim stated that for the recent NL enhancement projects the NL subcommittee had toured all sites, discussed possible projects at several and prioritized the projects on the three sites selected (GWA, BBWA and LHWA). A proposal was then prepared for the BCC and supported by/through the PPAC. Jim explained that the funding came from the Natural Lands Bond Fund for these projects and that the use of these funds is limited to sites purchased through the Natural Lands Program. Jim explained that there is app. 1.7 million left in the NL Bond Fund and that a priority would be developed in the future for how and what these funds could or should be used for. The topic of boardwalks and an overlook/tower at the Spring Hammock Preserve and whether the funds could go to them, was brought up. Jim stated that Rick Durr the Greenways and Natural Lands Division Manager was currently working with staff to develop a countywide inventory of all boardwalks to assess current condition and estimated repair or replacement costs. Jim said that this would likely be presented to the PPAC for review and comment at some point in the future. Barbara expressed a concern for the Youth Conservation Center and whether it was still a priority and Jim assured her that it was still a project that staff supported.

Other Business:

25th Anniversary Report – Jim reported to the group that the Natural Lands 25th anniversary report was completed and that they would receive a copy at the next meeting if not prior.

Spring Hammock School Board Boardwalks – Jim updated the group on a meeting with SCSB staff and the contractor they had secured to address their boardwalks. Jim stated that the SCSB had contracted with Wharton Smith who had a structural engineer assess the two bridges that cross the creek on the north side of Osprey Trail to access the “Mud Walk” area. The SCSB will be replacing any broken or missing boards and installing new decking on these two bridges. The status of the other boardwalks was in question and would be included in the County’s boardwalk inventory/assessment.

Next Meeting – Per the group consensus the next meeting would be July 22, 2016 at 8:00 a.m. at the Geneva Wilderness Area.

Meeting adjourned at app. 9:20 a.m.