

**MINUTES OF THE
PARKS & RECREATION COMMITTEE
MEETING DESTIN CITY HALL BOARDROOM
NOVEMBER 26, 2024, MEETING - 4:00 PM**

1. CALL TO ORDER:

Vice Chairwoman Johnson called the Parks & Recreation meeting to order as a workshop at 4:00 p.m. on Tuesday, November 26, 2024, in the Destin City Hall Annex Chambers with the Pledge of Allegiance immediately following.

2. ROLL CALL:

Members Present

Nikki Johnson
Leslie Schmidt
Isacc Birch
Autumn Weidenhamer

Members Absent

L'Rena Anderson
Brian Otto

Staff Present

Rey Bailey City Clerk
Ryan Reed Deputy P & R Director

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

➤ *September 24, 2024 Meeting minutes*

Postponed to the next meeting.

5. NEW BUSINESS:

Parks & Rec staff handed out flyers to the members for the upcoming events:

- **Christmas Parade Float Design**

The members decided to not have a committee parade float for this year due to time constraints and how they will strive to work on having a plan for the 2025 parade.

- **Christmas Lights Judging**

Mr. Reed noted that they need judges to volunteer, briefly explained their new and improved process for the judges to find the properties and how the judging will occur over just two evenings and how the volunteers will be assigned routes instead of having to drive through every street to locate the homes. He then asked the members if anyone would be willing to volunteer. Vice Chairwoman Johnson volunteered to be a judge.

- **Christmas Tree Lighting**

Mr. Reed explained how they need volunteers for this event as well and to let him know if any of them would be willing to help out.

- **Annual Report / Work Plans – Sandy Trammell**

Council-elect Trammell explained the process for obtaining the necessary information in order to create and present their Annual Report to City Council. She then presented the members with a detailed report summarizing the committee's annual work plan and goals.

- **Park Inspections**

Two inspections are scheduled each year in March and November. Members were reminded to submit their reports if they hadn't already.

- **Children's Park**

The Children's Park, previously noted as deplorable, has since been torn down, reflecting progress.

- **Tree City USA**

The Arbor Day Ceremony has been conducted annually. The committee discussed continuing to review Tree City USA requirements.

- **Parks Foundation**

The Parks Foundation has been established but is awaiting its EIN from the IRS. Once the foundation is fully operational, it will manage fundraising efforts for events like Pooch Palooza.

7. STAFF & MEMBER COMMENTS:

- **Destin Pooch Palooza Date**

Members Johnson and Weidenhamer led a discussion on Pooch Palooza, a community dog event. The committee agreed to aim for the first weekend in April to avoid conflicts with spring break and unpredictable March weather. They will confirm the date and begin securing sponsors and raffle items. The committee will also coordinate with the Parks Foundation to ensure funds raised go directly to parks improvements.

- **Parks Foundation Status**

This item was briefly discussed, Mrs. Trammell explained that currently the EIN number has still not been assigned by the IRS but once it is fully operational, it will manage fundraising efforts for events such as the Pooch Palooza.

Committee member Schmidt spoke of and raised concerns about restrictions on placing political signs on city property, making it hard for local candidates to find places to put signs near city buildings.

Council-elect Trammell spoke of how State of Florida Law prohibits campaign signs to be placed on government property.

Committee member Schmidt proposed adding crepe myrtle trees along the cemetery fence near the sheriff's station, noting how that area looks unfinished, and how trees would improve the appearance and honor the cemetery.

Mr. Reed stated that there may be a reason why trees were not planted on that side, adding he will investigate and follow up.

8. PUBLIC COMMENT:

A member of the audience brought up the state of the post office landscaping on Main Street, stating that the post office looks neglected, especially now that it's next to Publix. She stated that she has spoken to the postmaster, but progress has been slow.

Committee member Johnson stated that since the post office is a federal property, they cannot directly intervene, but community groups such as The Destin Garden Club or Rotary Club might be willing to help.

- **Next Meeting**

The committee discussed the need for additional meetings in January to accommodate the new work plan and elections of Chair and Vice Chair.

Motion by Committee Johnson, seconded by Committee member Birch, to hold a special meeting on January 9, 2025, to elect new leadership and begin work on the annual plan, passed 4-0.

The regular January meeting was confirmed for January 28, 2025.

ADJOURNMENT:

Having no further discussions, the meeting adjourned at 5:45 PM.

Adopted and approved this 25th day of March 2025.


Autumn Weidenhamer, Chairwoman


Sharon Gardner, Records Mgmt. Specialist