



Hendry LaBelle Recreation Board
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August 17, 2023

A regular meeting of the Hendry LaBelle Recreation Board was held on the above date at 6:00 PM at the Hendry-LaBelle Recreation Office, 310 Cowboy Way, LaBelle, Florida.

City Commissioner, Daniel Akin, called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM. Opening Prayer was led by County Commissioner, Emory “Rowdy” Howard. Members also present were, City Commissioner, Bobbie Spratt; Schoolboard Member, Paul Samerdyke, and a motion was made, seconded and passed unanimously to have County Commissioner, Mitchell Wills, attend the meeting by telephone.

Everyone stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

A motion to accept the July 20, 2023 Board Meeting Minutes was made by City Commissioner, Daniel Akin, seconded by City Commissioner, Bobbie Spratt. All were in favor. Motion passed.

Director, Steven Lynn, read **IV Correspondence (FYI) Item a**. An email he sent out on 7/24/23 giving a status of his meeting with Shelly Hunter pertaining to the proposed circus at Forrey Park and that he had not yet heard back from her with regard to insurance or how to proceed at this time.

Next, Director, Steven Lynn, read **Item b**. The Letter of Cancellation to LaBelle Martial Arts. The owner, Norberto loan, was in attendance. City Commissioner, Daniel Akin, addressed Mr. loan to approach the podium if he wished to speak at this time. He agreed, and pled his case on behalf of the parents and children of the martial arts in the area in an attempt to stay in the

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James Singleton Community Center, by expressing the number and type of children that were attending his classes, the importance of this type of program for this community, and his credentials for coaching and teaching. County Commissioner, Emory “Rowdy” Howard asked him if he has been looking for an alternate location. Mr. Ioan replied that he wanted to come here first because he went through this issue with the City about a year ago – back and forth with the Singleton Building and had to acquire insurance... so before he needed to obtain more insurance, he wanted to come here first. Schoolboard Member, Paul Samerdyke, explained how this all came about with the community neighbors attending previous Board Meetings and expressing their concerns mainly with the storage of LaBelle Martial Arts’ equipment. A group of them came in and they all spoke the same concerns. Mr. Samerdyke then went on to express that he was glad that Mr. Ioan was here tonight. City Commissioner, Bobbie Spratt, said, “I don’t think it’s your program that anybody had an issue with. I think it’s a great program; however, I think it’s the building that you’re using. I think we need to help you find a better place to do what you do so well.” Mr. Ioan replied, “It’s the Recreation Boards’ building and if it’s not, give it back to the city.” City Commissioner, Bobbie Spratt, replied, “It is the city’s, we are not giving it back to the city, we are in charge of renting it out.” City Commissioner, Daniel Akin, concurred that the problem is the equipment storage and then County Commissioner, Emory “Rowdy” Howard, went on to add that the intent of that community center is meant for more than just a single event. The correct use of the community building is for the community coming together for different, various purposes. He further stated that Mr. Ioan would have to find an alternate place so that the Singleton Building could be used as it is intended. City Commissioner, Bobbie Spratt, asked him if he had checked with the schools? Mr. Ioan replied, “Yes; however, I ran into some issues with insurance and the schools requiring me to have a school staff member present during my classes, etc...” City Commissioner, Bobbie Spratt, suggested that there are other places like the gym at UpTheGrove and the old Lions Club building but that it may cost him a little more money. There was discussion about that building being for sale. City Commissioner, Daniel Akin, asked County Commissioner, Mitchell Wills, if he would like to comment. County Commissioner, Mitchell Wills, stated, “I agree with the rest of the Board in that there is nothing wrong with what he is doing. It’s good to keep the children engaged in this type of activity; however, this building is not the place. This building is not a recreation building but a community center. It’s a community-based building and we do need to find another place for him to conduct this type of program.” City Commissioner, Daniel Akin, said, “I have no problem with UpTheGrove other than during Jr. Pro basketball, the place is inundated with kids playing basketball. So, that time of year wouldn’t work but other times of the year, perhaps. Mr. Ioan would need something year-round because his program is performed year-round.” County Commissioner, Emory “Rowdy” Howard asked the Chairman if any type of motion was needed here and City Commissioner, Daniel Akin, replied that we didn’t but County

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Commissioner, Emory “Rowdy” Howard said he would like to make it in a form of a motion to have Director, Steven Lynn, and the staff to work with him to see if we could find him a location that would work. Commissioner went on to ask Mr. Ioan, “Are there any other businesses doing this type of thing?” Mr. Ioan answered, “There is a gentleman giving private lessons in people’s homes but it’s not martial arts, I am the only one in town doing this.” Then, Schoolboard Member, Paul Samerdyke, added that he knew of a building south of town but wasn’t sure exactly where it was located. City Commissioner, Daniel Akin, interjected that a motion is on the floor to help this gentleman to find a space to conduct his martial arts program. All were in favor, motion passed to have Director, Steven Lynn, assist Mr. Ioan in finding another space to perform his program. County Commissioner, Mitchell Wills, clarified stating, “The building Schoolboard Member, Paul Samerdyke, was referring to is the old Jaycees building... the city building up front that they only use for the plays – that may be a place we could use as co-habitation there.” City Commissioner, Daniel Akin, pointed out, “That’s not under the Recreation Board but we’d have to check the lease status. That’s not quite under our umbrella but Director, Steven Lynn, could help him out with that.”

City Commissioner, Daniel Akin, brought up the next item on the agenda, **Staff Reports, Items a., & b.**, respectfully for clarification of whether or not a 501(c)(3) non-profit is required to show proof of having applied for this status to obtain the James Singleton Community Center at no charge until their final paper work comes through and Director, Steven Lynn, was asked to further comment. Director, Steven Lynn, said, “Yes, we need that as well as how much time will be given to the applicant for this process to be completed.” He said, “I looked into that. I had applied for this status myself in the past and the process took just under two (2) months. If the process takes three (3) months or more, are they getting the building for free?” He further stated, “We need an actual clarification on that.” Schoolboard Member, Paul Samerdyke, asked Director, Steven Lynn, “How do people apply since I’m unfamiliar with it? How did you apply?” Director, Steven Lynn, answered, “Through an attorney right here in town.” City Commissioner, Daniel Akin, asked County Commissioner, Mitchell Wills, if he had any comment on this. County Commissioner, Mitchell Wills, replied, “Yes, actually our bookkeeper is working on that, to get that accomplished.” He further stated that he would get that information for the group. City Commissioner, Daniel Akin, asked, “As far as the time-frame, you’re not really sure?” County Commissioner, Mitchell Wills, replied, “No, I can make a call tomorrow and find out and I can text Director, Steven Lynn, and get it out to the rest of the Board.” Further discussion was had, then City Commissioner, Daniel Akin, advised that this topic is tabled until that information is forthcoming and will discuss again next month.

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Director, Steven Lynn, brought up **Item c.**, County Attorney is working on an Amendment to Resolution 2018-1 to revise the Fee Schedule - stating that since the fees for the pavilions had been dropped, that Fee Schedule is out of date. Legal is still working on that.

City Commissioner, Daniel Akin, stated that he had a public comment card from Dessie Thomas. Ms. Thomas approached the podium and stated that she was wondering if when the new budget comes out in October, if they will know what things are going to be done with Kid Jones Park and the James Singleton Community Center. Director, Steven Lynn, explained how we have two (2) budgets, one is the Primary Budget and one is the Forrey Park Budget. He stated there is nothing specific for those areas she is referring to. Ms. Thomas said that they had given a list of things they wanted or needed to be done. Director, Steven Lynn, confirmed that he has that list and has added more items to it himself. An issue with the A/C at the Singleton building came up and he said he would be getting that taken care of tomorrow. He further stated that he is meeting an electrician out there tomorrow that there are also issues at the basketball court with breakers tripping. He further stated that County Commissioner, Mitchell Wills, advised him about several GFI's tripping along the fence line. Director, Steven Lynn, said he was going to get those re-set tomorrow while they are all out there. He further stated that he did get everything fixed at the pavilion and he spoke with John Hammil about the pole barn. He suggested that we take out the crossmembers and tin and put in new crossmembers and tin to save us a considerable amount of money. Ms. Thomas then asked if the upgrades they asked for would be in the next budget? Director, Steven Lynn, confirmed that the ice machine is coming from the new budget and Ms. Thomas further stated about painting the Singleton building and the ball field needs with Director, Steven Lynn, acknowledging those items as well.

Next, Ms. Thomas wanted to know about the status of the refunding of their Security Deposits, stating that she knew of some personnel issues delaying the process and that it would be discussed tonight at the meeting. Office Manager, Kim Anderson, confirmed, "Yes, the checks would be mailed out tomorrow as I informed you earlier this week." Director, Steven Lynn, confirmed that with the change-over in personnel, it took it out of our hands a little bit. Ms. Thomas thanked everyone and was excused.

City Commissioner, Daniel Akin, asked Director, Steven Lynn, to discuss the next item on the Agenda: **VII, Reports & Other Business: a.**, Director, Steven Lynn, stated that the Audit Report Submittal Checklist and the 2022 Annual Financial Report from CPA, Mauldin & Jenkins, were up there on the table for approval. City Commissioner, Daniel Akin, answered, "Yes, they are up here and are passed."

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The next item discussed was **VIII. Agenda Additions: a.**, Director, Steven Lynn, explained about the new language being added to the League License Agreement pertaining to flood waters on the ball fields. Previously, a Special Meeting had to be called each time there was standing water on a field in order to close the park. Now, with the new language added: *"...16. Should the fields be saturated with standing water, the park will be closed down with no admittance until such time as the Recreation Director deems ready to re-open."* Now, we won't have to do that.

c., Director, Steven Lynn, stated that he needed to get authorization for payment of an invoice by Ajax Paving in the amount of \$34, 855.64 from the Boater Improvement funds. "The amount they put in the account is \$43,100.00 and they are being transferred to the Improvements Other Than Building account. We just need the Board to approve that so they can send the check out tomorrow. It just needs voted on." Schoolboard Member, Paul Samerdyke, moved to approve the invoice, City Commissioner, Bobbie Spratt, seconded with all in favor. Motion was passed.

City Commissioner, Daniel Akin, mentioned the big stack of bills on the table. Schoolboard Member, Paul Samerdyke, moved to approve the bills, City Commissioner, Daniel Akin, seconded, all were in favor. Motion was passed.

City Commissioner, Bobbie Spratt, suggested to all who haven't seen the new paved parking lot at Bob Mason Park, to definitely check it out. They did a very nice job. Director, Steven Lynn, added that he had them add an additional "handicap" spot.

b., Director, Steven Lynn, requested a Transfer of Funds from Office Supplies in the amount of \$2,000.00 to go into Janitorial; and also a transfer of funds from several accounts, i.e., a transfer of \$3,000.00 from Improvements Other Than Building; a transfer of \$8,000.00 from Buildings; and a transfer of \$2,000.00 from Office Supplies all to Machinery & Equipment to purchase a new lawn mower to replace one that is totally down and another that he had to have the deck replaced for \$2,600.00. He further explained that a new deck alone would have cost \$6,000.00 so it made more sense to purchase a new mower that he had a quote for a 61" Scag for \$14,690.45 because the parts are cheaper to replace than on a John Deere mower. Blades for a Scag mower cost \$30.00 a set to replace while the blades on a John Deere mower cost \$80.00 a set. City Commissioner, Daniel Akin, asked the Board if they wanted to make a motion to approve the quote Director, Steven Lynn, was proposing for a new lawn mower, when Schoolboard Member, Paul Samerdyke, asked, "Are there enough funds in Office Supplies and Office Equipment.... I didn't see that much in there." Director, Steven Lynn, explained that there is currently \$8,916.55 in Office Supplies and we will not spend all of that by October. He further

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explained that we were getting low on Janitorial Supplies. City Commissioner, Bobbie Spratt, wanted confirmation that it was \$13,00.00 that was being transferred; however, it was actually \$15,000.00 total in the request. City Commissioner, Bobbie Spratt, made the motion to move the funds over so that we could purchase the much-needed lawn mower. County Commissioner, Emory "Rowdy" Howard seconded, all were in favor. Motion was passed.

Director, Steven Lynn, then brought up a request, "If we have the funds in the Primary Budget or the Forrey Budget, I propose contract work for the mowing and spraying at Forrey Park due to the fact that we have gotten behind because of the rain and having our team focus more over here." City Commissioner, Bobbie Spratt, asked if he had any numbers for that. Director, Steven Lynn, replied he did not because he needed approval first. He will bid it out for another meeting. He further stated that it would be for the next fiscal year and just a six (6) month contract. City Commissioner, Daniel Akin, said that they would be okay with that.

Director, Steven Lynn, requested that the basketball goals be removed from the Rodeo Grounds due to the fact that kids are jumping the fence and going in to play basketball and they have damaged one of the new large fans with a basketball. He fixed the fan blade himself. He further stated that the only program that is regular out there right now is the Zuma class and those are held in the morning. County Commissioner, Emory "Rowdy" Howard, asked, "Is Jr. Pro is practicing out there right now. Director, Steven Lynn, replied, "no."

City Commissioner, Bobbie Spratt, suggested that we invest in some cameras to put out on our properties to see if they are being violated or misused. You can get one of those trail cams. Director, Steven Lynn, said that the Board had approved those a while back and that he had purchased two (2). He doesn't want to just go install them now and have them get stolen, so he is wanting to make a box so that they can't get broken into. City Commissioner, Bobbie Spratt, further stated how when she went out to Forrey Park with Mr. Lynn this past week, he told her that people were breaking the locks on the fence gates to go in to fish. She further stated that it would be a security thing to invest in. More discussion was had about having the proper legal posting, citing the Florida Statute for a construction site and it being a felony if you are found breaking in.

City Commissioner, Daniel Akin, asked if they wanted to make a motion to have the basketball goals removed at the Rodeo Grounds and for any additional comments. Director, Steven Lynn, added the lights at the Rodeo Grounds are being broken as well. County Commissioner, Mitchell Wills, stated, "I hate to see all of the basketball goals come out. It's the only other covered basketball court other than Kid Jones Park. Some should be left in there because the fans aren't

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all the way down in there.” County Commissioner, Emory “Rowdy” Howard, asked if the fan posts could be shortened and Director, Steven Lynn, replied: “No, due to the slope of the roof.” City Commissioner, Bobbie Spratt, asked how many goals were there. Director, Steven Lynn, replied six (6) and three (3) big fans. He went on to explain the distance of the fan blades from the goals and they are right in line. County Commissioner, Emory “Rowdy” Howard, suggested to see if something else could be done. City Commissioner, Bobbie Spratt, stated, “We certainly don’t want to have to replace those fans or any more lights.” Others agreed. City Commissioner, Daniel Akin, questioned, “We can come back to this then?” County Commissioner, Emory “Rowdy” Howard, said, “Yes.” The matter is tabled at this time.

Director, Steven Lynn, went on to add that he received an email from Rock and read it out loud to the group about the concession stand and bidding it without a kitchen. City Commissioner, Daniel Akin, stated that he had spoken to Rock on the phone yesterday about the proposal on the concession stand. Rock stated that he had only received one comment back from his email to everyone. City Commissioner, Daniel Akin, said that he reviewed it and it looks fine to him. Rock also stated that he has the lights ready to bid. There was more discussion about food service and food trucks and whether the funds were there to bid both concession stand and lights at the same time and further whether a concession stand can function without equipment. County Commissioner, Mitchell Wills, agrees that the bid packet for the concession stand should be without the kitchen. County Commissioner, Emory “Rowdy” Howard, made a motion to ask Rock to finish preparing those two packets. City Commissioner, Bobbie Spratt, seconded. Motion was passed.

Director, Steven Lynn, said that all he has left is his evaluation – having given each Board member an Evaluation form to fill out. City Commissioner, Daniel Akin, said that we could give this another month that he hadn’t had time to fill his out. City Commissioner, Bobbie Spratt, and Schoolboard Member, Paul Samerdyke, stated that they finished theirs. City Commissioner, Daniel Akin, asked County Commissioner, Mitchell Wills, if he had finished his (the phone call was breaking up) and there was no answer. County Commissioner, Emory “Rowdy” Howard, replied that he had not yet finished his and further asked, “Do we get them to you?” “Do we do an average, is that the intent?” City Commissioner, Bobbie Spratt, replied, “It’s a real simple evaluation.” City Commissioner, Daniel Akin, said, “I don’t know about intent...whether there is a set rule on that but since I’m the Chairman, we can bring it up and look at it next month.” City Commissioner, Bobbie Spratt, said, “I’d like to point out something that when we made Steven full time Director, that took him off of part-time. I wrongly assumed that the pay rate would follow the promotion. Nothing happened there on his pay rate and I think we need to take a look at that.” County Commissioner, Emory “Rowdy” Howard, agreed and City Commissioner,

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Daniel Akin, said, "Steven has been very patient." All agreed with City Commissioner, Daniel Akin, said they would have to look into that. Schoolboard Member, Paul Samerdyke, asked, "So do we want to keep that in mind, the appropriate salary schedule for next time?" County Commissioner, Emory "Rowdy" Howard said, "That will work." City Commissioner, Daniel Akin, said, "Along with the evaluation as well." Then, County Commissioner, Mitchell Wills, jokingly asked if there would be better phone service or wi-fi service, (since the call kept breaking up). Laughter erupted.

Director, Steven Lynn, wanted to remind everyone about his upcoming trip Sunday, August 27 through Saturday, September 2, 2023 for the FRPA conference. Schoolboard Member, Paul Samerdyke, asked him if they could expect a short report once he was finished. Director, Steven Lynn, agreed and further stated that he has 26 CEU's and he believes that he will achieve an additional 15-18 CEU's while he is up there. City Commissioner, Bobbie Spratt, told Director, Steven Lynn, that she appreciated his aggressiveness in going for training and thanked him.

City Commissioner, Daniel Akin, stated that he did not have any more Public Comment Cards but if anyone else wanted to speak, to come up to the podium and state their name and limit their comments to three (3) minutes. Ms. Diane Brown came to the podium and thanked everyone for the additional tables and chairs for the James Singleton Community Center. She asked if anything could be done about the weeds along the water banks at the floating dock up at Bob Mason Park. Director, Steven Lynn, replied, "That's the waterways, not ours." Further discussion was made about setting it up for swimming with no lifeguards, and gators. Ms. Brown asked next if overnight camping was allowed there. City Commissioner, Bobbie Spratt, replied that she didn't think it was set up for that. Ms. Brown further asked about the "sprucing up" of the other parks like Kid Jones and Joe Culver. Director, Steve Lynn, replied that he still has those on his list to do. Next, it was asked about the times of the parks. Director, Steven Lynn, replied they close at 10:00 p.m. City Commissioner, Bobbie Spratt, asked if it was due to lights? Director, Steven Lynn, interjected that the Nature Park is at dark. City Commissioner, Daniel Akin, said we needed to check into the variation of that rule. "We'll have to work on that one, 10 or dusk?" A young woman came to the podium (her name was inaudible), asked about the basketball court at Kid Jones Park, the electricity in the pavilion, could the lights be on all night? Director, Steven Lynn, replied, "No they go off at 10 o'clock because the park closes at 10 o'clock." Norberto Ioan then came to the podium to read from his phone from an Internet search stating that State parks close at dusk.

City Commissioner, Daniel Akin, made a motion to dismiss, seconded by City Commissioner, Bobbie Spratt. All in favor, motion passed. Meeting was adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

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