



Hendry-LaBelle Recreation Board
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December 18, 2025

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.

County Commissioner/Chairman, Emory “Rowdy” Howard, called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

Opening Prayer was led by County Commissioner Mitchell Wills.

Everyone stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Members present were, County Commissioner/Chairman Emory “Rowdy” Howard, County Commissioner Mitchell Wills, City Commissioner Bobbie Spratt, City Commissioner Jackie Ratica, Schoolboard Member Paul Samerdyke, and Director Steven Lynn.

City Commissioner Bobbie Spratt asked for a motion to approve City Commissioner Jackie Ratica to attend the meeting via phone call. Schoolboard Member Paul Samerdyke Seconded. All were in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Bids:

County Commissioner and Chairman Emory “Rowdy” Howard informed the board that, due to the proper procurement process not being followed, the county attorney and county administrator recommended that all bids received has been returned and that ITB Bid No. 2025-001 be rewritten and reissued.

Consent Agenda: Approval of November 17, 2025 Minutes and bills:

BOBBIE SPRATT
City Commissioner

PAUL SAMERDYKE
School Board Member

EMORY “ROWDY” HOWARD
County Commissioner /Chairman

MITCHELL WILLS
County Commissioner

JACKIE RATICA
City Commissioner

City Commissioner Bobbie Spratt asked for a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Schoolboard Member Paul Samerdyke Seconded. All were in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Awards, Appearances, and Presentations:

Jeremiah Elio of SBG Airsoft made a presentation to the board proposing the use of Forrey Park for airsoft events, with plans to potentially establish an airsoft league in the future. He stated that the BBs used would be biodegradable. Board members asked safety-related questions, and Mr. Elio explained that all participants would be required to check in and that each airsoft gun would be inspected prior to use. He also noted that establishing an airsoft league would help increase facility usage.

County Commissioner Mitchell Wills stated that, if the board preferred not to obtain its own insurance, Christ Central Church could sponsor the program, as it is a 501(c)(3) organization. He added that he would contact other churches that currently operate sports leagues to review the contracts they use.

City Commissioner Bobbie Spratt made a motion to proceed with the next step and establish an agreement between Christ Central Church and the Recreation Board. School Board Member Paul Samerdyke seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Correspondence:

A discussion about security deposits was brought up; it was decided to be tabled until the next meeting.

LYSI reported issues with outside vendors selling food and drinks at their soccer games, which negatively impacts their concession stand sales. County Commissioner Mitchell Wills made a motion that no outside vendors be permitted to sell items at events outside of the leagues.

County Commissioner Mitchell Wills made a motion to approve the chair to sign the survey agreement with Johnson Engineering. The motion was seconded by City Commissioner Bobbie Spratt, and all were in favor.

Staff Reports:

Director Lynn raised the issue that LaBelle Heat has not submitted their insurance documentation or league agreement, yet they are still using the fields. County Commissioner and Chairman

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Emory “Rowdy” Howard stated that an attempt should be made to meet with the individual in person while they are using the fields. If the required insurance and league agreement are not submitted, LaBelle Heat will no longer be permitted to use the fields.

Director Lynn brought up the need for a new trailer that will accommodate the Ventrac, as the John Deere mower has broken down. City Commissioner Bobbie Spratt made a motion to approve the purchase of a 16-foot tilt trailer in the amount of \$5,100. The motion was seconded by School Board Member Paul Samerdyke. All were in favor.

Director Lynn also reported that all of the bases from the rookie field at Davis Pratt were stolen. County Commissioner and Chairman Emory “Rowdy” Howard stated that a police report should be filed anytime property is stolen.

Director Lynn further informed the board that some individuals have begun practicing on the Forrey baseball fields.

Hearing of the public:

Director Lynn requested permission for the Swamp Gala to be hosted at Forrey Park. City Commissioner Bobbie Spratt expressed concern about the use of recreation employees to assist with event setup. County Commissioner Mitchell Wills agreed with her concerns.

County Commissioner Mitchell Wills made a motion to approve hosting the event at Forrey Park, provided that there is no financial burden to the Recreation Board and that recreation employees are not used to assist with event setup. The motion was seconded by City Commissioner Bobbie Spratt. All were in favor.

Lydia Elio, Jacob Elio, and Kyle Owens came in support of hosting airsoft activities at Forrey Park.

Reports and other Business:

An organizational discussion was held regarding the positions of chairman and vice chairman. City Commissioner Bobbie Spratt made a motion to retain County Commissioner Emory “Rowdy” Howard as chairman. The motion was seconded by County Commissioner Mitchell Wills, and all were in favor.

City Commissioner Bobbie Spratt made a motion to retain School Board Member Paul Samerdyke as vice chairman. The motion was seconded by County Commissioner Mitchell Wills, and all were in favor.

Director Lynn reported that Recreation Board employees are provided uniforms each year. This year, some jeans were purchased using the county credit card due to not being able to use a

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purchase order. City Commissioner Bobbie Spratt made a motion to allow uniform purchases to be made using the county credit card. The motion was seconded by School Board Member Paul Samerdyke, and all were in favor.

A county commissioner noted that an alternative option would be for employees to be reimbursed for uniform purchases.

An update was provided on the Recreation Board's financial outlook for the year. The board agreed that spending on the Forrey side will need to be closely monitored.

Agenda Additions: None

ADJOURNMENT

County Commissioner Emory "Rowdy" Howard adjourned the meeting. The meeting was dismissed at 7:40 p.m.

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