



Hendry LaBelle Recreation Board
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MINUTES OF THE BOARD MEETING

July 7, 2026

A special board meeting of the Hendry LaBelle Recreation Board was held on the above date at 2:00 PM at the Hendry-LaBelle Recreation Office, 310 Cowboy Way, LaBelle, Florida.

City Commissioner/Chairman, Emory “Rowdy” Howard, called the meeting to order at 2:00 PM.

Opening Prayer was led by County Commissioner Mitchell Wills.

Everyone stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

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

Everyone stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Forrey Park concession building was one of the topics discussed.

School Board Member Paul Samerdyke said he was concerned about taking out a loan, especially with the upcoming homestead exemption vote. He asked if the county would still be able to make the loan payments if budget cuts are needed.

County Commissioner Mitchell Wills said he does not want to take on any more debt. He said the county is already having trouble maintaining the parks it has now, so there is no reason to add another.

BOBBIE SPRATT
City Commissioner

PAUL SAMERDYKE
School Board Member

EMORY “ROWDY” HOWARD
County Commissioner /Chairman

MITCHELL WILLS
County Commissioner

JACKIE RATICA
City Commissioner

County Commissioner Emory "Rowdy" Howard suggested at least building a covered shelter so kids have a place to get out of the weather.

Commissioner Wills said the City of LaBelle received a quote of about \$22,000 for a 40x60 pole barn.

Matt Yeomans spoke against getting a \$1 million loan for the concession building. He said the price was too high based on the research he had done and that the building would sit empty for about half the year. He felt the park should attract more people before taking on a loan.

Julie Wilkins also spoke against the \$1 million loan. She said the board should build something simple that works, similar to what is at the rodeo grounds.

Director Steven Lynn said restrooms are needed closer to the baseball fields. City Commissioner Jackie Ratica said bathrooms similar to those at Barron Park could be built and that the project would need to be completed in phases. Commissioner Wills said Phase One should include the roof structure and restrooms.

City Commissioner Bobbie Spratt made a motion to decline the loan from First Bank and move forward working with the engineer on the first phase for the restrooms and covered area. School Board Member Paul Samerdyke seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

The board also discussed getting a shed for Pop Warner because of mold in the current locker rooms. Director Lynn said he received a quote of \$15,000 for a 12x40 shed with electricity that could also have air conditioning installed. He added that the shed could also be rented on a monthly basis.

Commissioner Wills said he had received a lower quote from Brian Quinn.

Commissioner Wills made a motion to check pricing with Brian Quinn. If Brian Quinn's quote is lower, the chair is authorized to sign the purchase agreement. If not, the board will move forward with Charlie Barnes. The motion was seconded by City Commissioner Bobbie Spratt. The motion passed unanimously.

Meeting was adjourned at 2:45 P.M