

TO: Parks & Recreation Committee
FROM: David Chanski, City Administrator/Clerk
RE: Roles, Responsibilities, and Operations
DATE: April 10, 2023



Background

After the last Parks & Recreation Committee meeting, staff received questions from a number of committee members about meeting procedure as well as the role and responsibilities of the Committee. This item is intended to clarify some of those questions and provide instruction regarding meeting and operational procedures.

Roles of the Parks & Recreation Committee

Section 33.35 of the City Code (attached) establishes the Parks & Recreation Committee and its operations. Subpart E of Section 33.35 outlines the purpose and duties of the Committee. The purpose of the Committee is to “review and to make recommendations to the City Council on the development and organization of the City parks, trails and recreation programs.” The general duty of the Committee is to “prepare, hold hearings on and recommend to the City Council the plans, programs and policies as it deems necessary to carry out the purposes of this section.” There are 10 specific powers that the City Code gives the Committee to help it carry out its duty:

- To hold meetings of its members to consider matters pertaining to parks, trails and public recreation programs in the city as directed by the Council or as the members of the Committee themselves deem proper.
- To recommend capital park and trail projects to Council subject to available funding sources.
- To recommend policies affecting the use of the city’s parks and trails systems.
- To allocate park fields in a fair and equitable manner based on recommendations from users and city staff.
- To work with a variety of organizations to ensure the offering of an appropriate array of recreation opportunities for the youth and adults of the city.
- To assist with the preparation of a comprehensive plan for the future development of the city’s parks, recreation amenities and trail systems to be submitted to the City Council for implementation, to maintain the plan and recommend amendments to the plan to the City Council as may become necessary or desirable.
- To act in an advisory capacity to the City Council in all matters relating to parks, recreation and trail programs in the city.

- To assist in the procurement of land and review the retaining of parcels for necessary open space.
- To carry out any other plans and programs as may be assigned by the City Council from time to time.
- All city employees shall, upon request and within a reasonable time, furnish to the Committee or its agents the available records or information as may be required in its work. The Committee or its agents may in the performance of official duties enter upon lands and make examinations or surveys in the same manner as other authorized city agents or employees, and shall have the other powers as are required for the performance of official functions in carrying out the purposes of this section.

Additionally, Section 33.35(C)(5) authorizes the Committee to establish other committees and subcommittees to advise and assist the Committee in the conduct of its business. However, the composition of such committees and subcommittee must be from its own membership.

One item to note is that the City Code specifically states that the Parks & Recreation Committee shall not be considered a Park Committee as defined by State Statute and does not have powers to “acquire or lease land, employ personnel or enter into contracts or leases, or any similar powers authorized for a Park Committee under state law.”

In short, the primary role and responsibility of the Parks & Recreation Committee is to be the City Council’s primary advisors on all things related parks, recreations, and trails.

Governing Documents

There are four primary documents that govern and provide direction to the Parks & Recreation Committee. They are the City Code, the Comprehensive Plan, the Parks Master Plan, and the Parks Capital Improvement Plan. Staff will go into more detail on these plans in a separate item on the April 13 meeting agenda.

Meeting Procedures

Section 33.35(C)(3) states that the Committee “shall be governed and operate by rules adopted by the Committee. The Committee may adopt additional rules and procedures as are necessary for the orderly conduct of its business.” Staff has not found any documentation that would indicate that the Parks & Recreation Committee has established formal rules of order. Attached to this memo is a brief synopsis of Robert Rules of Order, which is the parliamentary procedure most widely used by government entities. These “rules” are purely a guide for orderly meeting conduct and are not legally binding. As such, strict adherence (or a lack thereof) does not affect formal actions taken by the Committee.

One item of importance is that the Committee does not operate as individuals but as a body, and all action of the Committee must be taken as a body with majority rule. As

such, any formal action, direction, guidance, recommendation, etc. to staff, the City Council, or another committee/commission/board of the City needs to be made through a formal motion and vote.

Agenda Development

Meeting agendas are developed by staff based on prior direction from the Committee or the City Council as well as staff's knowledge of issues, topics, questions, etc. that need to be addressed by the Committee. The Committee formally approves the agenda and, thus, as the opportunity to amend the agenda at the beginning of each meeting.

If a Committee member would like a specific item on a meeting agenda, it is requested that all information regarding that item be provided to staff and the Committee Chair at least 1 week prior to the scheduled meeting. Please note, that the only documentation provided in a meeting packet will be what is provided to staff. Staff will not engage on an issue brought forward by individual committee members, members of the City Council, or members of the public without an affirmative vote from the Committee to do so.

Parks Operations

The City of Breezy Point does not have a formal parks and/or recreation department. Parks operations are instead spread across departments. The Public Works Department conducts general maintenance of the parks system, the Administration Department provides the Committee with administrative and policy support, and the Police Department provides enforcement of the City's ordinances within the parks.

Attached to this memo is a copy of the 2023 Budget. In total, Parks & Recreation has a budget of \$36,750. However, if you break the budget down to simply operation funds, the operational budget is only \$12,000. The budget is set annually by the City Council. Any increases in the Parks & Recreation budget should be presented to the City Council as a recommended not later than July of each year.