



Meeting Name: Town Council Meeting
Meeting Date: September 27, 2023
Prepared By: D. Dyess, Town Manager
Item Title: Discussion – Parks and Recreation Committee

DISCUSSION:

At a previous town council meeting, Mayor Cooke requested a discussion item on a parks and recreation committee. The council agreed to agenda an item for discussion. Committees or boards of this nature are normally resident advisory boards to the council/manager that make recommendations for improvement and park use.

In Chapter 18 of our code a park means a park, reservation, playground, beach, recreation center or any other area in the town owned or used by the town and devoted to active or passive creation.

If a committee/board is formed, they will be making recommendations over the items that fall within the above definition. If this is an official town board/committee they would be subject to sunshine and any other official requirement, like the Palm Beach ethics training. Below are some board/committee responsibilities that I found from our neighbors.

Palm Beach Gardens:

About the Board

The purpose of the parks and recreation advisory board shall be:

- To serve as advocates for the citizens by conducting constructive investigation, discussion, and review
- Providing advice to the community services department, city manager, and city council with a broad outlook towards improving present recreational facilities and increasing utilization of the facilities by the public
- Evaluating and recommending future community needs for recreational projects and facilities.

Village of North Palm

The Recreation Advisory Board serves in an advisory capacity to the Village Council and makes recommendations for:

- Capital improvements/facilities.
- Matters relating to the overall recreational activity of the Village other than its waterways.
- Planning
- Present and future recreation activities
- Recreation programs
- The board also performs any other duties which may be assigned to it by the Village Council.

Some pros and cons:

- Staff time for running the board/committee – often staff must do the research and data gathering for the board/committee and present. Then after a recommendation it is done again for council. We do not have a recreation department that would normally handle this task.
- Obtaining feedback from residents on what is desired is always a positive, so another set of opinions could help shape the parks.
- Do you end up getting the opinion of five people rather than the opinion of many during a workshop or survey.

RECOMMENDATION:

The council should discuss and determine a direction for creating a new board/committee.