

**Parks & Recreation**  
4177 Ben Durrance Road  
Bartow, Florida 33830



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**PARKS & NATURAL RESOURCES DIVISION**

**POLK COUNTY LAKES ACCESS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES**

The Polk County Lakes Access Advisory Committee (LAAC) convened Tuesday, May 11, 2021 at 3:04 p.m. at the Polk County Parks and Natural Resources, 4177 Ben Durrance Road, Bartow.

Members Present: Tom Palmer, Pablo Sologaitoa, Adam Bass, Chad Allison, Bob Sheffield, Larry Johnson,

Members Absent: Greg Watts (with notice), Paul Thomas, Arlene Ledbetter (with notice), Cannon Kirby (with notice)

Parks and Natural Resources: Mike Callender, Tracy Mullins, Brandy Gray

**CALL TO ORDER / WELCOME / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Larry Johnson called the meeting to order.

Chad Allison introduced himself.

Larry led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES**

Tom Palmer mentioned that it should be noted that Lake Lowery is in the Green Swamp Area of Critical State Concern. Lowery was also spelled incorrectly. Brandy noted that Lake Juliana was also misspelled.

Initially, there was not a quorum. Once quorum was met, topic revisited.

Motion: Approve January 12, 2021 minutes as amended.

Mover: Bob Sheffield

Seconder: Tom Palmer

Result: Approved unanimously (6-0)

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

No public comments.

**FRIENDS OF THE PARK LIASION**

Committee usually nominates someone from the LAAC to also serve on the Friends of the Park Committee. This discussion was initially tabled until a quorum was reached later in the meeting.

Mike discussed the purpose and design of the Friends of the Parks. It is the Lakes Access Committee's decision on if they want to have a representative on the FoP committee. Adam Bass volunteered to be the liaison.

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Motion (after amendment): Move to nominate Adam Bass as the representative from Lakes Access Committee for Friends of the Park Foundation for the duration of his term.

Mover: Pablo Sologaistoa

Seconder: Tom Palmer

Result: Approved unanimously (6-0)

**LAKE MARION**

Mike Callender gave overview of Lake Marion. Currently have a small boat ramp on the lake. The area was actually a right of way. County has opportunity to acquire a substantial area on the east side of the lake for conservation, preservation, stormwater treatment, and possibly a boat ramp. Typically, do not acquire additional property if the County already has a facility on the lake; however, this would provide more space and better water treatment and would be a joint project. County will probably move forward with purchasing the property for conservation and preservation; however, staff are asking for committee's thoughts on adding a boat ramp.

Tom Palmer asked the relation of this location to the park that Poinciana has on the lake.

Mike Callender and Adam Bass utilized the power point presentation to point out surrounding areas, ownerships, and uses.

Committee agreed, with no objections, to supporting the development of a new boat ramp in the discussed location.

Mike discussed that different funding sources will be used to purchase / develop the land. If nothing else, the property will be purchased for stormwater.

**FUNDING SOURCES**

*Mike asked the committee to discuss funding sources not included on the agenda*

*Funding Sources:* Mike Callender discussed funding sources, as requested at the previous meeting and provided a handout.

There are two different fees charged for boating registration fees; one that comes directly to the County and one that comes back to the County from the State. The State generated funds have restrictions that state they can only be used for capital projects such as to buy property for public boating access or to build a public boat ramp. The County fees can be used for capital or to help maintain the public boating facilities.

A third funding source is from boat launching fees charged at Coleman Landing and Port Hatchineha.

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## **PARKS & NATURAL RESOURCES DIVISION**

Takes a few years to accumulate enough money to do a large project. Example, Lake Buffum is set to cost well over \$100,000 for design and roughly \$1,000,000 to build the ramp.

The County also uses funds from the Florida Boating Improvement Program.

### **PROJECT UPDATES**

Lake Juliana dock is installed. Mike gave the new members some history regarding the complexities of putting in the boat ramp including land use change, setbacks, and space limitations.

Lake Buffum will require a Level 4 review due to the ramp operating 24-hours a day. Staff may bring this topic back to the LAAC at a later date to vote on their support.

Panther Point Trail and Lake Hancock boat ramp are now both open for public use.

### **OTHER BUSINESS**

Mike asked if the committee is interested in visiting the Richloam Fish Hatchery. Typically do a tour of the facility then conduct the meeting in the small room on site. Members will have to provide their own transportation. Committee would like staff to work on setting up a tour. Staff will aim to have a response by the next LAAC meeting in September, at the time the committee will be approving the 2022 meeting schedule.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Vice Chair Larry Johnson adjourned the meeting at 4:27 p.m. (no longer a quorum)