



RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD MEETING MINUTES

December 13, 2023

The meeting was called to order at 1:30 p.m. by Chair Lauren Watkins who then called the roll. Members present were Lauren Watkins, Casey Van Rysdam, Harold Dockins, Bill Bowen and pending member Marithza Ross. Marty McEachean and Brad Long were absent.

Also present was Commissioner Christian Whitehurst and Parks and Recreation Staff: Ryan Kane, Director, Jamie Baccari, Assistant Director, Tim Connor, Project Manager, Teddy Meyer, Recreation Facilities Manager, Bobby McFarland, Sports Tourism Development Specialist and Diane Gorski, Project Specialist.

The Chair called for approval of the November minutes. Bowen motioned to approve the minutes and was seconded by Dockins. The motion was approved 4/0.

Watkins called for public comments for non-agenda items only. She explained that speakers each have 3 minutes to speak. She announced that the public would have the opportunity to speak to an agenda item following its presentation.

David Goldberg, 9 Aledo Ct, told the RAB that he and a partner had raised funds, hired John Houk, and partnered with the local government to build a disc golf course in Georgia that is now ranked 27th in the world. He offered his pro bono assistance in expanding the disc golf options within St. Johns County. Van Rysdam asked about the cost of the course. Goldberg stated that they built a huge 18-hole championship course that cost about \$150,000 ten years ago. Bowen confirmed with Goldberg that there were resources available in the county to build recreational disc golf courses. Goldberg said that the club could help defray costs by providing assistance and baskets and other things.

Jens Velasquez, a world champion disc golfer who is now a resident of St. Johns County agreed with Goldberg and added that disc golf is played by children and adults alike is a life time endeavor.

Van Rysdam asked for an update on the disc golf project. Tim Connor, Project Manager, shared that the 100% construction plans are currently being finalized and that staff would be doing a walk through on December 21 to see the layout and make adjustments as needed. Connor stated that the base bid meets the current budget of just under 700k and alternates would be considered later. Bowen started a discussion about the disc golf course, disc golf as a sport and competition as well as the footprint needed to build a smaller 9-hole golf course that included RAB members, staff, Velasquez and Goldberg.

Joseph Cone, 32 Florida Avenue, endorsed and echoed what Goldberg and Velasquez shared about disc golf. He stated that he is actively involved in disc golf and a founding member of the local disc golf club.

Reports

Commissioner Christian Whitehurst wished everyone a safe and happy holiday.

David Simpkins, St. Johns County School District liaison, was unable to attend the meeting but provided an email with updates and results of the High School Sports season.

The Chair welcomed Marithza Ross to the RAB and reminded everyone that the January meeting will begin at 1 pm in the County Auditorium and that a quorum is needed to review the TDT Category III Grant Applications and vote on the level of funding, if any, for each application. She asked the RAB members to make sure to attend the meeting and to notify staff sooner, rather than later, if they could not attend.

New Business

Watkins introduced the Shore Drive Trail item and explained that the presentation would be given by Tim Connor, Project Manager and that public comment relating to the item would follow. She explained that there would be no questions or comments from the RAB until after the last public comment to allow anyone needing to leave before a lengthy discussion takes place the opportunity to exit. Watkins asked Kane if he had anything to share about the project. Kane said that the bid for construction closed and that the county received many that were under the budget cap and that staff was in the process of finalizing the contract for construction that would be taken to the Board of County Commissioners for their consideration on the regular agenda at a future date. Watkins requested confirmation that the RAB was not making any decisions or motions relating to the project. Kane said there was no motion needed for the presentation. Connor provided a PowerPoint Presentation (**attached**). Watkins called for public comment.

Margo Geer, 249 Argonaut Road was concerned about the misinformation that was being shared with St. Augustine South residents. She said that there was a petition being sent around that contained false information. She said that only 10 homeowners out of 2500 homes in the community were spreading false statements and that the majority of residents were in favor of the trail. She said that she appreciated everything that the Parks and Recreation has and continues to do for the residents and that she supports the Shore Drive Trail Project.

Una Houk, 223 Argonaut Road stated that she was super excited about the Shore Drive Trail because it will give her the opportunity to exercise and walk safely in the neighborhood. She looks forward to taking her grandkids for a walk. She said that the Parks and Recreation Department takes wonderful care of the parks in St. Johns County. She said that she hopes that a small number of disgruntled residents don't ruin it for the majority.

Mick Jones 223 Argonaut Road said that the department has done an excellent job in communicating about and developing this project. He stated that he wants the project to be completed as do 70% of the residents he's spoken to. He emphasized that the majority of residents want the trail built and that he hoped that the Board did not allow a very small number of residents to stop the project.

Kenneth Rainer 515 Gerona Road said that he was not necessarily opposed to the trail itself, but that he did oppose the trail being built using impervious materials. He recited data to support his desire to have the trail built using pervious materials and questioned why the county wasn't considering using pervious materials.

Van Rysdam said that he personally knows people that live on Shore Drive and that they have told him that they support the trail being built. He asked staff to challenge the disinformation on the petition being circulated. He asked what reasons were given for the

1/5 survey takers not supporting the project. Kane said that resiliency was the #1 reason and gave the fear of tree removal as an example, as well as long term residents claiming ownership of the waterfront property due to them mowing the grass in years prior to the department taking over those duties.

Connor introduced Jeremy Marquis of Marquis, Latimer & Halback who explained why the trail was going to be built using an impervious surface. He said that it costs 30% more to construct a pervious trail surface. He stated that the maintenance of an 8' trail includes regular vacuuming and cleaning which would be cost prohibitive for the department. Discussion ensued that included the request for the percentage of land the trail will take up on the parcel, the long term cost to maintain a pervious vs. impervious trail system and the ratio of pervious vs. impervious land on the parcel. Kane said that the RAB will be notified of the date this project will go before the BCC.

Michael Payne, Director of the St. Johns County Park Foundation gave an overview of the Foundation and the accomplishments thus far. He requested that the county consider waiving rental fees for Parks and Recreation facilities that are utilized to raise awareness and donations to support the county. A brief discussion followed that included clarification of the request by Kane. There was a consensus of the RAB to send a letter of support to the BCC Chair.

Teddy Meyer, Recreation Facilities Manager reviewed the proposed TDT Category III Grant Application changes that included an updated rating matrix and an additional page dedicated to marketing. He said that the purpose of revamping the application is to ensure that the RAB has the tools and information it needs to make grant award decisions. A TDT Grant Funding Allocation PowerPoint (**attached**) was presented by Bobby McFarland, Sports Tourism Development Specialist. The presentation included research relating to how other municipalities determine economic impact and grant funding allocations. McFarland provided a modified ranking system for consideration of the RAB that consists of 5 questions and a new scoring system. RAB members asked questions and made suggestions that resulted in a lengthy discussion relating to the grading system and potential funding options.

Susan Phillips, President & CEO VCB said that their goal was to support and serve the RAB. She introduced Jaya Dillard who explained the partnership between Parks and Recreation events that involves reaching out to hotels and brokering the best deals for the participants in county sporting events and collecting post event data. She explained that the VCB's goal was to educate the hotels and public on the events that are happening in St. Johns County through outreach that includes social media. William McBroom, Director of Conference Sales, helps and supports VCB and county staff in this endeavor. Phillips shared that VCB has purchased an AI program to track everything happening in St. Johns County. This type of data tracking and collection provides detailed analytics that can be shared. Commissioner Whitehurst asked for examples of how and what types of data is collected. He asked how the collected is used. Discussion followed. Meyer stated that staff would work with the VCB to develop goals and strategies that will result in obtaining information relevant to the events that are happening in St. Johns County and methods to ensure accountability and accuracy. Meyer announced that there is \$325,000 available in grant funds for allocation in FY 2024. Kane mentioned the proposed 4 Regional Parks being brought online and the economic impact they will have. There was a consensus of the RAB for staff to take the input received today and incorporate it in the grant application for review at the February 14th RAB meeting.

Staff Reports

Jamie Baccari provided programming updates:

- 200 phone calls from Santa
- Hastings Parade collaboration was successful. Parks and Recreation partnered with the Library and Team Up and also participated in the event.
- St. Augustine High School made it to the playoffs but did not win. Parks and Recreation has staff who have played and/or coached at the High School and whose children are on the team participating in the sport making the department extremely proud.
- Land Development Code Level of Service project is underway. Staff is meeting with the contractor and the contractor will be reaching out to Watkins and Van Rysdam. There will also be public input in the process.

Director Ryan Kane

- The Palm Valley West Boat Ramp Grand Opening was this morning. This provides a much needed additional access point.
- Kane explained that the West Augustine CRA pays a TIF (Tax Increment Financing District) and they have a vested interested interest in programming for the community. He reviewed the demographic statistics for the West Augustine outreach programs and the CRA, He added that staff added programming and that participation has increased to 38%. Baccari explained that Summer Camp focused on the CRA area children and that there were other programs underway to increase attendance in this region. Kane gave kudos to the programming staff.

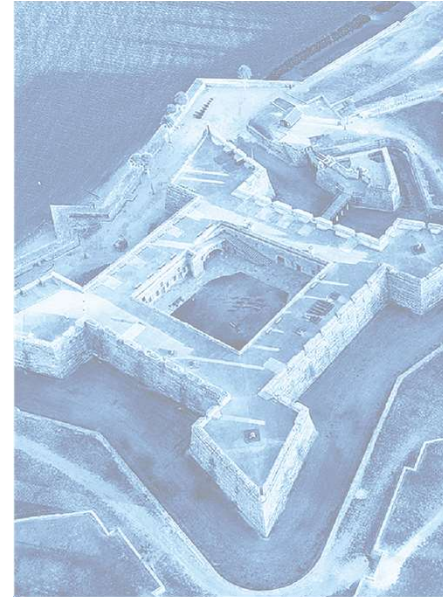
RAB Member Reports

Casey Van Rysdam wanted to discuss youth sports partnerships in the future. He also announced that Wes Tucker was recognized as the Golf Professional of the Year in Northeast Florida and that he does an unbelievable job managing the golf course.

Marithza Ross mentioned trash piling up at Veterans Park and asked how this problem can be addressed. Kane stated that the partners should let staff know that they need additional barrels and that an outside trash collection agency was responsible for trash collections at all of park facilities countywide. Meyer explained that sports tournaments were staffed with maintenance workers who kept up with trash collection. Baccari said that the Department now has a 3-man weekend Maintenance team that should help with trash issues.

Bill Bowen said he attended the Park Foundation Thursday night live event. He encouraged everyone to attend the Jimmy Jam Event this weekend.

There was a motion by Dockins to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Bowen and passed 4/0.



Shore Drive Trail

SJC Recreation Advisory Board
12/13/2023

PRESENTATION AGENDA

Overview

Project Details

Status & Next Steps





- Scope
- Purpose
- History

Overview



Scope

- +/- 3.25 mile Multi-use Trail
- Connect Doug Crane and Moultrie Creek boat ramps
- New drainage culverts
- Safety railings
- ADA accessibility



- Pedestrian Safety



Purpose



- Enjoyment of Waterfront Vistas

- Promoting Healthy & Active Lifestyle



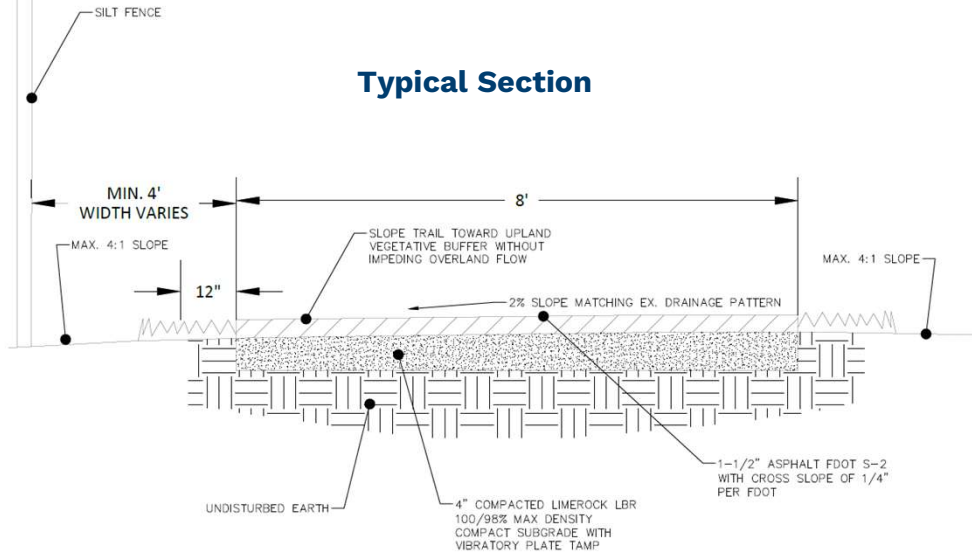
History



- Original concept for trail developed in 2006.
- Walking & biking trails were identified as the top citizen priority from the 2019 Master Plan.
- Res. 2021-84 approved application for Recreational Trails Program Grant (*awarded*).
- Funded in FY2022 & FY2024:
 - \$1,840,000 Park Impact Fees
 - \$400,000 RTP Grant
- Community Engagement
 - Attended multiple SASIA meetings
 - Two surveys conducted (*2022 results provided*)

<p><u>Survey Participants</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > 350 responses > 75% are residents of St. Augustine South 	<p><u>Importance of Trail</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > 65% Pedestrian Safety > 59% Promote healthy lifestyle / exercise > 45% peaceful retreat
<p><u>Anticipated frequency of use</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > 52% more than 3x per week > 85% more than 3x per month 	<p><u>Excitement level of trail construction</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3.79 stars out of 5 > 53% 5 out of 5 stars
<p><u>Amenities desired</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > 75% benches > 40% picnic tables & swings 	<p><u>Activities</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > 80% walk/jog > 65% Bike > 55% Enjoy the views / relax

Typical Section



- Design Team:

Landscape Architect (*primary*)

Environmental Scientist

Civil Engineer

Archaeologist

- 8' paved asphalt trail

FDOT minimum recommended width for shared use trails.

- Project Area

+/- 54.98 acres

+/- 27.11 acres of Wetlands

Project Details



Project Details

- Permits & Approvals Required

- St. Johns County Development Review Committee
- St. Johns River Water Management District
- US Army Corps of Engineers
- Florida State Division of Historic Preservation

No construction will commence prior to permits and approvals being granted from all Authorities Having Jurisdiction over the project site.

- Environmental & Historical Considerations

No significant impacts to:

- Archaeological and Historical Sites
- Wetlands
- Water Quality
- Floodplains
- Threatened or Endangered Species





Status & Next Steps

- Construction Bids received
12/06/23 - \$1.8M
- Awaiting final approval of grant management plan from FDEP Grant Manager.
- Construction contract tentative to BCC for approval in early 2024.



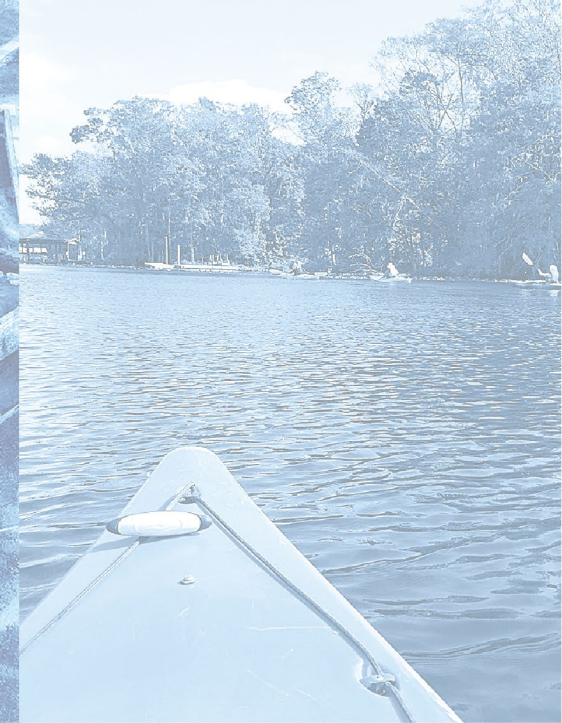




- Over 300 Paved Bike trails in Florida
- Longest being the Florida Coast to Coast Trail at +/- 192 miles from Titusville to St. Petersburg.

Florida Hikes

<https://floridahikes.com/bike-paths>



TDT Grant Funding Allocation Discussion



TDT Grant Scoring System

Other Grant Systems Researched

- *Pensacola Sports,*
- *Visit Tallahassee(Leon County)*
- *Volusia County*
- *Space Coast Office of Tourism,*
- *Seminole County,*
- *Flagler County,*
- *Clay County,*
- *St. Johns County*





Question 1

Does the event have a comprehensive Marketing Plan?

- a. (20 points) Does the event have a comprehensive Advertising/Media Plan that includes St. Johns County and the Tourist Development Council logos on marketing materials and does the marketing plan enhance visibly on a **national** level?
- b. (15 points) Does the event have a comprehensive Advertising/Media Plan that includes St. Johns County and the Tourist Development Council logos on marketing materials and does the marketing plan enhance visibly on a **regional** level?
- c. (10 points) Does the event have a comprehensive Advertising/Media Plan that includes St. Johns County and the Tourist Development Council logos on marketing materials and does the marketing plan enhance visibly on a **state** level?

Question 2

What value of visitor 's does the event provide? (Tourist/Visitors from the area outside of St. Johns County staying overnight in paid accommodations)

- a. (20 points) High Value visitors - (Tourist/Visitors staying overnight in paid accommodations for 3 days or more)
- b. (15 points) Value Visitors - (Tourist/Visitors staying overnight in paid accommodations for 1 - 2)
- c. (10 points) Day Visitors - (Tourist/Visitors staying for the day of the event)

Question 3

Are the participants coming from outside of St. Johns County?

- a.(20 points)75% - 100% of participants
- b.(15 points)50% - 74% of participants
- c.(10 points) Less than 50% of participants

Question 4

Impact of the Event

- a. (20 points) High Impact - Recurring event with increasing levels of participation and significant economic impact. Event uses a systemic approach to data collection and analysis.
- b. (15 points) Medium Impact - Recurring event with steady level of participation and economic impact to the county.
- c. (10 points) Low impact - First year event with level of impact unknown, does have positive anticipated level of participation and economic impact to the county OR a recurring event with a declining level of participation and economic impact to the county.

Question 5

What is the economic impact for St. Johns County?

- a. (20 points) \$300,00 or more
- b. (15 points) \$150,000 – \$299,999
- c. (10 points) \$50,000 – \$150,000

Final Score

85– 100 points 100% of requested amount

65 – 84 points 75% of requested amount

64 points or less 50% of requested amount

Example 1

Phase 1 Pickleball FL/GA & Veritas Classic

Question 1	Question 2	Question 3	Question 4	Question 5	Total:
15	20	10	15	10	70

Requested: \$15,000 per event

New Scoring: \$11,250 per event (75% of \$15,000)

They received: \$10,000 per event

Example 2

Phase 1 Prime Soccer Tournament

Question 1	Question 2	Question 3	Question 4	Question 5	Total:
15	15	20	20	20	90

Requested: \$20,000

New Scoring System: \$20,000

They received: \$10,000

Scores of all FY 24 Phase 1 Grants

Organization	Phase 1 FY 24 Request	New Scoring System	Score Received	Grant FY 24 Awarded
Fast Draw	\$7,500	\$3,750	55	\$2,500
Santa Run 5k	\$10,000	\$5,000	60	\$5,000
Prime Soccer	\$20,000	\$20,000	90	\$10,000
Triathlon	\$10,000	\$7,500	65	\$6,500
Pickleball	\$15,000 per event	\$11,250 per event	70	\$10,000 per event
St. Augustine Amateur	\$15,000	\$15,000	90	\$15,000
Jacksonville Classic	\$30,000	\$30,000	90	\$20,000
Perfect Game	\$10,000 per event	\$10,000 per event	90	\$8,500 per event
JFC Soccer	\$10,000	\$7,500	75	\$7,500
Total	\$152,500	\$131,250		\$103,500

St. Augustine VCB Post Event Process

- **Request to review post event process/challenges- RAB**
- **TDC Department – Post Event Procedures – Teddy**
- **VCB Perspective - Susan Phillips, William McBroom, Dr. Jaya Dillard**

Discussion Points

- Who scores the application?
- How do we control the request a grantee can make?
- What if the information provided by the grantee is not accurate?
- Do we want to add bonus points for community support?
- What direction would you like to go?

