



# Oconee County Parks & Recreation

**Lisa Davol, Director**

## Board of Commissioners

John Daniell, Chairman  
Mark Thomas, Post 1  
Chuck Horton, Post 2  
Amrey Harden, Post 3  
Mark Saxon, Post 4

---

### Recreation Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes – January 17, 2023

Members Present: Richard Ashmore, Leslie Hunsinger, Amanda McCoy Ledford, Giles Moree, Craig Moses, Kimberly Thomas

Members Absent: Jason Hewell, Dan Moore, Wesley Scott

Staff: Lisa Davol, Whitney Sperlik

Guest: Dayle Faulkner (Heritage Park), Jeanne Barsanti (OPF, Heritage Park), Brett Ledford (Heritage Park), Caryl Berzack (Heritage Park), Kira Miller (Heritage Park), Molly Smith (Heritage Park)

BOC: None

Press: Caitlin Farmer (Oconee Enterprise)

#### Minutes:

1. Call to Order – The Recreation Committee convened the regular meeting at Oconee Veterans Park. Leslie Hunsinger called the meeting to order.
2. Approve the agenda. Richard Ashmore made a motion to approve the agenda. Giles Moree seconded the motion to approve the agenda. Motion approved unanimously.
3. Approve November 15 Meeting Minutes. Giles Moree made a motion to approve the minutes and Kimberly Thomas seconded the motion. Motion approved unanimously.
4. Athens Area Horse Community – Amanda McCoy Ledford – Heritage Park Concept
  - Ledford presented information regarding Heritage Park to include background info, conceptual plan for equestrian use and reasons to invest in Heritage Park for horse events.
  - Ledford stated that improved arena footing, arena perimeter fencing and adding a warm-up arena are all needed for equine events.
  - Ledford stated that all the improvements are inline with the county Comp Plan for agricultural use.
  - Ledford said the county has a large horse community, and the horse community is working to raise funds for the footing and fencing first, then the warm-up arena.
  - Comparable facilities, according to Ledford, include Will's Park in Alpharetta booked at least 48 weekends per year and the Morgan County Ag Center which stays fully booked.
  - Ledford presented a concept plan created by Bob Smith with Ledford's input.
  - Ledford said she is open to working with other interest groups, such as the mountain bike users.



# Oconee County Parks & Recreation

**Lisa Davol, Director**

## Board of Commissioners

John Daniell, Chairman  
Mark Thomas, Post 1  
Chuck Horton, Post 2  
Amrey Harden, Post 3  
Mark Saxon, Post 4

- Items mentioned for the park beyond the 3 equine priorities were a maintenance/storage building, updated electrical capacity, adding CXT restroom near the general park parking that has a change station and potentially a pump track for bikers.

### Questions/Comments from Recreation Advisory Committee:

- Ashmore asked about funding and amount BOC would need to allocate. Ledford offered to assist in raising funds and determining amount of funds needed.
- Thomas questioned the ROI numbers/cost projections with the proposal from Ledford listing \$103,500 to \$153,500. Moree stated he would like to see the breakout of all the funds required. Thomas added that they needed to see the entire scope of the project, cost sharing agreements and whether funding was horse exclusive.
- Hunsinger questioned if funding requested was primarily SPLOST or other funding. Davol stated funding considerations through the budget process, SPLOST or other would be approved by the BOC.
- Moses asked why Morgan County was booked and not Oconee County. Ledford responded that the footing needed to be improved and fencing and a warm-up arena needed to be added.
- Ashmore asked what was the Phase I priority. Ledford said footing, fencing and warm-up arena. Ashmore said the recommendation could be sent to the BOC for the priority items.
- Thomas said a "tight list" would be needed to include staffing and other items, Ashmore agreed with determining staffing needs.
- Giles asked what was the rental fee for Morgan County; Barsanti stated Kel-Mac pays \$500 for one day.
- Thomas questioned if liability insurance of \$1M or \$5M was enough.
- Moses inquired about Heritage Park event uses. Davol responded that several interest groups have stated the importance of having more events at Heritage Park. McCoy said that a multi-use facility would benefit the community.
- Giles asked if RAC recommends the equestrian improvements to the BOC, would we receive requests from other park user groups. Davol stated the Heritage Park updated concept plan should address some of those recommendations.

### RAC Recommendations:

- Ashmore made a motion to recommend to the BOC Phase I Heritage Park improvements to the arena footing, arena fencing, addition of a warm-up arena, to include administrative, maintenance and operational support.
- Thomas seconded the motion.
- Motion passed unanimously.



# Oconee County Parks & Recreation

Lisa Davol, Director

## Board of Commissioners

John Daniell, Chairman  
Mark Thomas, Post 1  
Chuck Horton, Post 2  
Amrey Harden, Post 3  
Mark Saxon, Post 4

5. Other business if needed.
  - Sperlik mentioned upcoming Spring registration.
  - Thomson stated there was a real need for basketball gymnasium space and committee needs to address based on the interest and need in the community. Thomas stated the interest is in a standalone, non-school system gym, for the county. Ashmore reiterated the need for more gym space, stating it was the number priority moving forward.
  - Moses stated OCLL was over 1000 last year with many on the waiting list. Hunsinger agreed that additional facilities are needed for multiple sports.
6. Public comments.
  - Barsanti said there is a need for Heritage Park, question will be how expensive will it be to rent the facility, especially for the smaller local clubs. In addition, Barsanti stated horse riding is intrinsically dangerous and if injured no one's responsibility by the rider. The Kel-Mac Club requires participants to sign form verifying acknowledgement of this statement.
7. Motion to adjourn made by Richard Ashmore. Seconded by Moree. Motion approved unanimously.

**Next RAC Meeting scheduled for March 21 at 6 pm at Oconee Civic Center – Town Hall Meeting on Park Concepts and Future Parks. RAC Members assisting with collecting citizen feedback at the meeting.**