

MEMORANDUM

TO: Park Advisory Commission
FROM: Josh Landefeld, Parks & Recreation Services Manager
DATE: December 19, 2023
SUBJECT: Resolution to Recommend supporting the Leslie Science and Nature Center Nature Playscape

Attached for your review is a resolution to recommend supporting the Leslie Science and Nature Center Nature Playscape with an amount of \$250,000.00.

Leslie Science and Nature Center (LSNC) has managed and operated the Leslie Science Center for the City since 2007. Over the years LSNC has developed and implemented programming that focuses on providing high-quality services and experiences consistent with the vision and desires of Dr. and Mrs. Leslie. Staff have been impressed with LSNC programming and creativity over the recent challenging years and have enjoyed a strong, collaborative partnership in helping to provide a focus on environmental education and community building that takes place in the park.

Since 2015, LSNC has been working with the community and City staff to enhance the park and programming through the development of a nature playscape and additional amenities. LSNC has had many successes and setbacks during this process and has continue to work closely with City staff to share those success and identify ways to address the setbacks. LSNC has had success in fundraising and securing grants to build portions of the playscape and necessary amenities to support. Currently, LSNC has received \$602,490 of the \$1,497,690 need to complete the project and is continuing to pursue grant and funding opportunities.

Parks staff support contributing to the nature playscape and necessary amenities as it provides the parks department with added amenities to our parks system and will be free and open to the public. Parks staff also support this due to the long partnership with LSNC and their exceptional work in managing the space. In addition to being open to the public and providing LSNC with some needed programmatic space and necessities, it will also further designate Leslie Science as a community resource for all.

Staff have identified \$250,000 of older undesignated developer contributions to support LSNC. Supporting this will not impact the general fund or projects currently being funded by the Parks millage.

Supporting this project also achieves multiple sustainability goals:

- Engaged Community
- Human Services
- Active Living and Learning

While Parks funding does support maintenance and improvements to facilities and property at the park, no operational support is provided to LSNC for programming or operation. This contribution would be a one-time support of this organization outside of the normal maintenance support.

RESOLUTION TO RECOMMEND SUPPORTING THE LESLIE SCIENCE AND
NATURE CENTER NATURE PLAYSCAPE

Whereas, Leslie Science and Nature Center has been operating Leslie Science Center since January, 2007;

Whereas, LSNC has developed and implemented programming that focuses on providing high-quality services and experiences consistent with the vision and desires of Dr. and Mrs. Leslie;

Whereas, Parks staff have enjoyed a strong, collaborative partnership with LSNC in helping to provide a focus on environmental education and community building that takes place in the park;

Whereas, since 2015, LSNC has been working with the community and City staff to enhance the park and programming through the development of a nature playscape and additional amenities;

Whereas, the Nature Playscape and amenities would be open to the public and provide LSNC with additional space to increase programming and environmental education experiences;

Whereas, Parks staff have been engaged and supporting the development of the Playscape and amenities in partnership with LSNC;

Whereas, LSNC has secured \$602,490 in funding of needed \$1,497,690 to complete the project;

Whereas, Funding for the additional \$250,000.00 is available through developers contributions; and

RESOLVED, That the Parks Advisory Commission recommend supporting the Leslie Science and Nature Center Nature Playscape with an amount of \$250,000.00 through the use of developers contributions;