



Legislation Text

File #: 19-0729, **Version:** 1

Agenda Item Name:

Resolution 19-XX - Accepting the Donation of Real Property from the Walker Family, and Resolution 19-XX Adding Jane B. Walker Memorial Park to the Registry of Protected Public Places

Presenter:

Charlie Houder / (352) 264-6804

Description:

Staff request approval of the Resolution accepting the donation of 17.44 acres of real property from the Walker Family for use as a neighborhood park named in honor of Jane B. Walker and the Resolution adding the property to the Registry of Protected Public Places upon the transfer of title to the County.

Recommended Action:

- 1) Approval of Resolution 19-XX, accepting the donation of real property from the Walker Family for use as a neighborhood park named in honor of Jane B. Walker, subject to the completion of due diligence with the review and approval by the County Manager;
- 2) Authorization of expenditures for title insurance, recording fees, and legal fees necessary to complete the transaction; and
- 3) Approval of Resolution 19-XX, Adding the Jane B. Walker Memorial Park to the Registry of Protected Places, once title has been transferred to the County.

Prior Board Motions:

September 11, 2018 BoCC Regular Meeting:

BoCC authorized staff to work with the Walker Family on the donation of approximately 18 acres of the Walker property known as parcel number 06303-040-000 to be used as a neighborhood park named in honor of Jane B. Walker.

Fiscal Consideration:

The Property Appraiser's Just Value for the 17.44 acre portion of the property is \$125,568.

The estimated annual operating cost is \$7,500.

The estimated closing costs are \$7,200.

The boundary survey was completed by the county surveyor at no cost, and the phase I environmental assessment was \$2,705.

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Background:

Thomas J. Walker contacted staff with the offer of donating 17.44 acres of his 23.25 acre property as a park in honor of his late wife, Jane B. Walker. (parcel #06303-040-000). This single parcel is owned by Thomas J. Walker, and is located at the western termination of NW 23rd Avenue and approximately NW 106 Street, west of Interstate 75, in unincorporated Alachua County. This area of the county is under developmental pressures and open space for citizens to utilize for recreation are needed.

The donation of this land by the Walker Family, is predicated on its use as a neighborhood park named after Jane B. Walker, who passed away in 2006. Jane B. Walker was the first elected female Alachua County Commissioner and served on the Commission from 1982-1986. While in office, she was known for her efforts to promote the conservation of ecologically important lands in Alachua County and continued to actively promote conservation until her passing.

The majority of the proposed donation is comprised of 14 acres of improved pasture with a canopy of slash pine and live oaks. There are smaller areas on the property of mesic flatwoods, upland mixed forest and old-field successional forest. (Exhibit 1)

On April 26, 2019, the Land Conservation Board unanimously voted that the Pine Hill Forest - Walker donation should be gratefully accepted by the Alachua County Board of County Commission and utilized as a county park. On May 1st 2018, the Recreation and Open Space Committee (ROSCO) voted unanimously to approve the donation of the Pine Hill Forest-Walker property for a park. In addition, the proposed donation received a positive review by the Donation Acceptance Committee in accordance with the County Donation Policy. (Exhibit 2 & 3)

Access to the 17.44 acre donation parcel would be from NW 23rd Avenue. Dr. Walker or future owners will continue to use the existing access driveway through the donated parcel to access the 5.81 acre homestead parcel until such time as the County develops the Jane B. Walker Park and builds an equivalent access driveway within the 30 foot easement described in the survey.

Additionally, the waterline to the Walker homestead parcel runs through the donation parcel from the water meter near NW 23 Avenue east and then south of the barn until it intersects with the existing driveway where it follows the centerline of the driveway to Dr. Walker's home.

The parcel will be in Dr. Walker's son's name, William T. Walker, at the time of the donation.

The property would be managed as a county park with planning and development scheduled as funding becomes available. Given the property's connection with Mrs. Walker, staff concurs with the family's request that it be named the Jane B. Walker Memorial Park and added to the Registry of Protected Public Places. This would be the first park added to the Registry.

Staff recommends that the Board accept the donation subject to the completion and review of due diligence. Closing transactions would occur once there has been a determination by the County Manager that there are no title, survey or environmental defects.

Upon acceptance of the deed to the property, staff will record the Notice of Registration.