



Legislation Text

File #: 22-0825, **Version:** 1

Agenda Item Name:

Approve Friends of Cuscowilla to utilize their donations and grant funds for Improvements to the Primitive Camping Area's Nature Center at Cuscowilla Nature and Retreat Center

Presenter:

Gina Peebles 352-538-8265

Description:

Approve Friends of Cuscowilla to utilize their donations and grant funds for Improvements to the Primitive Camping Area's Nature Center at Cuscowilla Nature and Retreat Center

Recommended Action:

Accept donations from Friends of Cuscowilla, Inc. and authorize certain improvements to the Primitive Camping Area's Nature Center at Cuscowilla Nature and Retreat Center funded through donations and grants received by the Friends of Cuscowilla.

Prior Board Motions:

N/A

Fiscal Consideration:

N/A as these improvements are fully funded by the Friends of Cuscowilla

Strategic Guide:

Infrastructure

Background:

The Friends of Cuscowilla, Inc., a Florida not for profit 501(c)(3) corporation, was established to support Cuscowilla Nature and Retreat Center. The Friends of Cuscowilla have applied for a grant to renovate the Nature Center at our primitive camping area (including screens, fans, restroom renovations, and ADA upgrades.)

There are several items proposed by the Friends of Cuscowilla that staff are recommending be modified or excluded including:

- Both restrooms will be made ADA accessible;
- The vanities may not be replaced;
- The drop ceilings will not be added;
- The outdoor showers will be capped (not removed);
- The grounds will be maintained, not cleared;
- The nature trail ADA enhancements will be deferred.

Attached is the list of Board approved projects for the site. The Nature Center is the "Pavilion" listed on page 1.

Facilities Director, Dan Whitcraft, reviewed the grant proposal prior to its submission and believes the amount being donated will cover the cost of the improvements. There is currently no County funding available for project shortages, which has been relayed to the Friends.

Staff have been negotiating an agreement with the Friends for several months which would formalize our relationship and how funds raised could be used to support onsite capital projects. Because that agreement has not been executed, they fall under the County's current "donation policy." Per our attached donation policy, the Commission must accept the donation due to the estimated value of improving the asset.

EPD has been onsite and there are no impacts to the designated conservation areas. Risk was consulted and, once the improvements are complete, will add the facility to our insurance as an active facility. Facilities is serving as our project manager and doesn't anticipate this project triggering other requirements. The Health Department has requested a site plan to delineate our primitive camping area, which staff are working on. The Fire Marshall has been onsite and doesn't foresee any issues.