



COLUMBIA COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS AGENDA ITEM REQUEST FORM

The Board of County Commissioners meets the 1st and 3rd Thursday of each month in the Columbia County School Board Administrative Complex Auditorium, 372 West Duval Street, Lake City, Florida 32055. The first meeting of every month is at 9:30AM while the second meeting of every month takes place at 5:30PM. All agenda items are due in the Board's office one week prior to the meeting date.

Today's Date: 6/9/2023 Meeting Date: 6/15/2023

Name: Robby Hollingsworth Department: Commissioner District 3

Approved By:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Robby Hollingsworth", is written over a light blue horizontal line.

1. Nature and purpose of agenda item:

Special Olympics Florida seeks assistance with the Columbia County Special Olympics program. The County had previously funded this program.

2. Recommended Motion/Action:

Place for consideration in FY 2023-2024 Budget

3. Fiscal impact on current budget.

This item has no effect on the current budget.



February 15, 2023
Columbia County
Board of County Commissioners

Dear Commissioner Robbie Hollingsworth,

We appreciate the opportunity to provide you and the board with an overview of our mission and the support needed for our Columbia County athletes and programs.

Incorporated in 1972, Special Olympics Florida is headquartered in Clermont, serving athletes in 67 Florida counties. Special Olympics Florida provides year-round sports training and competition to over 60,000 children and adults with intellectual disabilities, at no cost to the athlete or their caregiver, as a means to achieve physical fitness, self-esteem, and the life skills necessary to be productive, respected, and contributing members of their communities.

Activities exist for those of all ability levels, from the highly functioning to the severely challenged. Anyone may participate in Special Olympics if they meet the eligibility criteria of having an intellectual disability or a similar developmental disability and are eight years or older. There is no upper age limit for participation. We currently serve six athletes in their 80s and one who is 90! We are the only organization that stays with our participants from the moment they register until the end of their life without ever charging them for participation.

Special Olympics athletes train and compete in over 20 sports, including Softball, flag football, soccer, basketball, equestrian, track & field, swimming, tennis, cheerleading, gymnastics, golf, sailing, stand-up paddle, surfing, bocce, pickle ball, bowling, cycling, powerlifting, and triathlon. All athletes train and compete year-round at the County level and can qualify for Regional competitions and State, National, and International Games.

Additional programs include:

- Non-Competitive training: motor activity training for athletes with profound challenges
- Unified Sports: combining athletes with and without Intellectual Disabilities
- Young Athletes: early intervention for children ages 2 through 7 years old

An important component of SOFL is healthcare accessibility. Due to the economic status of our ID population (on average, the population has a high percentage living below the poverty level nationwide), athletes with no access to health care are provided with free screenings and corrective medical assistance where necessary. The Healthy Athletes program provides free assessments at State competitions in the disciplines of Special Smiles, Opening Eyes, Healthy Hearing, FUNfitness, Health Promotion, and Fit Feet. SOFL provided free exams to over 12,000 athletes in 2019 through the support of partnerships with local healthcare companies.



Intellectual Disability does not discriminate. Athletes participating in Special Olympics come from all ethnicities, economic, religious, and social backgrounds. However, a significant number of athletes come from lower socioeconomic groups. In addition, the vast majority of school-aged children with Intellectual Disabilities who attend public schools receive free or reduced lunch, placing them in the at-risk demographic of the population that lives at or below the poverty level. Currently, 65% of Special Olympics Florida's athletes are school-aged, versus 35% who are 21 years and older.

SOFL seeks to provide persons with ID equal access to recreational, leisure, and health opportunities to enhance their quality of life, inspire confidence, build self-esteem, and foster independence.

Program Impact

COLUMBIA COUNTY	TOTAL
Athletes	112
Little Elites	71
YAP	41
MATP	0
Unified Partners	15
TOTAL PARTICIPANTS	239
Coaches	31
Class As	51

AGE	% Participants	# Participants
2-7	17%	41
8-15	43%	102
16-21	10%	25
22-29	10%	25
30-39	7%	16
40-49	6%	14
50+	7%	16

Financial need

As we add new athletes to Columbia County, we must provide them with equipment and uniforms. Our current equipment and uniforms are old and need to be updated. We need to purchase new equipment and uniforms for the following sports: Bocce, Bowling, Basketball, Cycling, Golf, and Swimming. We want to



provide our athletes with all they need to be successful and proudly represent Columbia County at the Area and Regional competitions. We also need to host a day to provide free sports physicals at a local school to enable students to participate and compete in our community sports. Most of our growth will come from school-age athletes. Your donation will directly support our current needs. We do not charge a fee for participation in our programs, health exams, or related expenses. The local resources are limited, and we need your help.

Cost

Funds needed	Items needed for Columbia County
\$4020	2 portable bocce courts
\$4550	New uniforms and equipment for Basketball, Softball, and Bowling
\$1430	Facility rental for Bowling and Powerlifting training & competition
\$10,000	Total

Donation

Your \$10,000 donation will provide the funds needed to continue to grow and expand our Columbia County programs in 2023.

Thank you for your time, and we appreciate your support!

John Robles
Director, Development, Corporate Partnerships
Special Olympics Florida