



MEETING MINUTES

Huntersville Parks and Recreation Commission

Wednesday, March 21, 2018

Members Present: Magic Cypress-McNairy, Kathy Jones, Rich Lange (Chair), John Mielke, John O'Neill, Edward Parks, Geoff Steele, Hank Stiene

Absent: Deanna Arnold

Guests: Commissioner Nick Walsh

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Rich, Chair, at 7 pm with a quorum present.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

John M. moved to approve the minutes for the February meeting; Ed Parks seconded the motion. All approved.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

1. Veterans Park – Michael shared a picture of the current condition of the park. Yesterday, the granite globe was installed. Ice had to be used to remove straps from the globe before it could be installed. The project is slowly moving forward. The parking lot needs more work due to sub-base issues. There was a problem with the pump as it is not compatible in the US (it was purchased in India). It appears as though the problem has been resolved. Rain has delayed some of the grading work. It is now looking like everything will be completed by the end of May.
2. Bradford Park Turf Fields – Due to weather, it is looking they will not be ready until mid-April.
3. Score Board Donation at NMP - The Town Board approved the donation of two scoreboards by Lake Norman Little League. It was also approved that their logo will be displayed on the scoreboards.
4. Public Art Committee - The Town approved the creation of the Public Art Committee. The goal is to help the Town implement new art in the downtown area as well in the parks.
5. Batting Cage at NMP - Funds have been donated by Lake Norman Little league and Stewards of the Game to replace the old batting cage at Huntersville Athletic Park.

6. Keffer is sponsoring some of the LaLaCaboosa event at Veterans Park.

COMMISSIONERS REPORT

1. Kathy – Lake Norman Little League. Noted that she has been keeping up to date with Lake Norman Little League’s announcements on social media. She has not talked to her contact there but assumes all is well with their programs. Kathy announced that there is property for sale in Huntersville that would be a wonderful investment for the Town. We could use it for camps and other activities. It’s a single family home that is getting ready to go into foreclosure. She asked if the Town ever looks at purchasing property for these types of things. Michael commented that most of the land we develop is purchased by the County. The Town is looking to sell a few pieces of land so he doesn’t think the Town would be interested in purchasing this particular piece of property.
2. Geoff – Asked the Commissioners if any of them have ever been on the Torrence Creek Greenway. He suggested that we have a future PRC meeting at the Greenway. Michael stated that we could possibly do that for the May meeting since the weather will be nice at that time.

PROGRAMMING REPORT

1. Top Deck Car Show is this Saturday, the 24th at 9:00 a.m.
2. Pictures with the Easter Bunny event is this Sunday, the 25th at Holbrook Park – 1:00 to 3:00.
3. Scott Treon Playground Dedication is this Sunday at 12:30 – Holbrook Park.
4. First “Movie in the Park” is scheduled for April 5th at Bradford Park.
5. Grower’s Market starts May 12th. Location TBD – depending upon the completion of Veterans Park.
6. Memorial Day Ceremony is Monday, May 28th at 11:00 a.m. at Veterans Park.
7. Summer Camps - After filling up in less than 15 minutes, we added an additional 40 residents per week due to the unexpected use of the old Police Annex Building. We will now have 130 campers per week for Junior and Teen Camps. We still have 15-20 people on the waiting list for each week.
8. Senior Softball - A record 253 players signed up this year compared to just 197 last year. A 28% increase.
9. Both Start Smart Preschool Soccer and Baseball are full with a waiting list.
10. Men’s and Coed Adult Softball Leagues are full with 52 teams.
11. Girls Volleyball- There are 238 girls signed up.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

NONE

NEW BUSINESS

1. Parks and Recreation Master Plan and 5yr CIP. At the last meeting, we talked about the operating capital items that we are requesting for FY19. Tonight we are talking about bigger items – over \$500,000. The current 2020 Park and Recreation Master Plan was adopted in 2011.

The Master Plan included the following requests: a list of existing parks that we would like to see expanded as well as new parks; maintenance and repairs to existing facilities; greenway development; and Mecklenburg County projects. The Plan took into consideration the projected growth in Huntersville.

Some of the projects referenced in the plan are as follows: turf fields, additional hiking trails, resurfacing of the tennis courts, new greenways, etc. Some of the items on the plan have been completed or are in the process of being completed.

Geoff mentioned that when he was on the Greenway Commission, it was discussed in more detail what the needs were for the greenways. The plan simply suggests that the Town should develop more greenways in the next 10 years and to work with the County and new developers to expand the greenway system. Michael suggested that when we draft the next plan, we should be more detailed about the greenways in the Parks and Rec Master Plan. It is recommended that we update this Master Plan within the next two years.

Michael also went over some of the amenities the public would like to see in our existing parks (i.e., spray grounds, dog parks, lighted basketball courts, additional picnic shelters, playgrounds, amphitheater, sand volleyball courts, an additional disc golf course, and 13-mile trail). The community's needs have changed in the last several years since the Plan was approved. For example, pickleball was not even heard of in 2011 and now it is very popular.

The survey that was conducted in 2011, revealed what the priorities were of what people wanted. Greenways and fitness trails were at the top of the list.

Rich asked if Eastfield is still being considered as a location for a dog park. Michael said that Ranson/Rosedale would be a good location for a dog park. Michael thinks we should look at hiring an outside consultant for the next plan because the last two plans were done in-house and it is beneficial to have outside input from a firm that deals with a lot of parks and recs master plans across region/nation. Funding will be required to hire an outside firm.

Below is a list of the large 5-year capital improvement needs:

- FY2020 Lake Norman Charter Elementary School Gym (\$500,000) – This project is scheduled to be completed in July 2019. This Agreement has already been approved by the Town Board.
- FY2020 Downtown Huntersville Greenway (\$1,000,000) – This will be the final piece of the 7 Mile Greenway from Birkdale to downtown Huntersville. Michael went into detail about where the greenway starts and ends and what phase it is in. The Town did receive a Carolina Thread Trail Planning Grant for this project.

- FY2020/2021 Ranson/Rosedale Park (\$550,000) – We own 10-11 acres in this area, which was donated to the Town. This location would be a great spot for a dog park. This would be more of a passive park, not an athletic park.
- FY2020/2021 Bradford Park Phase 3 (\$8,800,000) – The park Master Plan for the park was done over 15 years ago and needs to be updated. This future phase would need an additional access area from Ramah Church Road. Any future phases would need to provide an additional driveway from Ramah Church Road. This phase would include three rectangle fields, additional parking, tennis courts, lacrosse field, two baseball fields, trails, and a skate park. Potential partners could be Town of Davidson, Mecklenburg County, and USTA.
- FY2021 Huntersville Athletic Park Turf Infields (\$405,000) – Potential partners would be Lake Norman Charter School.
- FY2021/2022 Greenway Development - \$4,400,000. Various segments of greenways were discussed.
- FY2022/2023 Holbrook Park Expansion (\$1,800,000) – It would be nice to have a larger green space in the downtown area especially as the downtown area develops. Plans could include a splash area, plaza area, open play, play garden, wooded theater, future greenway would go through that area. Lots of options for that space. A way to keep people downtown.
- FY2022/2023 Cook/Graham Park Phase 1 (\$5,500,000) – We see this as our next big active park to serve a highly developed area of town that is currently not served. Future greenways will go through this park. We need to develop a park master plan for this site.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Request for Discounted Tournament Fees from Visit Lake Norman (“VLN”). Last month, VLN attended the PRC meeting and requested a 50% discount for an additional tournament that will be hosted in Huntersville this year.

A discussion ensued about whether or not we should give VLN the discount. The consensus was that we need to make enough money to cover our costs. It does not make sense to give them the discount and lose money and hope that the hotels in the area will benefit from the event. VLN could not give us any data on how much money is brought in to hotels during these events. In addition, the money that comes in from tournaments goes into the Town’s general fund and not back to the parks. Rich suggested that Commissioner Walsh bring this issue up to some of the other board members and get their feedback. If he could find out how many hotel rooms are being utilized due to the tournaments, it would be helpful. This discussion will continue since a decision was not made at this meeting. One opportunity may be to look at capping the maximum amount of discounts we provided each year to VLN.

2. Community School of Davidson (“CSD”) Partnership Update. The state recently passed a law that does not require K-12 schools to pay for road improvements. The Town Attorney’s opinion, as it applies to the new complex, is that this law does not apply since the site as currently proposed for the first phase, does not include educational facilities. Currently, CSD is

considering options on how to move forward with this project. Therefore, our partnership for the tennis complex is being held in draft format until this situation is resolved.

There being no other business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned.

The next meeting will be a tour of all of the parks on Wednesday, April 18th at 6:00 p.m.