



MEETING MINUTES

Huntersville Parks and Recreation Commission

Wednesday, May 20, 2020

Members Present: Deanna Baumgardner, Alisia Bergsman, Kent Curran, John O'Neill, Kathy Lewis, Jason Ma, Magic Cypress-McNairy, John Mielke, Edward Parks

Guests: Commissioner Nick Walsh

I. CALL TO ORDER

This meeting was conducted virtually and called to order by Ed Parks, Chair, at 6:30 p.m. via RingCentral.com.

II. DETERMINATION OF QUORUM

Ed confirmed that a quorum of commissioners was present at the meeting.

III. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

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

IV. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Project Updates:

- a. Covid 19 – The governor has issued an update on Phase 2, which has been modified from the originally planned restrictions. Sporting events are limited to 25 outdoors and 10 indoors. We will need to decide on whether or not we want to allow practices and games on the fields. I am leaning towards allowing organized practices only. Games are a little tricky with keeping the number of people to 25. Michael will find out what the County and surrounding towns plan to do. The soccer groups want to start using the fields on June 1st. A couple of baseball groups want to do an extended season over the summer. Lake Norman Little League most likely will cancel altogether. Stewards of the Game and HYAA are thinking of going forward with making up their spring season over the summer as well. Playgrounds must remain closed until the next phase, which covers another five weeks. Once we decide if we will go ahead and let groups start practices, we will also open up all of the restroom buildings. Once we have a definitive answer

on which way to go, I will let everyone know. Summer camps were deemed allowable under Phase I, however, we would not be able to do field trips. Therefore, we decided to offer just our junior camp program only (elementary age kids). Due to the limited amount of people in one space, we would not be able to accommodate all three groups. Lake Norman Elementary School will let us use their gym so we will have three different facilities to conduct the camps at, including the Bob Blythe Building. The survey we conducted reported that 85% of parents were relying on summer camp to go to work so we felt that we needed to keep the junior camp program for the elementary age kids. Teenagers can most likely stay home by themselves as opposed to the younger kids.

- b. Lake Norman Normy Awards – Our Summer Camp program made it in the top three for summer camps in the Lake Norman area. We won first place last year and hopefully will again this year.
- c. Barry Park Turf Fields – The project started this week, however, with all of the rain we have gotten and expect to get, not much has gotten done this week. Hopefully, this will ramp up again next week.
- d. Bradford Park Parking Lot Expansion – Asphalt has been finished - just have landscaping and modification to storm water remaining. Project will be completed soon.
- e. Veterans Park Restroom Building – Plumbing has been roughed in as well as some block work and electrical. The project is well underway.
- f. Ranson/Rosedale Park – Soil testing was done in the area where the restrooms are going. We are now reviewing different amenity options and materials. Hopefully construction will start in November.
- g. Downtown Greenway – We have submitted the plans for permitting. Hoping to start this summer; in-house staff will be doing some of the work.

V. PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSIONER REPORTS

John O. - Good to see the Farmers Market open and people out and about.

John M. – Thanked Michael and staff for everything we are doing under the circumstances.

VI. PROGRAMMING REPORT

- a. Memorial Day Event – Our event this year will be virtual, which you can view via the Parks and Rec Facebook page on Monday, the 25th at 11:00 a.m.
- b. Growers Market – Started a few weeks ago. Is open every Saturday from 8:00-12:00 at Veterans Park.

VII. PUBLIC COMMENTS, REQUESTS, OR PRESENTATIONS

None.

VIII. OLD BUSINESS

- a. System-Wide Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update. As you know, we have already gone through some of steps in the process for this project (i.e., surveys, public events, staff meetings with designer, etc.). Now, we are trying to narrow down our vision and mission statement that will tie everything together. A draft of the plan will be coming out next month. I would like everyone to review the draft Vision Statement that was emailed to you earlier today, which I am also sharing with you virtually. The goal is to keep the vision statement simple – “Creating a superior quality of life through premier parks and recreation service”. Our mission statement will be “Linking the community through recreation”.

The Mission Statement is also comprised of four pillars, which are as follows:

- Connects Huntersville by creating walkable connections to existing and future parks and programming. We want people to feel connected to the community. Per the survey we conducted, two-thirds of the people said they could not walk or bike to a park from their house. When we look at where additional park land is needed, we need to ask the question, “How can we connect those who are underserved in the community”?
- Preserve parkland for future generations by pursuing opportunities to acquire and expand parks. We need to be looking at preserving park land for future parks. We will continue to work with the County on this and potentially looking at funding the purchase of land.
- Provide parks and recreation to the entire community. We need to be looking at areas that are underserved - where kids do not have transportation to get to the programs we offer.
- Partner with public and private organizations and recreation opportunities for Huntersville residents. We currently partner with some organizations, however, we should be looking for more partnerships to possibly create additional opportunities for the community.

Please let me know your thoughts on these pillars. You can email me your thoughts after you have time to review them in more detail.

John M. asked if we knew of anyone we could partner with? Michael responded that we are currently partnering with organizations and are open to any kind of partner. Our goal is to continue partnering with others. Trying to think outside the box. Brandon Edwards is trying to build a complex on land at Hambright and Mount Holly-Huntersville Road. We might be able to find ways to partner with him to help his project and to serve the community. Maybe we could send him a list of the tournaments we turn away due to lack of space.

Michael shared a draft of the Comprehensive Implementation Plan that McAdams drafted. The Plan talks about some of the ideas in all phases – short term, mid-term, long term. The goals are listed under each objective. He will share all of the information in the plan when there is more. The subcommittee needs to spend about three hours together to go over the current draft of the plan.

The Huntington Green community is a good example of where we need to come up with a plan. A bike plan was discussed as very few people have their own transportation. Also, when parents are working different shifts, they are unable to get their children to the programs. There is a church near this community doing some great things to help; for instance, they are upgrading the playground equipment that is located on the church property. There may be some opportunities to partner with them as well.

We also need to make sure that park improvements make it into the plan. Several of the parks are older and are in need of updating.

Ed asked how Covid has affected the process. Michael said we are about a month behind on the process since all meetings are done virtually. A presentation to the Town Board would be more productive if it was done in person instead of virtually. We want to take our time with this process and do it right.

Kent asked what Michael's thoughts were on timing of the subcommittee meetings. Michael said maybe early next month. We are also doing some benchmarking from other cities and with the North Carolina Parks and Rec Association for comparisons on what they are doing. We will be looking at potential growth and how we plan for another 15,000 people in the next 10 years.

Ed asked about the County's Master Plan. Michael said that they are further behind than we are. They have a bigger plan than we do and are meeting with other towns to see what they are doing. They are not waiting on us, however.

IX. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Naming of the New Ranson/Rosedale Park. Michael shared the results of the survey that was conducted for the naming of the new Ranson/Rosedale Park. The first phase of the process was to compile all of the suggestions we received (109 names were submitted). We then narrowed those down to 11. Those names were sent out in the survey where 347 people voted. Torrence Creek Park was the most popular name. The top five selected are as follows:

1. Torrence Creek Park
2. Rosedale Nature Park
3. Huntersville Community Park
4. Rosedale Meadow Park
5. Rosedale Park

Of the original names that were submitted, 24 had the name "Rosedale" in it. Other names that made the top 10 list are: Craighead Park, Rosewood Meadow Park, Rosedale Community Park, Rosedale Community Park, Rosedale Village Park, Inclusive Park, and Macie Knox Huey Park.

Michael asked the PRC members to vote on what name they would like to see the park named. A discussion then ensued on how to conduct the vote and what the background was on some of the names that were submitted. Ed asked who Macie Knox Huey was. Michael said that she

used to be very involved in the community and lived near the park site. She actually played on the land as a child.

Michael then asked if anyone had a passion for a name that does not include the name "Rosedale". Anyone leaning towards "Torrence Creek Park" or any of the Rosedale suggestions? Several members commented that they thought "Rosedale Nature Park" would be best since a lot of emphasis has been made on the natural aspects of the park.

John M. made a motion to recommend "Rosedale Nature Park" as the name of the park; Magic seconded. All approved.

- b. Discussion on Changing the Field Allocation Process for Baseball/Softball. Lake Norman Little League made a point that we should give out field space by complex and not all fields at one time. Michael thinks this is a good point since the smaller groups have less tickets, which in turn means that those with less tickets end up with the better quality fields. In the fall, we will go with this new process to make it more equitable. The other two groups are pushing back on this new process, however. Michael just wanted the PRC members to be aware of this situation in the event anyone asks questions about this.
- c. Other Business. Michael asked if the committee was open to holding next month's meeting at the shelter at Barry Park. Ed thought that would be a good idea – all other members concurred. Alisia asked if the new commissioners could still get a tour of all of the parks to the new members. Michael said, yes. The tour will start at 4:00 p.m., leaving from Town Center. Everyone else can meet at Barry Park at 6:30 p.m.

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

The next meeting will be at Barry Park on Wednesday, June 17th at 6:30 p.m., preceded by a park tour at 4:00 p.m. for new commissioners.