

Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting – 21 July 2020

Members Present:

- Wayne Rundell – Vice-Chair
- Wyn Birkenthal
- Cody Owen
- Danny Hein -- Chair
- Jared Mull – Parks and Recreation Director

Call to Order: Chairman called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

Approval of Minutes: The commission reviewed the minutes from the June 2020 meeting and approved them unanimously.

Public Comment

- There were no public comments at this time.

Old Business

- Park Projects:
 - Fitness Course: Construction started yesterday on the new fitness park project and a lot of equipment has already been installed with the concrete and the installation of the rockwork beginning soon. Weather permitting, the turf will begin next week. Afterward, the course will be ready for handicapped-accessible parking spaces and a walkway. Because of the pandemic, the park will not be accessible to the public for the next foreseeable future until restrictions are lifted, unfortunately. Caution tape will be placed on the equipment for the time being. There was a mix up and the company accidentally produced and shipped the memorial sign. Jared will be submitting a request to go on the next county commissioner's meeting to recommend naming the course in honor of Jameson, and placing the sign at the course. Depending on the restrictions, some type of opening ceremony will be planned, it just may be delayed. Jared encouraged the Commission to stop by and check out the progress.
 - Pickleball Courts: The one remaining factor is the last layers of cushioning, color, and lines which is largely dependent upon the weather. Because of the recent rain, progress has slowed though Jared is hopeful to string a few nice days together to regain momentum on the project, it is approximately seven dry days away from completion.

New Business

New Park

- Master Plan: There are funds for a master plan for the newly acquired property. A large portion of master planning includes public input, but with the restrictions

surrounding the pandemic, incorporating public input will be difficult. Jared would like to establish a committee or task force to spearhead this initiative and has asked any members of the Commission if they would be interested in joining this task force to review RFQ's for the master planning, be involved with the public planning process, site analysis, etc. Jared has already started looking at companies for the master planning and can send additional information if individuals choose to be on this task force. The timeline would include a lot of initial site work and online surveys in the fall/winter, public input meeting and stakeholder meetings in the Spring, present a ROUGH draft to the County Commissioners, hold an additional public input meeting afterward, and then present a final draft to the County Commissioners. Key stakeholders would also be invited to participate in the process and have their own separate meetings, similar to the Silvermont Master Plan. The question was posed if funds were available for a topographical survey. Jared stated that could be a valid point to look at prior to beginning the process, especially when considering the feasibility of putting athletic complexes on this property.

Recreation Update

- Outdoor Athletics
 - Adult organized sports, specifically softball or church league softball, is not currently being allowed to play on the county fields. The main reason is because of the NC Department of Health and Human Services guidelines with their recommendations of the number of players and fans allowed. The adult softball league does not have the authority to keep the number of individuals limited due to the openness of the parks. Also, there is no staff available to keep the facilities clean within the guidelines presented.
- Camps
 - Summer camps are in full swing. The volleyball camp is happening now. There will be three more weeks of summer camp.
- Adult basketball league was canceled and fall programs have been canceled. At this point, decisions are being paused to wait for TCS decisions for the upcoming school year. After they decide, we may look for guidance from County Commissioners to see the greatest need in the county to see if a camp, similar to the one offered in the Spring, will need to be offered again. There are alternative programs already being brainstormed in the event that we will not be operating some type of camp during the school year so that we can still offer programs for the public.

Director Update:

- July is Parks & Recreation Month and Jared has been highlighting staff, programs, parks, and various other things occurring within the realm of Parks and Recreation on Facebook to bring awareness.

- If individuals would like to have a memorial bench or tree on the grounds of the recreation department, they must make a proposal to Jared which then comes to the Commission for approval. The Pickleball Club is starting to dissolve, but one of their long time members recently passed and the club would like to start the process for a memorial bench in her honor. This could be coming to the Commission for approval in the near future.
- Jared mentioned that the staff has done a wonderful job in being flexible with implementing the new guidelines and working hard this summer. Way to go, staff!

Member Comments:

- Danny Hein stated he was very interested in working with this team and master plan to see the new property come to fruition and see its potential.
- Wyn Birkenthal stated he was glad to see the black fence along the pickleball courts which makes it look professional.

Adjournment: The motion was made to adjourn, seconded, and approved unanimously at 6:40 pm.