



MEETING MINUTES

Huntersville Parks and Recreation Commission

Wednesday, March 20, 2024

Members Present: Kent Curran, Kathy Lewis, Janelle Harris, Tige Chiesa, Frank Freeman, Selene Cypress-McNairy, Ash Munro, Arun Nair, Telisa Johnson.

Absent: none.

I. CALL TO ORDER

This meeting was called to order by Kathy Lewis, Chair, at 6:30 p.m.

II. DETERMINATION OF QUORUM

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

III. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Tige moved to approve the minutes for the February meeting; Kent seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

IV. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Michael informed the group that Nick Barrett had resigned as Park Repair Supervisor. He has been with us for fifteen (15) years and helped with many projects in-house.

Abernethy Park – Improvements are almost done. We are currently adding mulch, the final areas of fencing, and the picnic table under the shelter. Frank mentioned that with the park being handicap accessible, it will be more inclusive. We are receiving a lot of positive feedback.

North Mecklenburg Park Splash Pad –The area is starting to take shape. The spray components have been delivered to the site. We are still on schedule to open in June.

Richard Barry Park – The roof is being put on and upgrading of BMP is almost done. Tige asked if there were any suggestions to add a restroom at Bradford Park because it gets crowded. Michael replied that we did not, but it could be considered in the future.

V. PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSIONER REPORTS

Janelle – There's an indoor skating program at the Waymer Center. Now that it's getting warmer, they would like to get outside and use the multi-purpose court, without interrupting

the hockey league. Michael replied that we could get her a copy of the hockey schedule and possibly partner with the group.

Arun – Asked if there is a reservation system for the parks and shelters. Michael replied that there are no reservations allowed at Rosedale Nature Park, so if anyone would like to use the picnic tables, it will be first come, first served. Due to the size of the park and parking restrictions, we do not accept reservations at Abernethy and Rosedale Parks. All other parks are available for rental through our website.

VI. PROGRAMMING REPORT

Athletics

- Mayor's Fitness Challenge – April 7th- May 19th. The winner will be awarded the "Fittest Community" trophy.
- Mini Athletes – Baseball, Soccer, Flag Football, and Cheerleading in the evenings will start next week.
- All softball leagues have started.
- Nothing But Net and volleyball games start this weekend.
- Athletic Summer Camp registration is open: Volleyball, Soccer, and Mini Athletes.
- The next session for the indoor pickleball league starts next week.

Recreation & Events

- Donuts with the Duck & Bunny – March 23rd at Veterans Park.
- Adult Classes – Spring Charcuterie on March 22nd and Clay Tile on April 5th.
- Beginner Fly Fishing Trip – April 5th.
- Growers' Market OPENING DAY and the Car/Truck Show - April 13th.
- Archery Tag U12 – April 17th at HAP.
- Kind Karma Yoga at HACC: Beginner Friendly and Yoga w/ weights. Free!

VII. PUBLIC COMMENTS, REQUESTS OR PRESENTATIONS

None.

VIII. OLD BUSINESS

- a. **Prioritize Parks and Recreation Capital Projects** – Michael reminded everyone that at the last meeting, we spoke briefly about future projects so when the time comes, we will be prepared to recommend them to the board. Looking at the 2030 Master Plan, all the amenities that are in red, have been completed since 2020. The projects in blue are current, and those in green are future projects. When we review the top survey results, nothing has changed except the request for a Dog Park and Disc Golf has been replaced with Water Features and Pickleball Courts.

Recently Completed Projects:

- i. Huntersville Athletic Park Synthetic Turf Project
- ii. Huntersville Athletic Park LED retrofit athletic field lighting.
- iii. Waymer Park multi-use courts and paved walking trail.

- iv. Abernethy Upgrades.
- v. Public Art Installation of Ascension (trailhead sculpture).
- vi. Public Art Installation of SculpTOUR (6 sculptures).

Current Projects: Everything highlighted on page 12 are projects that we are committed to. The contracts are signed but the money is not finalized. We don't have to rank them. Ash asked if the costs for all the future projects are expected to come out of the eight-million-dollar (\$8 mil) bond. Michael replied there is also the General Fund, Hotel/Motel money, and potential grants and partnerships, that we can use. Tige asked how much we receive from the Top Gun softball agreement. Michael replied that it's about one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000.00) per year. That money goes back into the fund balance. The Hotel/Motel funds must be used on tourism-related activities and amenities. All our special events are funded by this fund. It has also funded projects such as improvements to HFFA, Huntersville Recreation Center, and Richard Barry Park.

Michael recommends focusing on the two largest projects – Bradford (we jointly operate with the Town of Davidson. The land is leased from Mecklenburg County, and they have contributed financially to capital items). The Huntersville/Davidson agreement split is 80/20 and is based on population.

Ramah Church/Fire Station – There are twenty-five (25) acres of land. Five (5) acres are allocated for the fire station, so twenty (20) acres will be for the park. This park will be like Rosedale Park. Rosedale was one point four million dollars (\$1.4 million). This park will cost more. Arun asked how it is decided who does what in the parks because in some of our parks, Mecklenburg County has been involved in some of the projects. Michael replied that it all depends. Sometimes towns decide not to be included. Arun followed up by asking how the county decides which projects to become involved with and how can we get them to do more. Michael replied that they have a system for partnerships, and they rank the projects. If we decide to pay for the design, the project will jump up higher on their list. If there are partnerships, it helps to get the projects done sooner. For example, Bradford Park expansion. If we partner with Davidson, it will help to put that project on the county's radar. Kathy commented that during our meeting at Waymer Park, the representatives from the county were impressed with the feedback from the community, and they decided to partner with us on the improvements. To get a CRTPO grant, you must show how safety will be positively impacted by the project.

Parkland Acquisition – we don't know when land is available to purchase. We buy land in the area where we need parks.

Bradford Park Phase 3 – This plan needs updating. Adding driveway access to Ramah Church Road will be a priority because once Sam Furr is expanded, there will be no left turn coming out of the park. The current plan will change when we go back to the community for feedback. All our parks are pretty much built out, except for

Bradford. Fank asked about parks on the west side of town. The Cook property is going to be a future park.

Recreation Center Expansion –The beams are in place for expansion. It will allow us to have more space for programming and summer camp.

Holbrook Park – We would like the opportunity to expand the park to be a passive park.

Huntersville Athletic Park Amphitheater - We would also like to add an amphitheater that is bigger than Veterans Park. Our agreement with Central Piedmont Community College (CPCC) allows us to handle the additional parking needed.

Michael asked everyone to come up with a priority list to present at the next two meetings. Arun needed more clarity on the joint use agreements with Lake Norman Charter School. Michael told him that the joint use agreement with the charter schools includes the town having access to their gyms and they have access to our fields and courts. We will send an email with the chart that shows all the agreements. Ash also asked if we could have a survey to rank the projects.

IX. NEW BUSINESS

a. **Discuss Pickleball Courts at Holbrook Park.**

Lake Norman Tennis Association rarely uses the tennis courts at Holbrook Park because they need at least five courts for gameplay. Our agreement with LNC (Lake Norman Charter) requires that we provide three (3) tennis courts during school days. We can convert one tennis court to add two more pickleball courts. The only time tennis courts will not be available for the public will be from 3-5 pm when LNC is in session and using them. In pickleball there are many challenges where there are leagues, some participants like to play with friends, then there are some that like open play (rotate in and out). It will cost about twenty-one thousand dollars (\$21,000.00) to make the retrofit. There are capital reserve funds we can use. Some money was allocated for the North Mecklenburg Park tennis resurfacing project, but Michael applied for a grant to cover those costs. Kathy asked if this decision would need to go before the town board. Michael replied that the budget amendment would have to go before the board. Keep in mind that the new LNC high school will build a tennis complex with eight tennis courts at some point, and we can partner with them like we do with the Community School of Davidson.

Ash moved a motion to table the vote. Magic seconded. After some discussion, many felt comfortable to vote tonight. Postponing was denied. Kent moved a new motion that we convert one tennis court into two pickleball courts at Holbrook Park. Tige seconded the motion. It was unanimously approved.

Kent asked about the disc golf course at Barry. Michael replied that we could not do anything until the BMP was done with the construction. Once they are done, we can go down there to see what we need to do to construct the course.

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

The next meeting will be on Wednesday, April 17th at 6:30 p.m. at Town Center.