



MEETING MINUTES

Huntersville Parks and Recreation Commission

Wednesday, May 22, 2024

Members Present: Kathy Lewis, Ash Munro, Kent Curran, Janelle Harris, Arun Nair, Frank Freeman, Magic McNairy.

Absent: Tige Chiesa, Telisa Johnson.

Guests: Kelly Walsh, Robert McCluskay, Sarah Woodbury, Cristi Moore, Tim Turton.

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

Janelle moved to approve the minutes for the April meeting; Ash seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

IV. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Michael – **Employee Updates** – New Athletic Assistant, Stephen Wofford. Cory Oddo was promoted to Park Services Supervisor. Heather Keiser, Growers Market Manager. There are six employee anniversaries this month. Sam Putnam is retiring after being with us for over ten years. He has helped to do a lot of construction work in-house.

Barry Park Restroom and Parking Lot – We hope for this project to be completed by the end of June.

North Mecklenburg Park Splashpad – We have made a lot of progress in installing waterlines, sewer connections, and the backflow. Shade structures and the seating walls are completed. If we continue to get dry weather we should be able to open at the end of June.

Budget - The budget has been presented to the Town Board. The top projects are in this fiscal year's budget (this does not include the two big projects we discussed at the last meeting). The Greenway project is in there as well. They are CRTPO projects that we've received grants for. The grant will cover 40% of the cost.

Other projects include the North Mecklenburg Park playground replacement and the expansion of the Holbrook Park parking lot. Keep in mind the funds for the Ramah Church Park and Fire Station #4/LNC Elementary School Park only cover the planning and design. We will apply for grants and also get public input. Next fiscal year we will present the cost to build each park. There's also some smaller operating capital, like replacing the lighting control system at Barry and North Mecklenburg Park. There are cameras in the parks but the only one with a license plate reader is at North Mecklenburg Park. We hope to add license plate readers to the cameras at Barry, HAP, and Bradford Parks.

We received the first notification from USTA for a twenty-three thousand dollar (\$23,000.00) grant for the resurfacing at North Meck Park. We are waiting to hear from the North Carolina section and the Southern section. The cost for the resurfacing is sixty thousand dollars. (\$60,000.00).

V. PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSIONER REPORTS

Janelle – The 48th Annual June Festival is scheduled to take place at Waymer Park on June 1st. She attended a 'Partners for Parks' meeting and asked if there was a Parks and Rec - town/county meeting. Michael replied that the meeting next month at the Northern Regional Recreation Center will have all the Northern Mecklenburg County towns in attendance. However, some meetings are more at the state level. The directors meet remotely every Thursday. Assistant directors also meet. The regional meetings have filtered out, but there is the state conference and training that everyone gets to attend. Partners for Parks was created to provide organizations the ability to donate money so they can be used as tax deductions. The town has used Partners for Parks previously to raise funds for smaller projects but years ago the town created a sponsorship policy that allows organizations and individuals to donate to the town directly. This policy has worked out well for the town.

Janelle also asked if there is ever an opportunity for the PRC to mingle with Parks and Rec staff so both groups can get to know each other. Michael mentioned that while there is a staff appreciation event, traditionally it hasn't included town committees or advisory boards.

Ash – If you were unable to attend the budget workshops, please consider writing an email to encourage the board to keep all the park projects in the budget.

VI. PROGRAMMING REPORT

Athletics

- End-of-season championship games for Volleyball and NBN – June 1st.
- Volleyball clinics and camps start on June 10th.
- Volleyball and NBN Fall registration opens – June 17th
- Mini Athletes camp starts June 18th – They just completed cheer, soccer, baseball, and football.

- Adult and senior softball is finishing up in the next few weeks.

Recreation & Events

- **Summer Camp** – runs from June 10-August 9.
 - **NEW** Sumer Camp offering for teens: June 24th-28th – Legacy Recording Arts Youth Camp. This is a week-long experience for creative youth and aspiring music producers. Youth ages 12-15 learn about the art and technology of music production.
 - **Memorial Day Ceremony** – May 27th at 11 am – Veterans Park.
 - **Movies in the Park** – June 14th at 8 pm – Veterans Park.
 - **LaLaCaboosa** – Summer Kick off – June 20th at 6 pm – Veterans Park.
 - **Growers Market** – Saturdays 8 am-12 pm.
- SPECIAL EVENTS at the Market:** June 8th – Kids Day and June 22nd – Pet Adoption Event.

VII. PUBLIC COMMENTS, REQUESTS OR PRESENTATIONS

Kelly Walsh – Holbrook Park Pickleball

Robert McCulsuy presented. They would like to discuss the growing challenge since pickleball is becoming more popular, and with its popularity, there will be conflicts between different visions of how the courts should be used and allocated. Entrepreneurs are also trying to make money off the sport. They are appreciative of the two additional courts coming to Holbrook Park because most problems arise from overuse and conflicting use, which he believes will be greatly resolved by adding more and more courts.

Kelly started a Team Reach group within an app to gauge local interest in open play. Team Reach gives users a good idea of how many people are waiting for open play courts. Users can also post comments to the group, post open play schedules, and pictures, and communicate with users.

Robert went on to say that the purpose of this meeting was to give feedback from the community and suggestions on how to organize open play at Holbrook. To begin, they recommend two courts for reservations and six for open play: no reservation, no fee. Users will be able to access the public facility. He said that there are ways to organize open play and would like for us to consider the following:

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| -Paddle system | -Posting open play rules |
| -Courts by ability | -Courts available to reserve |
| -Courts by gender | -Bag rack |
| -Courts for families/children | |

Robert emphasized that the popularity of pickleball is largely due to the social interactions it fosters. The game creates a social environment that promotes friendliness and community spirit. However, it's necessary to maintain some level of organization and guidelines that ensure it isn't exploited for commercial gain.

Michael commented that the pickleball league at Holbrook had their time reduced in half due to the number of Huntersville residents in the league. Kathy added that we use

the same allocation process for all other sports: soccer, ballfields, etc. Kathy asked how we handle tennis. Michael replied that there is a bigger demand for pickleball open play. There are reservation systems for both sports. There are so many groups with their opinions on pickleball. Some want open play, some prefer certain times or to play with their age groups, then some prefer organized/league play, while some just rent the courts to play with their friends.

VIII. OLD BUSINESS

NONE.

IX. NEW BUSINESS

a. **Review Co-Sponsor application.**

We received an application for a new Co-Sponsor. However, Michael asked for the roster to see how many participants are Huntersville residents and they have not responded. The application is incomplete. This application will be placed on hold until we receive all the information needed to review it.

Members of the PRC also discussed placing a time limit on public comments/presenters to ensure our meetings stay on track. Michael is going to consult with the town attorney to confirm if there are existing guidelines for public comments for advisory boards.

Michael then went on to ask for guidance from the group on how we would handle the new courts at Holbrook Park. There will be eight courts and we would like to continue having the league as long as they meet the required number of residents. We will post a survey on the website/social media to solicit feedback from the entire community.

Arun moved a motion to conduct a survey. Kathy seconded. The group will collaboratively add questions to the survey. The plan is to review the survey feedback when we meet in July.

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

The next meeting will be on Wednesday, June 12th at 6:00 p.m. at the Northern Regional Recreation Center. 18121 Old Statesville Road, Cornelius.