



MEETING MINUTES

Huntersville Parks and Recreation Commission

Wednesday, September 18, 2024

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

Absent: Magic McNairy, Telisa Johnson.

Guests: Diane McLaine, Rob Yarmey, Chad Huck and Dave Mancuso.

Town Liaison: Mayor Christy Clark.

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 August meeting; Frank seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

IV. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Michael – **Voting Reminder** – The last date to vote for the Normy Awards for Huntersville Parks and Recreation Summer Camp is Friday, September 20th.

Employee Anniversary – Tracy Houk, Assistant Parks and Recreation Director celebrates thirteen (13) years with the town.

Staffing Update - Andrew Skinner is the new Park Services Specialist. One Park Operations position remains open.

Lake Norman Charter School Elementary School – The school is planning to grade the pads for six new tennis courts. We hope to add these additional courts to the Joint Use Agreement and operate it like we do CSD. Groundbreaking is expected by year-end.

Richard Barry Park – The parking lot is open. The restroom building has received the Certificate of Occupancy, so the contractors are taking care of a few punch list items before opening it.

Capital Projects:

Waymer Park Splashpad – The contract for the design is nearing completion.

Fire Station No 4 Park – We met with the consultants today. The first public input meeting is scheduled for October 16th. We will hold our meeting at 6 pm, then start the public engagement at 6:30 pm. We will meet at the site or at Lake Norman Charter School, as a backup if it rains.

Ramah Church Park – We will meet with the consultants on September 30th then schedule the public input meeting.

Dellwood Building – The Town Board has approved two hundred thousand dollars (\$200,000.00) for the repairs.

Tree Survey at Holbrook Park– This survey is a part of the parking lot expansion process where certain size and species of trees must be surveyed. Not all trees that are marked will be removed.

V. PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSIONER REPORTS

No reports.

VI. PROGRAMMING REPORT

Athletics

- All events are running smoothly.

Recreation & Events

- TACO – Take a Child Outside – Outdoor activities happening in various town parks.
- Books by the Butterfly – Ongoing every Thursday at Rosedale Nature Park.
- Movie In the Park – Scheduled for September 20th, featuring “Space Jam”.
- Latino Night – Set for next Friday night at Veterans Park.
- Adult Recess – October 4 – Huntersville Athletic Park.
- Biketober Block Party – October 19 at the Greenway Trailhead (back of 760 Craft Works). Featuring discussions on bike safety and maintenance, free bike helmets, live music, yard games and food trucks.

VII. PUBLIC COMMENTS, REQUESTS OR PRESENTATIONS

Lake Norman Pickleball Association – Rob Yarmy, Chad Huck and Dave Mancuso.

The organization was founded in 2020, has grown from 250 members in 2022 to approximately 1,200 members today. The membership Fee is \$30.00 per year. They currently partner with the

towns of Cornelius and Davidson. As of September 2024, there are about 250 members in the organization from Huntersville.

The organization offers open play opportunities for all skill levels. When court monitors are introduced to manage open play, it ensures that the rules and proper paddle rotation are adhered to.

Chad Huck (Membership Coordinator) spoke about the various program offerings:

- Ladder Leagues – Seasonal leagues that take place at Torrence Chapel Park in the Spring and Fall, where players are divided by skill level.
- Open Play – Inclusive sessions encouraging social play for all skill levels.
- Round Robin Play – Scheduled for 55+ players, organized by skill and age during less busy times.
- Team Sponsorship - They sponsor teams in the Queen City Pickleball League. League fees are in addition to the membership fee.
- Tournaments – Take place at Holbrook Park: St. Paddles Day Tournament (Spring) and Fall Classic Tournament, presented by Novant Health (Fall).

They rely on volunteers for court monitoring to ensure proper play rules and paddle rotation. The paddle rack system is important and must be followed. There is a need for more paddle racks at Holbrook Park to accommodate at least thirty (30) paddles.

Arun asked what the money collected at leagues used for. The fees collected fund equipment purchases like nets. They are a 501C7 organization, provide need based scholarships, and conduct summer camps in Cornelius and Davidson. The summer camps fall under the Parks and Recreation umbrella, but they provide the instructors.

Vision – They are offering to us the same things they do at Cornelius and Davidson: scheduled play (open play, round robins and more), clinics, leagues and tournaments. They also offer structured play and clinics, especially for novice players. They believe that they can help expand what we offer to residents and bring organization to the game.

Keys to a successful membership:

- *Code of Conduct – Clear process for addressing unruly behavior on the courts.
- *Transition Plan – A phased approach to ensure smooth execution of the programs.
- *Mutual Partnership – A partnership that benefits both sides. They would ask for a designated number of court hours for members only programming.

Kathy asked what the next step is. We will review Cornelius' plan. Michael will share their contact information with the Parks and Recreation Commissioners.

Bradley Middle School Track (Diane McLaine) – The objective is to create a unique community amenity in Huntersville by upgrading the existing community track at Bradley Middle School/Richard Barry Park.

There are seven track facilities in the area, but upgraded tracks are generally not publicly accessible. Many users continue to utilize tracks despite their poor conditions, including cracks, and grass growth, and lack of lights.

Upgrade Considerations – The track is an eight-lane track. The Greenway connections in the future will make it more accessible. We can potentially collaborate with Charlotte-Mecklenburg School (CMS) and explore private partnerships and grants. Besides enhancing community engagement, and improving the conditions to attract more users, there is the potential for hosting events, including the Special Olympics.

The estimated cost to do this project is between \$120,000.00 and \$200,000.00. The mayor expressed support for pursuing this project. Michael will follow up with Dennis from CMS (Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools) to discuss this project, but we will have to make sure they are on board. Janelle asked about expanding the already new tracks at the Language School, but space constraints limit this option.

VIII. OLD BUSINESS

North Mecklenburg Park Playground – We’ve received a lot of feedback from the Facebook survey. Three options were presented, and according to the AI summary on Facebook, commenters prefer Option 2. However, they would like to make it more accessible with some of the pieces shown in Option 3. There is a strong demand for more shade; Michael proposed placing benches near existing trees. It is not feasible to put a canopy with Option 2, due to the height of the structure and the cost. Janelle and Ash recommended replacing some panels of the playground with accessible options.

Mayor Clark inquired if there are other areas in the parks that will benefit from trees being planted. Michael mentioned that we typically try to plant at least fifteen to twenty (15-20) trees every fall. Patty suggested planting trees around the tennis courts at North Mecklenburg Park. Oak trees really thrive in this area. Michael said that plans are in place to plant trees at Waymer Park and Barry Park.

Janelle asked for an update on the restroom’s situation at Huntersville Athletic Park/Old North State League partnership – Michael confirmed that a restroom facility will need to be added to accommodate the partnership since bleachers are considered a permanent structure. The organization is still interested in renting the facility with the need for fencing, without adding permanent bleachers. We are waiting to get written confirmation that the bleachers will require an additional restroom facility.

NEW BUSINESS

None.

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

The next meeting will be on Wednesday, October 16th. Location and time to be announced.



SEE NEXT PAGE FOR OPTION 3

